

SPRING VIEWS

Spring International Language Center

Littleton, Colorado

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Why Did We Come to the U.S.?

Higher Education, War, Political Disagreement, Escape from Imprisonment



Yongxing Fan, China

Because of my parents' work, my family decided to come to the US. I think this is a very important decision and also a very important challenge, such as language, environment, customs, diet, interpersonal relations, beliefs, and cultural differences.

Before coming to the US, I had just graduated from university. After 9 months of internship, I successfully passed the National Nurse Qualification Examination and found a satisfactory job. The U.S. is a new beginning. Every new thing is a new challenge for me, which has completely changed my life in the past 20 years.

I need to start afresh. I need to learn linguistics well first. I'm getting used to it. The biggest

change in coming to the U.S. is the change in mentality. When I first came here, I didn't dare to speak because of my language barrier, so I became very anxious. After a long time together, I felt that everyone was patient and friendly. I gradually became confident. The education model here is different from that in China. It is very relaxed and free, and there is no pressure. I like the education model here very much. I hope that in 2023, I can improve myself, learn English well, learn more about U.S. culture, travel, and make more friends.

Maibi Ramirez, Venezuela

In April 2019, I traveled 7 days by bus from Venezuela to Peru. I traveled alone because I needed work in another country. The economy in Venezuela had collapsed and it is the same today. When I traveled, I left friends and family behind. I lived in Peru for 3 years. I had many different jobs. I met many good and bad people. I met a girl who became my best friend. We lived together until she went to Spain. I visited many places in Peru. I never saw my family, but I always kept in touch with them. I worked every day and I always helped them however I could. My life changed completely, and I was living alone. Many times I thought about returning to my old life in Venezuela. I missed the food, my siblings, my parents, my city, and my country, but I continued to work in Peru. Fortunately, I met someone who is now my husband, and my life changed again. We got engaged in Peru, we got married in Las Vegas, and I hope to visit my family soon.

Oksana Shevchenko, Ukraine

I was living in the capital of Ukraine, Kiev, with my family. We lived in the historical center of the city and really enjoyed our life. But in February 2022, Russia attacked Ukraine and the war began. My family had to go through many trials to survive and get out of Ukraine. We spent several months in Slovakia and then came to the United States, so my new life began.

I enjoy every day in Denver. I like the openness and kindness of American people. From the first day we felt their care and support. I have already made many friends in Colorado. Denver is a very beautiful city with many places to spend time with my family. I also really like the climate and nature here. We have already gone to the mountains and it was very beautiful there. Of course, I miss Ukraine, but in Colorado I feel at home.



Hong Huang, China

When I first traveled to the United States, I was attracted by the unique cities of Colorado. The people here are very friendly, and the climate has four distinct seasons. Especially the autumn here is beautiful, and in winter it is simply a world of fairy tales. In 2019, I came with my daughter from China to Denver, where she is studying. I was so happy that I could finally come here. But after living here, it is completely different from what I imagined. Language, travel, and life all have to be solved by myself. Fortunately, I have my daughter by my side, as well as friends and neighbors who have helped us a lot.

It's all getting better now. My daughter is doing well in her studies. We often go to sports, meet up with friends, and do volunteer work at a homeless home. My current task is to learn English well, and I plan to drive around the United States with my husband next year to see the outside world!

Martha Kiza, Malawi

My name is Martha Kiza. I am 20 years old, and I was born in Congo and raised in Malawi. I live with my parents and sisters and brothers. My parents decided to come to the U.S. because of the problems we encountered in our life in 2019. It was the year that I had to go to university. I didn't go because my parents had no money to take me to the university. On September 15, 2020, we traveled to come to the U.S. For now, my parents have jobs and my brother and sister are going to school. We eat well, we sleep well, we eat the food that we want, and we wear clothes that we feel to wear. I thank God for bringing us to the U.S., to give us the ability to work and get what we want in this life, because in the past my life was very difficult.

