

# The Firefly



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# Applying to study at an English University

Have you ever had any fancy dreams of studying abroad: holding parties all day and night, taking spur-of-the-moment trips whenever you want, having a sweet interracial relationship with a handsome foreign guy under the bright sunshine, looking forward to being surrounded by elites and fulfilling your own dream. Though studying abroad sounds fantastic, it is undoubtedly a huge decision in your life. Before you decide to study abroad, let us explore some advantages and disadvantages.



## Pros and cons

### Pros:

1. **Top universities:** England is home to some of the world's top universities, such as the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge. These universities offer world-class education and are highly regarded globally. According to 2023 QS rankings, 5 English Universities are ranked in the top 10.
2. **Cultural diversity:** Studying in England will expose you to a diverse range of cultures, ideas and perspectives. You will have the opportunity to interact with people from all over the world, broaden your understanding of different cultures and make lifelong connections.
3. **Career prospects:** England now offers graduates a PSW (post-study work) visa, which allows international students to stay in the UK for up to 2 years after completing their studies to work or look for work. Thanks to its strong economy and many multinational corporations, England provides a wealth of employment opportunities for graduates. A degree from a top English university can give you a competitive edge in the job market.
4. **Personal growth:** Studying abroad is a life-changing experience that can help us develop our independence, resilience, and adaptability. You will have the opportunity to step out of your comfort zone, learn new skills and gain valuable life experiences.

## Cons

1. **Cost:** Studying in England can be expensive, particularly for international students who are required to pay higher tuition fees than domestic students. For instance, the tuition fee for UCL foundation course in 2023 is 23,500 pounds, which is equal to about 900 thousand New Taiwan dollars. In addition to tuition fees, students will also need to cover the cost of accommodation, living expenses, and travel, which is usually predicted to be 500 thousand New Taiwan dollars per year.
2. **Racial Discrimination:** Racial discrimination can be a nightmare for many students studying abroad. Although universities enact policies in place to prevent discrimination and ensure that all students are treated fairly and respectfully, we might face racial discrimination. Nonetheless, it is also worth noting that England is home to many international students from a diverse range of backgrounds, so you are likely to meet people from a variety of cultures and ethnicities. This can be a great opportunity to learn about different cultures and perspectives.
3. **Limitation:** As standard Taiwanese students, we are not capable of getting an a-level degree. However, universities like the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge require an a-level degree to apply for their undergraduate course, and without an a-level degree, we cannot meet the entry requirements for these outstanding universities. Fortunately, some universities offer foundation courses to international students. With this foundation course, we can apply for some brilliant universities like UCL and ICL.

These difficulties will affect your life in the UK, and may also cause you to feel frustrated, but if you are ready to overcome all these challenges, read on to learn how to apply:

## How to choose a university?

When considering which university to apply for, there are several methods for us to analyze which university best suits us.

1. **Academic quality and reputation:** You should look into the university's academic programs, faculty, and research output, and consider the university's ranking and reputation, as well as accreditation by professional bodies. Usually, we look into the two most prestigious rankings: QS and THE.



2. **Course offerings and flexibility:** Consider the range of courses offered and whether they align with your academic interests and career goals. Also, look at the flexibility of the course structure and whether there are opportunities to tailor your studies to your interests.
3. **Location and campus:** You should consider the location of the university and whether it is a suitable environment for you. Some like the city; some like the countryside. Moreover, campus facilities, such as libraries, student support services, and accommodation are also important to take into consideration.
4. **Student experience:** Consider the overall student experience at the university, such as the quality of teaching, opportunities for extracurricular activities, and social life on campus. The most important part is the opportunity to get an internship, especially for business students. Internships can help you get a well-paid job.
5. **Cost and financial aid:** You should consider the tuition fees and other costs associated with studying at university. Normally, universities located in London have higher tuition fees, but students there can develop a richer social life. In addition, check out scholarships, bursaries, and other forms of financial aid that may be available to you.

### **Before studying abroad- how could we prepare ourselves to meet the qualifications?**

1. **Semester's Score:** Normally, we use our semester's score to apply for the uni. Therefore, having good semester's scores is a critical point to apply for ideal majors and universities. Furthermore, accumulate experience as much as you can throughout the first year and the second year. Since you might be required to write an SOP, all sorts of experiences can help you demonstrate your passion for your chosen major.
2. **English Abilities:** One of the advantages of studying in Yang-Pin is that our English teachers work hard to cultivate our reading ability. Nonetheless, the importance of listening, speaking, and writing ability cannot be over-emphasized. As a result, if you aim to study abroad, ensure that you constantly make progress on these three abilities.
3. **IELTS or TOFEL tests:** As an international student, we usually need to minimum testing requirement, which take the form of IELTS or TOFEL tests. Take IELTS for example. If you are applying for a foundation course, you need to meet the requirements of getting a 5.5 overall; If you are applying for an undergraduate degree, you need to meet the requirements of getting 6-7 overall, depending on which subjects you are applying for. However, notice that the validity period of IELTS tests is merely two years, so don't take the tests too early.

