

# Student News



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## Born in Boston, Raised by the World *by Ralph D'Amico*



*Approach welcomes its newest member to the team. Ralph is an ESL and TOEFL teacher who taught in Korea for more than three years.*

Seven years ago I'd never left the United States. Never even really thought about going anywhere until my best friend went to Bolivia to play soccer. Why leave America? We have everything here. There are mountains, rivers, beaches, forests, plains, islands, tropical places, cold places, warm places, hot places, and, at that time I could go to Mexico and Canada without a passport. Why leave?

Well, as it turns out, there is a whole world out there. Outside of America there are other mountains, rivers, beaches, cultures, food, religions and customs. Who would have thought?

When you grow up here, people, most of whom have never left America, tell you that America is the greatest place to live; it's a melting pot of people, religions, food and cultures from all around the world. Therefore, it's the greatest country in the world. As an American we are taught this in school, at least in my school, we learn about how America rescued Europe in WWII and helped the world economy recover. We learn about US History from an American perspective. We learn very little about the outside world with the exceptions of wars that we fought in and/or against foreign countries.

*Continued on page 3...*



## Korean Culture *by Ryan Park*

"What do you have in your country?"

I suddenly remembered that my Turkish friend asked me that question. There's nothing came up in my mind at that time but IT technology, semiconductors and ship company. So I answered that my country is famous for IT, semiconductors and ship company. But that wasn't what he meant. He said, "Japan has wealth and specific culture and China has great population and long history. But I don't think Korea has good culture or something special." I wanted to kick his butt but it was not his fault. It was our fault to make them think like that. It is true that population of China and Japan is much more than Korea, but I guess it cannot be the reason why we couldn't let them know about our culture and country as much as those countries did.

I read an article from website which was about a bow artisan who has been making Korean traditional bows for over 30 years. According to that article and Korean history, the Korean traditional bow has been unique weapon in Asia for thousands years. And it could shoot further than any other bows and was stronger than any others. For that reason, China always tried to steal the know-how to make the bow but they finally failed to get it.

The thing made me surprised was that his work was started from his great, great, grandfather...so it's been 300 years since his family started to make the bows. It's honorable and glory for him that he makes the bows following his family's work even though he didn't want it at the first time. He says that a bow costs only 3 rice bags which used to go for same as it was in the past although it has passed hundreds of years. So making bows cannot be a job for people until you get assigned as an artisan. So people who started to learn making the bows usually give it up within 6 months, he said.

This is the reality we are in. I think that the government should solve this kind of problem before we open our cultural market to other country. How can we tell our culture to others without keeping our own cultural thing. So I guess we should protect and support those people who stick to preserve our traditional things to continue our culture in any other ways. That is how we can continue our history and tell our descendants who we are, because there's no country without their history.



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Writing Contest Winners: **What was the Luckiest Moment of Your Life?**



**1st place by Yasushi Iwamoto**

Level: WR 400

The luckiest moment has not arrived. This is my answer for this question. You may be saying, "What are you talking about?" I am not mentally challenged or anything. I am just tired of retracing every single event that has happened in my life and choosing one. In fact, most of them turned out to be next to nothing. The luckiest may be when I find this essay awarded in this writing contest. I don't know. This may sound like the most straightforward essay in the history of the contest, but it would definitely be the moment to the rest of my recollection if this really happened.

From the beginning, I did not intend to write my essay in this way. As a matter of fact, I was struggling for a few days to recall any past event in my life after this topic was announced. All things considered, however, I was convinced that they were not outstanding enough to come out in this contest. After giving up retracing the

past, I also tried making up a complete fiction on this subject matter, but unfortunately it turned out that I am not cut out for shenanigans either.

After a little while, it slowly dawned on me that there was another way that I can write an intriguing essay: "think outside the box." That is, you should think in a way that shows imagination and an ability to solve difficult problems in new or unusual ways. Some people may think it is a cliché. However, when I get extremely stuck with work, I am inclined to get out of predicaments by instead taking the problem in a totally different approach. Therefore, this time I decided to focus on unidentified moment in the future instead of looking back upon the past, and that is why my answer is, "the moment has not arrived yet," as aforementioned.

