



## Students Write about Gifts Seen and Unseen

**The Gift of Generosity** *The Cookie Thief* by Valerie Cox teaches us several lessons. The story is about a woman and a man who are sitting next to each other in a waiting area. The woman had bought some cookies and put them in her bag. The man had an identical package of cookies on the table between them. She began eating his cookies thinking they were hers. He ate them too without comment or complaint. She, assuming he was stealing from her, began to boil inside. He broke the final cookie and graciously offered half to her. From this story we can learn the first lesson, don't judge people if you don't know them. The man whose cookies were stolen was very nice to the woman who stole from him. Second, be generous to others like the man was because that shows kindness. Finally, the writer demonstrates that when we are generous, we will be happier and more satisfied with our lives. It can also make people around you happy. The woman in the story thought he stole her cookies, but ironically she found out that she was actually taking his and therefore was the thief herself. It seems clear that the man in the story is the happier of the two. **Lien Meyer, Vietnamese American, level six**

**Level Four's Gifts:** A special gift is given by an extraordinary person who is important to you. Do you think every gift has a unique meaning? I received a special gift which is a playing-card that my best friend gave me. It is special because every card has our picture printed on it. When we were students at school, we always played cards together; however, now we live in different cities. Even though we live under the same sky with happy lives, we often miss each other. This gift represents our precious friendship, and I always remember that year when we first met each other. Clearly, the playing-card is the best gift I have ever received. **Mengxue Zhang, China**

Love is the best gift given to me that I cannot see, but I can feel it. It is a special gift that I can receive over and over again from my mother, husband and kids. My mother's love gives me the best inspiration and energy to move forward. My husband's love strengthens me when I feel down and it drives me to attain my goals. My kids love gives me the responsibility for the safety of their lives. **Usha Selvakumar, India**

The most beautiful gift ever given to me was my healthy birth. I am happy and have not had physical problems. The bond and support between the person who gave me this gift will remain no matter how much time passes and no matter where I live. She will not hesitate for a moment to stay by my side and warm me with the fire of love. And who gave me this most beautiful of gift of life? Do you know who she is? She is the mother...or, rather, my mother. **Thani Alghamdi, Saudi Arabia**

The best gift I have ever received is my marriage, I feel happy when I remember it yearly at our anniversary. This gift of marriage means a lot to me. It means love, compassion, and hope for our future. This gift strengthens us and makes us feel satisfied with each other. It adds a sweet memory to our lives and makes it enduring. **Omar Mohamad Shanta, Libya**

The best gift I ever received was at my high school graduation when I received very high grades. My father had promised to buy me a new laptop if I worked hard and was deserving, and I was! I woke up on Monday morning after graduation and found a car key beside my bed. I wondered what it was doing there. My father said, "It is for you." I couldn't understand what he was referring to, but when I looked out my window I saw my gift in the driveway and was so surprised because I was looking for a new laptop! This new car was the best gift I ever received. **Omar Ibrahim Abdu Aedh, Saudi Arabia**

### Level Two's Gifts:

The best gift that I received in my life is my daughter. God gave her to me because she is very special to me. She is my treasure and the best gift that God ever gave me. **Meylin Moreno De Sanchez, Nicaragua**

I have received many gifts in my life, but the best gift was my son's gift. On November 11, 2004, the day was my birthday. My relatives and friends visited me, and we had a big party. I received lots of gifts, like a scarf, shoes, and bags. One gift was special. That was a homemade card. The card was very beautiful. It had a painting and one short sentence: "I wish my dear mom is beautiful forever." That was my son's gift. Do you know that he was four years old? This was my best gift. **Qiongying Joanna Chen, China**

My best gift was a car from my father ten years ago, but I couldn't drive at the time. I learned how to drive. I didn't want my dad to be sad. The gift was special and the best because it was from my dad. **Aisha Alghamodi, Libya**

My best gift was an iPhone from my father when I studied at university. It was very special to get because I didn't tell him I needed a phone. I'm very thankful to him. **Feng-Hao Yang, Taiwan**

I remember a few years ago, my mother gave me a dog for my birthday. It was a black and white dog. Her name is Lulu. She is so cute! I was very surprised and happy. I said, "Thanks, mom!" My dog is very wise. When I get home, the dog runs fast to me and smiles. Sometimes, I finish my homework and then I play with my dog. Sometimes, my dog and I walk in the park. Usually, my dog and I clean my room. She's very happy. I like my dog because she is important to me. It's one gift my mother gave me. **Duy Le, Vietnam**

It was a wonderful day. It was four years ago. After I finished university, my husband gave a party for me in a hotel because of graduation. While I was eating dinner in a restaurant, my husband brought a gift for me: a gold and glass heart in a box. It was a very nice day, and I hope to graduate again from this program for English. **Reema Mohamed, Saudi Arabia**



The first snow: Jose (Eric) Uribe, Jose Nicolas, and Chun Mi Ju

## Conversation Groups Discuss Presents Big and Small

In their twice a month sessions, community Conversation Partners asked students questions about gift-giving. Cars and money were the most popular gifts to receive. In response to what gifts you cannot see that have been given to you by people in your life, the students listed these: hugs, kisses, love, life, kindness from others, and “the wind blowing at my back when I was riding.” Opinions about giving presents were definite “no’s” to re-gifting, or giving knick-knacks as gifts, and, from a Chinese student: “Never give an umbrella to someone because it will bring bad luck.”