4. Making plans earlier: Applying for a university either on your own or finding a consultant isn't an easy task; therefore, as long as you make plans in advance, you'll have plenty of extra time to deal with any unexpected obstacles.

## **How to prepare after you have made up your mind to go abroad?**

There is a lot to prepare, both on the practical and the psychological side. It is by no means an easy task to apply for an English University. It requires a certain amount of effort. Thus, the following tips will make your application process more efficient.

### **Preparation in practical aspects**

1. English requirement:

Almost every university abroad sets up its requirements for your English abilities. Among them, IELTS and TOEFL are the most common tests. Two exams have different styles and methods, so be aware of which exam you are suitable for before signing up. Generally, writing and speaking are more difficult parts. Therefore, you should pay more attention to the preparation for the writing and speaking parts of tests. Not only because it is more difficult to get an excellent score, but also because these are the two abilities you need most after going abroad; so, early cultivation of these two skills will definitely help you a lot.

2. Recommendation letter:

There are usually no requirements when writing a recommendation letter. However, generally speaking, when choosing tutors to sign your recommendation letters, your homeroom teacher will be the best choice and the next best choice will be the teacher who is related to the professional subject you are applying for. (There are exceptions for sure. If you are going to major in foreign languages, but your homeroom teacher teaches geology, then I suggest that you find an English teacher who knows you well.) The logic behind recommendation letters is actually to help professors understand what kind of student you are from the perspective of others. Therefore, in theory, the more familiar you are with your teachers, the more credibility the letter has. For example, there is even an extra column in the recommendation letter of UCL, which requires the writer to fill in how long the student and the teacher have known each other. This demonstrates that finding a teacher who is familiar with you is a very important part to them.

### 3. Personal statement (SOP):

Your Personal statement is quite important since this is the best opportunity for you to show your personality. While writing, remember to describe your characteristics, abilities, motivations, and plans for future career. What makes your personal statement even more attractive is to constantly emphasize the connection between these abilities and the major you are going to study in, so that professors can feel your potential and enthusiasm for your studies when reading your personal statement.

### 4. Entrance exam:

Most foundation courses in the UK do not have an entrance examination, except for UCL. Before getting the chance to do an interview with your future tutors, if you're applying for UCL (UPCS) you have to take two exam subjects. The exam is based on your major, which may include mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, or critical thinking. There will be sample questions from previous exams in each exam. It is not difficult to pass the exam if you study the previous exam well.

## Preparing the psychological aspects



You might receive a lot of new information while preparing. Sometimes new information may make you question or doubt your decision to study abroad. You will find out that foreign countries are not as fancy as you think. Generally, they do not hold parties every day. Moreover, your financial

budget makes you unable to spend a lot of money; language problems make it even difficult for you to make friends, let get a boyfriend or girlfriend. Numerous projects and deadlines are waiting for you to complete. The language barrier might also make you question yourself countless times: is it worth spending so much money? However, what I am going to tell you is that it is not easy to live alone, and it is even more difficult to study abroad typically when you have just turned 18. Willing to make this decision after understanding all the pros and cons is already a brave move and

you should be praised for your curiosity and bravery. Just remember, studying abroad isn't only a good chance to get a taste of different types of teaching, but also a special experience in your life to broaden your horizons and get familiar with foreign cultures, and most importantly, a once in a lifetime opportunity to learn to become independent. Difficult as it is, if you are willing to tackle all the obstacles with a positive attitude, studying abroad can be one of a kind experience that you will cherish. Hence, remember to stay true to yourself and always believe that throughout all the difficulties, you will be braver, be more open-minded, be well-informed, and become the person you want to be.

### **Last question: Who is suitable to study abroad?**

“Anyone who wants and puts it into practice” will be my best answer. (I am just kidding, of course you have to achieve high semester's score, meet the English requirement, have high scores in IELTS and TOFEL, have financial support from your family, be willing to endure hardships, endure discrimination, accept loneliness, and learn to cook.)

Last but not least, remember what I have said: the process of achieving dreams is not easy, but it is this hardship that makes your dreams shine even brighter. I believe that, in some afternoon in the future, you will enjoy the breeze of the Thames River, chat about the future with your friends, and experience the beauty of the life that you have created for yourself.

By 302 李昕祐





# Preparing for IELTS Tests



## Introduction

Can you believe it? Spending NTD 7800 in exchange for a piece of paper, a pen, an eraser and being drained for four hours. Yep, this is the legendary IELTS, the first hurdle that all international students must pass.

Before taking the IELTS tests, we should get familiar with the types of the test, the standards of the tests, and most importantly, how to get the highest score. Let us start with a brief introduction to the IELTS.

IELTS stands for the International English Language Testing System, which is a standardized test that measures the proficiency of non-native English speakers. The test assesses our ability to use the English language in four areas: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The IELTS test is commonly used for academic and immigration purposes, such as university admissions, job applications, and visa requirements.

