

Making the Best of Your ESL Classes

Do you know how to organize your student life in order to get the most of your classes? By following these simple tips, you will find it easy to study and improve your English skills.

Well Being

Be well-rested – A good night of sleep helps you concentrate and succeed the next day.

Eat well – Hunger does not help learning. Bringing snacks to the classroom is okay if they are quiet and not messy.

Feel well – If you feel sick, you should not stay in class. Report to the front desk that you feel sick, and they will give you instructions on what to do.

Being Prepared for Class:

Have the material – Always have your own pen, pencil, eraser, notebook, dictionary, and textbooks with you.

Label your material – Write

your name on the first page of your books (notebook and textbooks).

Using cell phones – Turn off your cell phone before the class starts.

Keeping Track of Your Progress:

Mark the units you see in class – Circle the unit number in your book; write the date and the name of the teacher who taught it.

Take notes – Take notes of the things the teachers put on the board. This will help you understand more.

Correct the exercises done in class – Use a different color of pen to correct your own exercises in class.

Do homework – Take note of the homework the teacher asks you to do. Give your homework to the teacher when you are done. Write your name and date on it.

Taking tests – Teachers will let

you know when it is time to take a test. Do not wait too long to take it.

Taking Advantage of Approach's System:

Do self-study – You can study by yourself if you think a unit is easy enough to understand without having a class. If you study a unit by yourself and your exercises are all correct, the teachers will consider this unit done.

Use the computer lab – Approach has a computer laboratory with lots of English programs that will give you extra practice. The computer lab can be used every day, anytime. Ask the tutor to select an ESL program for you.

Request a tutor – Tutors are students at an advanced level who are here for the students who need some extra help. At Approach, tutors are available to help at no cost.

See More on Page 7...

IN THIS ISSUE

Making the Best of Your ESL Classes	1
Writing Contest	1
A Little Bit of History	2
Jokes and Poems of the Month	4
November Birthdays	4
October Activities Scrapbook	5
50 World's Best Rated Places	6
Monthly Special - December	6
Teachers' Tips of the Month	7

November 2006 Writing Contest

Topic: Something you are thankful for this year.

This month's writing contest was a little disappointing because of the lack of entries. This is a good chance for students to improve their writing and refine their grammar. In fact there has been a gradual decrease recently in entries, and we will try to promote the next contest more aggressively. The topic for this month was something you are thankful for this year. It was very hard to pick a winner so three essays were chosen as co-winners. All writers chose to write about people close to them but they were all different. Kawamura, Mayumi wrote about her boyfriend of many years and how he has helped and protected her. Baba, Hiroyuki wrote about his family - parents, brother and sister. Finally Lee, So-Hui wrote about her friends and how the quality of friends is more important than quantity.

Thank you to those who gave us essays, and we hope to generate more interest in the next months.

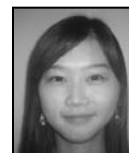
Writing Contest Participants



Mayumi Kawamura
WR 300



Hiroyuki Baba
WR 200



So-Hui Lee
WR 300



by Brian Smith

A Little Bit of History

It's a Wonderful Life

In the history of American motion pictures, there is probably no other holiday movie more revered than "It's a Wonderful Life" starring James Stewart, Donna Reed, and Lionel Barrymore. It was filmed in black and white in 1946 and has probably been seen by almost every Americans past the age of 10 at least once (I've seen it at least 50 times myself). Well, here's a summary of the film from CineBooks'



Motion Picture Guide. I modified it slightly for easier reading. After you read this, go out and rent the film and find out why Americans love it so much. Call it corny, call it old-fashioned romantic optimism, but we love it.

This wonderful fantasy begins in the heavens with angels talking about a small-town young man, George Bailey and how his problems have overwhelmed him to the point where he is contemplating suicide.

In flashback we see George's life from boyhood: how he saved his younger brother from drowning, going deaf in one ear as a result; how he worked at the local drugstore owned by Mr.



Gower, and met his childhood sweetheart Mary, who, into his deaf ear swears she will love him all her life.

As a child, the boy discovers that druggist Mr. Gower, who has been drinking due to a

family tragedy, has mistakenly mixed a prescription containing poison; the boy stops him from sending it to a patient. Angrily, before the boy can tell him of the mistake, Mr. Gower

boxes the boy's ears. When he realizes his error, Mr. Gower breaks down and begs the boy for forgiveness. By the time Stewart grows up, he can't wait to get out of tiny Bedford Falls and away from his father's building and loan association. He's set to go off to college, but his father dies and George must take over the building and loan to keep it away from old man Potter, the richest and meanest man in town. Everyone realizes his Uncle Billy is incapable of running the business, and George has to stay on to keep the business going. He uses his savings to send his younger brother Harry to college. George plans to leave town when Harry finishes school and comes back to run the building loan.



