The ESOL Ambassador

The ESOL Ambassador is a quarterly publication of the Sylvania ESOL Department. Essays are written by students at all levels of the program and submitted for publication by ESOL instructors.

Subscriptions: The ESOL Ambassador is distributed to various individuals and departments at PCC. If you wish to receive issues regularly, please contact Sarah Bailie at CT 206 or by email at sarah.bailie@pcc.edu.

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ESOL club
at PCC Sylvania

We are a gathering of students to help ESOL students to thrive at college by providing opportunities for ESOL students to get involved in PCC community and to make connections outside of classroom.

We organize fun activities!
Downtown tour, Hiking Trip etc
We help with ESOL fund fundraising!
Volunteer at ESOL fund’s fundraising event that includes $1.00 Jewelry Sale

Interested in being a part of coordinator team?
Contact esolclubsy@gmail.com

Check out our Facebook page
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ESOL PCC SYLVANIA
My Apartment

Level 1 ESOL students wrote about their apartments.

I live in an apartment in Tigard, OR. I live with my family. My apartment is small. There are two rooms, a kitchen and one bathroom. I have a large living room. I have a TV and coffee table. I have a kitchen, a microwave, refrigerator and a window. My apartment is beautiful for my family.

Written by: Jenni De La O

I live in an apartment in Tigard with my daughter and son-in-law. We live together. My apartment has two bedrooms and a kitchen, a dining room and a living room. The living room has a fireplace. In my bedroom there is a computer, a TV, an armchair and a dresser.

Written by: Xiaomei Liu
I live in an apartment in Beaverton, Oregon with my boyfriend. I live on the first floor. My apartment has one room and the living room is pretty big. There is a TV and a bookcase. There is a closet in the hall. The bathroom has a big mirror. I like my apartment and the neighborhood I live in.

Written by: Catalina Ordon

I live in an apartment. There is one bathroom. I live with my husband and my children. There are two children. There are three bedrooms. The bedrooms have three beds. I have a small living room. There is one TV in the living room. I have a large bathroom.

Written by: Shahlaa Alobaidi

ESOL Level 2 Students Wrote About Their Jobs:

**Christian’s Job**

I am a flooring installer. I started this job eight years ago. I work in different places. Every morning I pick up my job schedule for that day. When I do my job, it’s necessary to leave all customers happy. The carpet is sometimes very heavy. I often have long days, but it is fun because I get to know many different places. I don’t get benefits. It’s not a bad job. I’m happy there.

Written by: Christian Godoy

**My Job**

I am a nail technician. I give customers manicures and pedicures. I help make your hands and your toes look clean and beautiful. I think it’s like magic. When I see my customers happy and they like their hands, I am very happy. I work full-time, but I don’t have medical benefits or get sick days. My job is very difficult, but I don’t feel tired because I like my job. I work with customers from all over the world. I can learn a lot of English each day.

Written by: By Anh V Nguyen
Parties!

*These ESOL Level 3 students wrote about their most memorable parties.*

Our Beautiful Goodbye Party

When my husband, my daughter and I came here, our family from Chile gave us a goodbye party. Our parents planned the party. All of our family went to the party. Our goodbye party was beautiful and we lived an amazing moment. The made for us a beautiful video about our lives in Chile. Also we ate delicious food. Then we danced to our favorite music. Many people from our family wished us a good trip and many great times in the U.S.. We were very happy.

Written by: Carla Diaz

Engagement Party

Last summer my brother Zied got engaged. Me, my parents, my little sister and my two brothers went to the party. My mother bought a wallet and shirt as a gift for my brother’s fiancé. My father bought a big cake and boxes of fruits, like bananas, pears, and strawberries. He also bought twenty pounds of lamb meat. It is in our tradition to bring food and gifts. At the party, my brother and his fiancé sat next to each other while everyone was dancing and joking around. We had a DJ to entertain us with folk music. He played a lot of rhythmic songs. Everybody danced except my brother and his fiancé because they are both shy.

Written by: Khoaula Laamari

Vietnamese Party

When I lived in Vietnam, my family liked to have a party with everyone in the family. They went to the supermarket and bought food. After, they cooked. The kids played in the yard. The old people liked to talk together. I did some things that my mom asked me to do. And then, when everything was ready, everyone sat together and ate. In my country, everyone likes to sing karaoke at a party. So, my family ate, sang, and talked at the party. The men liked to drink beer, the women liked soda, and the kids too. When we finished this party, the men went back home and slept. The women cleaned everything before they left.