There are two types of IELTS tests: the Academic test and the General Training test. The Academic test is intended for students who want to study in an English-speaking country, while the General Training test is for individuals who are seeking work experience, training programs, or immigration to an English-speaking country.

IELTS scores range from 0 to 9, with 9 being the highest possible score. Most universities and institutions have their own score requirements, but a score of 6.5 or above is generally considered a good score for most purposes.

The IELTS test is widely recognized and accepted by universities, employers, and immigration authorities around the world. The test is available in over 140 countries, and there are more than 1,200 test centers worldwide. The duration of the test is approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes, and it is available in both computer-based and paper-based formats.

After having the preliminary introduction about the tests, let us figure out how to prepare for these four sections.

## 1. Reading section

The IELTS Reading section is designed to assess our ability to understand and interpret written English. It consists of 40 questions and we have 60 minutes to complete the section.

The reading texts are taken from books, newspapers, magazines, and academic journals, and cover a range of topics, including science, history, arts, and social issues. The texts become progressively more difficult as we move through the section. There are three sections in the Reading test, and each section contains

one long text with around 700-1000 words, followed by a series of questions. The questions test a variety of reading skills, including skimming, scanning, and comprehension. Some question types we encounter in the Reading section include multiple-choice, short-answer questions, matching, and sentence completion.

In the test, It is important to manage our time effectively during the Reading section, as we only have a limited amount of time to complete all the questions. In terms of strategy, we should aim to spend around 20 minutes on each section, and try to answer all the questions in each section before moving on to the next one.

## 2. listening section

The IELTS Listening section is designed to test our ability to understand spoken English. It consists of four sections, with 10 questions in each section, and we are given 40 minutes in total to complete the section. The recordings in the Listening section are taken from a range of sources, such as conversations, monologues, and presentations, and are designed to simulate real-life situations. The recordings become progressively more difficult as we move through the section. In the Listening section, we will hear each recording only once, so it is important to listen carefully and take notes as we listen to the recordings. we will be given time after each section to review our answers before moving on to the next section. Some question types we encounter in the Listening section include multiple-choice, matching, and sentence completion. We are also required to complete a diagram or a table based on the information we hear. During the test, it is important to follow the instructions carefully, and to use the time provided to review our answers and check for errors. It is also important to keep track of our progress, and to manage our time effectively to ensure that we are able to complete all the questions in the allotted time.



## How to improve?

### 1. Read a lot

While preparing for the IELTS reading test, I realized that my vocabulary and reading speed were not sufficient to achieve a good score. Therefore, during my preparation process, I read at least three news articles from the Washington Post every day. Reading the Washington Post not only increased my vocabulary but also helped me understand international situations and develop a broader international perspective.

### 2. Listen a lot

While preparing for the listening test, I found that the biggest challenge for me was the heavy British accent used by the speakers. Therefore, I listened to the BBC's 6 Minute English podcast for 15-20 minutes every day. Although the time spent each day was short, the repeated exposure and stimulation helped me achieve good outcomes in listening.

## Speaking section

### 1. Regarding the Speaking Section

The IELTS Speaking section is designed to test our ability to communicate effectively in spoken English. It consists of a face-to-face interview with an examiner and takes around 11-14 minutes to complete. The Speaking test is divided into three parts, with different types of questions in each part. In Part 1, the examiner will ask you general questions about yourself and your interests. In Part 2, we will be given a task card with a topic to talk about for two minutes. In Part 3, we will have a discussion with the examiner on a more abstract topic related to the task in Part 2. The Speaking test assesses our ability to speak fluently, use appropriate grammar and vocabulary, and express our ideas clearly and coherently. The examiner will also assess our pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns. During the Speaking test, it is important to listen carefully to the questions, and to give complete and relevant answers. We should speak clearly and confidently and use a range of vocabulary and grammar structures to express our ideas.

### 2. How I Prepare

This was the hardest part of the entire exam for me, and I believe that to many people, this part is the hardest part in the tests either. Not only did I need to be familiar with a wide range of vocabulary, but I also had to pay attention to small details such as pronunciation, sentence structure, and grammar when speaking. At the beginning, I could only communicate about half of what I

wanted to say in English, which was a frustrating start. However, my teacher encouraged me to speak more, listen more, and imitate more. I started by practicing in front of a mirror with pre-written examples, making sure that every pronunciation and word was correct. Then, I began to come up with my own responses. In the next stage, I recorded my answers with a voice recorder and reviewed them after practice, looking for grammar and word selection errors. Through this repeated practice, I gradually became more confident in my speaking skills. Although I can't speak English as fluently as a native speaker, I am now able to talk confidently in my familiar areas and am no longer afraid of speaking English with foreigners.

Even if you feel very confident in your speaking, you still have to remember that take the test seriously. IELTS speaking questions are usually very down to earth, but sometimes the inability to speak is not because of the English proficiency, but because of lack of life experience. To solve this problem, you can prepare a short story in advance, and be more calm when facing a problem that you have never encountered before.

