

Gifts from the World to You...*Students Write*



Alfredo and Bayarsaikh display favorite foods from their countries: Mexico and Mongolia.

Best Friends Forever

If someone ask me what is my best gift which I was received since I was born except my family? This is my best friends. They are a wonderful gift that I received from my life. I met them when I was 10 years old. They are people, who are always beside me, share me everything in life. Whenever I have any difficulty they always come beside me. We spent childhood together with many amazing memories. They taught me a lot of thing in life. I remember that once time when I get sick, and I had to stay in hospital a week. They also

stayed in hospital a week with me to take care of me carefully. I love them so much. Now, we are adult. Each person has their individual lives. We don't live close together like when we were a kid. However, whenever I have any difficulty or something which need their help, or share with them. They always come beside me. We are the best friend forever. They and my family are my best gift in the world. **by Tien Nguyen, Viet Nam**

The Best Gift I Have Ever Received...by Laura Cespedes, Venezuela

My opportunity to do an internship in Mexico, D.F. I always dreamed of doing my professional practice in the ninth semester out of the country because I wanted the experience of sharing with other cultures.

I started to search for an internship in Mayo Clinic because there is an agreement with my University and that clinic, but I could not do it there because of my English level in the TOEFL test, so I looked for Spanish-speaking countries, such as Chile and Mexico. In Chile the answer was yes, but the practice was a minimum one year, but in the university the requirement is 6 months; therefore, I had to leave that option. In Mexico, I received the answer from two amazing institutes. One was in Jalisco and the other one in Mexico City. My choice was in Mexico City because the practice was in the biotechnology field but applied to humans, while the internship in Jalisco was applied in plants.

My practical training was wonderful; I met Doctors who taught me a lot about the process of tissues, polymer scaffolds and policies with the handling of animals. Also, I met great friends there. I am still talking with them. I tried a lot of delicious Mexican food; it was so much that I gained a few pounds of weight. I had the best time ever there because it was the first time that I had traveled out of my country alone without family, surviving in that giant city, and all was perfect in Mexico.



Marriage and a Wonderful Man...by Dina Siahaan, Indonesia



My marriage is the best gift I've ever received. I'd never imagined that I would find such a wonderful man. He is funny, smart, a hard worker, great cook and good looking, a perfect combination, more than I can ask. Finally, my parents were happy because I had found my prince charming.

As a woman who was born in Indonesia, my parents have high expectations for me. After I finished my undergraduate degree, they wanted me to get married and give them a dozen grandchildren. They are typical parents in Indonesia, but instead of fulfilling their expectation, I decided to travel and explore the world. I traveled to Asia and lived in New Zealand until I decided to pursue my master's and moved to the U.S. Happily living alone as a single woman, I finally found my freedom. My parents were finally unable to watch all my movements and behavior because when I lived with them, I always felt under a surveillance camera, as in the NSA office.

Even though, I lived miles away from them, I always was their little girl. Every time, I called them, the first question that came out from their mouths was "when will you get married?" "Have you found a boyfriend yet?" "We will not rest in peace until you get married". All those comments become a huge pressure on me. Fortunately, I was able to fulfill my parents' request. I found my prince charming. I remembered my parents were more thrilled than I was when I told them about my future husband.

My husband is very quiet, but he is very kind, and loves giving me surprises, especially on my birthday. He is a very loving person. If I studied upstairs in my room and forgot to have my lunch or dinner, he will bring it up stairs to my room. Sometimes I feel bad for him because I am not a good person who memorizes someone's birthday and that is my weakness. But after a few years went by, I learned to remember these events better. Our marriage is not perfect; we struggled in the beginning, but with communication we will be able to face our obstacles.

The Gift of Family...by Bashayer Albarakati, Saudi Arabia

After fasting for the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims are greeted by the spirit of Eid; the primary holiday we celebrate. The spirit of Eid is unlike any other. One witnesses joy that is truly inexplicable. Children's laughter rings through the halls of our homes, gifts are exchanged, and family members who you have not seen for months are together once again.

That, to me, is the greatest gift of all. The gift of family, to be surrounded by your loved ones and to feel their presence is greater than any material gifts I could possibly be given. Truly, it is only during Eid when we are all, at last, together again. When "I miss you" is replaced by "I love you" and tears of longing are replaced with tears of joy. That is the true spirit of Eid indeed.