Written by: Thuy Huynh
**Spring Festival**

Spring Festival was the most important festival in China. It is like Christmas in the U.S.. On that day, almost all people wore new clothes and shoes. Each family had a perfect party at night. I had two young brothers. They were married. So our three families visited our parents together. We celebrated Spring Festival with my parents. My mother and father cooked lots of traditional food for us. We sat around the table, talked and ate. At midnight, we lit fireworks and ate dumplings. I sent presents for my big family. My parents sent red envelopes with money to the children. They were excited and happy.

Written by: Wenjing Zheng

**A Big Family Party**

My family had a big party in 1986. There were 12 people to attend the party. They were my three uncles and their wives, my two aunts, my mother, my husband, my daughter, and I. My aunts, my uncles and their wives were all from different provinces where they worked and lived. They all hadn’t returned to their hometown for many years. My husband and I prepared for a few days for the party. We cooked a lot of home cuisine. They enjoyed the food very much. They talked about a lot of things, especially about their childhood. They laughed and didn’t want to go to sleep. After one week, they had to say goodbye and return to their city. After many years, I still remember that year’s party.

Written by: Alice Xu
Countries to Visit!

Enigmatic Russia

Russia is a country with great history, wonderful nature, and rich traditions. There are many old towns with amazing old architecture. Some towns are over 1,000 years old! Russians celebrate many ancient holidays. For example, "Maslenitsa". People kick out winter by burning an effigy of "Winter", baking pancakes, singing and dancing. The pancake is the symbol for the spring sun. Russian nature doesn't have a lot of sun, and it is harsh and beautiful. I was born in a small town on the Volga River, so I love spring's drifting ice, it sounds like a thousand small bells. I love the smell of the melting snow, the sun-warmed ground, the smell of mushrooms in the autumn forest, frosty air in the winter… Russia is a wonderful country and great place to travel! (PS: Especially now, because ruble fell, and everything has extremely low prices :)

Written by: KaterinaPerfilova
ESOL Level 4 Writing

Traveling in China

If you want to travel, please choose China! Because China is a great country with more than five thousand years of history and culture. It consists of fifty-six ethnic minorities. The people in China are friendly, warm and hospitable. You can enjoy different customs and culture. China’s capital Beijing has more ancient buildings and places of interest. For example, the Summer Palace, the Imperial and the Great Wall. But the gorgeous Chinese natural scenery is breathe taking. As the saying goes, after visiting "the Five-Yue Mountains," you can not see any other mountains, and after visiting" Jiuzhaigou" you can not see any other river. Because Jiuzhaigou is known as "Paradise on earth." In China you will not only enjoy beautiful scenery but you can also taste delicious foods. When you understand about the essence of Chinese ancient culture and history, maybe you’ll want to learn more. It is absolutely worth that you’ll spend a lot of money and time to visit China. Beautiful China is waiting for you!

Written by: Yingqiu Li
ESOL Level 4 Writing
**My Great Country---China**

I love my country because it has a long history and splendid culture. The ancients built the Great Wall to defend the enemies. At that time, they didn't have any machinery, so they built it by their hands. There is the Imperial Palace in the Forbidden City. On the ancient Silk Road there are Mokao Caves. Its natural scenery is very beautiful. It has two rivers, one is the Yantse River, one of the longest river in the world. The other one is Huanghe River, that we call "Mother River", is the position of the Chinese nation. In the southwest, there is Huangguoshe Falls. It is one of the largest waterfalls in the world. It also has a lot of big cities, such as Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjing, and so on. But I like the nation's food and snacks more. I'm proud of China.

Written by: Zongfang Wu
ESOL Level 4 Writing

**Convenience in Taiwan**

Taiwan is a convenient country. First of all, it has big markets. There are many different stores on the street. You don't worry about daily life. Secondly, you can eat a lot of food in Taiwan. You can eat savory rice cake or beef noodles in the morning. Maybe you can buy bubble tea or sun cake for your afternoon tea. Thirdly, it is a small country. But it has many beautiful cities to visit. You can take a train, a car or ride a motorcycle to every city. Taiwan is very easy to live in our life, I love it.