Everyone might be afraid of the speaking tests; nonetheless, remember that this is the only chance in the tests that you can control what you are going to demonstrate, so don't be shy or frightened, just keep smiling, and do your best.



## Writing section

### 1. Regarding the writing section

The IELTS Writing section is designed to test our ability to write in English in an academic or semi-formal style. It consists of two tasks, and we have 60 minutes in total to complete both tasks. Task 1 of the Writing section requires us to write a description of a graph, chart, or diagram. We will be asked to summarize and compare data, describe a process, or explain a map or plan. We are expected to write at least 150 words in 20 minutes. Task 2 of the Writing section requires us to write an essay in response to a given prompt. The prompt will usually ask us to discuss a particular issue or topic, and to

present our own opinion or argument. We are expected to write at least 250 words in 40 minutes. The Writing test assesses our ability to write accurately, coherently, and appropriately for an academic or semi-formal context. We will be assessed on your ability to use appropriate grammar and vocabulary, organize your ideas effectively, and express your ideas clearly and coherently. For Task 1, we should make sure to include all the required information and to use appropriate language to describe the data. For Task 2, we should ensure clearly presenting our argument or opinion, and to support our points with relevant examples and evidence.

## 2. How to improve

I left no stone unturned wrote down everything I could think of, including some phrases, some idioms, and some brilliant articles. In fact, there are no shortcuts to improving writing skills. However, there are still few ways to help you write an ideal article.

### 1. Read extensively:

Reading regularly exposes you to different writing styles, vocabulary, and sentence structures. Pay attention to how authors express their ideas and convey information.

### 2. Expand your vocabulary:

As previously stated, building a strong vocabulary enables you to express yourself more precisely. Learn new words and their usage in context. Practice incorporating them into your writing.

### 3. Seek feedback:

Share your writing with others, such as teachers, native speakers, or writing groups. Their feedback and suggestions can help you identify areas for improvement and refine your writing skills. Fortunately, you study in Yang-Pin. All the teachers will be pleased to help you improve your writing skills.

### 4. Study grammar and sentence structure:

Enhance your understanding of grammar rules, punctuation, and sentence construction. This knowledge will enable you to write more accurately and effectively. To me, inverted sentences and cleft sentences are two common ways that I demonstrate my grammar skills.

### 5. Edit and revise your work: Editing is an essential part of the writing process. Review your writing to identify areas for improvement, such as clarity, coherence, grammar, and vocabulary, and therefore revise your work accordingly. Stay motivated and persistent: Improving writing skills is a continuous process.

## Special rules in IELTS: The Enquiry on Results (EOR)

Candidates who have taken the IELTS test can apply for an EOR within six weeks of their test date if the candidates believe that they deserve a better score. Candidates can choose which component(s) they would like to re-evaluated. After the re-evaluation, if the scores are revised, the candidate receives a new Test Report Form (TRF) with the updated scores. If the scores remain the same or change to a lower value, the original TRF is returned to the candidate. There are many people sharing their success experience, it shows that applying for EOR could be helpful for you. However this process cost NT\$4000.