My bet is that this idea could be either given the thumbs up or considered to be weird as hell. Be that as it may, I will be hoping that this essay somehow brings me some luck.



**2nd place Ashraf Adam-Eldien**

Level: WR 300

Yes, for a moment I imagine, I have been the luckiest person in the whole wide world. The luckiest moment, could vary greatly among the many different kinds of people. Luck looms over every aspect of our lives. The luckiest moment is working hard, being prepared for opportunities, and being in the right place at the right time. It also requires the ability to recognize chance events when they strike. Luck you can control, but chance events you cannot. I will take you along with me to the day when I was born, through what I would consider to be my luckiest moment, so you can receive the proper vision of it.

My luckiest moment happened on the first day of my life, when my parents went on a one-day fishing trip in a tiny boat to Toti Island, which is about one hundred miles away from the city. They spent a wonderful day, full of fun and happiness. While my father was fishing, my mother who was seven months pregnant unexpectedly started to have pain. Under these incredible circumstances and emotional distance from everyone around her, she gave birth.

It was a miracle I stayed alive, my father in a panic, washed me, a new born baby, in a tiny boat, in the middle of the coal seawater. It took hours before we could get back to the city and enter the hospital. When finally we arrived at the hospital, I was already stiff from the cold and exposure. My eyes were almost dark blue. I was gasping for breath. My mom wouldn't stop crying, she thought I had died, and gone to heaven.

When we were in the hospital, that's when our trauma began. The pediatrician did a spinal tap, administered antibiotics, then he told my mother that her baby had some type of infection. He didn't know what they were about to face, they were going to move me to I.C.U.

Then the tests were done. It was never determined exactly, but it

was theorized that a sudden shift in the thermidine (the temperature layer between the warm and cold levels) had resulted in flashing methane "slush," a writhing mass of white foamy water. I don't know how long I had been on the boat, I was sure I was dead, even if the weather didn't kill me, I felt it probably would.

After a very hard time for the whole family waiting in front of the I.C.U., the doctor came out with some tears on his cheeks and a beautiful smile at the same time. Then he said that he was very happy for the baby, no words can express the gratitude he felt to God! It was beyond a gift. Then he told my parents that if they had been late by even a second, or if he didn't resuscitate me and hit the right moment, I would have died.

My parents were truly amazed! They were there from the beginning to the end, from the tiny boat to the I.C.U. They drove like crazy, with the hope of crossing the finish line with me, listening to their intuition and maintaining positive expectations to the last moment. That was the first time my family realized that I was a person protected with a special kind of lucky umbrella.

To sum up, people always seem to miss lucky moments sitting right in front of them: whether it is a loving family, the love of their life, or even the most beautiful smile or the sunrise or sunset. The luckiest moment is all down to how you look at life. Go forward with a big smile, recognizing the opportunities, expecting the best and it will happen. A realistic and optimistic view of life coupled with an energetic pursuit of your key objective always produces lucky moments.





### 3<sup>rd</sup> place Hyun Sook Youn

Level: WR 300

There are many wonderful blessings in my life. I consider myself to be lucky in a number of ways. I have sound health, I have loving parents, and I have wonderful friends. Most importantly, God has given me the gift of my two beautiful and healthy children.

First of all, my children were born with perfect bodies without any permanent physical or mental conditions. This is the luckiest thing for me. Frequently, I see people walking around with a handicapped child. In my case, I think, God gave me healthy children. So, I am lucky and happy.

Also, second of all, my beautiful children have grown without a big accident. We heard in our neighborhood, children get hurt by cars, trains, or motorcycles. But it hasn't happened to my children. This is thanks to God and the luckiest thing.

Third, my two beautiful and healthy children have good minds. Therefore, they always behave. However, my children like to help poor fellows and have respect for elderly people. Also, this act of helping follows in my country's tradition. But I think I am proud of

my good children's minds.