The question of what they would like to give to other students in their classes brought this response: Books for English practice and, most importantly, a VACATION!

Here are some of their other responses as recorded by their American Partners:

**Omar:** Money for a car

**Saeed:** Toyota Land Cruiser

**Joanna:** a Homemade card from my son

**Colin:** A Toyota Yaris, given for free

**Norellis:** An engagement ring from my now husband. It was in a glass of water.

**Peng:** Money from my father to study here at Spring

**Aisha:** My brother gave me a car even though I couldn’t drive it.

**Reema:** For graduation from university, my husband gave me a beautiful large glass hear with my name on it and an inscription about graduation. He also gave me gold jewelry and flowers, but the heart was most special.

**Noura:** When my first child was born here in the USA, I was without all of my family, but when I saw my new baby and my husband, I knew I had family here and was happy.

### And Best Gifts They Have Given to Someone

**Noura:** I gave my little brother a receiver, so he could watch soccer live. He was so excited.

**Peng:** I gave a watch to my girlfriend.

**Norellis:** I gave clothes to everyone in my family in Venezuela.

**Paul:** I made trivets from special tiles and wood to give to family something I had made myself.

**Aisha:** When I was ten years old, I save my money and bought my mom a scarf. She still has it in a box.

**Saeed:** A falcon

**Joanna:** Two Hummel figurines to my best friend

**Omar:** Cell phones to the whole family

**Colin:** I had my wife kidnapped by her friends.



### Basic Level Writes

My favorite room is the living room. I relax in this room. There is a big TV. I like to watch with my family. There is a fireplace in the corner. There is a black coffee table on a red rug. There is a floor lamp between two grey couches. It’s comfortable. I love my living room.

**Mofida Rgibi, Libya**

My favorite room is the dining room. I like this room because I eat in this room. There’s a dining room table in the middle of the dining room. There’s a sugar bowl next to the creamer. There are pepper shakers on the dining room table. There’s a medium size vase on the hutch. I like to see those flowers. There are four small white chairs. There’s a chair in front of the hutch. It’s a very nice room, but I miss the dining room in my country! **Abdullah Alshamrani, Saudi Arabia**

I have a wonderful mother. Her name is Mody. She is 42 years old. She is a beautiful woman. She is slender and has long, black hair. She is tall. She always likes to read Arabic poetry. She also likes to cook. My mother is affectionate, elegant, and kind. I love my mother and I miss her. **Alaa Alqhatani, Saudi Arabia**

My favorite room is the bedroom. I like this room because it’s quiet and comfortable. There’s a bed between the dresser and the window. My bed is comfortable, but it’s small. There are a white pillow and black blanket on the bed. There’s a mirror next to the closet. My clothes are in the closet, and I like them. There’s a small RV next to a lamp on the night table in the corner. There are nice photos of my cousins on the wall. Outside the window, there are many trees and cars. I like my bedroom! **Tai Luong, Viet Nam**

# ***A Special Gift to All Our Readers from Level Five***

## ***What Am I? Poems***

(answers on the last page of Spring Views)

1. By Alejandra Cerda Corral (Mexico)

Blue and purple are my legs.  
Red and yellow are my arms.  
Other colors are inside.  
Am I a person? Tell me why...  
When it rains, I go outside.  
Who am I?

2. By Abdulelah Almuhanha (Saudi Arabia)

I speak all the languages  
Even though no one taught me.  
I do not exist,  
But I have been everywhere in the world.  
What am I?

3. By Arwa Alzahrani (Saudi Arabia)

You cannot see me.  
You cannot feel me.  
You cannot touch me.  
You cannot breathe me.  
You can find me among the stars.  
I fill the space.  
Life ends with me.  
What am I?

4. By Kanatip Isarakul (Thailand)

I help you in many ways.  
I wake you up in the morning.  
You will be satisfied with my babies.  
You use my feathers for cleaning your rooms.  
What am I?

5. By Cheng-Han Chuang (Taiwan)

Everyday many people need to use me at school, work, or home.  
I can find a lot of information and talk to your friend.  
If you use me a lot, my power will be lost fast.  
Finally, you start to charge me.  
What am I?

6. By Taqi Alshehab (Saudi Arabia)

You will find me on all beds.  
I protect you from the cold.  
I keep you warm.  
Wool is my material.  
What am I?

7. By Isabela Pimenta (Brazil)

They call me beauty  
And the symbol of love  
I am the passion of the garden of the heart  
That you can share with your beloved.

## Level Six Expresses Their Thoughts

### Saving Money

The proverb "Save your black dime for your black day" points to the importance of saving money. A countless amount of money is being spent all over the world, but not all of it is spent for the right reasons. Although it might seem obvious to some people how to save their money, others find it hard to make ends meet. To make it easier, education is the star solution, followed by setting a goal, then finally using a savings account.