Written by: Chiahsun Wu
ESOL Level 4 Writing

**Memories of Danyang**

Damyang is my sweet hometown. This town has a lots of bamboo forests. The Yunsan River is in front of my house, and three other sides are bamboo forests. In late spring, we cut bamboo sprouts, and mother makes spicy bamboo salad. In the summer, I spend most of time with my friends. we swim, fish, and catch clams in the Yunsan River. In the fall, we harvest rice, beans, and other things. In the winter, it is hunting and ice skating season. All seasons, we are very busy, doing lots of things. Damyang is a lovely memory of my hometown

Written by: Sally Ku
ESOL Level 4 Writing
The Beautiful Country

Korea is a small but great country in Asia. First of all, Korea has four distinct seasons, you can feel different features every season. Secondly, the people in Korea can get medical benefits with less burden, and convenient transportation makes people going around everywhere without their own vehicles. Thirdly, the low university tuition gives a big chance to many students who want to study. Finally, the most important value for Koreans is respect for elders. In many cases, there are usually three generations living under one roof, so children can learn the spirit of family from grandparent's care and teaching.

Korea's territory is smaller than Oregon. However, Korean people are very diligent, friendly and passionate for the future. So, I love my beautiful country, Korea!

Written by: Chunja Ha
ESOL Writing Level 4

Escape From High School

Have you ever successfully escaped high school? For me, that was a disaster. I could remember every moment of twenty years ago Monday morning November 3rd; I was a freshman in high school. In our high school, there was a celebration, so we didn't have class for the first 2 hours. In Iran the educational system does not allow girls and boys to go to the same schools. Not surprisingly, boys and girls are very interested in each other. Especially in the 90’s without social media, smart phones and the Internet, it was hard to meet boys. In school my classmates always talked about boys, and I didn’t have anything to share with them. Monireh was the most popular girl in our school. That day surprisingly she was very nice to me, and she said that I was her friend. She asked me if I wanted to be cool, so I had to fool the gatekeeper to help her escape from school. I generously helped her, and we successfully escaped from school. Monireh met a boy, so she simply said to me leave us alone! She left me. I felt bad because she used me. I thought what am I supposed to do? School wasn’t so far, so I could easily go back to school. I wish I did that, but I kept going very unsurely. Suddenly, I saw a tall boy with a very cool baseball cap. He pulled his hat down over his face and I didn’t see his face completely. I was very nervous, but I just wanted to make a short conversation with him. Because, my friends would definitely ask me about what I did that day, and I should have a story to tell them, so I said to him you have a nice watch. He just jumped and grabbed my hand and said shame on you! Did you escape from school to
meet boys? I was shocked at that moment, and I was begging him, “Please don’t tell mom anything! Did you escape from school too? Please don’t tell mom, I swear I will not tell her you escaped either!” He was my older brother! I wasn’t successful in negotiating with him at all, so he told her! I was punished badly, and after that, I never escaped from school again.

Written by: Nasim Nasiri

ESOL Level 5 Writing
This term, the Communication 5 class met with the Philosophy of Religion class for an hour. The students from both classes shared information about their faith, including how they practice their religions, the meanings of each prayer, and how they feel when they follow their religious rituals. Here are their perspectives on the activity:

This morning, my class discussed religion with the Philosophy of Religion class. It was a nice class. It was the first time meeting the students, but they were friendly, and it seemed as if we had known each other for a long time. We had a good time with the conversations. It was great! We shared the meaning of religion, and we talked about the purpose of religion. After the discussion, I learned that religion always teaches everyone to love each other and want a peaceful world. I love my new friends because we have something in common: wanting love and peace. I'm happy to share religion in my nice class.

Written by: Phuong Lai

My experience in the Philosophy of Religion class was great. I really liked it. I learned different views on religion; also, I didn't know that there was a class that talked about religion. I felt very excited to get to know students studying religion, and they were very attentive with me.

Written by: Miguel Lopez

When I went to the Philosophy of Religion class, I learned different things about other religions. I was in a group with Catholic people, and I learned the differences and similarities between Islam and Catholicism. It was fun and I want to do it again.

