

ELC MIRROR

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER

VOL. 9 | AY 2021-2022



Flying HIGH with ELC!

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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

With a warm heart and open arms, I welcome you to the 9th edition of the ELC Mirror.

Summer break is around the corner...again! Hasn't it felt like this year has gone past way too quickly? Either way, the ELC community is excited for spending the much needed summer holiday, and eager for embracing the next academic year.

In this edition of the magazine, the theme is FLYING HIGH WITH ELC! We have collected the achievements of the Center in various aspects to proudly show to the world that we are all flying high, even higher than before.

Like the past academic years, 2021-2022 has been fruitful for our Center. Kudos to the ELC Management, teaching and support staff, and students, for joining forces to aim higher and hit the mark. Hopefully, the effort behind that labour pays off when the ELC will emerge victorious in the 1st Inter-Departmental Competition at UTAS-Salalah (Insha'Allah).

True enough, the ELC has become instrumental to our success, and we are always humbled and grateful for being a part of this community in reaching greater heights.

From the ELC Mirror, we wish you a happy vacation. Godspeed!

Dr. Claire M. Orpilla

EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF THE ELC MIRROR

Message from the DEAN

The University of Technology and Applied Sciences has recently launched its visual identity, which is the way to present the University to the entire world. Our new identity represents the University's goals, vision, and mission for the present and future. It also symbolizes the University's aspiration to equip the next generation in the field of technical and applied education ensuring their competitiveness locally and globally. To achieve this target, the English Language Center (ELC) plays a pivotal and crucial role as it provides students who have been accepted to study at the University with the required language, technical, mathematical and life skills to enter and succeed in their academic undergraduate programs. The theme of the ELC Mirror's 9th Edition, "Flying High with ELC!" coincides with the path of UTAS as signified in our new identity.

Notwithstanding challenging circumstances, it has been a fruitful and successful year for UTAS-Salalah, and we are extremely proud of the developments and progress that we have achieved for 2021-2022. As always, on behalf of the University management, I want to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the entire UTAS-Salalah community for their hard work and dedication, as well as the support that they have extended to the management.

This edition of the ELC Mirror highlights and celebrates the accomplishments and success of the ELC as the Center went above and beyond my expectations this year.



Dr. Mohammed Rashid Almamari

DEAN OF UTAS-SALALAH

Looking back, the Center had noteworthy achievements and initiatives, which are indicative of its culture of excellence. The level of collaboration and diligence you have demonstrated this year is truly remarkable. The University management recognizes the Center with all its staff and students, for their outstanding contributions to the success of the entire University, and I look forward to more milestones from the Center.

Finally, I would like to again congratulate and commend the team behind the ELC Mirror. This magazine is a manifestation of the Center's triumphs, which extend to the entire University.

From the DESK of the HoC-ELC

As we come to the end of the academic year 2021-2022, we can proudly look back at our achievements with a sense of pride. This is the product of constructive cooperation, sincere dedication and continuous efforts of all the ELC faculty members. Even the students of the Center benefited from all the extra-curricular activities conducted. They gained confidence in English speaking skills and they were encouraged, too, to refine their general study skills, thereby promoting a sense of ownership to the English Language Center.

One of the innovative achievements is the presentation of the ninth edition of the Center's magazine, the ELC Mirror. It showcases the creative team spirit and competitive environment, which has had an impact on many stakeholders. It includes a variety of the best articles from our students and faculty members. Among these contributions are news, reflective essays, feature stories, poems, and other miscellaneous articles.

As such, I want to convey my most heartfelt thanks to Dr. Mohammed Al-Maamari, the Dean of UTAS-Salalah, for his infinite support and words of encouragement. My gratitude is similarly extended to the editorial board of the ELC Mirror, chaired by Dr. Claire, for their efforts in producing this comprehensive magazine, which highlights the events accomplished by the ELC each academic year.



Saeed Salim Al-Mashiki
HEAD OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER

It is our hope that this wonderful effort will continue to create an environment of innovation, achieving the best results for the general objectives of UTAS-Salalah.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all ELC lecturers for their dedicated service, unwavering support, and inexhaustible patience. I wish them a happy holiday filled with safety and happiness with their families and loved ones.

Perspectives from the HoS-CTM

The last semester has been basically made for the low achievers struggling with English, Math, and IT courses. Accordingly, the ELC has prepared well for the reinforcement course this semester. As a first step, the management conducted an Orientation Day for the students before the start of teaching, by stressing the importance of attendance, punctuality, class participation, and college rules. In addition, the HoSs gave some good tips to the students on how to pass the final exams.

The ELC management likewise had a class visit to the Foundation Program students from Levels 1 to 4 to ensure that the rules have been successfully followed by all students. Students took the opportunity to raise their concerns and doubts to the management. However, that matter was delivered smoothly to our students in a flexible way for their sake.

The low achievers need a special care and encouragement that can bush them up to achieve the learning outcomes required for this current semester. Hence, the ELC management has made a good plan for them by increasing awareness and providing extra assistance.

As far as this matter is concerned, all the efforts would be fruitful if everyone in the ELC cooperates towards achieving one particular goal.



Khayar Mohammed Alamri

HEAD OF SECTION - CURRICULUM & TEACHING METHODS

Perspectives from the HoS-ELP

The academic year is about to end, and my heart is full because of the numerous achievements of the English Language Center, through the concerted efforts of the ELC Management, lecturers, support staff, and students from the General Foundation Program and Post-Foundation Program.

Together, we have aimed and reached for the stars as spelled out during our ELC Day. As the most diverse department at UTAS-Salah, we have showcased our unity in diversity. We all deserve a pat in the back for doing well in this academic year.

From the English Language Programs Section, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all of you, who in one or another, have contributed to the milestones achieved by the ELC, under the administration of Mr. Saeed Salim Al-Mashiki.

As we journey together to another academic year, I hope that your commitment to serve the ELC and the University will remain steadfast and burning. We will meet obstacles along the way, but I am confident that we will get it through together.

At this juncture, I would like to wish you all the most enjoyable summer holiday with your family. See you next semester!



Salim Said Al - Maashani

HEAD OF SECTION - ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

COVER STORY

Flying HIGH with ELC!

BY DR. NAGAMURALI ERAGAMREDDY



Through a dynamic and goal-oriented educational curriculum, the ELC is committed to developing receptive and motivated students. The curriculum gives students the tools to understand numerous topics from both a local and a global perspective.

Here in the ELC, numerous possibilities are given to develop and evaluate critical creative thinking abilities, flexibility of approach, capacity to collaborate with others and serve others, as well as grit and fortitude in the face of difficulties, within the broad-based modules that are offered.

More importantly, the institution's educational curriculum is supported by a wide range of activities, which help to produce the best possible ELC products—strong, self-assured, and engaged lifelong learners. The ELC cultivates students to acquire a lifetime habit of learning, which is essential for all-around development.

The ELC is identified as a community of learners that cultivates the full range of students' abilities and uniqueness from various backgrounds.

Our shared goals are to:

- foster the courage to live and think as unique people who accept their obligations in the greater world.
- show all of our students the profound fulfillment that comes from helping others.
- extend the educational experience to incorporate the artist's creative joy, artistic sense, and vitality.
- help our students form the academic mindsets, that will serve as the cornerstone of a passion for learning that lasts a lifetime.
- encourage character growth so that people can live meaningful lives.

Indeed, the ELC is a true learning community that can help you fly higher to reach the zenith of success.



ELC Day wows spectators

BY DR. CLAIRE ORPILLA

The English Language Center culminated the academic year 2021-2022 with a bang by holding the ELC Day themed “Aiming for the Stars” in the Multi-purpose Hall, UTAS-Salah on May 23, 2022.

The event kicked off with the cutting of ribbon and opening ceremony. In his welcome message, Mr. Saeed Salim Al-Mashiki, the Head of ELC, acknowledged and thanked the Dean, Dr. Mohammed Rashid Al-Mamari, for gracing the ELC Day as the Patron. The HoC also expressed his gratitude to the organizing committee for pulling off the event, and to UTAS-Salah staff and students for sharing the momentous event with the Center.

The next activity showcased students’ presentations on Cyber Security by Abdullah Al-Mashani, Cryptocurrency by Asma Sulaiman, and Negative Effects of Social Media on Beauty Standards by Manwah Bait Matran.

Another highlight of the event was the ELC Achievements in AY 2021- 2022. Ms. Dhahab Hubais presented infographics about the accomplishments of the ELC Magazine, Writing Center, Research and Consultancy, Staff Professional Development, and ELC Clubs such as Photography, Art, and Speaking Clubs.

Energizing the audience was the conduct of competitions hosted

by Dr. Razia Khan, Ms. Zeentah Shaik, and Mr. Jogie George. Kahoot and Story Telling were participated in by staff and students, a Spelling Bee by students, and Words Building by staff.

An art contest and exhibition was the fourth activity. It was an individual work for students using watercolor art, painting art, pencil art, charcoal art, and mirage art. The first prize was bagged by Muna Al Shanfari.

Thereafter, Ms. Rio Asada presented a workshop on origami, highlighting Japanese art, origami techniques in modern space engineering, and



TOGETHER WE SUCCEED: Assisted by the HoC- ELC and some staff of UTAS-Salah, the Dean is the Patron during the ELC Day on May 23, 2022.



AIMING FOR THE STARS: Mr. Saeed Salim Al-Mashiki officially opens the ELC Day held in the Multi-purpose Hall.

demonstration in making paper cranes. She was assisted by her students, namely, Ayaj Jaboob and Qies Riyadh Sloulin.

The main highlight of the event was the Cultural Show, directed by Ms. Rachel Joseph and Ms. Racquel Barth. Seventeen countries from the ELC were presented by select staff to flaunt their respective cultures.

Awards ceremony for staff and students was the final part of the event hosted by Ms. Mariam Al Sabbah. Awards were based on

the following categories: ELC Management Support Team, 4th ELT Symposium, Staff Professional Development , ELC Magazine, Writing Center, E-Learning, Research and Consultancy, ELC Clubs, Ejada, GFP Induction, ELC Day, ETC Technical Support, ELC Security Guards, photography winners, and art contest winners, participants, and judges.

To celebrate that milestone, staff, students, and guests had lunch together in the Self-Access Center.



Cultural show featuring 17 nationalities from the ELC



Origami workshop



Student presentation on Cyber Security



Student competition in story telling



Student art contest & exhibition



Awards ceremony for staff & students

1ST INTER-DEPARTMENTAL, STAFF COMPETITION LAUNCHED AT UTAS-SALALAH

An inter-departmental and staff competition was launched by the Dean's Office at UTAS-Salalah to encourage distinction and innovation.

The duration of the competition was from September 5, 2021 to May 31, 2022.

The end-products of the competition include enhanced output, increased productivity, boosted morale, new and innovative ideas, and healthier collaboration among staff.

The criteria for the inter-departmental competition involved six elements as follows:

- Teaching & learning (25%)
- Research Performance, Publications, and Student Projects (20%)
- Industrial and Community Outreach Programs (20%)
- Staff Development Programs (15%)
- Student Development Programs, Activities, and Student Clubs (15%)
- Other initiatives (5%)



BEST ONE EVER: GFP students consider the photography exhibition the most exciting activity for AY 2021-2022.

For the individual category, staff are appraised in terms:

- Class Observation Rating of 4.5 out of 5
- Initiatives/Projects for the Department, Section, Center
- Research publications
- Participation/speakership in community outreach programs
- Conducting internal trainings

- Participation in conferences
- Initiating and conducting activities for students
- Any other achievements related to the teaching/learning, research, and entrepreneurships
- Any achievements that increase the quality of work in the center, departments or section

A committee chaired by the Dean kept track of the progress of each departments and staff for the entire academic year, and the highest weightage from the contenders shall be given recognition some time in July 2022.

Meanwhile, the ELC has geared up for the competition by preparing all evidence of its numerous achievements for AY 2021-2022.



HOPEFUL & GRATEFUL: Team ELC, with the Dean of UTAS-Salalah (3rd from left), after their almost four-hour presentation of evidence.



GUIDING STUDENTS: Level Coordinators help students to complete a form during the orientation.



credit: www.sct.edu.om

ELC at UTAS-Salah is new IELTS testing center in Dhofar

IELTS PARTNERSHIP INKED: ELC at UTAS-Salah has become an official offsite testing venue and registration agent in the Dhofari region, in collaboration with Hawthorn-Muscat, English Language Center.

The University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Salah signed a collaborative agreement with Hawthorn-Muscat, English Language Center, establishing the ELC at UTAS-Salah as the new IELTS center in Dhofar Governorate.

The agreement was signed on March 30, 2022 by the UTAS-Salah Dean, Dr. Mohammed Rashid Al-Mamari, and Mr. Suhail Mohammed Bahwan, the Center Manager of Hawthorn-Muscat, ELC.

Representing the ELC at UTAS-Salah during the event were Mr. Saeed Al-Mashiki, the Head of the Center; Ms. Khayar Alamri, the HoS for Curriculum & Teaching Methods; and Mr. Salim Al-Maashani, the HoS for English Language Programs.

Through the signed agreement, the ELC at UTAS-Salah has become Hawthorn's official exclusive offsite testing venue and registration agent in Dhofar.

The agreement aims to assist students of UTAS-Salah and other stakeholders, who hope to register for and take part in the IELTS exams. The new services are also open for non-Omanis who are living in Dhofar.

Around 30 examinees took the first IELTS exam in the new ELC building on May 7, 2022. The second exam was conducted on June 25, 2022 with about 21 exam takers.

The examinees expressed their heartfelt gratitude to UTAS-Salah for bringing IELTS services closer to them for a reasonable fee.



IELTS CONSULTATION: The ELC Self-Access Center opens its door to students who need information and guidance in taking the IELTS exam.

ELC holds 4th ELT symposium

BY DR. CLAIRE ORPILLA



4TH NATIONAL ELT SYMPOSIUM: *The Head of the English Language Center, along with other lecturers are actively engaged during the opening ceremony of the symposium on Current and Future Trends in ELT.*

The fourth ELT symposium on Current and Future Trends in ELT, organized and hosted by the English Language Center (ELC) at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS) – Salalah on March 17, 2022 via Zoom platform, was designed to address the challenges and changes that have dramatically impacted the institutional landscape of English Language Teaching (ELT) in recent times.

The symposium began with a brief introduction by Ms. Muna Salim Kashoob, the chair of the symposium organizing committee. She articulated the committee's commitment in providing continuous support and professional development opportunities for the ELC staff, including interactions with other academics across Oman.