To conclude, one of the luckiest moments is that God has given me the gift of my wonderful girl and boy. Since I have been having a healthy family, I considered God to be great. Also I am lucky and happy.

### Love Poem *By Jullyen Matos*

*If I could have just one wish,  
I would wish to wake up everyday  
to the sound of your breath on my neck,  
the warmth of your lips on my neck  
the touch of your fingers on my skin,  
and the feel of your heart beating with mine  
Having that I could never find that feeling.*

## Born in Boston, Raised by the World *by Ralph D'Amico*

*...continued from page 1*

So in 2001 I left America for the first time. I went to Italy and lived in Florence for a semester. I learned a lot about the world from my time there. It turns out that not everyone envies America. Not everyone around the world thinks that America is the greatest place on earth. In fact, people didn't seem to think much about America at all. Italians are happy with the way they live. I learned that... maybe America is the greatest place for Americans and Italy is the greatest place for Italians.

I returned to New York just in time to be there for September 11. Luckily I was at school and not work or I would've been in World Trade Center plaza. After the horrible events of 9/11 the world attitude changed towards the US, for a brief moment the world felt for America and wanted to help. We attacked Afghanistan later that year and I decided to return to Italy.

Returning to Florence was a little bit different the second time around. I was very comfortable in the city. I enjoyed myself and had a chance to travel a bit; I went to Spain, France, Holland, and Switzerland. It was amazing to me to see how different life was in each place; how distinctly different the cultures are, and of course, how diverse the food was (for



anyone that knows me, they know I love to eat).

The next year I had to return to New York to finish school, but I soon returned to Rome. I took an internship with the US State Department and got to work at the embassy. It was a great learning experience for me and I spent the last month traveling throughout northern and eastern Europe. It was great to meet different people and see these amazing sites; most people from my hometown (with the exception of Colleen), which is just north of Boston, haven't even heard of many of the places I traveled to and would hardly consider traveling there.

After my summer in Europe I returned to New York and took a job with a law firm. It was boring and tedious and I quit after 3 months; it was not for me. I went to Korea where I've been living and working for since 2004. I enjoyed my time there and had the opportunity to teach all age levels from kindergarten to adult. I came back to my hometown after 7 years, 4 continents and 30 some-odd countries to find everything pretty much the same. I somehow found Approach and it has helped to open my eyes about the city; I'm learning every day that there are people from all over the world living right here in Boston.

I enjoy traveling as much as I enjoy anything, but... I'm getting older and it has been tough for my family to have me so far away... so I'm back home now... but thanks to all of you I'm able to enjoy myself and continue to learn new languages and about new places in the world.

## Staff Recommendations ←



### *Culture Shock Treatment*

by Corinna Gilson

Being in a new city is hard, let alone in a new country. There are many little lessons that we all learn as we navigate through life and through the new places it takes us. We often learn these lessons as a result of culture shock. It helps us to adapt and coast a little smoother through life. This month's culture shock treatment is about cell phones and where and when NOT to use them. In America it is considered rude to answer one's cell phone in class, in quiet places like the computer lab or restaurants, or while someone is talking to you. It can be distracting and considered rude. Try to find a place to be alone and wait until the end of class to answer your phone. I hope your first session of culture shock therapy was helpful!



### *Student Reminder*

by Lois Wang

Dialogue journals, or the little blue books in your portfolio, are a great way to improve your writing in English. Just like you try to build fluency without worrying about mistakes in conversation class, dialogue journals help you to feel more comfortable writing in English. Remember to be writing in your dialogue journal each week. You can bring it for a teacher to respond to during portfolio class. Starting in April, you will need to show your dialogue journal to complete WR 200, 300, and 400 and get promotions to the next level.