Saud Al-Marri, Saudi Arabia

I am Saud Al-Marri, born in Saudi Arabia. I lived my life in Saudi Arabia and was raised there. I studied in Saudi Arabia and finished my studies in Saudi Arabia. It is an enjoyable memory. Then I thought that I would study abroad and achieve my ambition to master the English language and complete the university and specialize in what I want. The specialty that I hope to succeed in is cybersecurity.

Giang Dang, Vietnam

An important turning point in my life was the student visa interview. I got my visa and came to study in the U.S. I'm studying English. After finishing the English program, I will apply to study Business Administration major, because my parents are running a business accommodation service, you know. They have two hotels in Vietnam. When I graduate from my major, I will go back to my home. I want to take care of my parents, because I am the only child in my family. I will take over, develop and improve my parent's business.

Asmaa Ettachfini, Morocco

In August 2019 I traveled to the USA with my family. I think this is a very important decision and also a very important challenge. I left my husband in Morocco because he had a lot of work. I found many problems, but I managed to confront them. When I got to work, I relaxed because I met many friends and I began to speak English fluently. That changed my life.

I like the weather in Colorado – it is very snowy. It's new for me: I am accustomed in my country to the sea atmosphere. It's hard, but it changed my life, because I like skiing. Sometimes I miss my country, food, my house, my city. Life, it's hard. I must work and study for getting a good life.

Andrei Gritskevich, Siberia

In 2018, when I lived in Siberia, I was against the government of that country. I participated in rallies against the state. They put me in jail, and when they let me out for a couple of days I had to leave forever. On March 8, 2018, my journey began. I took a plane to Moscow. After that, I flew 12 hours to Cuba. In Cuba, I was detained by the police. After that, I flew to Mexico. There I was again detained by the police. They kept me for 18 hours. After that, I flew to Tijuana. There the police detained me for 30 hours. After that I went to the U.S. border and asked for political asylum. They put me in jail. I spent 6 months in prison. Finally, I won in immigration court and got out. So, I started a new life in America.

Nancy Mantilla, Colombia

Over the years I have had many changes in my life, but one that has marked my life is having the opportunity to live in Saudi Arabia. There I enjoyed time with my family and I adapted easily to this culture. In addition, I met very special and wonderful people who gave me their friendship and a very special love that still continues. On the other hand, I had the opportunity to meet other people from other cultures and enjoy this stage of my life a lot.

My family and I always remember this time with great gratitude and we came to the conclusion that as long as you are in a good state of mind and open your heart to meet valuable people and receive everything they offer you will feel happier in your life. I have been a very lucky person since God has given me many positive changes in my life. I have always been with my husband and my daughters who have given me their love and who have also marked my life.

I am lucky that life has rewarded me with all these spectacular things thanks to my parents and siblings who have always given me unconditional love and support. My life has been wonderful to this day and I know that great

What advice would you give to a friend who wants to study in the U.S.?

Studying in the USA is a great opportunity and a privilege before having an important journey in our school life. Studying in the USA requires a lot of planning to acquire the necessary information. Advice varies depending on several factors, for example, the requirements for obtaining a U.S. visa depend on the length of your stay or your country of origin. First, you should:

-Research cities, schools, and universities: You need to know the city's education system, cost of living, campus life, location, available programs, and tuition. If financing your education is a major concern, look for universities that offer scholarships to international students. Some people prefer larger cities while others feel more comfortable in smaller ones. Each place has its own atmosphere, and you will have very different experiences depending on where you go.

-Be financially prepared: Student fees, visa fees, and housing (renting an apartment or living with a host family). Some students prefer to live with a host family to improve their English skills. If you are looking for short-term study opportunities in the U.S., check to see if your university offers exchange programs. If you are accepted, you can travel to the United States and live with a host family to fully immerse yourself in all aspects of the culture. These programs are different from the degree programs at American universities and can be an important step toward future study in the U.S. if that is your goal.

-Funding: If personal or family funds are not enough to cover the bill, consider the following sources of funding:

- Student loans provided by your institution
- Federal government programs
- International scholarships
- Scholarships to specific universities
- Local organizations in your community

- School and University Visa Application: After you have been accepted to the university, you will need to begin the process of obtaining a visa from the U.S. Department of State, which can sometimes be complex. You should therefore do extensive research to understand the requirements you will face depending on your country.