The Head of the ELC at UTAS-Salalah formally welcomed the attendees of the symposium. In his opening remarks, Mr. Saeed Salim Al-Mashiki urged them to endeavor to keep abreast of the current and future trends in ELT and to address the challenges and repercussions brought by the global pandemic. He also thanked the Vice Chancellor (VC) of UTAS for honouring the event, and the symposium partners, namely, the National Geographic Learning, Galfar Gases, and Labelle for extending their support.

Distinguishing himself as the Patron of the symposium was the VC of UTAS, His Excellency Dr. Saeed Bin Hamad Al-Rubaie, who spelled out the University's responsiveness, resilience, and compliance in ensuring that the

core work of teaching and learning across UTAS campuses continues undiminished. The VC expressed his appreciation to the management and the staff of UTAS-Salalah, in particular, for their continuous efforts in helping the University achieve greater heights of success.

The first keynote speaker was Dr. Ali Al-Balushi from Sultan Qaboos University, Oman, who elucidated the topic Empowering Language Teachers as Reflective and Transformative Intellectuals: Teachers Creating their Own Theory of Practice.

Dr. Peter Watkins from the University of Portsmouth, UK, was the second keynote speaker on the topic Five Ways to Improve the Teaching of Reading.

The third keynote speaker was Mr. Alex Warren from the National Geographic Learning whose topic dwelt on Visible Thinking Routines in the English Language Classroom.

Engaging Students through Shared Classroom Decision-Making – How can it be Done? was the last keynote topic presented by Dr. Andrew Littlejohn, an Associate Professor of Language Education and Deputy Dean (Research) at the Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Institute of Education, Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

Other highlights of the symposium included five paper presentations and one workshop by select academic staff from prestigious higher education institutions across Oman. Completed in concurrent sessions, the presenters were:

Dr. Zainab Al Balushi (SQU) on Mapping out the Paths to Teaching Social Responsibility in the Context of ESP; Dr. Yasir Alyafaei (UTAS-Salalah) on Affordances of Online Collaboration on Students' Writing Performance and Revision Behaviours; Ms. We'am Al Jilani (UTAS-Salalah) on Integration of Technology in the EFL Classes to Teach Past Tense; Dr. Moza Al-Malki and Dr. Yaqoob Al Ghatrifi (UTAS-Rustaq) on The Use of Problem Solving at Cycle 2 English Classroom; and Dr. Jamila al Siyabi (SQU) on Responding to Special Needs in ELT: Challenges and Opportunities. Mr. Abdull Al Hashmi (UTAS-Nizwa) and Mr. Salah Al-Hanshi (SQU) collaboratively presented a workshop on Transforming Learning and Teaching Experience through RoznaHub.

The keynote speeches, paper presentations, and workshop

made gleanings essentials to the following recommendations to help set the future directions of ELT across Oman:

- Developing the current curriculum is needed to support the teaching and learning process.
- Extensive reading has more benefits than intensive reading.
- Using different routines and activities is important to enrich EFL classroom.
- Integrating technology in EFL classroom is essential.

The ELC stakeholders are now looking forward to next year's event with several implications of this year's symposium being highlighted. Calls came for a centralized location for future ELT conferences for all the UTAS colleges. Salalah itself would be an ideal hub for this event in the months of the 'Khareef' season, with the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex as a potential venue.



Message from the UTAS-Salalah Vice Chancellor & the Patron of the ELT Symposium, His Excellency Dr. Saeed Bin Hamad Al-Rubaie



Keynote speech by Mr. Alex Warren from the National Geographic Learning

A COMMITMENT TO LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

BY RANDY MAGDALUYO

The current academic year has witnessed new initiatives and directions in the English Language Center. With the formal relaunching of the Writing Center and Remedial Program, it has remained committed in further enhancing the students' language skills while helping them realize their educational and personal goals. Mr. Saeed Al-Mashiki, the Head of the ELC, stressed this important mission of forming critical, creative and independent English language learners among General Foundation and Post-Foundation students.



Writing Center

As one of the ELC banner programs, the Writing Center provides a positive support to students at every stage of the writing process. The highly qualified tutors carefully assist students in discovering their writing potentials and guiding them in completing writing pieces with confidence in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, mechanics, grammar and citation styles. Students have a wide range of options to avail these services including booking individual writing conferences, joining small group discussions and participating in mini workshop series. They can bring several types of writing samples, such as essays, projects, reports, letters, proposals, memos, emails, scripts, speeches and resumes among others. To set an appointment, students can choose their preferred schedules by using the Tutorial Booking System (TBS) or visiting the Self-Access Center (SAC). Additionally, teachers can make a referral through the SCT Web Apps – Writing Center.

For this academic year, the Writing Center catered more than 400 remedial students in all its services. One of the highlights was the mini writing workshop series that all tutors jointly designed and successfully conducted to both GFP and PF students.

Level 1 tutors, Mr. Ediphil Sibanda and Zeenath Shaik, presented an interactive writing session in describing past activities focusing on the construction of past regular and irregular verbs. Students worked on a crossword puzzle and a gap fill worksheet to help them write a short paragraph about their last summer trip.

Level 2 tutor, Ms. Racquel Barth, delivered a workshop on instructional writing using action verbs and transition words to guide students in writing a step by step instruction. Students watched an instructional video on how to make noodles and discussed in their small groups the different steps before their writing practice.



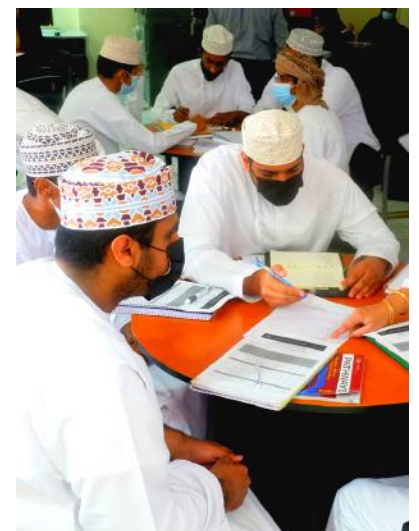
“

Students participated in an interactive vocabulary exercise in their small groups by doing a short reading and practicing the 4-step approach to learn important words from their Pathways books.

Level 3 tutor, Ms. Steleen Pramod, guided students in outlining and organizing their ideas for a cause and effect essay. Students worked in small groups to brainstorm their ideas and write sample thesis statements, topic sentences and supporting details about a number of common issues, such as eating habits, laziness, smoking and social media.

Level 4 tutors, Mr. Randy Magdaluyo, Ms. Helen Jemima, and Mr. Anwaar Ahmed, discussed argument essay writing and helped students identify sample arguments in favor and against the issue. Students watched a case study report on the advantages and disadvantages of promoting tourism and later outlined and wrote their ideas in their writing booklets.

Another workshop on vocabulary development strategies was also facilitated by Mr. Sibanda to all level 4 remedial students. He emphasized the importance of building one's vocabulary through the 4-step approach, namely read, learn, record and use. Students participated in an interactive vocabulary exercise in their small groups by doing a short reading and practicing the 4-step approach to learn important words from their Pathways books.





REMEDIAL PROGRAM

The Remedial Program is another regular tutorial service offered by ELC, which aims to improve the other language skills and study skills of the students. The sessions are conducted by the respective class teachers during their advising hours at the Self-Access Center (SAC). Students are provided with supplemental materials and individualized assistance in reading, listening, speaking and grammar.

The reading tutorial focuses on the use and mastery of strategies to address issues related to comprehension, decoding, fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, speed and vocabulary. Teachers use different reading texts and train students on how to build their skills based on their reading purpose.

The listening tutorial introduces techniques to practice comprehension, note-taking, spelling, sound discrimination and vocabulary. Students deal with different audio materials and engage in interactive discussions to improve their listening skills.

The speaking tutorial engages students in communicative tasks that develop fluency, grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary while helping them manage their speech anxiety. Students participate in speaking tasks with different situations, themes, topics and formats.

The grammar tutorial incorporates the language features and structures that students have to apply in their receptive and productive skills for effective communication. They take short grammar exercises, such as subject-verb agreement, pronouns, tenses, voices, phrasal verbs, etc.

Moreover, remedial students in the Post-Foundation Program also engaged in several workshops on technical writing. Ms. Rio Asada and Mr. Magdaluyo conducted a workshop on graph analysis. Students examined details presented in sample bar and line graphs, completed a gap fill worksheet with some useful vocabulary items, and practiced writing a complete data commentary.

Dr. Mohammed Al-Raimi focused on the ways students can achieve coherence and cohesion in his workshop on process essay writing. Students brainstormed in their groups some transition words to show a sequence, give an example and state a conclusion, which they later used in writing about the steps in getting customers' opinions about factory products.

Lastly, Ms. Rachel Joseph detailed the steps in writing targeted job applications letters based on print and online advertisements. Students reviewed samples of job postings and practiced applying for these available positions by writing letters following the suggested structure and content.



In this academic year, the Self-Access Center received more than 200 remedial class appointments from GFP and PF students. The sessions were organized and supervised by Mr. Magdaluyo, Ms. Atsloom Al-Maashani and Ms. Amna Al-Yafi who serve as coordinators of the Writing Center and Self-Access Center, respectively. The overall satisfaction feedback surveys also indicate that students considered the remedial classes as very useful in developing their language skills and study habits. They were highly satisfied with the conduct of the remedial classes by their tutors.

Truly, the Writing Center and Remedial Program are a testament to the ELC's commitment to create a community of engaged, motivated and goal-oriented language learners. The opportunity in teaching English is to help them become critical and creative participants and allow them to grow as mature and independent learners. As Toby Fulwiler (1986) puts it, "... not all of them succeed completely, but at least, they are [all] well started."



PROACTIVE ENGLISH LECTURERS: *The workshops on using wheel of names (photo 1) and causes of absenteeism (photo 2) make teachers more creative in performing the assigned tasks.*

SPD committee conducts 4 programs in summer'22

BY MUNA KASHOOB

The ELC Staff Professional Development (SPD) committee organized four programs in the last semester of AY 2021-2022, to help boost teachers' academic growth in ELT.

The first webinar was entitled “Time Management Strategies for Students” by Dr. Iyyappan Sundareswaran, who shared the most important strategies and skills that students can gain to manage their time and plan their goals. He ushered teachers on how they can help students acquire these strategies.

Next was the workshop of Ms. Muna Kashoob on how to use wheel of names in ELF/ESL classrooms, conducted on June 2, 2022 in ELC lab-1. She shared a fun tool to use for brain breaks, by filling the wheel with a variety of exercises, which can be tailored based on students' needs.

On the other hand, Mr. Randy Magdaluyo presented an action research on exploring and transforming classroom teaching experiences on June 21, 2022 in the Self-Access Center (SAC). Staff considered it insightful while reflecting how to become better English educators.

Meanwhile, a seminar was done by Ms. Manal Alabsy on June 27, 2022 in the SAC. The first session was a case study on the causes of absenteeism, and the second session focused on authentic assessment. The seminar received a positive feedback from the attendees.

The ELC Management commended the staff for religiously attending all the SPD programs for the entire academic year.

STAFF CONVENE TO KICK OFF SEM 2

BY SALINA MASCRELHAS

The English Language Center had its semester-wise staff meeting on the 8th of February, 2022 in the Self Access Center. Mr. Saeed Al Mashiki, the Head of the English Language Center, greeted the ELC staff and wished them a successful semester at the outset of the meeting.

He extended a warm welcome to all the new staff, who had recently joined the ELC. He also elaborated on student and staff statistics, ELC staff breakdown and teaching load, Ejada platform, staff leave policies and procedures, Inter-departmental competition, and 4th ELT Virtual Symposium during the meeting. The details regarding the TRC Block Funding Cycle, different types of TRC Grants, research proposal submissions, and important deadlines were shared during the meeting. The ELC staff were also encouraged to engage in fruitful research that is beneficial to the country.

Mr. Al Mashiki expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all staff for their contributions and services in various capacities to the Center amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.



STARTING THE SEMESTER RIGHT: *The Head of the ELC explains the crucial role of each staff as the Center bids to win the 1st Inter-Departmental Competition.*

Ejada 2nd cycle workshop sheds light

BY QASEIM AL-MAASHANI

A workshop on implementing the second cycle of Ejada plans was conducted for the English Language Center staff, UTAS – Salalah on May 16, 2022, in order to shed light on the technical difficulties and challenges faced by staff members using the platform, and to clear up several key points about the academic nature of the summer semester. The workshop was organized and hosted by the ELC Ejada Support Team.

Mr. Saeed Al Mashiki gave a brief speech about the upcoming semester. He praised the Ejada Support Team for doing a wonderful job, along with the staff for achieving their plans in the first cycle. After that, Ms. Salina Mascrelhas stressed the importance of the Reinforcement Course. This was followed by Ms. Khayar Alamri who went through the objectives and key results of the second cycle, and Mr. Salim Al-Maashani who demonstrated how to organize and upload evidence to the server. The workshop ended with an open forum where Mr. Qaseim Al Maashani, a member of the ELC Ejada Team, answered all queries raised by the staff.

ELC SHOWCASES 'MY OMAN, MY PRIDE' PHOTO EXHIBITION

BY JOGI GEORGE

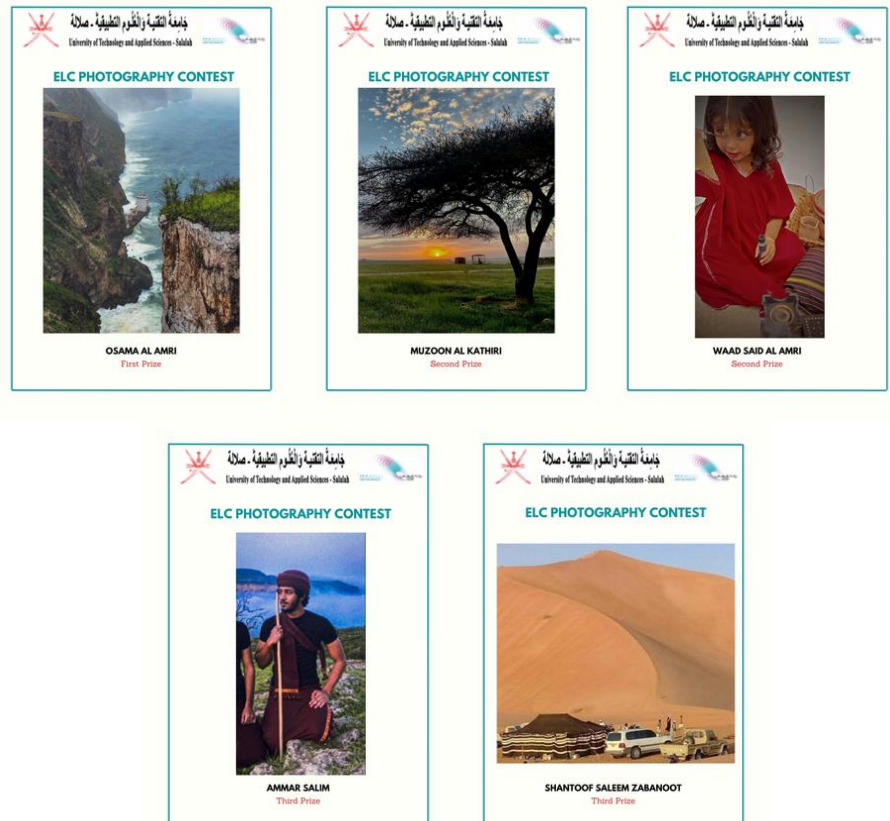
The English Language Center showcased an exhibition of students' photographs on the theme My Oman My Pride, as a culminating event of the Photography Club.

