

SPRING VIEWS

Spring International Language Center, Littleton, Colorado

July 18, 2012

Peace and the Best of Cultures

Students Share Writing in Summer Contest

Spring International's annual summer 2011 writing competition produced a number of excellent essays from beginning through advanced levels. Instructors judged the writing and chose the best from each level to receive prizes. Students were required to write about one of these topics: How will study in the U.S. help you reach your goals? What is the best of U.S. culture you would like to take home and what is the best of your culture you will always keep? What person has influenced your life the most? and What are your dreams for your country? Criteria for judging included creativity, organization, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Each of the winners will receive \$50 and publication in *Spring Views* and the Spring International website.

Spring Views is published each nine week term to give students an audience for their writing. Writing is recognized as the most difficult skill area in a curriculum that includes grammar, reading, and listening/speaking classes in addition to classes such as research paper, conversation, and modules based on student needs and preferences.

1st Prize, Advanced Level

The Best of Two Cultures: Saudi and American... by Abdullah Algaeid

Living in the United States is an excellent opportunity to discover the culture of one of the greatest countries in the world. As a Saudi student studying in America, I have learned what American culture actually looks like. Before coming to the U.S., I had thought that American culture would be like the movies I had seen; however, it is utterly different than what I thought. American culture, honestly, is one of the best cultures in the world. Furthermore, I like both American and Saudi

culture, yet each one has its own attributes. In my point of view, the tradition I like best in American culture is fairness, and in Saudi culture it is family relationships.

Fairness is a feature of American culture that demonstrates politeness to people. The definition of the word "fairness" is that people get their rights without appealing or demanding. In America, people are the same no matter what their religions, color and nationalities are. Human beings are treated the same way whether or not a person is poor or affluent. For instance, when a person is pulled over by a police officer after doing something wrong, the officer will perform the regular procedures no matter who that person is, unlike in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, a person living in the United States does not need a business connection in order to get his rights. Specifically, upon applying for a career, a person does not need to have a business connection to get hired. Conversely, in Saudi Arabia the rules are clear and sharp, no connection equals no job. Also, people in America do not pay attention to either a family name nor a tribal name upon choosing their spouses. In contrast, when Saudi people choose a spouse, they care only about whether or not their spouse is a descendant from a famous tribe. Therefore, I wish that Saudi Arabia would have more fairness in the future.

On the other hand, a Saudi tradition that I would seriously love to keep is the family relationship and how it is significant to strengthen and unify the relationship between family members. The family in Saudi Arabia is known as one body.
(cont. p.2)



The Best of Two Cultures (cont. from p.1)

If a member of the family feels sick, everybody in the family can feel his sickness. Moreover in a Saudi family, parents have the most respect by their children. For example, a child who is aged thirty years cannot act without consulting his parents, especially for major circumstances such as buying a car or getting married. As a student in the United States, I roughly see no respect for parents by their children, often who are eighteen and up, because children have so much freedom. In Saudi Arabia, most of the time families have to meet once a week with their grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, which is a wonderful habit. When it is time to eat, the family gathers in one room at one huge plate, not only to eat but also to talk about their daily lives. Isn't this the most fabulous thing in the world? Yes, it is. It is the most fabulous thing to be with your family as one strong body, every member supporting the others when they are in need.

To sum up, being in the United States for a year and three months has taught me the best traditions of both Saudi and American culture. In fact, if I had not been here, I would not have noticed the best traditions in my own culture. I have no doubt that I have learned the best about American traditions. Hence, by the time I graduate from university, I will have experienced much of American culture; consequently, I will take the best traditions to Saudi Arabia to add to the Saudi culture in order to strengthen it. However, without any hesitation, I will keep the best of my own tradition, family relationship, which is considered unique to many foreign cultures. Fairness and close family relationships are among the best and most significant traditions in any culture.

1st Prize, High Intermediate Level

Reaching My Future Goals by Studying in the U.S....by Mohammed Alkhereiji

Studying in the United States has changed my life forever, and I am sure it will help me with my entire life, and I am very thankful for this opportunity. My goals for the future are to master the English language, be a professional businessman, and to travel all over the world.

By living in the United States, I will reach the goal of mastering the English language because I am taking classes as well as tutoring after school. Although my friends are from Saudi Arabia, I practice English with them and encourage them to take advantage of their time in the States. Also, what helps me to get better in my English is that, if I fail, I will be sent back to my country. This is a very big pressure for me because I do not want to return without learning English perfectly. In conclusion, my goal of master English will only be accomplished if I continue to live and study in the United States.

Since I want to study a serious career, it is very important that I have studied in the U.S. because employers will take me more seriously when they know this. The reason is that they will see that I have the dedication to go to another study to study another language and learn their culture. This says a lot of things about a person because it is not an easy thing to do. Also, not everyone gets that opportunity, and I am very happy I did. When I want to work at an important office, I will be respected because I went to the United States to study and I know English. that will help me get very good jobs because not everyone in Saudi Arabia speaks English well. Finally, knowing English and studying in the U.S. will help me reach the goal of being an important and professional businessman.

Traveling the world not only requires a lot of money, but also knowledge of different countries and languages. English is spoken in most of the world, and it would help me get around different places that I want to visit. I believe it would make it easier since I speak English. Traveling is something that I really wish to do because I think it really opens people's eyes to how they see the world. I have only traveled inside my country and countries that are close, but this trip to the United States has been my first big travel. It has shown me how different cultures can be and how much someone can learn from visiting foreign countries. In conclusion, I believe knowing English can help me with my goal of traveling all over the world.

To conclude, studying in the United States has given me the opportunity to accomplish many things, and I still have more to accomplish in order to succeed. Among these things, I have learned to speak English and I have learned about American culture. This experience has help me greatly to accomplish my goals for the future. I ama very excited that I am here, and I am very grateful for having this opportunity. Living here will help me to master the English language, to be a professional businessman and be taken more seriously and, finally, to travel all over the world.



1st prize Winner, Beginning Level

My Favorite Teacher, a Person Who Influenced Me...by Saad Alotaibi

Sometimes before I go to sleep I start to remember all the good memories. I would like to talk about my favorite teacher who helped me a lot with my life. My favorite teacher's name is Omar. he is helpful, kind, and respectful. He always would help me with everything when I was in high school. For example, I would talk to him about my problems, and he would help me forget about them. Also, he is really kind because he always gave us easy tests. he was always eating breakfast with us and making jokes with us.

Omar is fair. One day there was a problem with a black guy and a white guy, so everyone agreed with the white guy except Omar. He is fair with everyone and loves to treat people the same. Finally, he is the best teacher in my life. I hope to see him again, so I can do nice things for him.