Roses and Rings...by Kholuood Alfarsani, Saudi Arabia

A gift is the most beautiful thing in the world to express the sincerity of your feelings. I have received many gifts, but the best one is the wedding ring that my husband gave me when he proposed to me three years ago. I have never forgotten the day when Turki gave me this ring. The ring was made of diamonds. It looks amazing. I was surprised and I could not say anything. He also brought me a bouquet of red roses.

I was told by my family, "You should approve his request of marriage because he is a smart man and he knows what you are looking for."

The Best Gift by Hayley (Yang Li), China

Everyone would enjoy having a gift. The meaning of a gift may vary from person to person. As for me, life is the greatest gift I've ever had.

What's life? Many people spend all their time searching for the answer. Life would be a paradise everyone dreams of; life would be full of happiness and mysteries; life would be a valuable treasure. But what about the life we're living now? We spend too recklessly, laugh too little, get angry too quickly, stand up too late, get up too tired. We multiply our possessions, but reduce our values. We talk too much, laugh too little and lie too often. We've learnt how to make a living, but not a life.

Hold fast to life, but not so fast that you can't let go. By always chasing after new goals, we're never really appreciating what we already have right now. When I walked in the street one day, the sunlight hit me. How beautiful it was, how warming, how sparkling, how brilliant! I looked around to see if anyone else relished the sun's gold glow, but everyone was walking too fast, most with eyes fixed on the ground. Then I realized most of us have been indifferent to the grandeur of each day, too preoccupied with petty and sometimes even meaningless concerns. At that moment, I came to know life's gifts are precious, but we're too heedless of them. Surely we must hold fast to life, for it is wonderful and full of beauties. We know that is so, but often we recognize this truth only in our backward glance when we remember what was, and then realize that is no more. We remember a beauty that faded, a love that waned. But we remember the best gift is life.

From Father to Son...by Mohammed Aljohani, Saudi Arabia

The best gift I have got is my car. Upon graduating from high school, my father gave me a new car as a gift. It was very valuable to me because I was in that age when most people who are the same as my age dream of having a car. I will never sell this car, and I will give it to my son after he graduates from high school.

Unforgettable Gift...by Wejdan Alshammari, Saudi Arabia



A gift is a symbol of giving and it is used to express love and affection. It does not matter how expensive it is, but it is enough to express the extent of love and the appreciation between two parties, as it has a wonderful and deep impact on the hearts of people. I have got various gifts from people in my life.

I appreciate all of them, but the most beautiful gift I have received in my life was from my father. When I was a child, I hated drinking milk, especially during breakfast. No one in my life could have forced me to drink it. However, one day my father went to the shop and bought me a cup. Then he took one of my favorite pictures that I loved a lot and printed it on the cup. He put it in a box and covered it with my best character animation (Sylvester). I could not describe my feeling when I got it. It was the nicest and the gift that has brought the most joy to my heart. For many years, I drank milk in this cup but unfortunately, it has been broken, so I stopped drinking milk. However, I would say that my father was the best gift in my life, and there are no words that can describe him.

Best Friends...by Eman Shftai, Saudi Arabia

Receiving presents from people that you love is the best thing that could ever happen to us, especially from the people closer to your heart. Three years ago, Areej, my best friend in secondary school, who is a happy person, gave me a big box full of gifts, and an enormous bouquet of flowers.

On that morning, I saw her carrying a huge plastic bag, and I asked her, "Why did you bring this large bag today?" She answered, "This is my sister's bag."

Her sister was in level three at the same school. At break time, she gave me the big box and a flower bouquet. The box included three books; two of them were novels and one a documentary book. Also she gave me some chocolate and make-up. I was really happy and felt that I had the best friend in the world.