Sixty-eight photo entries from students were displayed in the hallway of the new ELC building on March 30, 2022. The photographs included Oman's natural scenic spots, traditional Omani clothing, Omani children, and animals found in Oman.

Selected by popular voting, winners of the contest were:

- First place - Osama Alamri
- Second place - Muzoon Al Kathiri & Waad Alamri
- Third place - Ammar Hardab & Shantoof Zabanoot

The event was organized by Mariam Al Sabbah (ELC Club Coordinator) and Jogi George (Photography Club Coordinator), and it was inaugurated by Mr. Saeed Al Mashiki (HoC-ELC).



L1, L2 students watch movie

Levels 1 and 2 students from the General Foundation Program got overwhelmed with excitement as they watched the movie The Italian Job on March 31, 2022. Organized by the ELC Club, the movie day aimed at making learning English more entertaining and at helping students properly express themselves and understand society. Separate classrooms for male and female were used during the movie day.

Ms. Mariam Al-Sabbah, the ELC Club Coordinator, believed that GFP students deserve a reward after studying hard for the mid-term examination. Popcorns, nachos, and cold beverages were served while students were watching the movie. According to Ms. Sabbah, the ELC Club is planning to have a real cinema experience for UTAS-Salah students by holding it in a bigger venue like the Multi-Purpose Hall next academic year.

General Foundation Program

ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS

AY 2021-2022



SEMESTER 1

LEVEL 1

1. SAFA SAID SALIM AL ANSI
2. NAWAF MOHAMMED FARAJ AL KATHIRI
3. AHMED SAID SUHAIL HARDAN

LEVEL 2

1. HIYA MADIAN ABDULLAH AL-YAFAI
2. AHMED SAID SUHAIL HARDAN
3. MAJDAH BAKHIT SAID TABOOK

LEVEL 3

1. ASMA ABDULLAH SAEED AL-DINI
2. ANWAR OMAR SAID AL-AWADI
3. TASNIM ABDUL AZIZ RABIA AL SHAJIBI

LEVEL 4

1. MOHAMMED BADAR ALI BAIT ALI
SULAIMAN
2. RANIA SAUD ABDULLAH AL MANDHARI
3. MOHMMED RAMADHAN SANGOOR BAIT
ALMDAWI

SEMESTER 2

LEVEL 1

1. ALLA HAMOOD SAID AL-KIYUMI
2. ESARAA SALIM MOHAMMED AL OJAILI
3. AMELYN AHMED SALIM BAIT RABEEA

LEVEL 2

1. SARA TAIMUR HARIB AL HAJRI
2. NASSER SAID SALIM RAFEET
2. AHMED ABDUL QAWI SALIM FADHIL
3. SULTAN ISMAIL SULAIMAN ALBLUSHI

LEVEL 3

1. MUNA AHMED MOHAMMED AL AMRI
2. AHMED SAID SUHAIL HARDAN
3. HIYA MADIAN ABDULLAH AL-YAFAI

LEVEL 4

1. MOHAMMED ANWAR ASHOOR
AL-HADDADI
2. SAID ALI SAID ARAN AL SHAHRI
3. ASMA ABDULLAH SAEED AL-DINI

Toastmasters International introduced to ELC students

To familiarize students with Toastmasters International, the ELC Club, the main student organization of the English Language Center, UTAS-Salalah, organized a workshop in the Self-Access Center on March 28, 2022.

Amal Al Balushi and Musallam Al Kathiri, the guest speakers from the Toastmasters International –Salalah Chapter, shared information to the students about the organization, the merits of joining it, and the membership fee. Using English and Arabic, the speakers explained how the Toastmasters club has helped them become more confident communicators, public speakers, and leaders, and how they have gained the skills needed to achieve both their professional and personal goals.

BY HRIDHYA MENON



YOUR VOICE IS POWER: Amal Al Balushi from the Toastmasters International- Salalah Chapter, encourages students to be confident speakers.



SPEAKING TIME: Three GFP students share their insights on the benefits of enhancing speaking skills.

When the floor was open for clarifications, some teachers asked content-related questions, while volunteer staff and students participated in the ice-breaking activities.

Mr. Saeed Al-Mashiki, the Head of ELC, appreciated the initiatives of the ELC Club chaired by Ms. Mariam Al Sabbah and he assured the support of the Center in all student activities. He also thanked the Dean and the Assistant Deans for coming over in the workshop.

The ELC has its own Toastmasters Club, which is open for bonafide students from the General Foundation Program and the Post-Foundation Program at UTAS-Salalah.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT: The Dean of UTAS-Salalah commends the ELC for its initiative to introduce Toastmasters to students.



TOKEN OF APPRECIATION: The Head of ELC awards a certificate to Musallam Al Kathiri as a guest speaker.

RESEARCH SEMINARS ORGANIZED FOR ELC STAFF

BY DR. AJU THOMAS

A seminar-cum-workshop on Pursuing Linguistic Research beyond ELT was conducted for the ELC staff on the 14th of June, 2022 by Dr. Faqir Aslam Rana, an ELC Lecturer. He explained the ways to expand linguistic research out of the very field of English Language Teaching. The obstacles that may arise while expanding the research out of ELT and the strategies to overcome such challenges were dealt with in detail by the presenter.

Salim Al Mashani, the HoS-Programs welcomed Dr. Rana on behalf of the HoC Mr. Saeed Al-Mashiki. The HoS pointed out in his remarks the need to focus on engaging in productive and fruitful research and wished success to all the ELC researchers for their contributions to research. On the other hand, Dr. Yasir Al Yafaei, in his valedictory remarks, encouraged the participants to think beyond the core topics in ELT and conduct research based on the current trends in applied linguistics.

Dr. Aju Thomas, Coordinator, R&C Committee, ELC, thanked the participants for attending the said seminar-cum-workshop. Meanwhile, another seminar was attended by ELC staff on June 16, 2022 with Dr. Victoria Tuzlukova, an English Faculty at the Center for Preparatory Studies, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat.

The seminar dwelt on the new trends in ELT and ELT research, and the guest speaker explained the ways where research can be done in the new areas of ELT. Around 45 participants attended the seminar, and all their queries related to the topic were addressed.

Ms. Khayar Al Amri, HOS-CTM, in her introductory remarks, extended her warm welcome to Dr. Victoria on behalf of the HoC- ELC.

The two seminars were organized by the ELC Research & Consultancy Committee headed by Dr. Aju Thomas in an effort to keep the teachers abreast with new research trends in ELT.



LINGUISTIC RESEARCH: Dr. Faqir Aslam Rana shares some strategies to overcome challenges in expanding research out of ELT.



GUEST SPEAKER FROM SQU: Dr. Victoria Tuzlukova explains the ways where research can be done in ELT.



THINK BEYOND ELT: Dr. Yasir Al-Yafaei encourages his colleagues to be more proactive in research.

ELC virtual research library now accessible

The ELC Virtual Research Library is now accessible for all staff of the English Language Center, through the ELC documents drive. The library includes various researches along ELT and Linguistics from reputable online sources around the world, as well as research methodologies.

FLYING HIGH

in Teaching

BY JON CHITTICK

Ever wondered how teachers manage to be successful and stress free? Below is the "secret" recipe:

SOCIAL SKILLS

Teach and model. Your students practice and rehearse an extensive list of procedures or social skills throughout the year. Begin with the procedure for getting the students' attention. Do it by asking a question, the answer to which every student will know and will be eager to share. By doing so, the students invariably all answer at once.

Commend them for their enthusiasm, but explain that they cannot all answer at once. Follow up with a variety of fun questions, which they will all be eager to answer. For literally everything that the students do in the classroom, behaviorally and academically, structured procedures are implemented. When students do not follow the procedures, which happens from time to time, do not scold them. Simply remind them of the procedures and they practice them again. This way, students always know what is expected of them, they know exactly what to expect from the teacher, and the classroom runs very smoothly. The classroom atmosphere is extremely work oriented, yet it is always pleasant and supportive.



ESTABLISH CONSISTENCY THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS

To make your classroom run smoothly, spend your first week of school basically teaching procedures, first in management and then in academics. Refrain from raising your voice when students don't follow the procedure. Simply remind them and practice the appropriate procedure with them. Most importantly, remain consistent.

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

When you are certain that students understand the basic operational procedures of the classroom, move on to academic procedures. In teaching writing, for example, begin by teaching basic paragraph structure. Teach them how to write three supporting detail sentences and one closing sentence. Students practice and practice and practice until they understand and can implement the basic procedure. Then, move on to extended writings, where the same procedure is applied. Students can grasp this concept because of the simple procedures. The students behave in class because they know exactly what is expected of them and they are made to feel successful! Remember, well-rehearsed procedures are the key to successful classroom management and effective teaching. Discipline needs not be a concern if procedural practices are implemented and adhered to consistently.





IMPORTANCE OF STAFF GATHERING & PARTICIPATION

BY WE'AM AL-JILANI

Who said that activities, competitions and even Open Days are meant to be for students only? Staff also should be involved in such kind of activities for them to feel active, productive and valuable. I have experienced a number of such events here at UTAS-Salalah, which had an effective influence on my work motivation, and productivity.



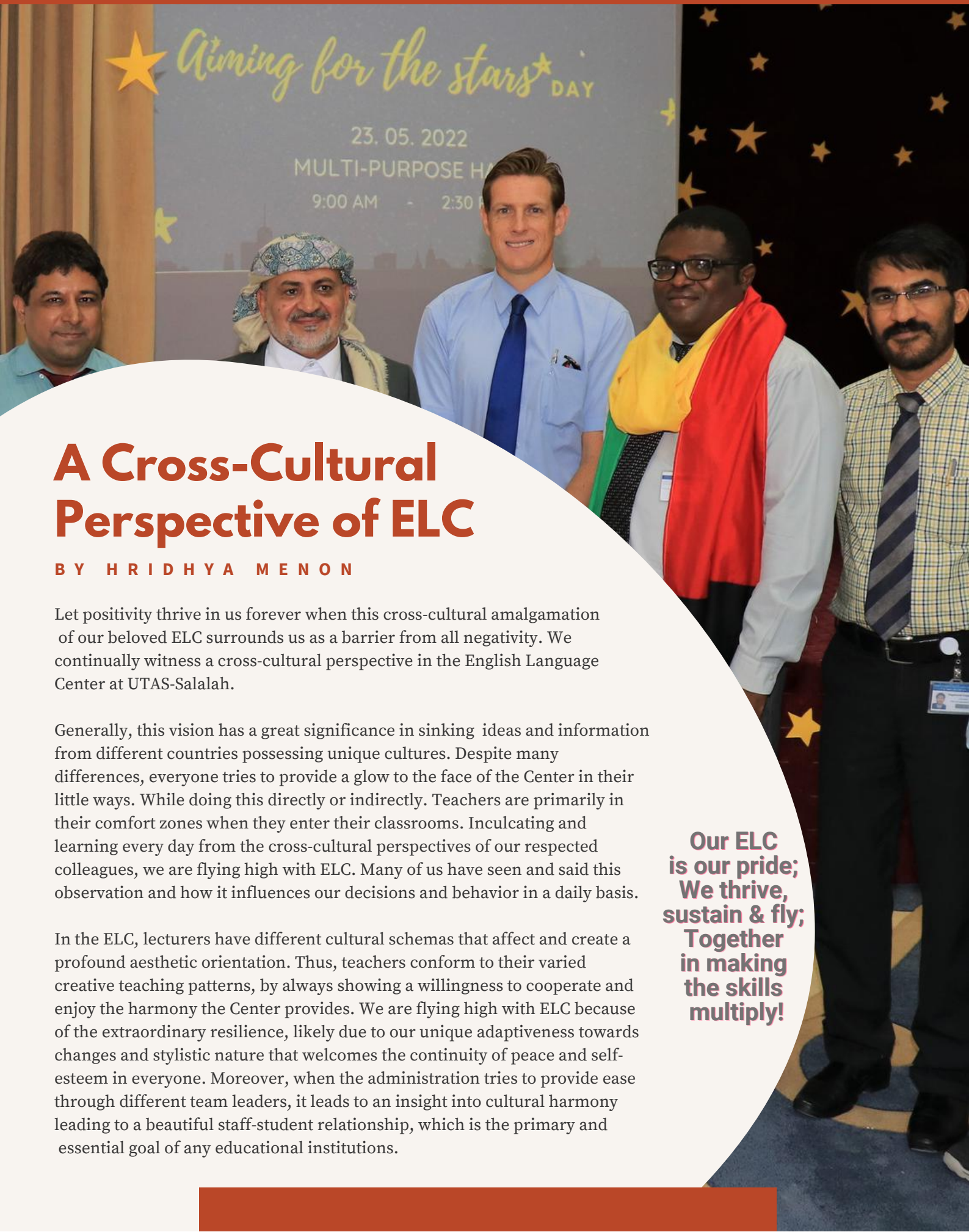
One of these amazing motivational events was the 4th ELT Symposium that took place on March 17, 2022. It was an extraordinary annual event organized by the ELC. Joining experts from all over Oman and around the world shared their knowledge and experiences. Taking part in that event and participating in with such great experts had definitely fostered my motivation and made me think of publishing papers both locally and internationally.

Another remarkable event that had a great influence on me as a member of the ELC was the ELC Day on May 23, 2022. I can't forget the positive vibes I felt while seeing my colleagues in their traditional customs and happily flaunting their cultures, which I had limited background of, such as the Philippines, India, Japan, Pakistan, Yemen, etc. I really fell in love with that fantastic cultural show.



One more very creative idea to increase staff motivation, productivity and workability was the 1st Annual Inter-Departmental Center, Department, Section and Staff Competition (from September 5th 2021 to May 31st, 2022) that was organized by UTAS-Salalah. I remember preparing for this competition from the first moment I heard about it. A thrill of excitement ran through me because I wanted to improve myself as a talented teacher, academic researcher, and active participant in my department. I believe the same feeling is shared with by my other respected colleagues.