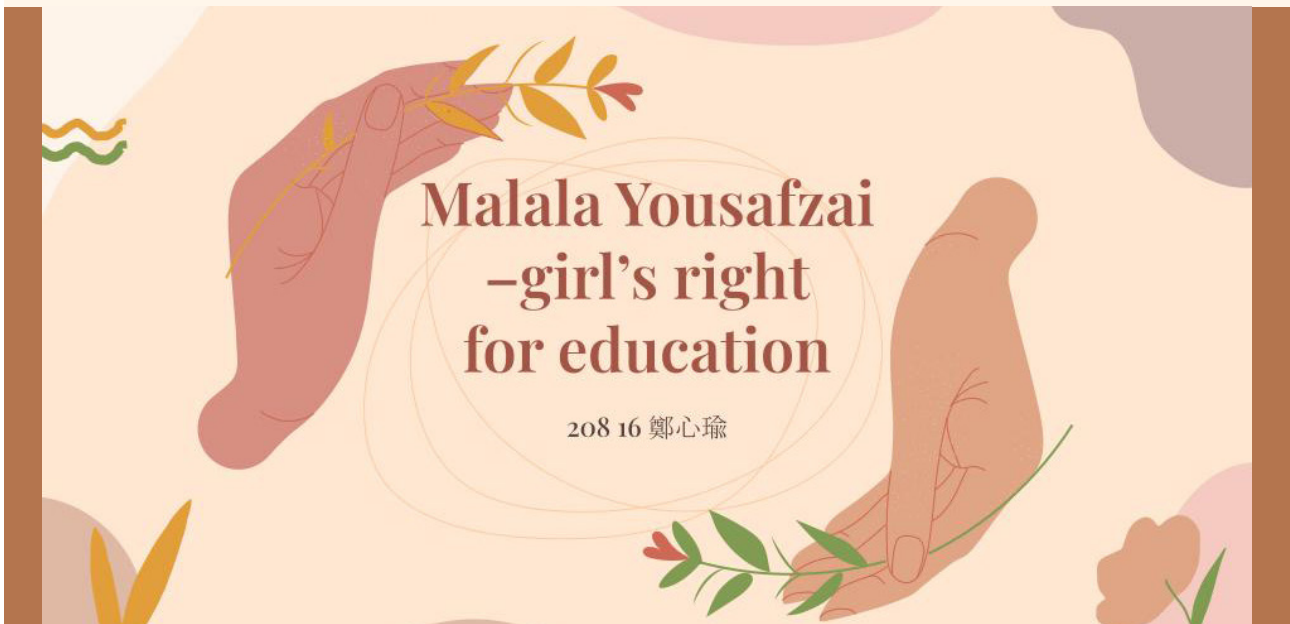
## Conclusion

Preparing for IELTS tests is undoubtedly not an easy task, we might face frustration while trying to meet the criteria. Nonetheless, just like other steps before studying abroad, preparing for IELTS tests can dramatically improve your English abilities. Try to make sure you have the chance to write, or even talk in English, during your preparation, as a way to boost these skills. Once you pass the threshold of the requirements, you will find out that you greatly improved your English abilities, so don't be afraid to prepare for the tests. Be ready, and pass it! Through this journey, I believe that one day, while someone asks you "how are you?", your answer will no longer be "I'm fine, thank you, and you?"

By 302 朱詠恩



# Malala Yousafzai – Girl's Right to Education



This semester, I took a course in which we read an English novel called I am Malala.

In this class, after we finished the novel, we made a brief presentation about the chapters we had been assigned.

My part was to read chapters fifteen and sixteen. They are about Malala realizing that her hometown was not safe. She and her family had to leave her hometown and become internally displaced persons, or IDPs.

Even in tough times, Malala didn't give up studying. I would say that what Malala loved the most in her life might be studying. When her family was packing up necessities for their journey to their relatives' house in the mountains, her brother wanted to bring chickens, while Malala tried to bring her books. And after they got in the mountains, Malala went to school with her cousins as soon as she got settled. Though most of Malala's family were hiding from the Taliban, her father was in Peshawar trying to get the media and the regional officials to acknowledge what was going on back in Swat. He then got invited to a meeting being held by a special ambassador from the US in Islamabad, and Malala went with him. At the meeting, Malala asked the ambassador to help the girls in Pakistan to get an education, but to Malala's disappointment, the government did not believe that girls' right to education was as important as the other issues in the country.

My presentation started with the information above, and continued with some quotes from these chapters that I felt were important. Then, I played some videos of Malala and the promotion of the right of children's education.



The first one is about Malala telling us how education is crucial to people, the impact of digital education, and what other countries can do to help promote education.

The second video is a young celebrity speaking on the UN' s youth forum when he was the same age as we are now. He was appointed UNICEF ambassador, and was promoting children' s education rights as well.

Other people had done their presentations as well. After we all finished, the teacher asked us to finish the rest of the novel and write worksheets, although I would have rather made more presentations.

### Beautiful Sentences

Number 1  
The future of our country can never be bright if we don't educate the young generation.

Number 2  
You are speaking for peace, for your rights, for the rights of girls. That's not wrong. That's your duty.

Number 3  
I stood on our roof looking at the mountains, at the alleys where we used to play cricket, the apricot trees coming into bloom. I tried to memorize every detail in case I never saw my home again.

Number 4  
My heart was full, but sometimes it's not until someone else cries that my tears feel free to flow.

Number 5  
The education of girls was far down on the list of issues that Pakistan faced.

And now we are going to have another presentation which is much more difficult. We have to pretend that we are advocates for something. I choose a topic about pet abandonment, since I have a pet dog at home, and after the pandemic, I have seen some news reporting that pets were being dumped on the streets. The news made me sad

and I wanted to do something for the abandoned animals. I hope my new presentation will turn out to be fantastic!

By 208 鄭心瑜



# Scout Camping



Recently, I went on a two-day camping trip with all of my classmates. It was my first time camping for a long while, and I have to say it was a great experience.

The first day, I woke up in the early morning, about five o'clock, when the sun had just risen. After having breakfast, we all went to our planned meeting point and prepared to begin our journey.

We arrived at the campsite around noon. The host reminded us about several things, and then we quickly set up our tents. In the beginning, we guessed it would be a simple task for us. However, when we began setting up our tent, we found that the stakes for our tent had disappeared. At first, we didn't understand how important those were. As the sun set, the events held on day-one came to a close, and we all enjoyed a campfire party and our peaceful surroundings.