### *Did You Know?*

by Caroline Senkal

The Easter bunny originates from the ancient Anglo-Saxon carnival. The ancient Anglo-Saxons celebrated the return of spring with a carnival commemorating their goddess of offspring and of springtime, Eostre. The word carnival possibly originated from the Latin 'carne vale' meaning "flesh, farewell" or "meat, farewell." The offerings were rabbits and colored eggs, bidding an end to winter.

As it happened, the pagan festival of Eostre occurred at the same time of year as the Christian observance of the Resurrection of Christ and it didn't take the Christian missionaries long to convert the Anglo-Saxons when they encountered them in the 2nd century. The offering of rabbits and eggs eventually (in the 8th century, it is thought) became the [Easter bunny](#) and Easter eggs.

For more fun facts go to <http://www.didyounow.cd/index.html>



### *Blacklisted Phrases*

by Colleen Foley

#### **"No offense, but..."**

By now, you might have heard native speakers premise some particularly harsh observations with this disclaimer. For example, "No offense, but your clothes make you look fat and your haircut is horrifying." The listener always knows to brace themselves when they hear these three infamous words. The irony is 9 out of 10 times, the listener is bound to get offended! Many years ago I took this phrase out of my personal circulation of speech and I encourage native and non-native speakers alike to do the same.



### *Classic Movie Review*

by Brian Smith

#### **Charade (1963)**

*Starring: Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Walter Matthau, James Coburn, George Kennedy*

In this beautifully filmed movie set mostly in Paris, the soon-to-be-divorced but now suddenly-widowed Regina Lampert (Hepburn) becomes a suspect in her husband's murder. Soon she is followed and threatened by three of her husband's former associates who think she has hidden the fortune that they had stolen (with her husband) from the US government years before. CIA agent Hamilton Bartholemew (Matthau) assures her that he is on her side and advises her from afar. Enter the ever-present Peter Joshua (Grant) who is there to help her - or is he? Though not directed by Alfred Hitchcock, this romantic-comedy/thriller, full of suspense and humor, is very Hitchcockesque. Most highly recommended.



### *A Brief Word About Pronunciation*

by Michael Hnatko

I have come to the conclusion that some students are lazy. What I'm talking about is the final "s" in the regular plural and the final "s" in the 3rd person singular simple present. In pronunciation class I have noticed that some students can say it but don't. Maybe they think nobody will notice or it is so small it doesn't matter. Students who have the most trouble are those whose languages don't have a plural like Korean and Thai. But, many other students are guilty. The plural in English is so easy. There are only a few exceptions. You all should be glad you don't have to learn Arabic where nearly every word has a different way to make the plural. So, don't be lazy. Say the "s"!!

## Staff Recommendations



### **Internet Advice** by Sierra Kenney

"Do you have a Facebook account? You don't know what it is? What rock are you living under?!" It's about time everyone gets a Facebook account! It's like the new Myspace, but this social networking site is the latest and the greatest! Facebook was launched in 2004 by a Harvard University student and has over 64 million users worldwide. Even my 18-year-old soon-to-be-cousin-in-law in Turkey has an account! There are hundreds, maybe thousands of applications, with the nonsensical purpose of throwing sheep or poking friends, but I have used it to make contact with old school friends and share pictures with large groups. So join Facebook and send me a friend invite! You'll find most of the teachers, staff and many students are already members. Let's be Facebook friends!



### **F-1 Student Reminder** by Tammie Key

What should I do if my passport expires? Students should always have a valid passport. In the event that your passport expires, you will not be out-of-status. It can be renewed through the mail with your embassy/consulate in the US. Please contact your respective embassies/consulates for specific information. The process will usually take 4-6 weeks, so please do not wait until the last moment to begin the renewal procedure.



### **Studying Tips** by Eliot Friesen

Fifty years ago, English students had a very different experience than yours at Approach. For instance, they spent a great deal of time memorizing and repeating dialogues from textbooks, following the popular assumption of the day that second language learning was largely a process of rote memorization. It was discovered, however, that this approach did little to produce truly "fluent" language learners. As a result, students spend a lot more time actually using language today—writing, conversing with teachers and classmates, etc. This change reflects a large body of research showing that "rule-based" learning must be complemented with actual communication practice for learning to happen efficiently and effectively. Therefore, in order to maximize your learning experience at Approach, take advantage of every opportunity available to you to put your skills to use. You may not even be aware of the significant impact this has on your improvement over time.