-Purchase health insurance: It is important to purchase travel health insurance before visiting a country. In the case of study abroad in the United States, it is even essential. Health care in America is very expensive, and if you don't purchase insurance before you travel to the country, you could owe thousands of dollars in case of an emergency. Many universities offer their own discounted health plans for students. In fact, some require students to sign up for their plans if they do not have comparable coverage.

-Always check email: you should always check your email. From the minute you are accepted into an American university, your email becomes an important part of your life. So for the visa process it is important to check your email every time.

-Prepare yourself for the realities of the country and your city: culture shock, the reality of public transportation, the tipping culture, learning about holidays, etc. By preparing yourself before you leave, you will reduce the risk of unexpected problems during your stay.

- At university be punctual and prepare in advance for homework, exams, etc. If you are assigned to a group project, make sure you understand your role. Try not to skip classes even if you get sick - you'll need to catch up with your classmates.

-Use the library to your advantage for research, make friends by participating in various school activities. In other words, you should participate in sports, charities, or anything else that is related to your field of study. This will help you make friends and integrate the American culture. *by Niakale Camara from Canada, originally from Mali*



Can You Solve These Riddles from Level 5-6?

1. I'm knocked and knocked
And pushed and stopped!
They all run around
Each like a GAZELLE...
But I only fear BRAZIL!
What am I?
Susan

2. I have different names
I involve the world
I'm deep and mysterious
You can't live without me
There is a lot of life in me
However you can also die if you're in me
What am I?
Camila

3. I cannot speak,
I cannot touch,
But I am always with you,
Give me some light,
Then you will never be alone.
What am I?
Yufan

4. I have a pair of big eyes;
My tail is very short;
My wings are transparent;
I fly around to catch mosquitoes to eat.
What am I?
Allen

Here Come More Riddles...

5. I am as warm as they come.
 I never forget a face or a name, keeping all of the memories.
 It seems I can hold love for the whole world.
 I come in one of the smallest packages,
 But I am one of the biggest you will ever meet.
Susan

6. Whenever you are, you can enjoy me.
 Wherever you are, I can be a good friend.
 We can go together far away to touch the sky,
 We can go together to meet someone else.
 If you only turn sheet by sheet,
 Little by little paying attention to every single step
 We can fly together,
 We can laugh together,
 We can have so many adventures together.
 Day by day I can teach you something,
 Day by day I can be your companion.
 Do not forget to be nice to me
 Remember that we are friends.
 Do not forget that I also need some caring.
Noemi

7. I am yellow
 I get up early.
 People say I am king,
 but I do not have a kingdom.
 They say I am blond,
 but I do not have hair.
 I light up without being a lamp.
 Sometimes I burn up.
 In the evening I fall asleep.
 In the morning, I wake up again.
 Who Am I?
Silvio

**(Answers at bottom of page)*

Turning Points and Spring School History

In 1979, a small group of educators met to decide the name of their new intensive English as a Second Language Program. They wanted a name that would reflect the positive aspects of starting life in a new country. They chose **Spring**, a season of new beginnings, freshness, and growth. They set a goal of expert teaching of the language plus caring for the needs of students who were experiencing a critical turning point in their lives. They included airport greetings, assistance with housing, and immigration compliance, host families, American conversation partners, and guidance for college and university admission. Now here we are 43 years later and still helping students begin a new chapter in their lives.

Spring

*We are always starting over.
 We are always beginning again.
 Something within us or about
 us changes: it is time
 to be moving on.
 Change is seldom easy.
 A friendship a favorite spot,
 a familiar lifestyle slips away,
 and nothing is the same.
 May God grace all our turning
 points with patience
 and Peace.*

Miriam Therese Winter



Spring Views is published at the end of each term to give student writers a platform for their developing skills and a place to share their stories. c.shoemaker, editor



*Riddle Answers: 1. Soccer ball at World Cup, 2. the Ocean, 3. You guess, 4. Dragonfly, 5. Shirlaine, 6. A book, 7. the Sun