Written by: Omar Alarfaj
Surprised by an Arrow

What do you do if someone randomly shoots an arrow into your arm? Ten years ago, when I was in an archery class, another student accidently misdirected the arrow into my arm. My friend was shooting toward her target while I was walking past her to pull out my arrows from my target. Suddenly, I saw an arrow stuck in my arm. At first, I did not realize the arrow was in my arm. I thought the arrow was in my sleeve, and I pulled out the arrow from my hand. Then, when I pulled up my sleeve up, I realized I had been shot in my arm not just my sleeve. I was so shocked. It happened because we both disregarded a basic rule of archery. My friend "who misdirected the arrow" fainted when she realized what exactly happened to me. I was just shocked, and I just laughed because I did not believe that happened to me. An arrow was in my arm. Finally the police and an ambulance came. They asked me: who got hurt? I said: I got hurt by an arrow. They were surprised because I was fine. The doctor asked me: what did I do with the arrow. I said: I pulled out the arrow. He got angry because he told me, you might hurt your arm. At the moment I just said "thanks God" because that might have been worse. On the other hand, I think that surprise arrow was my lucky arrow because I got invited to the Iranian national archery team after three months. I hope all your surprise arrows will be lucky arrows in your life.

Written by: Houmat Heidari
ESOL Level 5 Writing
Improve English

English is the most important language in the world. If you want to improve your English, there are three ways to improve your English.

The first way is listening. Listening is important to understand what people say to you, so you can listen to music, news and advertisements on the radio. Also, you can go to the talk time coffee and conversation group for listening in the PCC library or talk time in public libraries. In addition, you can watch TV. You can watch movies, news and advertisement.

Another way to improve your English is speaking. Speaking is important for people to understand you, so you can go to the talk time coffee, conversation group and talk time in public libraries. Also you can talk with native English speakers in public transportation, in shops or in a gym. In addition, you can make American friends through your college, neighborhood or public places.

The last way to improve your English is writing. Writing is the most important way to connect with anyone by messages, so to improve your writing you can go to tutoring center, writing center or online tutoring. Also you should write a lot of essays for practice.

All of these ways are very good for improving your English. If you have trouble with listening, speaking or writing you should focus on that area. After that you will be almost perfect in English.

Written by: Abdullah Alluhiedan
ESOL Level 5 Writing
The Reading 6 class worked on a project about the Harlem Renaissance this term. Each student prepared a poster about an artist from that historical period and explained the information to the Level 3 class.
The Darkest Time of the Night

Many years ago when I was a teenager, my family decided to leave Iran in order to save our lives and our freedom. The only way for us to do this was to cross our own country’s border and become refugees in the neighboring country, Turkey, until we found a new home. It was a long journey, but the last night of the journey, my fear became so strong that I lost my hope.

After many days walking and riding a horse in the mountains, we got far enough from the border. It was a new world to me. Even the sunset was different, and there were many beautiful colored fields, which were like an oasis in front of my eyes. Somehow, I was feeling more relaxed because I knew we were finished climbing, but I was anxious about what was in front of us.

We were divided into two small groups. I was in the second group and we were walking to go across the fields ahead. It was getting dark, and it was the best time not to get noticed by the patrol. We were getting farther down the mountain and the plants and bushes were getting taller. Some of the plants had sharp thorns. The moon was almost full and the sky was clear so we were able to see. On top of one of the hills, there was a cold breeze and the moonlight was making it more mysterious. It was like a dream.

I looked back, trying to see where the others were and they weren’t that far away. I started walking down the hill, and I noticed something moving fast in our direction. The only thing I was able to see were bushes bending down and moving like a wave. I stopped there and I noticed the bushes were bent all around me in different directions, and I realized they couldn’t be people. I started to run back to the hills, but my group wasn’t there. I couldn’t stop and my heart was beating so fast in my chest. I fell down many times, but that didn’t stop me from running. There was nowhere to hide and luckily I found one of my friends. She was standing and was bent down with her hands on her knees and she was trying to catch her breath. I checked my pocket to find my knife, but it wasn’t there. The only thing that came to my hand was my metal water bottle. I took it out and we stood back to back. Finally, we saw what was in the bushes. Three big animals were walking around us. They looked like bears or wolves. I couldn’t even tell. There were taller than us and making scary sounds. My friend lit a lighter. The animal’s eyes were reflecting the light and they were showing their scary teeth. One of them got too close to me and I threw my bottle towards it. Then we started throwing rocks at them.