When his brother shows up with a new bride who says that Harry has a chance to work for his father-in-law, George once again stays in Bedford Falls keeping the building and loan afloat. Despondent, he visits Mary, who has remained true to her youthful vow and still loves George. He's surly and rude, and tries to leave, but then recognizes his love for her and soon they are wed. He plans to see at least some of the world on his honeymoon, but just as they are leaving, he notices a mob scene at the building and loan and arrives to find there's a run on the place. He uses the money he'd saved for the honeymoon to satisfy the depositors, throwing away his last chance to get away from Bedford Falls, even briefly.

The years pass and George and Mary renovate a dilapidated old house to live in and raise a family of four children, while George continues to keep the building and loan going, never

making much money but helping numerous people in the town buy homes. World War II comes and he is rejected due to his bad ear. His brother Harry, however, becomes a Navy pilot whose heroics save a U.S. troopship, winning the Congressional Medal of Honor. On Christmas Eve, Harry is to be decorated at the White House while his family and friends in Bedford Falls celebrate his fame, shown boldly on the front page of the Bedford Falls newspaper. Absent-minded Uncle Billy is in Potter's bank about to deposit \$8,000 in building and loan funds. When Potter enters, Uncle Billy can't help but gloat, tossing a copy of the newspaper into Potter's lap. Unfortunately, the \$8,000 is also in the newspaper. In his office, Potter finds the money, but says nothing, silently watching Uncle Billy as he frantically searches for the money.

Back at the building and loan, a bank examiner has arrived to go over the books. In his office, Uncle Billy tells George about the lost money, and the two go out, retracing Uncle Billy's steps in a vain attempt to find the cash. George begins to panic and becomes enraged at Uncle Billy, knowing the missing funds could mean a jail term. He goes to Potter and asks for a loan, but Potter only taunts him, then tells him he's going to call the authorities.

Thoroughly depressed, George wanders home where he shows uncharacteristic cruelty to his family, then leaves, heading off for Martini's saloon. It is there that he utters his prayer for help that is heard up above. He then heads for the river, convinced he'd be better off dead. Standing on the bridge over the river, George peers down at the icy waters below. Suddenly another body hurtles into the water, an eld-



derly gentleman, who begins to flounder and call for help. Stewart leaps into the water and yanks the old man to safety.

They later dry out in the bridgetender's house. There the man introduces himself as Clarence Oddbody, AS-2 (angel, second class). He tells a bemused George that he is his guardian angel and that he jumped in the river so George would save him instead of taking his own life. He adds that he still must earn his wings. With this news, the bridgetender falls out of his chair and runs outside, thinking he's dealing with lunatics. George thinks the old man is nuts, but is puzzled as to how he knows so much about his life. When Clarence points out that George's death wouldn't solve any problems George agrees, noting that it would be much better if he'd never been born. That inspires Clarence and, after checking with his heavenly employers, he grants George's wish.

George is suddenly able to hear out of his deaf ear and can't understand why his clothes are completely dry and he has no identification. Those changes are minor, however, compared to what he



is about to see as Clarence takes him on a journey showing him what the world would be like if George had never been born.

He finds that his brother died in a childhood accident because George wasn't there to save him; as a result, his brother never grew up to be a hero, saving all the lives of the men on the naval transport. In addition, he was not around to stop the druggist Gower from putting poison

in a prescription; as a result, a boy died and Gower went to prison. More incredible, the pastoral town of Bedford Falls is now the garish Babylon of Pottersville, filled with burlesque houses, peep shows, bucket-of-blood bars, and pawn shops, where drunks and prostitutes roam the streets.

George learns that after his father died, Uncle Billy tried to run the building and loan and went insane when it folded. His mother has had to subsist on a meager income running a boarding house. He finds her a weary, unhappy old woman who doesn't recognize him and orders him to leave. No one in town, it seems, knows who he is, including his old friends, Bert the cop, and Ernie the cab driver. They think he's crazy, but when Bert tries to arrest him, Clarence uses his magical powers to help George escape. George is now nearly terrified by the sights he sees, and feels he must find Mary and all will be back to normal. He finds her, an old maid librarian, but she doesn't recognize him either and she screams as he desperately begs her to help him. The screams attract Bert who comes after George with his gun drawn, prompting George to run wildly out of town, back to the river. Standing on the bridge, he begs for Clarence "to get me back, get me back! I want to live again." He begins to weep, begging to rejoin the living. A police car turns onto the bridge and Bert rushes forward, addressing George in a friendly manner. George prepares to fight him until he realizes that Bert knows him. He has again lost the ability to



hear in one ear, and now realizes that things are back to normal. Joyous he heads back to town, ecstatically greeting every familiar face and sight in Bedford Falls.