Many thanks to our colleagues, ELC, and UTAS-Salalah for these creative and motivational initiatives.



A Cross-Cultural Perspective of ELC

BY HRIDHYA MENON

Let positivity thrive in us forever when this cross-cultural amalgamation of our beloved ELC surrounds us as a barrier from all negativity. We continually witness a cross-cultural perspective in the English Language Center at UTAS-Salalah.

Generally, this vision has a great significance in sinking ideas and information from different countries possessing unique cultures. Despite many differences, everyone tries to provide a glow to the face of the Center in their little ways. While doing this directly or indirectly. Teachers are primarily in their comfort zones when they enter their classrooms. Inculcating and learning every day from the cross-cultural perspectives of our respected colleagues, we are flying high with ELC. Many of us have seen and said this observation and how it influences our decisions and behavior in a daily basis.

In the ELC, lecturers have different cultural schemas that affect and create a profound aesthetic orientation. Thus, teachers conform to their varied creative teaching patterns, by always showing a willingness to cooperate and enjoy the harmony the Center provides. We are flying high with ELC because of the extraordinary resilience, likely due to our unique adaptiveness towards changes and stylistic nature that welcomes the continuity of peace and self-esteem in everyone. Moreover, when the administration tries to provide ease through different team leaders, it leads to an insight into cultural harmony leading to a beautiful staff-student relationship, which is the primary and essential goal of any educational institutions.

**Our ELC
is our pride;
We thrive,
sustain & fly;
Together
in making
the skills
multiply!**

Interview with an

BY MARION WILTON

ALUMNI



RAED ALI FARAJ AL-JABRI graduated in 2010 from the University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Salalah, previously known as Salalah College of Technology, where he completed his Diploma specializing in Quantity Surveying. He started working at Royal Court Affairs in 2013 and is currently studying for his Bachelor's in the B.Sc. (Hons) Quantity Surveying and Construction Management program at the Middle East College in Muscat.

In this interview, Raed shared about his experience at UTAS-Salalah and how it had influenced his professional career as a young, up-and-coming, talented Omani graduate in a very competitive field.



Q1: What is your current position and how did UTAS-Salalah prepare you for your career?

At the moment, I am First Assistant Quantity Surveyor at Royal Court Affairs. When I started my studies in 2006, Quantity Surveying was a new course and I was part of the second batch of students to enroll in the program. It was very challenging because it was completely new to the college and most of us were not entirely sure of what it was at the time. It was a while back of course, but I remember that we studied around 23 subjects and of those, I think, I needed maybe 4 of 5 to help me in my trade now. So yes, I believe that these subjects really helped in preparing me for my trade and to know the basic theoretical side of it.

Q2: You are currently busy with further studies in Quantity Surveying and Construction Management. Can you tell us about that?

Yes, I am now also studying for my Bachelor's in Quantity Surveying and Construction Management at the Middle East College in Muscat. It's a more advanced course, going into more detail and it's more practical. For example, we check things such as the soil content of a particular site, the feasibility of a project, we do estimations by also looking at the surrounding environments. So, basically it gives a more in-depth understanding of Quantity Surveying and what it actually involves. It's a very good program and I feel that it enhances everything that I already know but with much more detail and more deeply.



Actually, we were fortunate because there was a contact link between the college and industry, so there was a person at the college who provided some assistance.

Q3: How did your experience at UTAS- Salalah help you find your first position after graduation?

Actually, we were fortunate because there was a contact link between the college and industry, so there was a person at the college who provided some assistance. He would then select the students and then check how many openings there were at the companies or maybe government departments. But, it was very difficult because I was a new graduate in a new field and it was very competitive because we didn't have any working experience. I finished in 2009 at the college and graduated in 2010 but only started working in 2013.

Q4: Did you immediately know what you wanted to study or focus on academically?

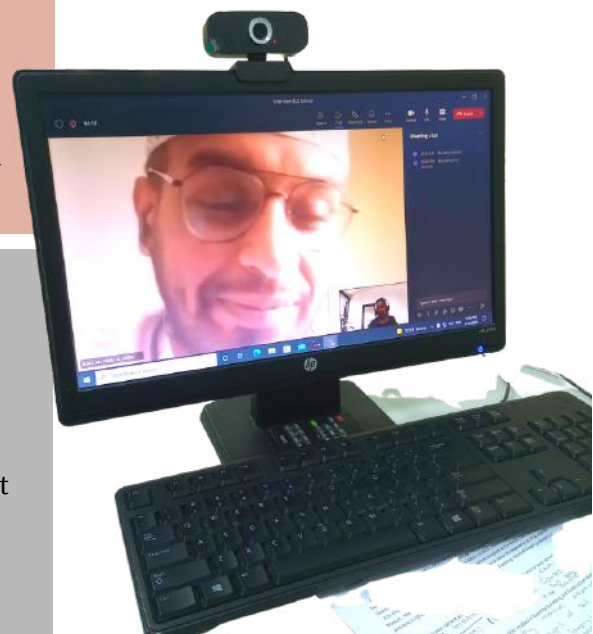
No, it was during Level 4 on the Foundation program when they showed us the different fields in Engineering. Quantity Surveying was introduced as a new course but I had no idea what it was. All the students were unsure as we were familiar with Civil Engineering, Design, Electrical and so forth but not this course. I asked a friend who worked as an IT engineer and he explained some things to me. He told me that mostly expats were working as Quantity Surveyors. But, he was very positive and suggested that I do it as I would be one of the first Omanis. I also spoke to the college dean who also encouraged me as it was something new in Oman. Also, it was only introduced 3 months before at the college and there were only a few students doing it, so it would be a good direction for a student as it was a specialized field.

Q5: What kind of flexibility did you find in the academic options at UTAS-Salalah? Could you choose your subjects to your preference?

Because it was in the initial phase, options were a bit limited and courses on offer mostly also depended on teacher availability and we were usually only about 5 to 6 students assigned to a teacher. So, for example depending on teacher availability, 7 courses would be offered and then we could choose 5 from those.

Q6: How much personal attention did you receive from faculty members? Did you find that they showed sufficient interest and involvement in you as a student?

Actually, I was always approaching my teachers and had a good relationship with them, especially with Mr. Hassan that I mentioned before, and another teacher whose name I cannot recall. I realized that if I showed them that I was serious and really interested in my studies, then they would also take me serious. It was a valuable lesson that I learned during that time. If you commit to something and show your interest and ask for advice, people will also take you seriously and be more open to helping you and sharing advice.



Q7: How much interaction did you have with other students?

We were a very small group of about 6 students in a class so we worked very closely and interacted a lot. And also because I would sometimes help my classmates with translating in class, we were very involved and we all knew one another and worked well together.

Q8: What sort of career services were available?

As I mentioned earlier, we were lucky to have a link between the college, the companies and the ministry, so there was some connection and one person who assisted and provided guidance. But, it was hard not having any work experience.

Q9: In your opinion, what do employers look for in new graduates from UTAS-Salalah?

I would say that being proficient in English is most important. Companies value good communication skills because you need to interact with people from different cultures, so it's important to be a good communicator and speaker. Employers are also looking for graduates who are disciplined and committed, and who are punctual and respectful of time. Appearance and being confident are also important factors that they look at.

What advice do you have for students as they look for future careers or future programs to apply to?

I would advise them to focus on learning English and not just speaking, but reading and writing as well because it's very important to be able to communicate in the workplace. Also, I would advise them to seek their passion and to research their interests before they make a decision. They should educate themselves and research if they want information, make use of YouTube, Google or whatever resources they can find to help themselves and find out more about future programs. They should be involved and speak to their teachers and make serious efforts to get information and search for help. So, this is my advice: read, write and search.

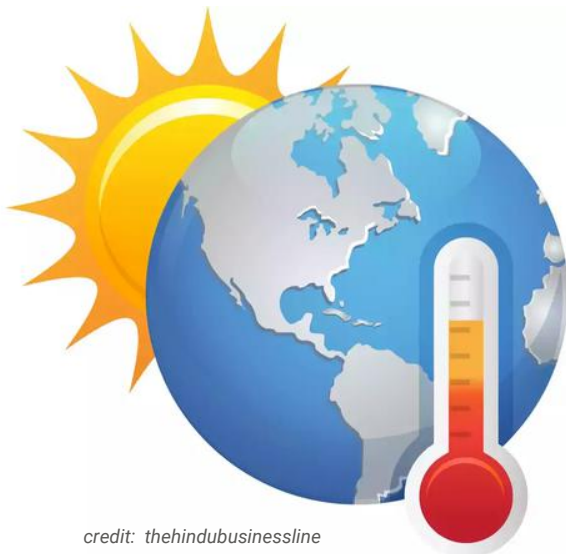
GLOBAL WARMING:

Problems and Solutions

BY FAHAD SALIM ALI TABOOK, L4 STUDENT

Global warming is an important environmental issue that needs our undivided attention. It is caused by several factors that result in severe effects. In this essay, I will analyze the causes of global warming and will propose solutions to address the issue.

On the one hand, there are many reasons why we face global warming. The main cause of global warming is burning of fossil fuels. It is because when fossil fuels are burned, they release huge amount of carbon dioxide into the air. For example, many manufacturing companies burn fossil fuels like coal and gas to create power for the cars. Another cause of global warming is deforestation and tree clearing. This is due to people and companies who clear and burn wide areas of plants and trees for urban development which contribute carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Clearly, burning of fossil fuels and deforestation and tree clearing are the main causes of global warming (WWF-Australia, 2018).



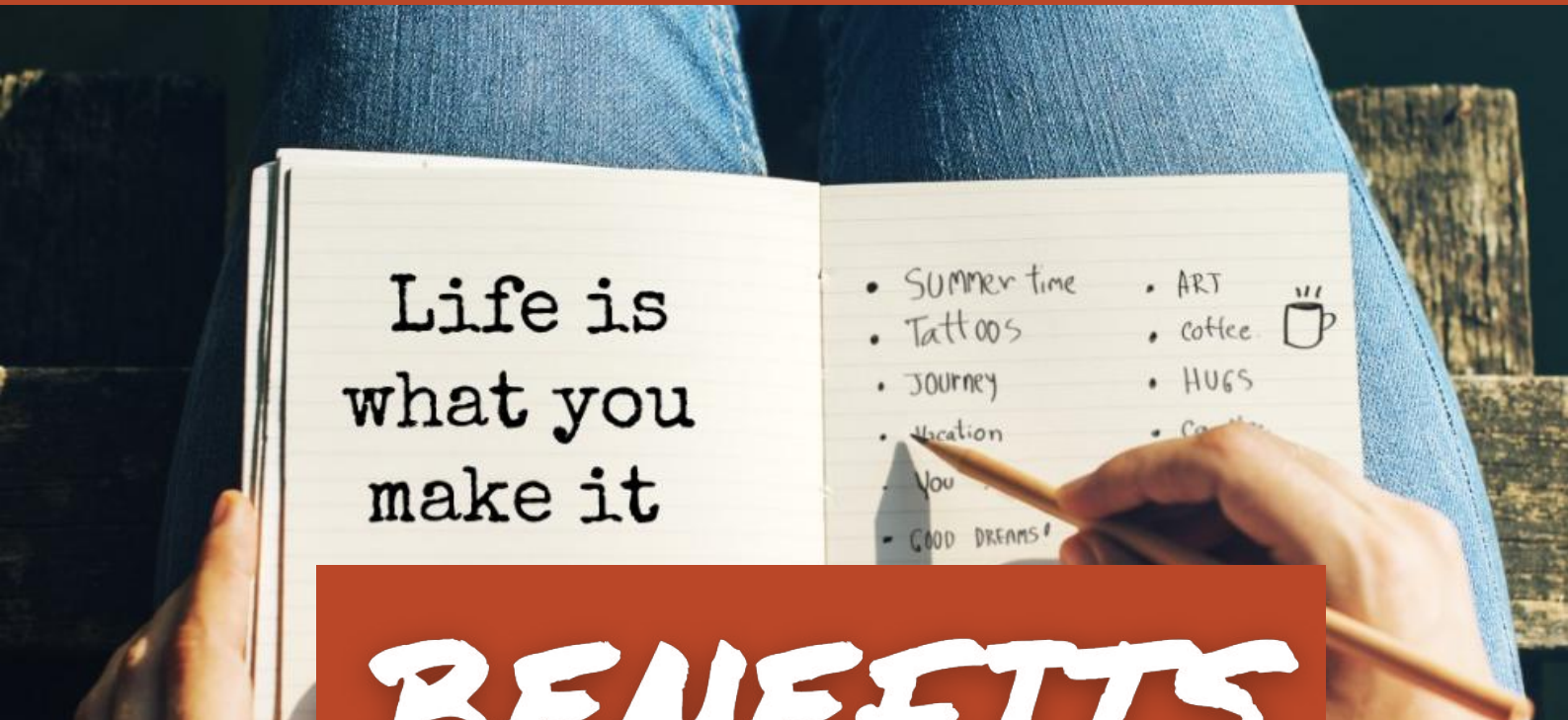
credit: thehindubusinessline

Gone the other hand, there are many ways on how we can solve global warming. One major solution to this problem is reducing the amount of electricity generated from coal and gas. This can be done by using renewable energy sources. As an example, solar energy is clean and safe from pollution. Another important solution is protecting our forest and trees. This can be achieved by imposing strict laws on deforestation and tree clearing. As an illustration, when government strictly implements the environmental laws, we protect our trees that help regulate our climate by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Undeniably, this issue can be solved through the use of renewable energy sources and strict implementation of law (European Commission, 2021).

To conclude, global warming is a serious issue caused by some factors but can be resolved through several actions. The main responsibility for solving this problem lies with all of us, especially the people and the government. It is important that we need to work together to achieve a clean and healthy environment for the next generation.



credit: esgclarity



BENEFITS of a Bucket List

BY MARION WILTON

In the 2007 movie “The Bucket List,” two elderly terminal-cancer patients become friends as they share a hospital room. The unlikely pair quickly form a special friendship and decide to embark on an adventure of a lifetime before they ‘kick the ‘bucket’. The expression is a euphemism or informal term meaning “to die”. Basically, it’s a list of goals you want to achieve, dreams you want to fulfill, and life experiences you wish to explore before dying. It often includes big accomplishments, travelling, and fun and interesting things you’d like to experience some time or another.