### **Weird Movie of the Month** by Chris Bishop

#### **Mystery Science Theater 3000 Series**

This month, rather than one awful movie, I'm advocating a large collection of awful movies! The Mystery Science Theater 3000 series (MST3k for short) ran for over 11 years on a series of different television networks. In it, one guy and his two robot buddies must endure a string of the worst movies ever made. They only survive by laughing at these terrible movies. To you, that means it's an awful movie, with three silhouettes in the front row making fun of it. I recommend starting with "Agent for H.A.R.M.," a cheap James Bond knockoff.



### **Common Mistake** by Luciana Sarra

Who's vs. whose: This is one of those cases where it is important to remember that possessive pronouns never take apostrophes, even though possessive nouns do. "Who's" always and forever means only "who is," as in "Who's that guy with the droopy mustache?" or "who has," as in "Who's been eating my porridge?" "Whose" is the possessive form of "who" and is used as follows: "Whose dirty socks are these on the breakfast table?" :)

Extracted from: <http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/who's.html>



### **Tech Tip** by Nick Jacobson

Have you ever been in a sports bar, electronics store, or the airport and been annoyed by the constant noise and distraction of TVs. There is now a solution. The TV-B-Gone takes slightly more than a minute to emit more than 200 popular shutdown codes, like trying every possible combination to open a safe. The result is that you can enjoy peace and quiet wherever you are (or you can watch the confused expressions on people's faces when every TV in the room goes black!)



*Katja enjoying herself during International Lunch*



*People are all smiles because of the free food at The Wonder Bar!*



*Another pitched chess battle during International Lunch.*



*The winners of the Ping Pong tournament show off their trophies at International Lunch.*



*These guys know where to sit! As close to the bar as possible!*

## So What Activities Happened in March?

On Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup>, Brian took a group of students on a free tour of the Massachusetts State House. Once inside, they had a special surprise: Governor Duvall Patrick! That's right! They happened upon the governor as he was walking through the hallways and Brian introduced our students to him. They held a brief conversation with Governor Patrick asking our students from what countries they hailed. It was a tremendous moment of serendipity. *(Note to students: If you do not know this word, look it up, it's a good one!)*

Because the first trip proved so popular, on Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup>, Nick gathered about a dozen students and went back to Mt. Wachusett. The conditions were relatively mild and many of our bravest tried skiing for the first time. Nick gave individual lessons to students as well. Doubtless, Nick and our students will return to the slopes again next year.

On Monday the 24<sup>th</sup>, Colleen and a number of students traveled over to the New England aquarium. The aquarium is a great place to get up close and personal with some of the ocean's most unique animals. You can see a dolphin show, march with the penguins, and gaze into the massive aquarium filled with all kinds of exotic fish. We're looking forward to next month as we have lots of new great activities planned. See you soon . . .



*Students making friends at The Wonder bar!*



*Beatriz posing during International Lunch.*



*Table games during International Lunch.*

## How to Save Gas *by Hsiu-Chia Hsu*



Like most of us if you have a car and use it every day, you must have already felt the pain at the pump. Gas prices are on the rise.



Here are some tips to help you save gas.

- Walk, bike, take the public transportation, or carpool when possible. Use the car only when necessary.
- Drive your car wisely. Plan trips well to avoid unnecessary driving
- Maintain your car properly. Taking good care of your car can make a big difference in your gas mile age.
- Try not to idle your engine for long periods of time. Turn off the engine if you anticipate a lengthy wait.
- Avoid carrying unneeded items in the trunk. Extra weight decreases gas mile age.
- Keep tires properly inflated and aligned.
- Easy on the accelerator. Try to accelerate slowly when starting the vehicle.
- Use the air conditioning only when necessary.