Back home, George bursts through the door of his house to blissfully embrace his children. In the parlor waits the dour bank examiner and the local sheriff. George greets them with a wide smile, saying: "Isn't it wonderful—I'm going to jail!" But George does not go to jail. Mary runs into the house

and into his arms. Behind her, flooding into his home, are all his depositors, friends, and relatives, brought there by Mary when she learned that her husband was in trouble. They begin to empty their pockets into a large basket, thousands of dollars, in gratitude for what George and his company have done in enriching their lives. A wire arrives in which old friend Sam Wainwright, now a millionaire manufacturer, states that he has made \$25,000 available to George if he needs it. The sheriff tears up his warrant and even the bank examiner contributes. Harry arrives and drinks are passed out. Harry toasts George: "To my big brother George, the richest man in town." All burst into "Old Lang Syne." Someone or something brushes the Christmas tree next to George, Mary and their children, and the bells on the branches tinkle. The youngest Bailey Zuzu, held in George's arms, says: "Look, daddy, teacher says that every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." George grins broadly and says: "That's right, that's right." He looks upward and gives a wink, saying: "Attaboy, Clarence."



Jokes

by Nadia

From www.hicards.com

Still Five Pounds

MacTavish's little boy was being questioned by the teacher during an arithmetic lesson. "If you had five pounds," said the teacher, "and I asked you for the loan of three pounds, how many would you have left?" "Five," said young MacTavish firmly. "Five?" the teacher said "How do you make it five?" "Well," replied young MacTavish "You can ask for a loan of three pounds, but that doesn't mean you will get it."



What a Birthday Cake



For his wife's birthday party, George ordered a cake with this inscription:

"You are not getting older. You are just getting better."

Asked how he wanted the message arranged, he said, "Just put 'You are not getting older' at the top and 'You are just getting better' at the bottom."

It wasn't until the maid served the cake that he discovered, that the cake read:

"YOU ARE NOT GETTING OLDER AT THE TOP. YOU ARE JUST GETTING BETTER AT THE BOTTOM."

Just Leave Him

Two ladies were shopping. When they started to discuss their home lives, one said, "Seems like all Alfred and I do anymore is fight. I've been so upset, I've lost 20 pounds."

"Why don't you just leave him then?" asked her friend.

"Oh! Not yet." the first replied, "I'd like to lose at least another fifteen pounds first."



Frosty the Snow Man

Poem of the Month

Frosty the snowman
was a jolly happy soul,
With a corncob pipe and a button nose
and two eyes made out of coal.
Frosty the snowman is a fairy tale, they say,
He was made of snow but the children
know how he came to life one day.
There must have been some magic in that
old silk hat they found.
For when they placed it on his head
he began to dance around.
O, Frosty the snowman
was alive as he could be,
And the children say he could laugh
and play just the same as you and me.
Thumpetty thump thump,
thumpety thump thump,
Look at Frosty go.
Thumpetty thump thump,
thumpety thump thump,
Over the hills of snow.

Frosty the snowman knew
the sun was hot that day,
So he said, "Let's run and
we'll have some fun

now before I melt away."
Down to the village,
with a broomstick in his hand,
Running here and there all
around the square saying,
Catch me if you can.
He led them down the streets of town
right to the traffic cop.
And he only paused a moment when
he heard him holler "Stop!"
For Frosty the snow man
had to hurry on his way,
But he waved goodbye saying,
"Don't you cry,
I'll be back again some day."
Thumpetty thump thump,
thumpety thump thump,
Look at Frosty go.
Thumpetty thump thump,
thumpety thump thump,
Over the hills of snow.



December Birthdays

- 1 Etsuko Ijima
- 1 Tulin Polatli
- 6 Woo Jin Hwang
- 8 Brenno Rosa
- 9 Mi Kyung Kim
- 12 Sans Aksoy
- 13 Ivania Soares
- 14 Sin Choi
- 16 Olgun Cetin
- 16 Aysun Atagan
- 22 Mi Hyang Hong
- 24 Mariya Prodanova
- 29 Taena Kim
- 30 Maria Viviane Santos

November Activities Scrapbook



Approach students took a tour around Boston and stopped in front of the State House.