I saw a light and it was our guide coming for us. He was with a group. Soon the animals got scared and disappeared. The guide said they were wild dogs that live in this cold area. We walked for less than an hour. He said we could rest, but I had no water. There was blood on my face and hand, and I didn’t even notice that I had cut myself. Also, there were many thorns in my clothes. There were little holes in the rocks that were full of rain or snow water. I had a little cup and I slowly filled it with water.
I held my lighter closer to the rocks and I noticed many bloodsuckers in the holes. I had no choice because I was so thirsty and I carefully drank the water. I had no energy. I was feeling pain all over my body. I told myself I couldn’t tolerate this anymore. Suddenly, our guide said, “There is a car waiting for us to take us to the destination and we will be there before sunrise.”

In the morning, I saw my mom and I couldn’t believe it was over. It was like I woke up from a nightmare. Tears were rolling down my face and I was not able to say any words. She helped me to get washed up, bandaged my wounds, and gave me water and food. I remembered the darkest time at night is the closest time to sunrise. I learned that with hope, there is not any hard situation that will stay forever. Today I am here and have survived even harder times than that.

Written by: Atousa

ESOL Level 6 Writing
My Roof, My Heaven

When I received the e-mail that I would be going to the BCT (Basic Camp Training), I was still in my country, Kosovo. I had millions of ideas and thoughts in my mind. What will happen to me? How will it be? With whom will I work? I knew that my life would change forever. I thought about my future, my family, my life. I was at that point when my mind was confused. So, I got my dog and went straight up on the roof, or Heaven, as I used to call it and just watched the stars and the moon and thought.

That night, after I got that e-mail, I decided not to talk to anyone. I just sat on my roof with my dog and my cigarettes. It was very warm weather, the middle of June. I didn’t want to cry but I did. I was hugging my dog and looking at the beautiful moon and talking to her, as I like talking to the moon. The moon was so bright that night, not like other times. It was different. I was talking to her and asking what would happen to me. Am I going to succeed? What am I going to tell my mum? I knew that she would get so sad. On the ground, I could see my beautiful garden with a lot of tulips and I could hear my brother talking to my dad. They were talking about having a trip somewhere that summer. On the right side was my garage and my motorcycle that I loved so much, but I knew that it was time to leave, to start a new life, on my own, and joining the Army was my dream, a dream that had come true.

I sat there for about two hours, smoking and thinking. One moment I could hear a noise, and I found out that my dog was sleeping and he was snoring. I felt sorry for him because I raised that dog and he was a great friend to me, but I had to leave him also. Talking to the moon made me feel very happy and full of life. I felt like I was a free bird who is able to fly and never fall because he is protected by God.

Suddenly, I could hear my mum calling my name, but I didn’t respond to her call because I didn’t want to talk to her, not at that moment. All that time I was sitting on the roof made me realize how much I love my family, and how much I was going to miss them. I asked God to protect me and my family, especially to protect my mum and give her health and make her strong in my absence. I could feel God was listening to me, like he was promising me that everything would be fine.

Those two hours that I spent in my roof were probably the most loved moments that I ever experienced, because after that I felt very relieved. My spirit was free, and I felt like I could control my emotions and not cry if I had to talk to Mum. After all that time, I woke up my dog and went downstairs and talked to my mum, not about the news, but just a normal conversation, and I know that I was very comfortable with her. I didn’t show negative feelings because I had just been on the roof-- I had been in Heaven.
My First Job

Teaching is not difficult, but teaching well as an adolescent makes it more challenging. Dealing with students in elementary school needs a lot of skills. My parents were teachers, and they insisted that I be like them. I thought about it, but my concern was that I look younger than my real age. Then, I decided to pursue this career and face my fears.

I was 19 years old at that time, and I had just graduated from a fine arts institution as an elementary school art teacher, and was required to do an internship for the last three months in school. My life was a paradox. I had to teach the students how to grow up without fully knowing how to do so myself.

I was nervous at that time. I went to the elementary school, and the principal introduced me to the students and teachers. I felt embarrassed at that moment. I had never been that embarrassed before. The first thing I heard from one student when the student were lined up in the morning, was “Is he a teacher or a student?” And most of students were laughing. Even the teachers were whispering about me.

I was thinking “Why am I here?” and “Is this the appropriate place to be?” The principal gave me the schedule; asking me to teach the third grade. I was confident, because I have the ability to speak without shyness, but my weakness was that I looked younger.