## April Birthdays

1	Hyun Sook Youn
1	Mika Kanazawa
4	Anna Rowinska
4	Valentina Krayanova
4	Marcia Camoico
5	Olivia Maas
7	Jose Machado
8	Thanikan Rattananodom
8	Cem Bakar
9	Myeong jung Seo
12	Thanatuch Ninkong
12	Anna Lena Stangier
15	Tais Brenner
17	Karla Ibanez
18	Mesut Olukcu
20	Elena Bousheva
20	Israel Montesinos
20	Lale Dogar
20	Feng-yu Liu
21	Jeong hwa Lee
23	Ronye Felix
26	Abdilda Kozhabay
30	Muhammed Goztok

## Dessert of the Month: Whisky Fudge Cake *by Chris Bishop*

Here's another dessert that uses the great flavor combination of chocolate and whiskey. This is my favorite birthday cake, it's a moist, heavy chocolate. You want to use a whiskey with a strong flavor, but cheap rotgut won't do; I usually use Johnny Walker Black Label. It works really well in a 12-cup Bundt cake pan, but just about any type of cake pan will do, just adjust the cooking time based on how thick or thin the cake is.

### Ingredients:

<i>cocoa powder</i>	<i>2 cups sugar</i>
<i>1 ¾ cups water</i>	<i>2 cups flour</i>
<i>2 ½ tsp. instant coffee crystals</i>	<i>1 tsp. baking soda</i>
<i>¼ cup whiskey</i>	<i>2 eggs, at room temperature</i>
<i>5 oz. Unsweetened chocolate</i>	<i>1 tsp. vanilla</i>
<i>2 sticks butter</i>	



*Fudge Cake*

Preheat the oven to 275°F. Grease the pan with butter and dust it lightly with the cocoa powder. Shake the powder around to coat the pan evenly, then knock any extra powder out with a tap on the pan.

Combine the water, instant coffee, and whiskey in a medium-size saucepan and simmer. Add the chocolate and butter, and stir over medium heat until the butter and chocolate have completely melted. Then, turn the heat off and add the sugar, stirring until well mixed. Set this aside and let it cool for a few minutes.

In a small bowl, mix the flour, baking soda, and salt; then slowly add this to the chocolate mixture while beating with a whisk. Beat in the eggs one at a time, add the vanilla, and mix until it's smooth. It will look far too thin to be cake batter, but don't worry. The secret is in the slow bake to dry out a lot of that moisture.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for about 1 hour and 25 minutes, until a toothpick pushed into the cake comes out clean.

This cake will stay good on the countertop for about 3 days, but don't put it into the fridge! If you refrigerate it, it turns into a rock!

Serve at room temperature or a little warm, with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.



## It's Tax Time by John C. Carleen, Esq

If you are a foreign national doing business in the United States, you are most likely required to file a tax return. You are considered engaged in business even if you are an employee working for wages. If you are a student or scholar visiting the United States on an F, J, M or Q visa, and are classified as a nonresident for U.S. Tax purposes, you are required to file a tax return each year you are present in the U. S. if you have any income subject to U. S. Income tax. Even if you have no income and no tax liability you are still required to file a form 8843 – Statement for Exempt Individuals. (All F1 students must either file a form 1040NR, 1040, or 8843. There are no exceptions.)

In order to file your return you first must determine whether you are a resident, a nonresident, or a dual status alien for tax purposes. Your tax status is independent of the Visa you may hold. Even though you are a citizen of another country, you may still be considered a U. S. resident for U. S. tax purposes. Your tax status determines whether you are required to file, which forms you file, and whether you are eligible for treaty benefits.

If you do not have a tax liability and fail to file your tax return, there are no penalties if no tax is due. However, the terms of your visa require you to comply with all laws of the United States, including the requirement to file an income tax return. You may be required to show proof that you filed if you wish to change your visa status, or obtain permanent residency, or regain entry into the United States once you depart. To ensure you comply with the immigration laws it is prudent to file a return each year you are in the United States.

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