Another stop along the tour through Boston was the Boston Common. Here students pose in front of a statue of Paul Revere.



Students get a free Thanksgiving Lunch at Café Belo thanks to Approach. Milena, Sylvia and Karoline express their gratitude.



Daisuke gives thanks for all the free food!

“The best part of the activities is to be together with students from all over the world.”



Francisco, Julio, Karen and Togo finished their dinner before everyone else. They are happily stuffed.



Tulin was not happy that we interrupted her meal. Sofia was all smiles.



Ronaldo is so stuffed he can't even smile!



Eric is shocked at the amount of food he was able to eat at our Thanksgiving Lunch.



by Luciana Sarra

BBC's 50 Places to Visit Before You Die

Chichén Itzá (Mexico), the ancient city whose name means "in the mouth at the Itzá's Well", was, in its time of grandeur (between 800 and 1200 A.D.), the centre of political, religious and military power in Yucatán, if not all of South-eastern Meso America. In its architecture one can observe a gradual change in style, starting with the Puuc style, also shared with Uxmal and other sites in the Peninsula and culminating with the so-called Mayan Toltec style, due to the architectural similarities with Tula, capital of the Ancient Toltecs, and with other sites in Central Mexico, such as Oaxaca and the Gulf Coast. Chichén Itzá was a large city with a great many inhabitants, distributed around the architectural nuclei which we observe as ruins, who had a relatively easy access to the water coming from the various caves and Cenotes of the region. Read more about it at www.internet-at-work.com/hos_mcgrane/chichen/chichen_index.html



Machu Picchu is a city located high in the Andes Mountains in modern Peru. It lies 43 miles northwest of Cuzco at the top of a ridge, hiding it from the Urubamba gorge below. Machu Picchu (which means "manly peak") was most likely a royal estate and religious retreat. It was built between 1460 and 1470 AD by Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui, an Incan ruler. The city has an altitude of 8,000 feet, and is high above the Urubamba River canyon cloud forest, so it likely did not have any administrative, military or commercial use. After Pachacuti's death, Machu Picchu became the property of his allus, or kinship group, which was responsible for its maintenance, administration, and any new construction.



Machu Picchu is comprised of approximately 200 buildings, most being residences, although there are temples, storage structures and other public buildings. It has polygonal masonry, characteristic of the late Inca period. (http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/prehistory/latinamerica/south/sites/machu_picchu.html)



Niagara Falls is a set of massive waterfalls located on the Niagara River in eastern North America, on the border between the United States and Canada. Niagara Falls (French: les Chutes du Niagara) comprises three separate waterfalls: the Horseshoe Falls (sometimes called the Canadian Falls), the American Falls, and the smaller, adjacent Bridal Veil Falls. While not exceptionally high, Niagara Falls is very wide. With more than 6 million cubic feet (168,000 m³) of water falling over the crestline every minute^[1] in high flow, and almost 4 million cubic feet (110,000 m³) on average, it is the most powerful waterfall in North America. The American Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, and a Maid of the Mist boat. Geographically, Niagara Falls is located about twenty minutes away from the U.S. city of Buffalo and about an hour and a half (90 minutes) away from the Canadian city of Toronto. Niagara Falls is renowned for its beauty, and is both a valuable source of hydroelectric power and a challenging project for environmental preservation.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niagara_Falls)

Monthly Special - December

by Carl Phillips



December is the twelfth and last month of the year in the Gregorian Calendar and one of seven Gregorian months with the length of 31 days.

In Latin, decem means "ten". December was also the tenth month in the Roman calendar until a monthless winter period was divided between January and February.

Events in December

- World AIDS Day (Dec 1)
- Naksi in Kazakhstan (Dec 5)
- Independence Day in Finland (Dec 6)
- Pearl Harbor Day in the US (Dec 7)
- Día de la Madre en Panamá, Mother's day in Panama. (Dec 8)
- Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, in Mexico (Dec 12)
- Saint Lucy (Dec 13)

- In the pagan wheel of the year the summer solstice is the time of Litha and the winter solstice is that of Yule.
- Christmas (December 25)
- Boxing Day (December 26)
- Kwanzaa (December 26 to January 1)
- Philippines - Rizal Day (December 30)
- New Year's Eve (Dec 31)

Trivia

- December always begins with the same day of the week as September.
- December's flower is the narcissus or holly.
- December's birthstones are turquoise, lapis lazuli, zircon, topaz (blue), or tanzanite.
- December in the Northern Hemisphere is the seasonal equivalent to June in the Southern Hemisphere and vice versa.

