

2011 TESL ONTARIO ESL WEEK CONTEST

ESSAY ENTRY #7

TITLE My Experience of Learning English

Learning English is a meaningful experience for me. When I began to learn English in the LINC School, I really felt my life changed, because I can learn new knowledge to enrich my language and my way of thinking. Every day is different. Now I understand why people say learning is infinite, because learning goes on and on forever never stopping. It has no edge.

When I recall my experience of learning English, making a brochure will stay a memorable learning experience. Last week my teacher gave us a task to make a brochure about our community. The brochure needs to include everything about our community even interviewing people who are living there.

At first, I had no idea about it. When I was on my way home, I started to think about how to do it, where I should research materials, whom I will interview and so on. When I got home, I turned on my computer, and came across the brochure which my community center had given to me and I read magazines. I hoped I could catch some inspiration. After two hours of preparation, I had the main idea. I listed an outline and imagined the pictures in my mind.

Then I started to do community research on the internet according to my list, and looked for some pictures that related to my topics in my brochure. At 10 pm I finally finished the words part for my brochure. I brought it to my husband to get some advice. He proofread it for me. The second day, I worked on the interviews and decorating my brochure; it was the most interesting part. I picked four persons, my husband, my neighbour, my husband's colleague, and a stranger for the interviews. After dinner, my husband and I knocked on my neighbour's door. I felt a little bit nervous and shy, although I had practiced the questions at home. But when my neighbour, Harry, opened the door, I felt relaxed at that moment, because he gave us a big smile. I told him about my mission, and asked him questions. At that time, my husband was "my secretary", and he took notes for me. The first interview was going very well; it gave me more confidence and satisfaction.

The second person was my husband's colleague, Ramesh. I was familiar with him, so I brought soup for him. He also was willing to get involved in my interview. It was successful and I got my anticipated answers.

The third person was a stranger. On our way home, I flashed an idea in my head, why not to interview a cashier. So we went to Canadian Tire. We bought something, and then we were waiting in the line. It was my turn, it was my turn, I felt my heart beat was getting faster. Finally, I got up the courage and asked the cashier, Statty, "Can I ask you a question?" When I heard a pleasant voice, "of course, why not?", all of my worries and nervousness disappeared. The last person was my husband, of course, there was no nervousness in our interview.

By talking to people you can get what you want to know and go beyond and expand your horizon. A friendly smile and a handshake can make it easier.

The last part of the brochure was decoration. I researched the Staple and Dollar store to get the papers and tools I had wanted. That evening, my husband helped me to complete the brochure.

We discussed it, cut and pasted pictures having so much fun in it. Although my husband was not a student in a LINC School, both of us enjoyed it!

When we saw our beautiful brochure, we could not describe the happiness in words. I think it was not only homework, but also it was a meaningful experience, we learned more beyond what we could imagine. I learned from this experience how to apply my knowledge. It means how to use and organize the words, expressions and sentences we had learned in class and how to communicate with people. It is the most important purpose for learning a language. Also, this task gave me an opportunity to discover my hidden talent and creativity.

I think I should appreciate my English teacher, not only she teaches us English, but also she gives us confidence and changes our life step by step.

People often say they are not good at doing certain things. In fact, they are good at it. You can always do something better than you think. As Terry Fox said, "I just wish people would realize that anything is possible if you try; dreams are made if people try."