After a few days things got worse. The girls from sixth grade were flirting with me, waving their hands, and winking. Because I was the only man in the school staff, I had to stay in the principal office.
The girls were staring at me from the window, and I would always turn my head as result. The next day, I went to the barbershop, and I asked him to cut my hair to be ugly, which did not work. The girls continued to follow me. I was depressed, and no one encouraged me except the principal. Eventually, I realized I had to be who I am. I behaved just as I am, and I focused on how to teach them. Everyone started to respect me and all the teachers were impressed. They said “Because of what you’ve done, Ahmed, everyone loves you and you have earned the students respect“. Eventually, with a few days of my internship left, the principal asked to hire me, and she said “I had never had a teacher like you”, to which I responded “It’s too early, because I still need time to decide what I want to do with my life “

This experience has taught me how to face my fears. It's changed my life, even outside the school. After that time, I have been more confident, and I have learned that personality is not what you look like, it’s how you behave.

Written by: Ahmed Ali
ESOL Level 7 Writing

**The Holy Grail of Cigar Smoking**

Cuban cigars are well known in the world. People in Cuba smoke anywhere as there are not many restrictions or laws to protect non-smokers. Even though, tobacco is grown in many places of the island, the price of cigars is not always affordable for many Cubans. I lived in Cuba for many years and I never smoked; however, I was always observing how people got the cigars. According to their means, there are three main groups: the Moochers, the Thrifts and the Black Marketeers.

The moochers are a very interesting group of people. They pretend that they are occasional smokers and that’s the reason for not buying their own cigars. They don’t waste any chance to ask for a cigar as soon as they see a friend or neighbor smoking. They won’t ever go away even if you do give them what they asked. Many times they get offended when people don’t share with them what they have. They always have a good excuse for not having cigars.

Frequently, low-income people roll their own smokes. They work hard at it, and they enjoy it a lot. This group is called the Thrifts. Usually they get the necessary materials for the process, and they don't need a lot of expensive equipment, or skills to roll cigars. They buy the tobacco from farmers or simply grow their own. This way they save money. My father smoked cigars since he was young, and during his senior years he started making his own cigars. He used to say that it was less expensive and tastier.

People buy authentic cigars as well as counterfeited ones on the Black Market. Many of these...
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Cigars are made by retired rollers who make them at their houses, using original labels, bands and packaging. The black marketeers get the cigars for two main reasons: one, their own consumption: this is an economic way to smoke and buy their own quality cigars; and two, for profit or gain: reselling the cigars. You often see them with an unlit cigar in their mouth just to show it off as a symbol of wealth.

When you want to describe a Cuban, there are three main things: the music, the rum and the cigar. The cigar smokers will continue finding a way to get their cigars no matter how. I recall the vision of my father sitting on the porch of our house, with his lit cigar sticking in his mouth, enjoying the distant sound of rumba and the view of vintage cars moving along the street.

Written by: Cecilio Cuervo-Arango
ESOL Level 8 Writing

Instagram Users Getting Weird

A high school student posted a photo on Instagram with a text under it saying “I am using Instagram during the class, and the teacher cannot see it.” Suddenly, the teacher commented on the post “get out of the class.” After a few seconds, the principal liked the post. Today, Instagram is becoming more and more popular among social media users; as a result, the unusual activities on it are getting more and more noticeable than ever. As a 24/7 user of Instagram, I can say most of these officially civilized Instagram followers could fall into five categories based on how they act on the social media: the lurkers, the gentlemen, the hitters, the loud celebrities, and the normal people.

The lurkers are the people who are not only completely useless on social media sites but also in real life, and they do not add any benefits to the admins of the pages; moreover, they like to use almost everything, yet they do not like to pay the price. These very rare creatures look at the admins’ posts and read them; however, it does not matter if they enjoy them or not because they are not going to like the post nor put a single comment on it. Just like other people, lurkers have a real life, and they try to enjoy everything around them, yet they do not like to pay for it. Indeed, lurkers do not follow the norms of societies in some situations.

“Gentlemen” are the most open minded and haughty people ever existing. They always do their best to put comments on each and every post to show that they know a lot about the topic; nevertheless, they have not read a single book in their lives nor do they have an idea about the reason for the post. These individuals seldom like a post because they think that the post is beneath them; nonetheless, sometimes they feel so generous that they may like one or two of the posts. Just like the lurkers, gentle-
have a real life too, and they talk with people, yet they usually make people frustrated or sad because they have an obvious sense of rudeness. After all, there is a reason to call them Gentlemen.