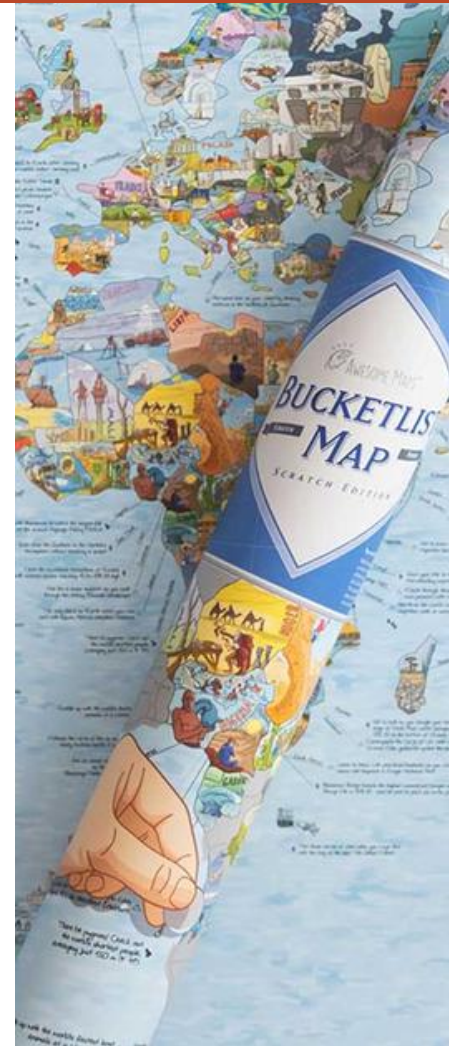
Yet, the idea of a bucket list might potentially sound like having a pessimistic outlook on life. After all, no one wants to be constantly reminded about the inevitable fate of death. Therefore, you might question the value of such a list and wonder how it could improve your life. In fact, would it really be such a huge regret to miss out on a few life experiences? Would it really make a difference if you die without ever climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, trek the Inca Trail, swim with dolphins, visit the Taj Mahal or run a marathon?

“

Bucket list is a list of goals you want to achieve, dreams you want to fulfill, and life experiences you wish to explore before dying.

However, do you often feel that your life is a flurry of activities that you can barely remember what you did the day before? Do you ever feel that you are functioning like a windup machine rushing from one task to the next without even having the luxury of time to reflect on the moment? What did you accomplish in the past week or month? What are your short term and long term goals? How meaningful are these goals and what value have they added to your life? Do you even remember these?

One of the major impacts of the pandemic was the realization of how short life is. If there's one thing that we have learned is that we are all vulnerable at some stage in our lives and that time is precious. So, what are the benefits of having a bucket list? Elizabeth Scott (PhD) lists several benefits for creating such a list. For example, it allows you to get in touch with your values, it makes you goal-oriented, it stimulates creativity levels, it adds to overall happiness, enjoyment of life, and helps to keep track of key life experiences. Research conducted by Stanford University also found that knowledge of a patient's bucket list can guide healthcare professionals in providing personalized care to patients and assist with treatment decisions that enhance their life goals. Moreover, a bucket list can be a motivational tool and inspire people to push their limits and broaden their horizons.



Ultimately, it's easy to dream and fantasize about something one wants to achieve, but there's a level of accountability when a person consciously decides to write it down which therefore, makes it real and tangible. Thus, it might be worth to reflect and take a moment to think on what you would like to experience before you really do "kick the bucket."



credit: Jess Lee

HOW TO START A BUCKET LIST?

Starting a bucket list can be fun and you can start by asking some questions:

- If you were to die tomorrow, what would you wish to do?
- What are some of your biggest dreams and goals?
- Which countries, places or locations do you want to visit?
- What if you had unlimited time, money and resources?
- What are some of the things that you have always wanted to do, but never managed to do?
- Is there something that you have always wanted to experience, feel or explore?
- Are there any special moments you would like to witness?
- Is there an activity or skill you want to master?

SEE THE PYRAMID OF GIZA

1

As one of the most fascinating places in the world, a travel to Egypt ranks high in almost every bucket list. The Pyramids of Giza are the oldest most visited tourist attraction in history and were built nearly 5000 years ago. It became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1979.

SEE THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

2

It's said that every bucket list should include seeing the Northern Lights, also known by its scientific term Aurora Borealis. This natural phenomenon is a spectacular kaleidoscope of colored lights that can be seen at certain times of the year in the northern hemisphere. It's an extravagant natural light show that occurs as a result of collisions between electrically charged particles from the sun that enter the earth's atmosphere.



credit: Live Fun Travel

FLOAT IN THE DEAD SEA

3

Floating in one of the saltiest formations of water in the world appears to be quite high up on many a traveler's bucket list. The Dead Sea is located between Jordan and Israel's borders and bears its name because there are no existing marine ecosystems as a result of the high levels of salinity which means that fish and aquatic plants cannot live in these conditions.



credit: Green Global Travel

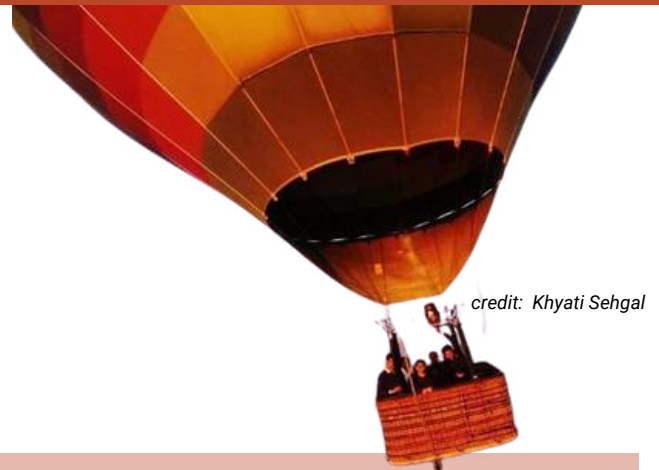
LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE

4

Learning a second language appears to be another one of the most popular items on a bucket list. People have different motivations for wanting to learn a second language, but mostly learning a second language is good for brain function, mental and cognitive functions, and also helps you to connect to other cultures.



credit: Akorbi



credit: Khyati Sehgal

RIDE ON A HOT AIR BALLOON

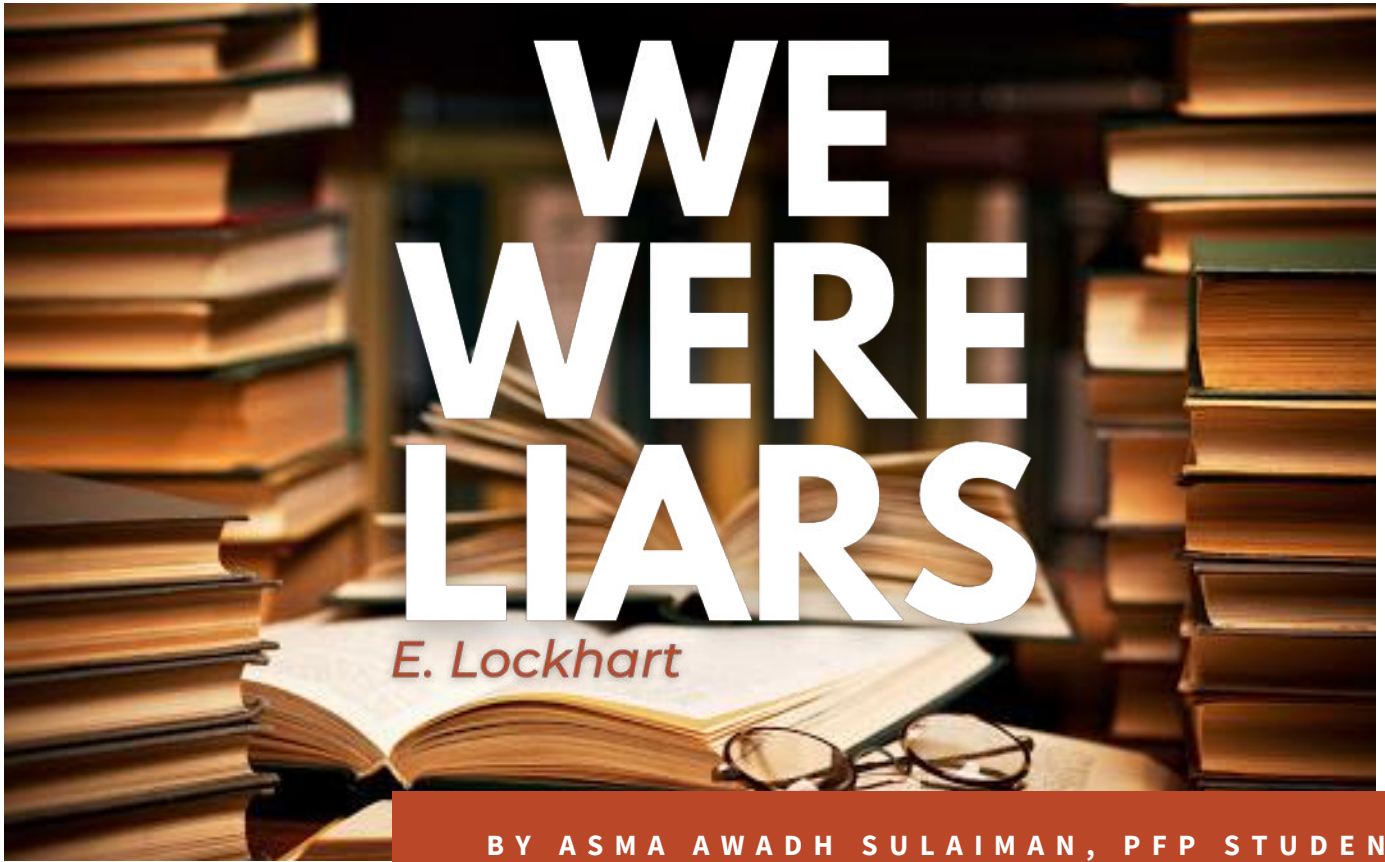
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Another popular bucket item list is to ride in a hot air balloon. A survey conducted by Engage Mutual recorded it as the 7th item in a list of 20 things that people wish to do before they die.

Compiling a bucket list can be inspirational and even though you might not achieve everything you wish, it's plausible that you would accomplish more in life than if you never created the list. A bucket list is a personal journey and no matter how ordinary or mundane it seems - whether it's something you wish to achieve or experience, it ultimately defines your life experiences and what you set out to achieve. It can be a simple thing such as learning to ride a bike, or to play chess, learning to swim, or playing the stock market, or something elaborate as attending the Olympics or doing a safari in Africa. No matter what it is, these are your most significant experiences and the things that you will remember most in life. Basically, these are the highlights in your life. These are the accomplishments that may change who you are in unimaginable ways. In essence, a bucket list can make you stop and reflect on what you actually want to experience in this lifetime. It reminds us about our own vulnerability and the fragility of life. It reminds us that life is short and that we should live our lives to the fullest and without regret.

A bucket list is a personal journey and no matter how ordinary or mundane it seems - whether it's something you wish to achieve or experience, it ultimately defines your life experiences and what you set out to achieve.

Book Review



BY ASMA AWADH SULAIMAN, PFP STUDENT

SYNOPSIS

We Were Liars is a startling novel with surprising plot twists. It's a plot-driven book rather than a character-driven one. You will not be able to put the book down until you have solved the riddle.

It's about the Sinclairs, who are wealthy, beautiful, athletic, intelligent, and everything in between. Every summer, they go to their private island to relax, but something went wrong this time! I won't say anything else about the plot. I started the book with no expectations. I knew little about it other than that it was about a wealthy family. I'm pleased with my decision. This is the kind of book you dive into blindly and hope for the best.

MY FAVORITE QUOTATIONS

"See the world as it is, not as you wish it would be."

"We are liars. We are beautiful and privileged. We are cracked and broken."

MY COMMENT

The fact that you are desperate to solve the mystery is what makes this book a page-turner. Cady, the brilliant main character, whose development and understanding of the world around her were both fantastic. The writing style was odd to me at first, however by the end I realised the beauty of it. The author used plenty of metaphors, but I think that's what made this book outstanding. Besides that, this book has superb morals. It explains how greed, power, and a desire for control can cause the loss of loved ones and the breakdown of families; that's also one of the many reasons why I enjoyed this book all that much. It is a realistic and psychological thrilling mystery coming-of-age novel that will make you think about societal issues without even realizing it.

MY RATING

4.5/5 stars

Guest Writer's Corner

CONQUERING FEAR

WITH SKYDIVING

BY RICARDO BIASON, BSD LECTURER

When individuals think about life lessons, they frequently recall the values and principles that were instilled in them as children. However, life does not end when you reach adulthood; it is a continuous journey with many twists and turns about learning.

Typically, before we undertake something challenging, we usually need to do some research to get comfortable with what we're doing. It's the same with skydiving. I needed to make sure that I met all the essential standards, including weight and Body Mass Index (BMI), before I booked my skydiving package.

As they say, the dread of the unknown is what scares people. As an educator, I've seen different types of fears of people: fear of failing, anxiety about other people's opinions, fear about understanding a topic, risk appetite regarding investments, and anxiety about changing habits. Each worry causes ordinarily curious people to forego exploring and finding learning opportunities.



FLY HIGH



Conversely, there was a build-up to my first skydive to conquer my fear because some of my friends challenged me to do it. Plus, thousands of people did it before me, including my instructor named Danny that had more than 1,200+ jumps in his career.

The sound of clinking metal made me feel safe. Danny mentioned "We must get ready." My pelvis and ribcage were compressed by the harness, and we staggered along the plane. The absurdity of the situation began to take hold right as soon as we saw the door of the plane was opened. I was not sure if the engine, the searing air, or the blood rushing through my veins was causing the roaring in my ears. Nonetheless, I decided not to listen. All I had to do was to bend my knees, hold my harness and smile, and Danny shouted one, two and jump! The parachute opened after about 20 seconds of falling, and everything slowed down. We floated blissfully towards the ground as I witnessed a spectacular view of Dubai, leaving the clouds in our wake.

That was undoubtedly one of the most terrifying but thrilling events of my life. The adrenaline rush from falling from such a great height was incredible!

If I had the chance, I would definitely do another skydive. Everyone should try something that scares them once in a while, in my opinion.

To put it all together, before we take on any challenging endeavor, we must first research what is required on the battlefield so that we are prepared with the essential knowledge, tools, and equipment. In addition, if we let it, fear can hold us back in life, but facing our fears and conquering them will help us achieve our goals more quickly than ignoring them altogether. Similarly, if an eagle is kept in a cage, it will not be able to fly high and will not attain its full potential. The same might be said if we are afraid of showing our full potential. You'll never know what skydiving is like until you try it. It's the same way in real life. We never know where it will lead us or what we will discover. Each fascinating new experience helps to define who we are as people, so savor every moment with an open mind.