The most impressive thing to me was at night. As the party ended, everyone got back to the camp, which was set up at noon. Unfortunately, my friends sleeping in the same tent with me were shocked. Our tent collapsed in the strong wind! We were all exhausted, but we still had to set up the tent again. However

we all had difficulty setting up the tent, so we rushed in the darkness to another side of the campsite to find some boys to help. Luckily, they were willing to lend us a hand, so we led a few boys from our class to our campsite. With their help, we successfully set up the tent before role call. At midnight, we were woken up by the sound of the wind. Looking around, our tent was shaking, and it seemed that it would fall down at any moment. We were scared that the tent will fall and hurt us, so the four people in the tent, including me, stood up and use all of our strength to support the crumbling tent. Because of this, we didn't even get a half hour of sleep.

The next day, we woke up early to the sound of birds chirping and the smell of fresh air. We spent the day exploring every part of the campsite.

Overall, I had a wonderful time on this camping trip. It was very tiring for everyone, but it was still a great way to spend time with friends outdoors. I felt refreshed and energized through this trip. I got so many memories with some of the best friends in my life, and I'm already looking forward to my next camping trip with them.

By 803 黃永昕





# INTERCLASS BASKETBALL GAME

Applause burst out when the buzzer sounded. Watching all the spectators rise to their feet as our teammates started praising us, we were overtaken by the excitement of victory and a strong sense of achievement. Finally, we surmounted all of the obstacles and won the championship.

As a matter of fact, we started our preparation more than a month before the game, due to our ambition to win the championship. Two classmates stood out as coaches and led the team. No matter it was the techniques they showed or their explanation of the rules, they devoted their time in teaching every player who was new to basketball. Aside from that, experienced players also laid out tactics and put them into practice in PE classes. Basketball had become a popular topic which classmates discussed very often in recess in that period of time, and as the game approached, our self-confidence grew.

From the preliminaries to the final game, the girls went the extra mile, astounding everyone and setting our score in the lead, which raised our morale and gave us a surge of adrenaline time and time again. We always concentrated on the games and encouraged each other, making sure to stay positive. Recalling a memory from the final, when one of the opponents shot a three-pointer, we were shocked because of how close our scores were. However, knowing we still took the lead, I kept myself composed and tried to pick my teammates up by yelling, "It's fine! Keep on focusing!" Not only did technique and physical fitness matter, but also our mentality, which made the biggest difference of all. Although we wanted the championship with all our hearts, we weren't too worried about winning or losing. Instead, dedicating our skills to the fullest in every detailed movement was what brought us to the moment of triumph.



In conclusion, every member of our team played a prominent role with solid determination in rising above all obstacles and ultimately winning the championship, and I appreciate all the efforts that have been paid by all of them.

By 208 陳俊羽

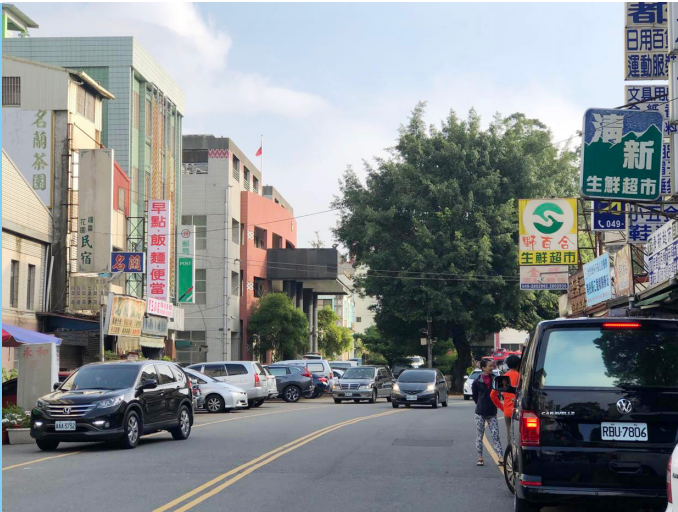
# Hehuanshan Adventure

Last year my dad decided it would be a good idea for us to go on a mountain-climbing trip to Hehuanshan. My family and I all like mountain climbing a lot, so we all agreed! But little did we know it was going to be an exciting, but also long and tiring, day.

I was a bit nervous at first, because my dad told me that it was going to be an early start. He said to get to the mountain on time, we needed to leave at about 4:30 in the morning. I am more of a night owl than an early bird, so naturally this made me a bit nervous! I packed my bags the night before, and went to bed early, but I couldn't really sleep. I must have fallen asleep eventually, though, because the next thing I remember was my dad waking me up telling me it was time to go. I must have also fallen asleep in the car because when I woke up next it was to the sound of my dad telling me it was time for breakfast.

We stopped at a place near Qingjing Farm, where we had some traditional dishes. There was some porridge and vegetables, which were delicious. The waiter there was quite nice, too. He had a chat with us and gave us a discount. What a great start!





We started the climb at 9:30. I saw different kinds of landscapes and magnificent views! What I remember first is that there were steep stairs and a lot of trees around us. I couldn't really see where I was going but I knew that I was going up! After a while it was more open and very rocky but I could see a lot of beautiful

views and flocks of birds flying in the distance. When I was near the top it was very steep with lots of loose rocks and very difficult to climb, but I didn't give up. When I finally reached the top, It was amazing! The sky was clear with little fluffy clouds, and there was sweet-smelling grass all around. Sounds beautiful, right? I took a photo with my family at the summit. I did it, I made it to the top!