Education is the solution for every problem. Finding the information needed to solve your spending issue is important. For instance, people who have some difficulties saving money could attend several courses that assist them in controlling their spending issue. As a result, gaining this knowledge is beneficial, and it can assure that they will get on the right track and avoid this challenging issue.

Setting a goal is also needed in order to save money. People think that they can save money without having a goal. However, it can be impossible to do so because as humans we need motivation! If every person had a goal in mind, saving would be much easier.

Another solution is to try to set aside an amount of your income in a savings account. This is absolutely an effective way. Undoubtedly, by doing that you will be assured that you would not have access to it whenever you want. In fact, savings accounts have proven their positive result for a long time, especially for those who struggle with the discipline of saving.

To sum up, saving is not easy, but it can be managed with different methods. Perhaps, if people followed these steps from the first time they earned money, the difficulties of saving money would not exist in the first place. **Noura Almuhanha, Saudi Arabia**

### Gone with the Wind

Movies affect people's lives because people can learn new things when they watch movies. For example, some movies teach people how to protect themselves. Many people love to watch old movies like "Gone with the Wind." Even though some disagree, everyone should see "Gone with the Wind."

The first reason why you must watch this movie is because it teaches a strong life lesson. It teaches that people must focus on their own lives. They should not think about what others have or what they are accomplishing. It shows us how a life can be destroyed, but by concentration on one's own life, warmth and happiness can be achieved. This is demonstrated in the movie through a relationship between two couples.

Another reason why everyone must see this movie is because people who are married need to be more sensitive to their spouse's emotions. This movie shows there is a problem in a family because the wife doesn't pay attention to her husband's feelings, but rather loves another person. She gives her emotion to her husband's friends. Nobody can help her to change, and it could be too late. This film shows that a woman must look out for herself.

Some people don't appreciate this movie because it was made long ago. However, old movies have inspired people for years. This movie shows a problem that existed many years ago and continues today. **Giti Mashhadiali, Iran**

### Unsafe Home Environments

We have heard many stories about children who have died because they lived in unsafe home environments. When children (especially under 5 years old) have been living in an unsafe environment they might have an accident, such as a broken bone, burn, or poisoning and so lose their life. These are called in-home accidents, and they result from wrong action of adults because they don't do what is necessary to protect their children. In fact, all parents should be concerned and follow some easy steps. Three ways we can help children are secure the exits, protect the cooking area, and lock the chemicals.

A great way to save the children is to secure the exits like windows, doors, and fire escapes because children don't understand it is dangerous to go to near an open window or door. Unlocked windows and doors can result in trauma to children's bones, internal organs, and brain. This brings suffering to both children and their parents.

Another idea is to protect the cooking area. This will help to create a safe environment in their home. If parents do this, they can prevent their children from being burned from hot water. Not only hot water but also surface of hot kitchen tools can burn children's skin and their muscles and bones.

It is also important to protect children by locking up chemicals. Children who are under 2 years old are curious about the home environment and they try to see everything, especially if they are beautifully colored things. Children become at risk of burning their gastrointestinal and respiratory organs because they have to put everything their mouths.

We can each be a small part of the solution for unsafe home environments. If parents take these steps they can prevent their children from home accidents and provide happiness for their family. Let's do this for our children and save their lives. **Ariunsanaa Miyensenge, Mongolia**

### Marriage, Yes!

Marriage is engraved in humankind's history. Throughout history people have been getting married to announce their love to the public and celebrate it with their families and close friends. It is an experience that leaves a stamp on the partners' lives, which is cherished forever. Although there are those who disagree, marriage is necessary in society.

One reason marriage is necessary is because it guarantees the rights for both partners. If something goes wrong in the partners' relationship, a documented marriage agreement will protect them both. Furthermore, it will reinforce the sense of responsibility that comes with the commitment of marriage. This makes life changing decisions a shared process.

Another reason is the wonderful experience that comes with marriage. The wedding itself is a celebration and declaration of love. This celebration brings both the partners and their families closer and strengthens their relationships. That happens through the process of organizing and preparing for the wedding.

Nonetheless, some people who are against marriage believe that the documentation of marriage is not necessary. However, they are totally wrong because with documentation comes an immense number of benefits and advantages. The act of documentation can help the couple financially. For example, they could apply for a loan or a mortgage as a married couple, whereas mere partners cannot. Also, without documentation one partner could not visit the other if the other had a critical condition in the hospital. These are a couple of reasons why documentation is of utmost importance.

Finally, marriage is a gorgeous event, profound act, and wonderful experience that people who are committed to each other should enter into. The benefits of marriage far outweigh the drawbacks, and everyone should celebrate and declare their love this way. **Nawaf Jafarah, Saudi Arabia**

### Answers to What Am I?

1. A rainbow
2. An echo
3. The night
4. A chicken
5. A cell phone
6. A blanket
7. A rose