Poetry Analysis



REVISITING ROBERT FROST'S POEMS

BY ANWAAR AHMED

Last March 26th marked the 148th birthday of Robert Frost. This made me think about revisiting some of his poetry, especially given these uncertain times, to hunt for perhaps, a different message, something that I might not have noticed before. Since Frost is known for his deceptive simplicity and understatement, one has to approach his poetry with both caution and a sense of abandon. That is how one experiences the cosmic sweep of his poetry.

Before I embark upon trying to read Frost's poems anew in the present context, it would be instructive to say that his attitude towards nature is inspired by "practical idealism" presented in Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Nature* and Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. He does not balk at espousing Tennyson's view (expressed in the *Memoriam*) that nature shrieks against God's law of universal human love, and is sometimes, "red in tooth and claw." He prefers not to jump on Wordsworth's bandwagon to unconditionally admire Mother Nature.

Desert Places is one of Frost's signature poems. It scares you out of your wits unless you are a stickler for interpretation. My first hunch after reading this poem is that it is a fine example of objective correlative when it insists on gazing in on the internal 'desert places' instead of watching a sense of desolation in the outer environment. What makes it a typical Frost poem is the insistence of the first person narrator that, he has his own subjective horrors to be scared of and he doesn't need markers of fear and loneliness staged outside to be reminded of the horrors that exist. In my reading, it underscores the idea that fear is all subjective and congenital. Human beings are born with it.

Reading this poem in the days of the new pathogen plaguing our world, we observe that troops of 'snow' and 'woods' instantly morph into the State's measures of security and caution clamped on people everywhere.

Lines like "Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast,"

"The woods around it have it-it is theirs/All animals (read humans) are smothered in their lairs,"

"And lonely as it is, that loneliness /Will be more lonely ere it will be less,"

Seem to press their sinister meaningfulness into contemporary readers' minds. Those who know already that they have been grappling with demons inside them will be less scared these days.

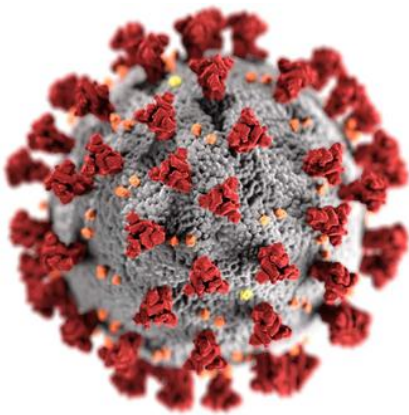


credit: The Times

Mending Walls has already been sufficiently unpeeled in terms of anti/pro-globalization. At least, in the times of this new infectious agent, readers tend to endorse the narrator who moves in the darkness, with stones in hands, like "an old-stone savage armed" and "will not go behind his father's saying" that "Good fences make good neighbors." What is unsettling for Frost's readers is that though he doesn't seem to be supporting either of his two characters in the poem, he begins it with a stunner of a line, "Does the world have to end in fire?" Frost holds this view on the basis of what he has experienced: "From what I've tasted of desire/ I hold with those who favor fire." Something there is that does not love a wall."



credit: dailysabah



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This “something,” it transpires later, is Nature that “spills the upper boulders” on the wall (separating the lands of two characters), “makes gaps,” and seems to be sending a message every Spring that “There where it is we do not need the wall.” With the current virus scourge in mind, we feel impelled to read that nature has suddenly changed its priorities and wants us to think that walls are good for humans (now). We need to carry our fences against our neighbors (as a precaution) wherever we go and live on our respective islands.

An Old Man’s Winter Night is a poem sister to Desert Places in terms of its pitching an old man against the power and horror of nature. “All out of doors” that “look darkly in” at the old man in a farmhouse at night accumulatively constitute the natural phenomena. He is so old that his age keeps him “from remembering what it was/ That brought him to that creaking room.” He is set against “the roar of trees and crack of branches.” In order to assert his human power and presence, he scares the cellar under him and the outer night by clomping off here and there.

What is important to note is that “A light he was to no one but himself,” which means that he does not have the comfort of family life. He is one of many loners in Frost’s poetry peopled with lonely characters. In the wake of contemporary numerous crisis, shall we think about the lonely old people who already have no one to talk to?

It would be remiss to overlook Fire and Ice that discusses, through apt metaphors, the disastrous consequences of human desire and apathy in tandem. Calamities such as lethal viruses and wars have brought to the fore, very effectively, that vanity and fire of human desires have pushed this world to the brink of a catastrophe. That is why the poet holds this view on the basis of what he has experienced: “From what I have tested of desire/ I hold with those who favor fire.”

Now the pandemics, wars and feminine in the world have brought the rush of human desire to a halt. Such situations call attention to the fact that keeping their lust for more and politics of territorial imperative aside, people, nations and countries need to get emphatic with one another in order to save the world from perishing twice. We had better heed now what Frost warned us about more than a century back:

**"But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough
of hate
To say that for
destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice. "**



Food Truck Review

DINING IN DAHARIZ

BY MARION WILTON, CLAIRE ORPILLA, RIO ASADA & RANDY MAGDALUYO

Recent months have seen a sprawl of stalls and food trucks popping up in the little beachfront suburb of Dahariz. With offerings such as the local favorite meshkak, Middle Eastern grills and a wide variety of cuisines, we explored some of the exotic tastes of Dahariz.

Nestled along the shores of the Arabian Sea, the sandy stretch of Dahariz is a firm favorite treasured by Salalah locals and visitors. It's safe to say that no visit to Salalah is complete without visiting this little gem. Over the years, residential developments have made this spot particularly popular, and especially during Khareef season - like most areas in Salalah - accommodation is as scarce as hens' teeth.



Dahariz holds a magical charm and weekdays, it might be mistaken for a deserted little ghost town with lonesome streets, apart from the occasional presence of workers laboring away at a building site. You'd find a crisp ocean breeze playfully doing a delightful dance with the arid desert sand. Often, you'll see a lone worker making his way to one of the restaurants, prepping for later in the day when Dahariz comes to life. Recent months have seen a sprawl of food trucks and stalls mushrooming along the beach. Previously, locals were limited to the meshkak prepared by Said, fondly known as the BBQ guy. These days however, we are spoiled for choice with different cuisines and delectable eats and fares to tantalize the taste buds.

MR. MANSAFETO

If you are looking for an authentic Jordanian meal, do yourself a favor and try Mr. Mansafeto. Seduced by the pleasant aromatic fragrance of blended spices, we meet the charming Mohammed who proudly informs us that he was the first person to introduce the food truck concept in Oman. A Jordanian civil engineer graduate from Sohar University, he started this venture after struggling to find a job. Putting his entrepreneurial skills to work, he opened the food truck to serve mansaf which is the national dish of his home country.



This flavorful, hearty dish consists of rice, bread and meat cooked for several hours in a rich, fragrant, tangy yoghurt sauce. Traditionally, it's served in 3 layers on a large serving platter.

The quaint little truck of Mr. Mansafeto is neatly organized with huge pots steaming in the corner. It's clear that great attention is given to hygiene, preparation and packaging. Talking us through the types of Jordanian food he serves, which also include appetizers such as 'awraq aleanab or vine leaves in English, we decided to try the famous mansaf. We eyed hungrily as he generously filled the modern, eco-friendly container with layers of fragrant rice and succulent meat while expertly drizzling the tangy, aromatic, yoghurt sauce. Filled to the brim and topped with a piece of wafer thin, crispy bread, this delectable dish did not disappoint. As we chomped away between bites of meat and rice, comments varied from top class, 5 stars, yummy, delicious, creamy, tender.... complete with munching sounds as we dug in to this comfort food. According to Mohammed, there's a Jordanian saying that loosely translates to: if you're angry with me, come to my house and have some mansaf so that you won't be angry anymore. We have to agree that this is mansaf magic for sure.

JOJI'S DINER

For an all-American dining experience, treat yourself to a scrumptious feast at Joji's Diner. Offering a mouthwatering menu bursting with a wide variety of treats, you can't go wrong with this one. From crispy, loaded fries, juicy gourmet burgers made with Angus beef, saucy buffalo wings, to waffle sausages, it was a tough decision to choose. We settled on the ever-popular corn dog, served with a generous portion of fries and also treated ourselves to a bowl of crispy, chicken teriyaki. In case you wonder or not familiar with American cuisine, a corndog is a hotdog on a stick dipped in cornmeal batter which is then deep fried. We unanimously agreed that the corndog was juicy and very tasty. Served with an ample serving of fries, it certainly is great value for money considering the price of 1.2 riyals for the entire meal. The fact that a corndog is served on a stick makes it a very popular type of street food because it's practical and easy to eat. This makes it an excellent choice for kids in particular, who could happily munch away without any effort.

A welcome surprise to Joji's menu is that it also offers a few Asian delicacies. The chicken teriyaki we had was a portion of tender chicken strips cooked in a tasty sweet and sour, light spicy sauce. It was delicious, and very well prepared with a few sprinkles of sesame seeds to add to the flair. Well-presented and very practical to eat, we all agreed that the taste and packaging were tops.



MODERN GRILL STATION

If you fancy a juicy burger, head over to Modern Grill Station. Apart from their signature meaty, Angus beef burgers, you can also treat yourself to a hearty bowl of pasta, loaded fries and dynamite shrimp or chicken.

We tried the steak burger and the mushroom burger and both were top class. The ingredients in particular, were very fresh, and both servings were neatly prepared.



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We sunk our teeth into the fresh, soft buns and enjoyed every morsel of these succulent beefy burgers. Served with a portion of crispy fries, it's worth noting that in comparison to other popular local franchises, these burgers were topnotch and offer excellent value for money at 1.8 and 1.5 riyals.

MASHAWI LAMASAT ALSUWRI

It's no secret that people in Salalah like to barbecue. No matter whether you call it meshkak, barbecue, ihaw like the Filipinos, yakiniku like the Japanese, or braai like the South Africans, there are few things that beat the taste of a juicy piece of meat straight from the grill.

Traditionally in Salalah, a spicy, tangy tamarind sauce is the preferred choice for the marinade. There are quite a few barbecue stalls at Dahariz beachfront, and the most popular options are beef, chicken or camel, but some also offer other types of meat such as goat, and even squid. We opted for a variety of beef, camel, goat and squid and happily munched away to this finger licking, Salalah favorite.



It goes without saying that sunsets at Dahariz Beach is a special time as the beachfront comes to life. There's a relaxed atmosphere in the air as the empty stalls of the afternoon are being stocked, chairs are put out, fires start crackling as the grills start to sizzle with lights switched on to welcome those seeking to wind down after a long, busy day. It's a fair assumption that Dahariz beachfront will experience even more significant changes in the coming years with more residential and commercial developments, and economic growth. At the moment, the little trucks and stalls that have popped up over the past few months cater for a wide variety of tastes. Not only has this become a popular sight, but it also captures the spirit of Dahariz where different people from diverse cultural backgrounds spend their evenings leisurely strolling the beachfront, families picnicking and people relaxing with a cup of chai while taking in the crisp, salty air of the Arabian Sea.



AU REVOIR, SALALAH!

Edward Stallard and Sandrine are both lecturers from the English Language Center, UTAS-Salalah. They are married and blessed with three lovely children. Edward is from England, while Sandrine hails from Paris. Here's an interview with the couple about their life in Salalah for 15 years.

Q1: So, tell us a bit how you came to Salalah.

S: Well, it's a beautiful story: We met in Jordan, where Edward was teaching and I was on holiday. One year later, we got married in Paris and we came to Oman on our honeymoon. It was Edward's choice. I had never heard of Oman

E: Yes, I remember showing you on a map where Oman is. Of course, the ties between Oman and the UK have a long history, which is why I knew about the country. And my uncle had lived in Oman in the 1960s. I think listening to his stories when I was a child made me dream.



Q: When did you arrive?

E: It was November 2007. We landed in Muscat, and went traveling with our backpacks in a rental car.

We loved Oman. The people were so welcoming, so nice! And the landscapes, the wildlife! It was just amazing!

S: It was so relaxed. People had time, we had time.

Q: Why did you choose Salalah?

S: Well, first of all, it was just meant to be our honeymoon. People usually come back after our honeymoon. So you can imagine the shock of our families when we said we were staying here!

E: I don't know if we chose Salalah or Salalah chose us. We were on Haffa beach one afternoon, and it became obvious we were staying here. As Sandrine said, our families thought we were mad. But when they visited, they understood. The quality of life here is really great.

Q: Then? How did you get a job?

S: We opened a bank account, bought our first car (a Kia Rio), we found a flat to rent in As Salam street. One week later we bumped into someone who worked at the college, and we met the HOD of the time.

E: I remember. He was so happy to have us appear out of the blue. We got a job immediately and started after the winter break (January 2008).

Q: How was the college back then?

S: I remember finding it so beautiful, with all the coconut trees, birds, blue sky. And so friendly. I'm really thankful the friendly atmosphere never subsided.

E: True. Even though the college is much bigger now, it is the friendliest place to work at. Back then, there were not even 20 teachers in the English Language Center. There was a room with 4 computers we could share, and small cubbyholes to disseminate memos and information. We were in small offices of 3 or 4 teachers.

S: The students were so kind, so genuine, and so honest. This has not changed either. The place has grown much bigger, but the atmosphere is still as pleasant, and I've loved every single day here. I always look forward to coming to college, greeting and chatting with my colleagues, exchanging with students, and having lunch with Edward. So lucky to have been able to work together for so long.

E: I could not put that any better. And thanks to the wonderful job conditions here, we have been able to raise 3 wonderful kids at home, and give them the best childhood ever. Our daughter, Tami, is already talking about coming back here when she is 18. In 4 years! So be prepared, Salalah is in our kids' blood!

S: Yes. Salalah is our home, it's where our kids were born, and it's where we have made memories. It is the special place in our hearts. We'd love to come back.

Q: So, why are you leaving then?

S: For a very boring grown up reason: Even with a Uk passport and a European passport, in order to not pay international University fees for our kids, we have to spend 3 tax years in Europe beforehand. Our daughter Tami is almost 14, so that's why. No choice.

E: Indeed. We can't stay here any longer. For now, anyways.

Q: How do you feel about leaving?

S: At first I was stunned, because until November, we did not know about the 3 years tax thing. I could not accept it.

E: Yes, it was a bit of a shock, to say the least. But also, we have to accept things, and some things you cannot change.

S: Around 2 weeks after it had become obvious we had to leave, we went to Mirbat. I was really very sad. Kids were playing in the water, sweet potatoes were cooking on the fire, and Edward was scrambling on the rocks. I just wanted to cry... Then, I thought: I can't be sad like that forever. I have to change my attitude, because I can't change the situation. So I decided to be thankful, for everything Oman, Salalah, the college had given us. We are lucky to have had such a beautiful time here. It will give us strength in our future.