Hitters are the trickiest followers ever existing in the universe. They are always looking for their lovely precious soul mates; hence, they try hard to hit on girls in the comments all the time. One of their most magnificent methods is commenting happy birthday messages on the posts; for example, they comment “happy birthday, I hope you live a long and happy life as 503-824-**** years.” Basically, they keep trying extremely hard to get together with all of their possible soul mates. Genuinely, they are among those most miserable of people who are seeking a good friend or a soul mate in the wrong place and with the wrong method.

The loud celebrities are the people who have thousands or millions of followers by shouting each other out; moreover, they are the special unique people who follow the footsteps of their idols, Justin Bieber, and Miley Cyrus. The only thing that matters in their lives is fashion and having more than 10,000 followers; additionally, they have no idea about what is going on in the world surrounding them. To be honest, they know some skills that have been working extremely well on their way becoming a fake celebrity; for example, Photoshop and heavy makeups. They use their skills to keep their real faces hidden. Indeed, this category includes individuals who do not have a life in the real world because the only place that they can possibly be admired is the internet; therefore, they are the actual losers of life because all of their achievements are ones and zeroes.

The last but not the least important category includes the normal people who should be admired the most. They are the individuals who use social media correctly. They do not take any inappropriate actions on the social media; furthermore, they like the posts they like, they comment on the posts when they think the admin likes to read their response, and they shout-out when they feel that the page has something informative for their followers. In fact, they are both the best followers and admins.

In conclusion, there are many kinds of people who use Instagram or the other social media sites in many different ways, and it is noticeable that not all of the users are good which sometimes reminds us of their lifestyles. After all, it is good to know whatever people do on a social media site is going to stay there forever; consequently, it is better to watch what is going to be posted, commented on or even liked.

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The Prospective Former Smokers

I’m a former smoker, but I could also say I had been a full, perfect idiot!

As a former smoker I completely agree with Dr. Mike Evans on the YouTube video “What Is the Single Best Thing You Can Do to Quit Smoking”. He says that quitting smoking can be like a journey. For some, it can be a short journey, but for some it can be a very long journey. Helping his patients to quit smoking, Dr. Evans identifies three stages: the first is the “Pre contemplation stage” when actually the smoker is even not really thinking about changing his habit; next there is the “Preparation stage”; and at the end is what he calls the “Action stage”. According to Dr. Evans, quitting smoking is a big challenge. Smokers adopt different strategies to effectively quit smoking.

The idiot. I would say that the idiot is in the stage of pre contemplation. He knows very well that smoking is wrong; however, he is not able to find the right motivation. When the idiot thinks about quitting smoking, he makes up stupid statements such as “I will quit smoking the day I will find a job”, or “I’ll quit smoking when I am pregnant”, or worse “My uncle died at age of 93 and he had been smoking his whole life, so it’s not true that smoking is harmful to our body”! There is a big problem with this category of people. They aren’t really sure that they want to quit smoking and unfortunately there is a huge probability that they will never make a decision in that direction.

The sponger. Like the idiot, I place the sponger in the pre contemplation phase as well. The peculiarity of the sponger is that more than quitting smoking he doesn’t want to spend his money buying cigarettes. Usually, after he has bummed a cigarette the sponger says. “You know, I don’t buy cigarettes because I want to quit smoking”. Everybody has a friend that is constantly bumming cigarettes! The real problem with this category of people is that they didn’t realize yet that more value should be given to their health instead of their money.

The utopian. I would say that the utopian is in the stage of preparation. The utopian is actively planning to quit smoking: he reads a lot of articles about how to quit smoking, he buys healthy foods to store in the fridge, and that he will eat when he is abstaining from nicotine; in some cases, he will also buy sports clothing because of course to do sport helps! While he is planning all of that, the utopian is smoking of course. However, before going to bed he will light up his cigarette and he will say to himself: “Ok, this is my last one”! If I remember right, there is a book by an Italian writer Fabio Volo where the protagonist every night, before going to bed, writes on the wall of his bedroom the same sentence “Today, (day, month and year)….. I smoked my last cigarette”, but at the end of
the book he was not able to write anything more because there wasn’t any space left on the wall!