Level Two Writes

The Nightmare. I remember a scary night. It was a long time ago. That night was scary for my daughter. Her name is Tami. We were in the house. It was a very dark night, so we went to bed early. Suddenly, I heard a noise and my daughter screamed so loudly. I ran to her room. First, I opened the door. It was dark and spooky inside. Then, I turned the light on, and I saw her face. It was panicked and scared. Then I asked her what happened. She dreamed that a ghost flew in her bedroom, and it was teasing her. Before she went to bed, I had told her not to watch a scary movie, but she likes to watch them because they are very exciting. After that, we prayed, but she was still scared. Then I told her that God is with her, so she does not have to be afraid. Finally, she went to bed, and she slept in peace. **by Lien Meyer, Vietnam**



A Beautiful Teacher. My teacher's name is Katherine. She is a beautiful woman. She is tall and thin. Every day she comes to class, and she is happy. My teacher is friendly because she helps everyone. If the students don't understand, she teaches them again. She is loving to children. Sometimes she plays games with children in class. She likes to exercise in the morning because it gives her energy to go to work. Sometimes she likes to read books. Often she likes to listen to music in her free time. I think Katherine is a good teacher. I love her. She is number one. **by Duy Le, Vietnam.**

Cat Bite. I remember a time that was scary for me. About twenty-three years ago, I had a scary experience when I was ten years old. My family had a cat. It was a big black cat. My brother liked the cat, but I didn't like it because I was afraid of the cat. One day, my mother was cooking in the kitchen, and my brother and I were there also. While my brother was feeding the cat, I pushed it away. Suddenly, the cat bit my right hand, so I cried loudly. My mother and my brother saw the blood on my hand. After that, they took me to the doctor. Now I am still afraid of cats. **by Son Do, Vietnam**

Level Two Writes (cont. from p.3)

Getting Ready for School. I have to go to school every morning. I will tell you how to get ready for school. First, I wake up early. Then I always wash my face, and I brush my teeth. Sometimes I prepare breakfast because I don't have enough time every morning. After that, I prepare my back pack if I didn't prepare it the night before. Finally, I take the bus, or I ride the train. If I get ready for school in time, I get to school on time. **by Norah Alshahrani, Saudi Arabia**

Traveling by Plane. About five years ago, I had a scary experience. I traveled with my family to Dubai by plane at midnight. We could not see because it was dark. First, the plane had a problem with the engine. Second, my mother and my sister were crying. After that, all of the people in the plane were crying and scared. Finally, the captain told us by microphone that everything was fine. I like to travel by plane even though that was a dangerous experience.

by Mohammed Alanazi, Saudi Arabia

Nicolas' Fall. I remember a time that was funny for me but scary for my friend. Nicolas is a very athletic guy and loves bikes, but his biggest fear is ducks. It was last summer, and my friend called me to go for a bike ride. We had the best equipment, and we rode near a big pond for two hours. The scenery was amazing because there were many ducks. When Nicolas saw them, he was scared and was moving away when suddenly, a duck ran after him. Nicolas fell down. The duck did not attack, but our ballad was over. Nicolas was very angry that I laughed so loudly, and he said to me, "If the duck attacked you, you would not laugh!" It was funny for me but scary for my friend. **by Hugo Lenthéric, France**



Level Three Writes

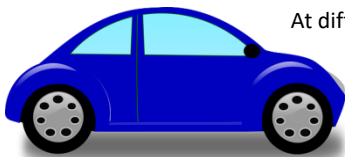
Leaving Home...by Zahra Alkhamees, Saudi Arabia

"Leaving home, in a sense, involves a kind of second birth in which we give birth ourselves," Robert Neely Bellon once said. Leaving the nest is hard, but sometimes it can be great to begin a new life and make your dreams come true. A wonderful experience I had that changed me to become a strong person was going abroad to the U.S. to study.

Last year, I was a lucky person because I got a scholarship from my government to study for a nursing degree. It was a big challenge for me to leave home and travel alone, although I had to follow my dream even if it was hard. At first, I felt excited, but when I remembered that I was leaving home, I was very sad. Also I imagined the worst thing, but my father took my hands and said to me, "I trust you. You can do it." At that moment, I became a strong and powerful person. I said to myself, "You have to do it to make your parents happy and proud."

In short, when I arrived in the U.S., my life changed for the better. I became more responsible and helpful. I learned from this transforming experience that I have to try to challenge myself to follow my dream and make it become true.

Good Things Come in Small Packages...by Dan Dan, China



At different, important times in my life, someone who loved me gave me a gift that I remember as special. My uncle gave me a book on my first day of school. My parents gave me my first phone and a car when I graduated from college. I have to admit, though, the favorite gift I have received is the stupid German car my husband bought for me when I was pregnant for the first time!