**Thank you for
giving us so much
more than we
would ever have
expected, for being
part of our life.**

**Q: What is your plan?**

E: We were going to go to Ireland, but maybe because of COVID, there aren't many jobs in EFL/ESL.

S: So we are going to the French Alps for 6 months. Kids can see and taste snow, learn to ski, we can brush up our French, and then, we will see. We trust life will show us the right direction.

E: I definitely need to brush up my French!

S: We will miss you all. Salalah will always be our special place.

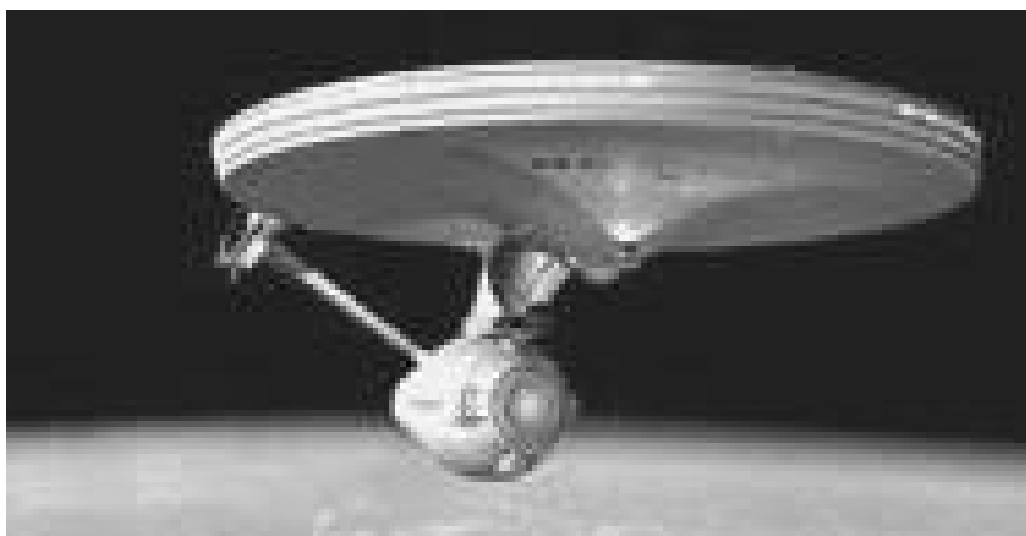
E: Yes, and hopefully we will come back one day. Thank you for everything you've all done

S: Thank you for giving us so much more than we would ever have expected, for being part of our life.

THE POINT IN GRAMMAR

To Boldly Go Boldly

BY DR MARC CARMICHAEL BROWN



It would be supremely patronizing to assume that the language learners or speakers, native or otherwise would not understand the nature of the infinitive form. If it were put to them to exactly describe the infinitive they would have no problem in stating that the infinitive is a verb preceded by the word 'to'. This is an elementary point, however, there is a contention in the English language that spotlights the infinitive and has caused much rancour amongst scholars. It is not the infinitive per se that is at issue, but the, dare I say it, the dreaded split infinitive.

To understand this phenomenon which has split (pun intended) the academic community from whence the rift appeared, a definition is required. Split infinitives are a specific type of modifier, usually the adverb, misplace between the word to and the verb, for example:

He began to quickly run for the bus. Generally speaking, this is a grammar error since the adverb is incorrectly placed in the sentence. The home of the adverb is, and always has been, after the bare verb. On paper this is true, and any grammarian worth his salt would stake his reputation on it. Thus, traditionally linguists have proscribed the use of the split infinitive even though in common speech the error can be found. Wherever we look, in the media, in books, on posters, notices, and texts books of the most serious import, written by the most highly esteemed writers of the language, there, glaring out stands the split infinitive.

A reminder that for every rule there is an exception, however, in the case of the split infinitive, it seems to have replaced the rule and set itself upon the throne in contempt of the scholars, linguists, philologists, and Caesars. The question that arises from this quirk is, why? The simple answer is, that, at least with regards to the basic error, it comes down to comfort. This can be categorised into non-standard and awkward forms.

Non-standard: It would take incredible strength to really forget all her bad childhood memories.

Awkward: It would take incredible strength to forget really all her bad childhood memories.

Placing really after forget makes the second sentence sound awkward. Even though grammatically correct, really is such a problematic word, it is best to avoid its use in writing and use a more specific adverb. Some degree adverbs such as completely, entirely, unduly can also create awkward sentences when placed after the verb.

Non-standard: It's hard to completely follow his reasoning.

Awkward: It's hard to follow completely his reasoning. A better choice here would be to put the adverb completely at the very end of the sentence.

Preferred: It's hard to follow his reasoning completely.

Sometimes avoiding the use of a split infinitive creates ambiguity. Consider the following examples:

Non-standard: The patient was told to occasionally monitor her blood sugar level.

Correct: The patient was told occasionally to monitor her blood sugar level.

Correct: The patient was told to monitor her blood sugar level occasionally.

In the second sentence, occasionally modifies the verb told and, in fact, alters the meaning of the sentence. However, placing occasionally at the end of the sentence creates ambiguity; does it modify the verb told now or the verb monitor?

The best position of the modifier occasionally is right after the verb monitor as in:

Correct: The patient was told to monitor occasionally her blood sugar level.

In formal writing, sentences in which there is more than one element in the infinitive phrase should be avoided:

Non-standard: Our Company decided to legally and rightfully seek damages for fraudulent use of the company documents.

Sometimes it may be necessary to rephrase the sentence to maintain the correct form and meaning:



Preferred: Our Company decided to seek damages in a legal and rightful way for fraudulent use of the company documents; or

Preferred: Legally and rightfully, our company decided to seek damages for fraudulent use of the company documents.

The non-standard approach works in some instances, and the standard approach can and does create ambiguity, and can be awkward. The bottom line is, wherever the adverb lands depends entirely on the context. The context drives whether or not the split, in my humble opinion, is acceptable or not. Be it in speech or in writing, emphasis, clarity, and comfort should be the gauges by which to judge the split infinitive rather than any strict grammar rule.



BY ZEENATH SHAIK

Henry Ford says, “Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.” Learning a language is a continuous process. The best way to polish up your language is to enhance your lexical set. Being aware of the latest updates to the English dictionary helps to keep pace with this wordy world. The Oxford English Dictionary is updated quarterly every year. Words from various origins, more sub-entries, and extra senses to the existing words are added as part of the updates. Let us look at some interesting new words and phrases from the 2021 and 2022 updates of the Oxford English Dictionary. You will also find both British and American English pronunciations besides the month and year of the update.

1. Do you eagerly wait for a celebration or a party to enjoy appetizing starters, delectable savories, scrumptious delicacies and luscious desserts? Here’s a single word to describe it all.

greeze, n. /gri:z/ /griz/ (March 2021)

“A large, satisfying meal. Also more generally (as a mass noun): food.”

2. Have you ever messed up doing something as you were in a hurry or you lacked the skill to do it? Can you think of a phrase that describes that?

bodge-up, n. /'bɒdʒʌp/ /'bɒdʒəp/ (March 2022)

“A bodged or bungled task or undertaking; a piece of work that has been done hastily, clumsily, or unskillfully.”





3. The year 2020 was not a usual year, it was full of unpredicted situations – lockdowns, physical distancing, quarantine, isolation, masks etc. However, there was one thing that everyone was looking forward to – Vaccine. This is where our next word comes from.

vaxxed, adj. /vakst/ /vækst/ (March 2022)
 “That has undergone vaccination; vaccinated.
 Often with modifying word, as fully, partially, etc.”

4. Looking out for a unique term for the household items like kitchen utensils. Well, you can now sound fancier while flexing about your new collection of dinner sets, tea/coffee sets, lemon sets etc. in front of your friends.

delph, n. /dɛlf/ (March 2022) = “Plates, dishes, etc., made of earthenware or china; crockery.”

5. Were you ever in a situation where you were annoyed with someone’s foolishness and wanted to share the same with others but at the same time didn’t want to be offensive?

Here is a euphemism for you.

haggis-headed, adj. /ˈhɑːɡɪsˌhɛdɪd/ /ˈhæɡəsˌhɛdɛd/ (September 2021)
 “Of a person: stupid; foolish.”

6. How do you like to spend your time with friends: dine out, shop, play sports or games, travel or just sit and chat about everyone and everything around you? So, you can now refer to that idle talk as...

gyaff, n. /gɹjaf/ /gɹjæf/ (September 2021)
 “Idle chat, gossip. Also: an instance of this; a chat; a piece of gossip.”

7. Ever had a chance to pile up your shopping bag with an unexpected little present, not from family or friends but the owner of the shop. Well, then you have got a ...

brata, n. /ˈbrɑːtə/ /ˈbrɒdə/ (September 2021) = “An extra amount or small gift added to a purchase by a seller, esp. in a market, to encourage the customer to return.”

Let's solve the following puzzle to unfold more vocabulary:

hose down
Caprese

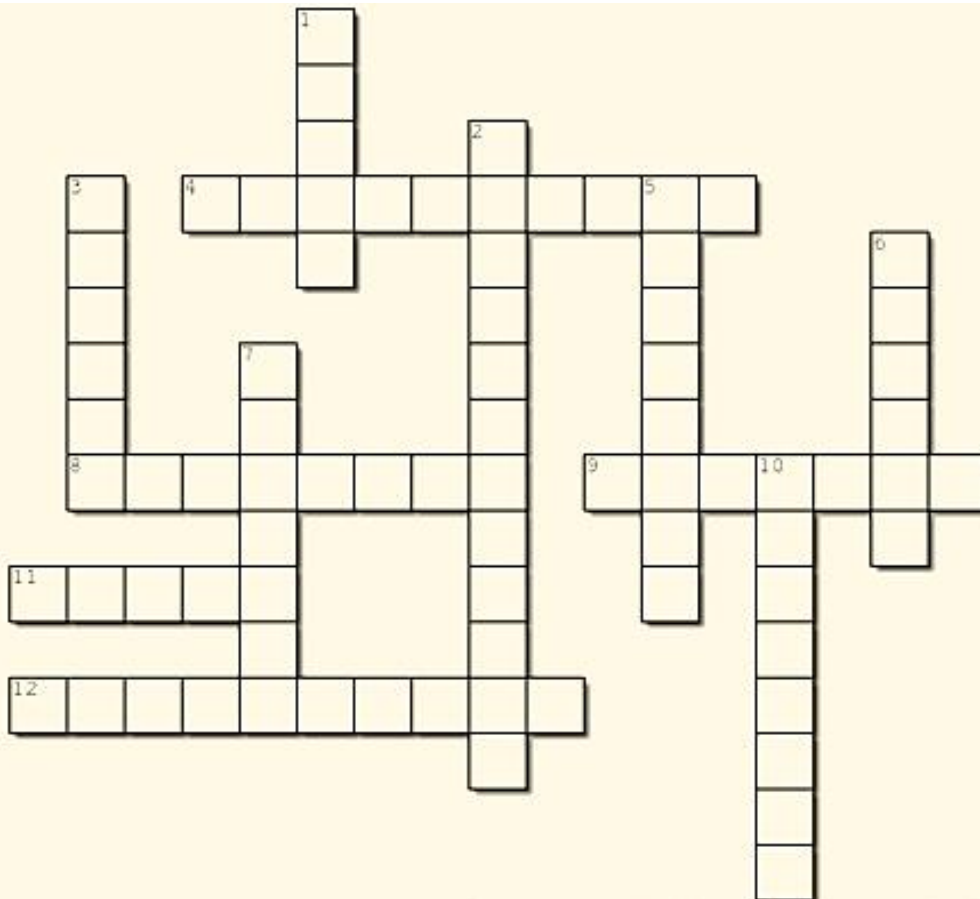
abuzz
smize

athleisure
mockumentary

buzzworthy
soft play

deep fake
defund

burpee
roaster



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

4. likely to capture the attention of the media or the public
 8. a video of a person in which their appearance has been digitally altered so that they look like somebody else
 9. a container, an oven or a piece of equipment used for roasting something
 11. to make a smiling expression with your eyes
 12. comfortable clothing that is designed to be suitable both for exercise and for wearing as casual clothes

Down

1. (with something) filled with a continuous humming sound
 2. a documentary designed to criticize its subject in a humorous way
 3. to stop providing money for something, especially something official
 5. to rain heavily
 6. an exercise in which you start standing up, do a squat thrust, then jump back up again
 7. used to describe a salad made of tomatoes, mozzarella (= a type of soft cheese) and basil
 10. an indoor area with soft, safe equipment for small children to play on

References:

1. OUP, 2022, Updates to the OED, 15/06/22, <https://public.oed.com/updates/>
 2. OUP, 2022, Recent Additions to OALD, 18/06/22, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/wordlist/new_words

DO IT YOURSELF!

BY RIO ASADA

WAQ WAQ means a feeling of excitement in Japanese. For example, when you have something you are looking forward to with your heart pounding, you are feeling waq waq. The origin of this onomatopoeia is gushing spring water or boiling water and whose English counterpart can be gurgle. What makes me feel waq waq the most is Do It Yourself (DIY): the activity of decorating or repairing things yourself for your home, and also making things for yourself. This is the beginning of my DIY journey during the Corona Pandemic 2020.

Since March 2020, all kinds of our waq waq were taken away from us due to the quarantine period and lockdown in Salalah.

Instead, we got a great deal of time on our hands but had to just stay at home. And time went so slowly that one day felt like three days and one week felt like a month. When I started getting fed up with watching depressing news and even movie marathons, I came across an article about people around the globe who had made face masks themselves. Then I asked myself, "There must be some scrap fabric in my room..." and I thought "Hmm, let's make a handmade mask to kill time."

My first DIY mask turned out not pretty at all with rough-hand stitches but that ignited my passion, making me feel I want to make something more. But where can I find a DIY coach when we are all under quarantine? Of course, YouTube! Never have I been grateful for YouTube which is always the best teacher to learn things. I went to a craft shop to buy colorful threads and needles to start an embroidery project. My favorite part of DIY is designing. My mind gets filled with ideas of all the beautiful details inspired by something I have seen before. That could be esthetic floral mosaics of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi or the iconic architecture of Burj An Nahda in Salala. Also, when I seek inspiration, I always go to Pinterest which shares countless images of designs and patterns, DIY and home décor ideas, and so on.

DIY projects brought the spring back to my spiritless mind with a spark of excitement, waq waq. All of a sudden, the hands of the clock moved fast and rhythmically. Every day I was busy with my projects. I worked even in the middle of the night until my eyes teared up due to fatigue from close-up work with a tiny needle and fine thread. I was in a zone where I was unstoppable.

After completing embroidery projects (bags, pouches, shirts, etc.) I tackled a DIY wooden bookshelf and shoe case, and one day I realized I was in my living room surrounded by full of my DIYs and I felt a great sense of accomplishment.