**The rewarder.** He is in the *preparation* stage as well. In this case, the smoker adopts a very selfish and childish strategy. Basically he rewards himself. The rewarder counts all money that he saved at the end of the week because he reduced the amount of cigarettes or didn’t buy any cigarettes at all. So then he spends the same amount on something he likes such a bag, clothes, or a special dinner. When I was trying to quit smoking, I adopted this strategy also, and I can say that it at least helps to reduce the number of cigarettes. However, one day, my dentist said to me “*Sonia, the best present you can do to yourself is quit smoking*”! He was completely right.

**The cheater.** I would put the cheater in the stage that Dr. Evans calls *action*, but with the slight difference that the cheater decides to give up smoking not because he actually decided himself, but to accomplish the desire of his support team. In fact, the cheater is so lucky to have the support team that is planning for him to quit smoking. Of course the cheater loves his family so he is not able to say what he really would like to say: for instance a big, fat “*NO*”. To the contrary, the cheater says, “*Yes, of course honey I love you and I’ll quit smoking*”. On the other hand, the poor cheater is a nicotine addict. Because he is ashamed to confess to his beloved that he is not able to keep a promise, he fights between the desire to accomplish the wishes of his support team and his nicotine addiction. On purpose, he hides packs of cigarettes in places where he knows he can sometimes sneak to smoke. Once, I was really impressed when on the street I saw a woman that, before lighting up her cigarette, put on some leather gloves that to avoid keeping the cigarette smell on her hands. The worst periods for the cheater are weekends and holidays because on these occasions he must spend most of the time with his support team. To avoid being detected, he makes up a lot of excuses to sneak out of the house and find a safe place where he can hide and smoke. The cheater uses chewing gum, brushes his teeth very often, and of course he uses a lot of perfume even though he hates it! Nevertheless, I have a request for the cheater: “Dear cheater, please try to invest your effort in something else. Don’t sneak out, but stay home and spend time with your kids, eat an ice cream or listen to music…..try to enjoy yourself without smoking”! Also, I want to tell you the reason that made my friend’s mother quit smoking. One day, after she had smoked a cigarette, she tried to kiss her little son, but he stopped her and said to her: “*No Mom, I don’t want to kiss you because you smell bad*”!
The desperate. Well, I would say that this is the last stage of the action of quitting smoking. The desperate has been through the previous stages and tried several of those strategies, but he failed miserably. For this reason he is desperate! On the other hand, he is more motivated in his effort to quit smoking. Consequently, he tries different products that he can find on the market. Or he buys medical solutions. For instance, he starts to chew chewing gum with nicotine, or worse, he buys the new electric cigarettes. I remember, some years ago, my youngest sister bought an electric cigarette with the intention of quit smoking. Thinking that that was a very smart idea, also my other young siblings followed her example. When I found out, I thought “What a waste of money”! First of all, the electric cigarette is very expensive. Secondly, it doesn’t help to fight the nicotine addiction that is the main problem for the smoker. If it is not used properly and with moderation, it can make the nicotine dependence worse. As a result, unfortunately my siblings didn’t quit smoking at all. Another technique is acupuncture. Also there are medical remedies. However, these last ones are awful because taking this medication, the smoker consumes already a big quantity of nicotine; consequently, when he tries to smoke a cigarette his body can’t afford to take more nicotine. I had also tried this technique. It was terrible and I couldn’t afford more than one dose, and of course it didn’t work with me. Finally, there are very rich and more sophisticated people that try the hypnosis, but to be honest I don’t know any of them, maybe because I’m neither rich nor sophisticated.

It looks like there are different strategies that the prospective former smoker can adopt to fight his addiction. I would definitely recommend that smoker request the support of his relatives and reward himself. First of all, because to try doesn’t hurt, at least not as much than to keep smoking. Secondly, these strategies help to reduce the amount of cigarettes smoked daily, and that helps to reduce the nicotine addiction. Finally, to make a little effort to quit smoking not only helps to increase our self-esteem, but also the sensation of frustration and unhappiness of being the slave of a cigarette. In addition to that, what you really need to conclude your journey successfully is the right motivation and a great force of will. At that moment, you realize that actually it’s possible to give up this addiction and move on with a healthy, happy life!

Dedicated to my grandmother: Mrs. Stella Aliberti

Written by: Sonia Landi

ESOL Level 8 Writing