People in the mountains are very friendly, too. People say hello, say good luck and sometimes they said I was doing well for a young boy.

On the way back down it started to rain, and it was getting a bit cold. However, I still feel that I was lucky, because I saw a colorful rainbow in the sky. The sky was beautiful; it looked painted.

Then we walked down for what felt like an eternity, and I was back in the car. On the way home I was very tired and soon fell asleep.

I was happy because I'd reached the top, seen a lot of great views, got some good exercise and met some nice people on our mountain climbing journey.

It was a nice day, don't you think?

By 701 墨印倫

# Human Interactions

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People usually forget how important mentorship is after they graduate. But mentorship can both affect the mentor and the mentee. Being a mentor can not only bring your life fulfillment, but it can also make yourself focus on your lifelong career again. People usually regard being a mentor as an easy job, and the sole requirement is working longer in the company than others. However, it's not as simple as you may think. In the beginning, you need to learn how to motivate and inspire your mentee. Using experiences of your own can help them connect with you even better. After becoming familiar with each other, they might start to rely on you, count on you, ask you questions and complain about things that are unpleasant to you, which is when it's your role to be a listener. Being a listener with a kind heart and patience is complicated. Sometimes, you might think they are stupid or saying some nonsense, but you still need to give them sincere and effective advice without hurting them. The real meaningful thing in the end of mentorship is to pass down your professional knowledge to the next generation, and pay it forward to the society.



Impress your audience by speaking their company's language while communicating with them. But the question is how to find a common language. An expert once said that following social media posts is a direct way to get into the firm. Also, reading more books and articles in your daily life plays a significant role, and the most important thing is to remember not to read the articles from different platforms and different writers. Somehow, the most effective way is asking insiders and you getting detailed and specific language from their offices. All of the above can make you stand out among crowds. But how to deal with toxic people if you accidentally encounter a toxic environment, for example, the coworkers or classmates who like to talk behind others backs constantly.



The environment which is defined as a toxic learning or working area is frequently unfavorable to us humans. And people who aren't in gossip groups feel pain to work or study in the same space with them. How to build a healthy relationship and live a happy life at the same time is such a challenge for them. Hence, research teaches us how to cope with toxic people. First, avoid sharing personal details with them because they could put you in danger of further emotional abuse or manipulation. Second, the most crucial thing to remember when interacting with them is to be prepared, organized and make sure you feel emotionally

calm. That can help you control the situation, and you won't get manipulated by others. Usually, people prefer to make almost everyone like them, but when it comes to toxic people you want to do the opposite. Otherwise, this effect could put you in an embarrassing situation. Hence, learning some skills to make those toxics like you is helpful. And the easy way to make them like you is to ask them for favors, they will think they're useful and like you more to show their importance.

Having mentorship, understanding others languages and coping with toxic people are all important skills in everybody's life. Learn it, try it and you might experience the best moments in your life when you face something that confuses you or someone you can't deal with. Those skills will definitely help you and impress you more than you could imagine.

By 108 陳宣妤



## Down to a town : Make a pilgrimage to Zi Nan Temple



After getting off the highway, driving straight for 2 kilometers and taking the right at the roundabout, we could see a small temple lying near a banyan tree. As small and shabby as it is, compared to the Beigang Chaotian Temple, which is renowned for its intricate decorations on the roofs and their extensive area, it doesn't obscure the fact that the Lord of the Land in Zi Nan Temple is fairly efficacious. Hence, every year it draws pilgrims throughout Taiwan.

In retrospect, floods of pilgrims surged into the lead with the aim of burning the first incense stick in Chinese New Year. Even when I reached the temple on the weekday, I still saw the thick incense smoke spiraling slowly upward to the sky coming with pilgrims' prayers. Rumor has it that if you smell the floral scent of lilies even though there's no lily flowers around us, it is when the god receives our words. I prayed to the Land of the Lord to bring my family health and to help us surmount hardships we encountered.



Next to the temple was a little booth which not only sold joss paper but also provided the service of applying for a golden hen. The clerk said to us, "There's no exaggeration that every religious household possesses a golden hen of their own. If you'd like to have one, fill out the form and ask god for permission." Upon hearing, my mom purchased one without hesitation.

Also, on the corner was a place where one could borrow money from the Land of the Lord. This service is called "chieh chin" in Chinese. A crew of cashiers there took on the responsibility of managing the god's money. As a general rule, worshippers borrowed the money from the god after throwing red moon blocks. A whole year later, they returned more money than they had borrowed previously. In folklore, the surplus was used to aid the poor.