He thought it was a good surprise and so did I, until I saw that he had chosen a two-door car. He bought the car because he thought that it would be safer and cooler than a Honda or a Toyota. But, it was still very small.

We drove the car for four years and brought our second baby home from the hospital in it too. We also went on road trips, and there was a lot of laughing about how small the car was. However, the memories we made in that little car were big memories that I will never forget.

Even though, at first, I was a little angry about my husband's choice in cars, I later loved that car. He was right that it was a fun car. It was small; it was fast, and he chose a good color. It was sad to sell the car when we decided to move here, but since we have an American car now, at least we have room for everyone to sit!

Gifts and Ceremonies...by Giti Mahadiai, Iran

Gifts are important things in some ceremonies. Each year people have different events to attend. For example, it could be a party, birthday, or wedding. In all these ceremonies, people bring gifts. The most important time for every person to get gifts are birthdays, weddings, and anniversaries. I remember when I received my favorite gift from my husband. It was a necklace that was very attractive with bright color and a unique design.

First of all, my necklace was very attractive to me because it was our 10th wedding anniversary when I got this beautiful gift from my husband. It was made with 24-carat white gold, so I could easily match it with any of my night dresses, and its shape looked different at different angles.

Second, my necklace was bright because it had a little diamond work around one big turquoise stone in the middle. The turquoise had a special color under direct light. I remember getting compliments from my friends all the time.

Finally, I loved its unique design, which was made in Italy. It was handmade, not by machine, and that is why it was so special. It had a tiny chain with fine big tear shape turquoise. I had never seen anything like it. In short, gifts are important for everyone because they help them to remember the moments when they made memories.

It is beautiful to receive a nice, charming necklace like mine, which I still have.



A Special Birthday...by Alfredo Ramirez, Mexico

My best gift was a nice watch for my birthday. I had a girlfriend about one year ago, and she gave me a watch for my birthday. It was an excellent gift because when she gave it to me I was at my school. I remember my friends and I were at lunch time, and my girlfriend came with her friends to my school. She sang a cute song and brought my gift with her. That day was special for me because I loved my girlfriend, but also that was a cute detail. However, she is not my girlfriend now, but she gave me the best gift. I think it was a little gift, but she made it the most wonderful one.

Quality and History...by Tsetseglenjural Nuidan, Mongolia

Every gift has its own quality and history. When I was 8 years old, my father gave me a chess set. I had recently learned to play chess, and my father taught me. When I was in elementary school and high school, I played many championships and had many medals. Now this chess set is one of the most important things for me. When I see it, I think about my dad, my childhood, and my hometown. Sometimes I miss my dad, and I just play chess, and it seems like meeting him. Sometimes, I think gifts that parents give their children shouldn't be expensive things. They should make memories that are not forgotten.

Parents...by Ashkan Mojtabaei, Iran

Gifts are the best thing in the world. They're beautifully wrapped with that colored cardboard and make you excited to see what they are. I was thinking what were the greatest gifts in my life—a backpack when I went to school for the first time? A car when I was accepted at university? An expensive phone when I got good grades at university? I have received a lot of gifts that made me happy, but which one is the greatest?

And then I realized the greatest gift in my life is my parents. They are the best gift that makes me happier every day.

English and Nursing...by Mizuki Kumamoto, Japan

The greatest gift I have ever received is this opportunity to study English and nursing here for a year. Some people who want to study abroad cannot do it due to money, time, or family problems. It is truly a pleasure that I am living and studying here. Some people believe that people who study abroad are rich, but I am not rich. Although my family is not such a rich family, my parents have fulfilled my dream of studying abroad. I really appreciate them for giving me such a great present.

Congratulations to winners of the Table Tennis Tournament: Supporters Bader, Libya, and Jeanne, Director Denver Center with 2nd place winner Ariunsanaa, Mongolia, and champion Kyle (Khuong), Vietnam.