Other names

- In Albanian, December is called Dhjetor
- In Finnish, December is called joulukuu, meaning "month of Christmas", since about the 18th century. Earlier it was called talvikuu, meaning "month of winter".
- In Irish, December is called Mí na Nollaig, meaning "month of Christmas".
- In the old Japanese calendar, the month is called Shiwasu meaning "priests run"; it is named so because priests are busy making end of the year prayers and blessings.
- In Xhosa, December is known as ngeyomNga, meaning "month of the mimosa thorn tree".

<http://experts.about.com/e/d/december.htm>

Tips of the Month from Our Teachers



The "IF" Scenario...

by Alex Paulikovich

If you are late for class (more than 5 minutes), you can study at the computer lab or do self study. In study room you could do your homework, take any pending test or review the test you have already taken, or alternatively, you could explore a new topic from your book. Tell the tutors what you are doing, and they will mark your attendance accordingly.

If you fail a test, find out what the problem was. You can ask the tutors to help you work on the most difficult topics. When you are ready to retake the test, go for it!



If a teacher says you are ready to take a test, do not postpone it. If you do not take your test soon, you will have to review units and may be placed on academic probation. If you feel that by now you are ready for the test talk

to the academic advisor to see if you can take the test. You will have to prove that you have completed all the necessary requirements to be promoted to the next level.

If a you want to attend an Approach's activity, you have to write your name on the sign up sheet. Notice the name of the person coordinating the activity and talk directly to him/her for more information. If you do not let them know about your plans regarding this activity the activity may not happen or it may be too late for you to sign up for it.



Movie Review

by Brian Smith

The Paper Chase (1973) Starring: Timothy Bottoms, Lindsay Wagner, John Houseman

The challenges facing first year Harvard Law School student James Hart (Bottoms) seem overwhelming until he meets Mr. Kingsfield (Houseman) his Contract Law professor - and then things get worse. Kingsfield is cold and demanding, and Hart is not sure how he's going to pass the course. To complicate matters he meets and falls in love with Susan (Wagner), a young woman who is beautiful, charming, intelligent and, unknown to Hart, Kingsfield's daughter. If you're a student or just remember what it was like to be a student, you'll appreciate this movie. The characters in Hart's study group add an interesting dimension the film.



Activity Tips

by Andrew Haynes

Guarneri String Quartet

Very rarely, one hears a performance that reveals such exceptional musicianship that the memory never fades. Yet, such recollections are astonishingly commonplace when the performance is by the Guarneri String Quartet. Rhythmic vitality, precision of ensemble, perfectly matched tone, nuance, elegance, refinement, and depth of feeling flood you with a stream of unforgettable musical moments — each one convincing you more than the one before that the music could not be played otherwise.

Location: NEC's Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street

Time: 3:00 PM

Nearest T Station: Symphony

Crafts at the Castle

Crafts at the Castle - an exhibition and sale of handmade art to own by world-class artisans from around the country. Friday, December 1 (10 am - 8 pm), Saturday, December 2 (10 am - 6 pm) and Sunday, December 3 (10 am - 5 pm). Tickets are \$15.00 for 3-day Exhibition Pass, Senior Citizens \$12.00. Children under 12 are Free.

Crafts at the Castle benefits Family Service of Greater Boston programs for children and families at risk. For info call 617-523-6400 ext 5987, or visit www.fsgb.org.

Location: Hynes Convention Center, Exhibit Hall B

900 Boylston St, Boston, MA 02115

Nearest T Station: Green Line - Hynes/ICA Convention Center Station

Date: Every Sunday, Friday, Saturday from 12/1/2006 to 12/3/2006 10:00 AM-8:00 PM

Bicentennial Celebration

Built in 1806 The African Meeting House, a designated National Historic Landmark, is the oldest black church still standing in the U.S., the first African descent in Boston. Commemorate the history of this building where monumental events leading up to the decimation of slavery have taken place.

SPECIAL GUESTS SPEAKERS:

Mayor Thomas M. Menino, Deval Patrick (Governor elect) Rev. Dr. Peter Gomes, Richard Moe (National Trust for Historic Presevation)

FREE

Reservation 617.725.022 ext. 25

Location: Museum of African Meeting House, Tremont Temple, 88 Tremont Street, Downtown Boston

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/calendar/calendar.asp>

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