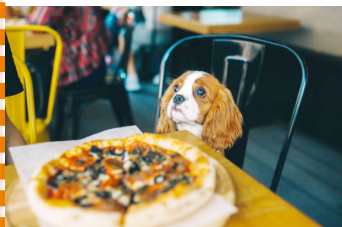
Later I was asked to fetch the food offerings and burn the joss paper only to find that due to the raising awareness of air pollution hoards of joss paper were gathered together to be burnt by staff members in the temple. Furthermore, I caught a glimpse of a platform in front of the temple. I craned forward to take a look and it turned out to be a Taiwanese opera performance. We were so astonished by their distinguished performance but felt sorrowful that as time advanced, traditional culture is fading away quickly.

As one of the most influential Temples in Taiwan, it renders religious pilgrims relieved and rekindles their passion for life. In addition, through many details such as the ban on burning the joss paper and the rare chance to see the Taiwanese Opera, it manifests that changes are in the air. After a fleeting visit, it dawned on me that the Lord of the Land in Zi Nan Temple indeed plays a considerable role in pious followers' lives while the conventional culture and practices should be more valued.

By 207 賴虹璇

# Opinions on Pet Friendly Restaurant

I can still vividly recall the unforgettable memory of when I stumbled across a man and his pet dog in a caffè. It was a scorching hot day with birds chirping and a mild breeze gently caressing my checks. I went to a pet-friendly caffè so as to alleviate my stress from urban life. Little did I know that the seemingly normal day would eventually turn out to be a total disaster. As I was lingering over a cup of lukewarm coffee and peering out the window to appreciate the hustle and bustle on the street, I found a furry dog running in the caffè. Not only did the dog give an atrocious snarl to every customer it saw, but it also tried to bite them. Of course, I was no exception. Being aggravated and annoyed about it, I immediately went to its owner furiously and did my utmost to persuade him to control his reckless dog. unexpectedly, the man just ignored my words and concentrated on his work. Having no alternative but to find a caffè with a better atmosphere, I left the pet-friendly caffè. In retrospect, the experience was so nasty that I will never go to the awful caffè again.



As far as I am concerned, as a customer, if I bump into some pets in restaurants, I will prefer to leave rather than stay. The statement can be elaborated for the following reasons. On one hand, the major aim of going to restaurants is so that I could totally immerse myself in my leisure time and relax. If the owners do not impose a restriction on those bothersome things, the only thing I could obtain is stress rather than relief. It will undoubtedly obliterate my desire to have meals in pet-friendly restaurants. On the other hand, from the perspective of the restaurants, pets are usually out of control. They will pose a menace to the furniture, decorations etc. of the store. I deeply believe that neither the customers nor the restaurants should be exposed to the risks. From the reasons mentioned above, I am convinced that all restaurants should ban pets. Not merely because the pets may be aggressive but also in that they may throw the whole store into chaos, the shopkeepers should not be burdened with the responsibility to look after the nuisance. Hence, pets should only be taken to parks or kept at home, instead of taking them to restaurants.

本篇文章為本學期英文作文比賽第一名

By 209 施柏志



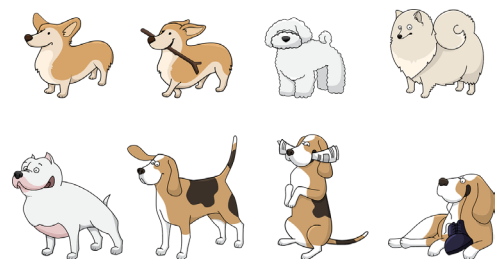
# OPINIONS ON PET FRIENDLY RESTAURANT



In the modern era, the practice of keeping a pet has become more and more prevalent. From common ones such as dogs and cats to snakes and even pigs, animals have gradually started playing a significant role in busy city lives and emerging in all kinds of places, including the most controversial ones, restaurants. As a person who is allergic to fur and scared of big dogs, coming across an animal while sitting at a dining table can be annoying. Once when I was waiting for my meal in a restaurant, I saw a woman walking through the door with her enormous dog that almost looked like a wolf. I started panicking and avoiding eye contact with the dog, hoping it wouldn't come over. But to my despair, the woman eventually chose to sit right behind my seat, and my nightmare began. At first the wolf dog just sprawled on the floor and growled. I couldn't help but look back, only to find it staring right into my soul. I turned back immediately but it was too late. The sound of

footsteps and breath started getting closer, and the next moment, I felt a warm and moist feeling. It was sniffing and licking my legs, I was paralyzed. The time froze for a little while and I sneaked out of the restaurant once the dog lost interest in me, leaving a whole meal behind.

As a customer, by no means would I advocate the idea of bringing pets into restaurants. I don't get the point of doing so, since the food is clearly not made for them and it would be devastating to see an animal climbing up the table and gorging on humans' food. The issue of hygiene is another problem. Animals can bring all kinds of diseases and bugs on them, some of which will be lethal to humans. With cafes and restaurants designed for pets popping up everywhere, I think it's time that pet owners stopped having their so-called "adorable" little creatures with them in normal restaurants and spare those with allergies, and stop spreading diseases, and horror.



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