Mother's Day Gift...by Xin Dai, China

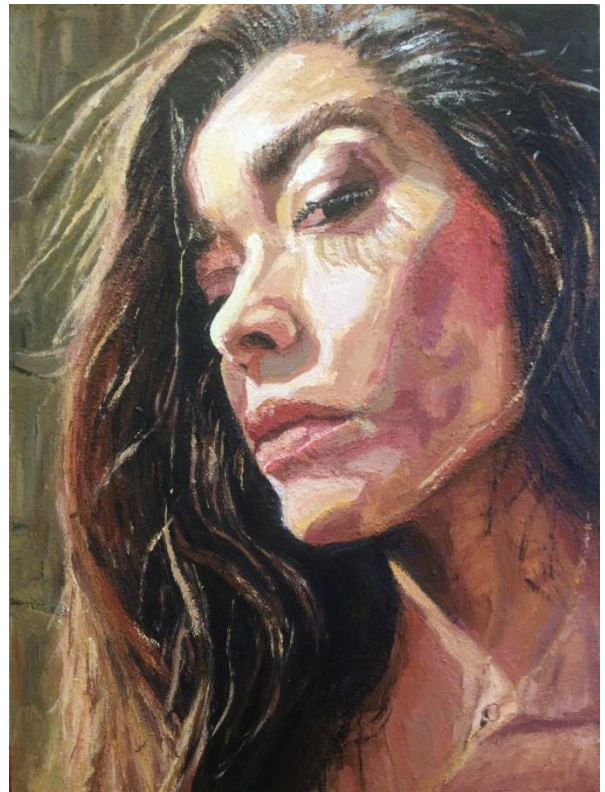
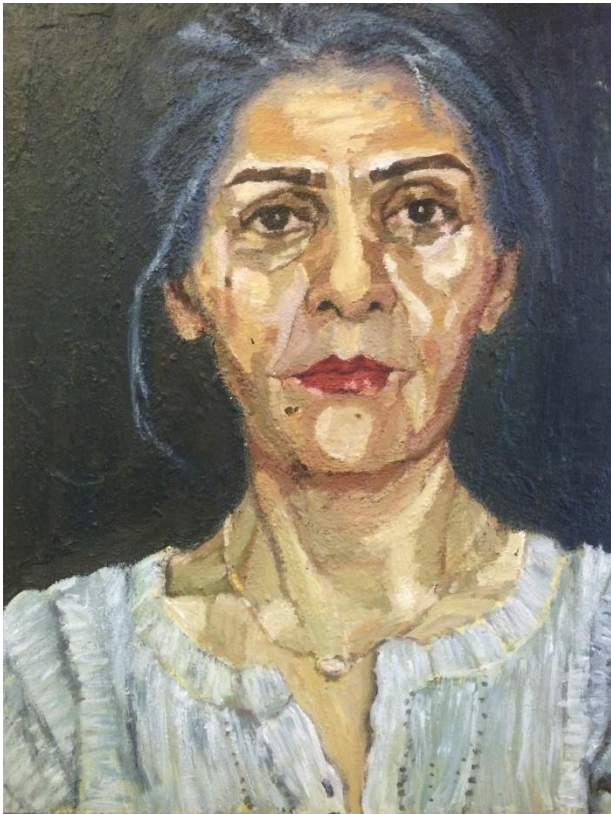
I have a special ring that is a silver color, but it isn't metallic. Its unique design is a silver flower at the top which makes it look very different. This ring my daughter made and sent it to me as a gift for Mother's Day. I feel the gift is very important for me because it represents her heart to me. This ring's materials are not expensive, but I feel that it is a beautiful, valuable, warm, and great gift.

Teachers and Staff Tell about Their Best Gifts

"My mother gave me her Christian faith in God which, in turn, gave me a fearless approach to life and a love for humanity."
Susan Feringer-Coury

"The best gift I ever received is the friendship of my husband. He always tells me, "Of course I love you, but I also *like* you!"
Christen Breaux

"There are many wonderful gifts that I have received, but the one gift that stands out this Christmas season is the birth of my son 23 years ago. In December of 1993, my husband and I began the long process of adoption. One September 29, 1994, my son Benjamin Charles was born. We are so blessed!" **Missy Hull**



The Gift of Creativity...Paintings by Mahnoosh Kaviani, Iran

(Follow Mahnoosh on Instagram: Mahnoosh.Kaviani)



Spring Views is published each nine-week term to showcase the writing of students from beginning to advanced levels at Spring International Language Center, 2575 W. Church Ave., Littleton, CO 80120. Editor: Connie Shoemaker, Director Emerita.