Now our life has been getting back to normal almost as it used to be. When I look back on those days of DIYs, I cannot help but think that thanks to my DIY projects I could stay present-focused and always positive. I promised myself I will never get my mind drought without searching for waq waq things. Let's keep our minds full of spring streaming by being inspired and cultivating our vision to see beautiful little things in the world, and ultimately inspire others.

At last, I would like to share one of my DIY projects: a macramé plant hanger. Macramé is a textile craft that uses knotting techniques, unlike weaving or knitting. If you can braid your hair or tie a necktie, you will find it easy. Learn step-by-step making of a DIY Macramé hanger and dress up your indoor plants in a boho-chic style.

Let's make a DIY Macramé Plant Hanger!



Materials :

- Macramé cord
- Measurement tape
- Scotch tape
- Scissors

DIY Level: Moderate

Steps :

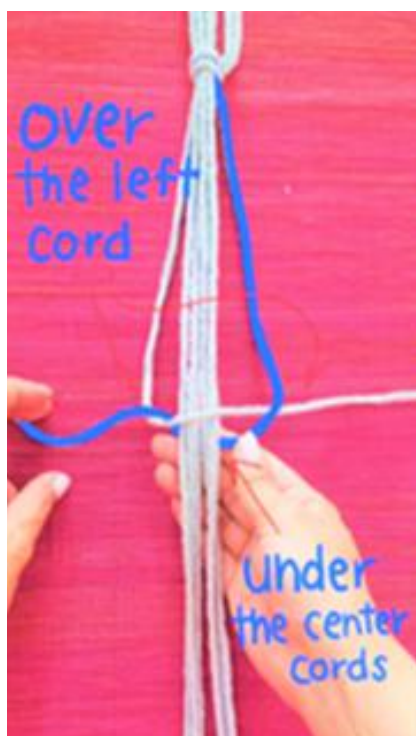
Cut 8 cords of 250 cm and 2 cords of 100 cm each. Find the center of the 8 cords and take the 100 cm cord then pull it around the cords and slip the cord ends through the loop. Pull it tight.

This knot is called a Lark's Head Knot.

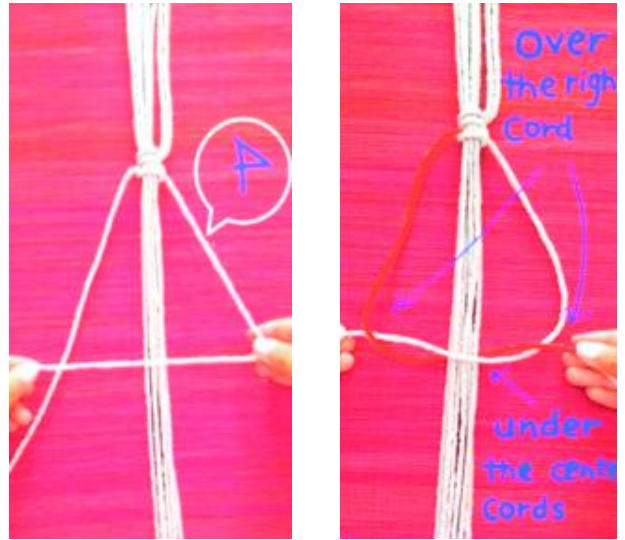


Place 8 cords down and place the other 10 cords up (the remaining 8 as well as 2 for the Lark's Head Knot). Tape the top 10 cords on the table so that they won't move. Take the very left and right cords and leave the remaining 6 cords straight in the center.

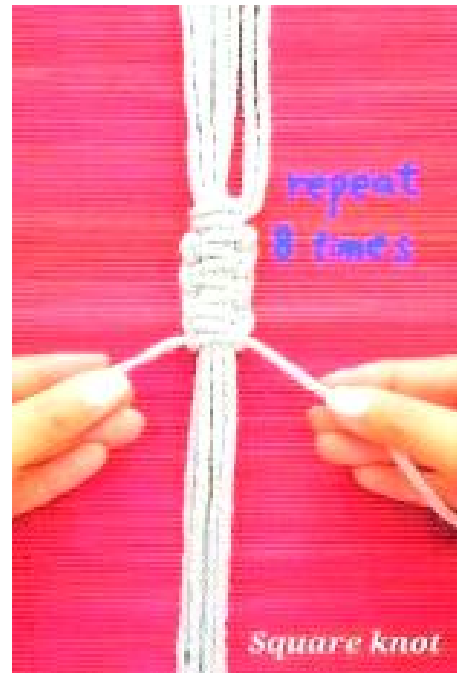
Take the left cord over the center cords and under the right cord making the number 4 shape. Then take the right cord under the center cords and through the corner of the number 4 shape created.



Now start with the right cord.
 Take the right cord over the center cords and under the left cord making a backward 4 shape. And take the left cord under the center cords and through the corner of the backward 4 shape created.



Now you see a square. You made a Square Knot.
 Repeat the same another 6 times.
 Then you make 8 Square Knots.



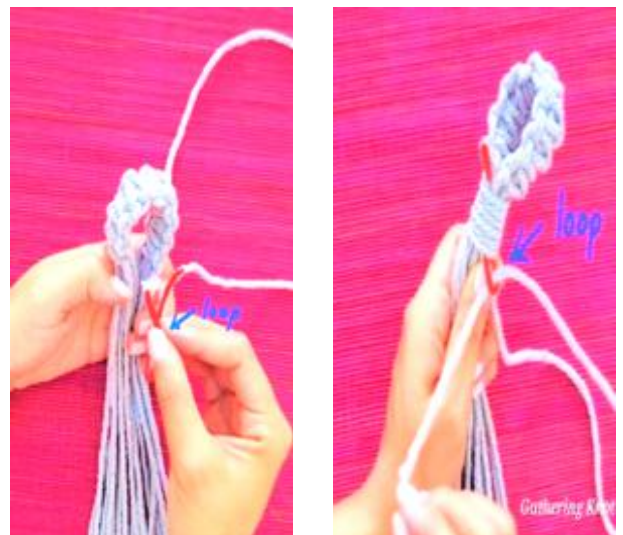
Remove the cord tied in the middle (Lark's Head Knot).
 Turn the whole cords upside down and tape the top cords to make the other half.

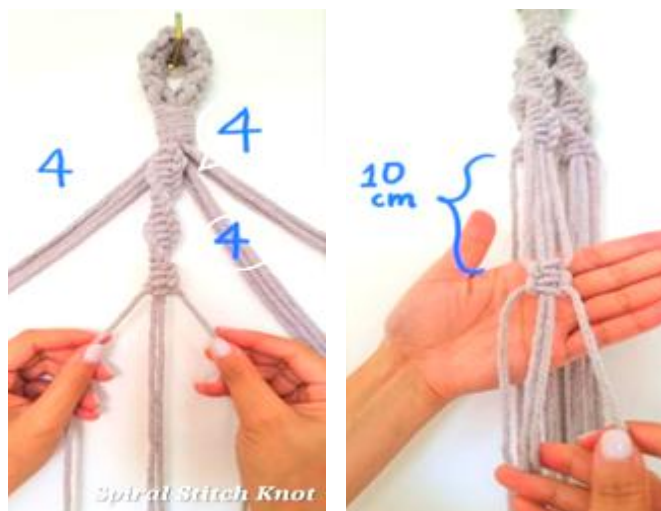
Make 8 square knots starting with the right cord.

Remove the tape and hold a loop of the square knots made and take the other 100 cm cord to make a Gathering Knot.

Make a 5 cm length loop with a short tail at the top then the long tail wrap around the cords from the top to the bottom. Wrap it as many times as you want but remain shorter than the loop under the Gathering Knot. Bring the long tail through the loop and tighten the knot by pulling the short tail until the loop is hidden inside the Gathering Knot.

Then, trim both tails.

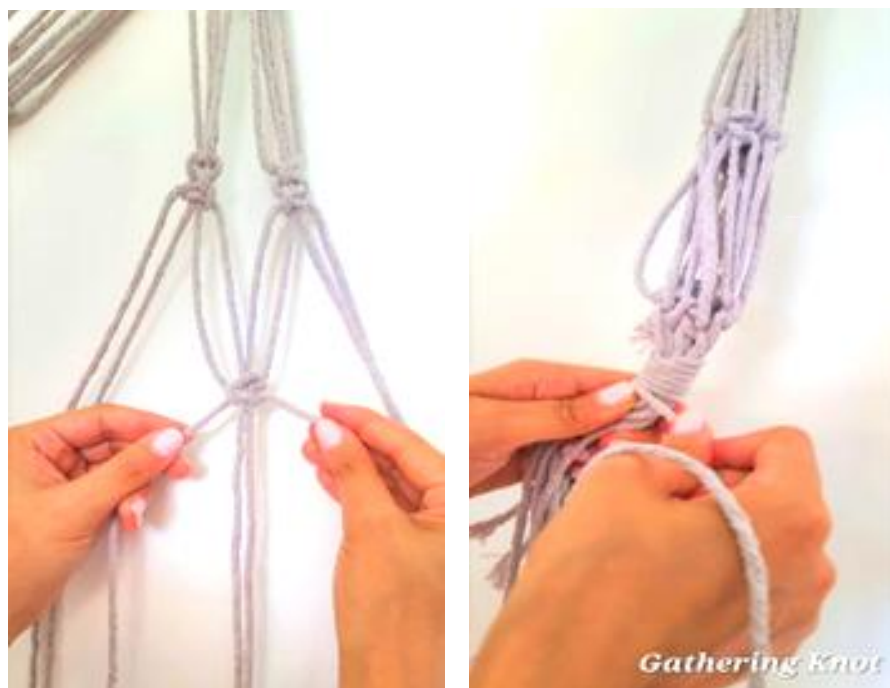




Hang the cords somewhere and separate 16 cords into 4 groups. Tape each group for your easy work.

Take right and left cords each and make sure the two center cords are straight. Bring the left cord over the center cords and under the right cord, forming a number 4 shape. Again, start with the left cord and repeat the same and you will see the spiral. These are called Spiral Stich Knots. You can make them as long as 10 cm or so. Do the same to the other groups.

Remember you only make number 4 shapes for Spiral Stich Knots; you don't make backward 4 this time.



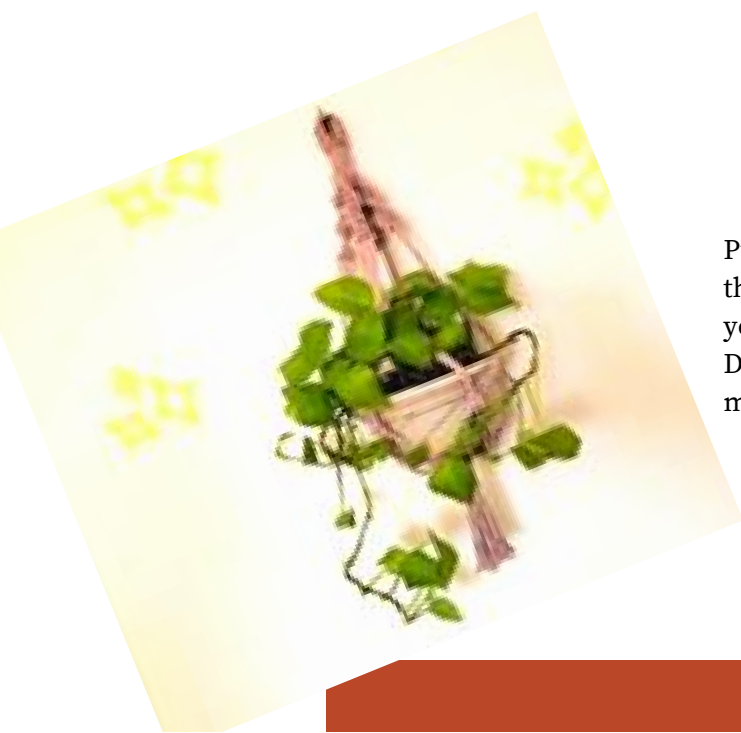
Leave 10 cm from the spiral knots then make 2 square knots for each group.

Take two cords from the right group and take another two from the left next to it.

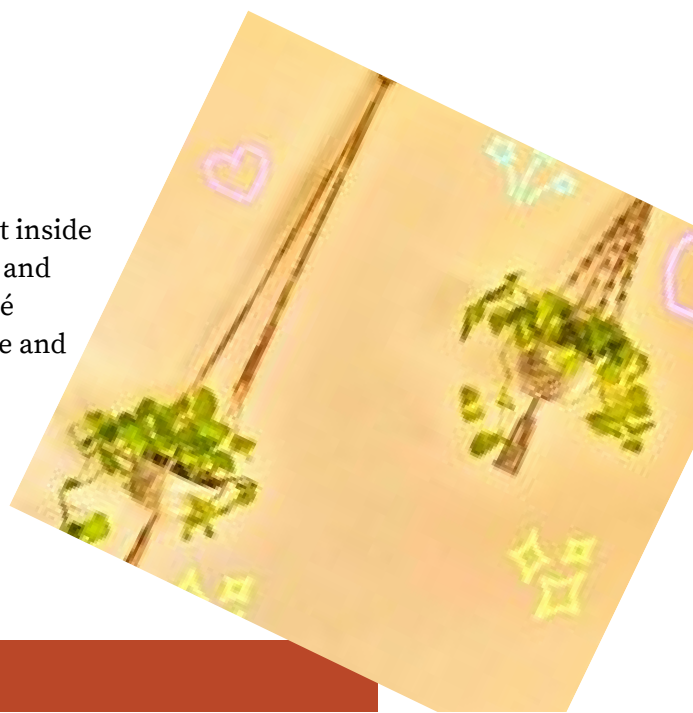
Leave 10 cm again then make one square knot. This is called Alternating Square Knots. Make two alternating square knots leaving 10 cm between each row.

Leave 3 cm from the last knots and make a Gathering Knot with the extra 100 cm cord.

Cut the bottom part at the length you want.



Put your plant inside the Macramé and your macramé DIY is all done and mabrook!



PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

BY AMIR HAJJAJ, ETC SENIOR INSTRUCTOR

Usually, the computer users rush to send their devices to the service center, no matter how simple a problem occurred to the device such as a new copy of Windows installing or not working mouse and others. However, with the expansion of the education blogs of the computer on the Internet, many of the normal computer users are able to learn now how to troubleshoot without resorting to maintenance centers.

This does not mean that one can completely dispense with the maintenance centers. On the contrary, the specialists and professionals in this field are the only ones who can solve the most complicated device hardware failures.

In this DIY, I am going to share the proactive preventive maintenance, which you can implement without resorting to maintenance centers.



Preventive Maintenance Plans

Preventive maintenance should not be overlooked to reduce the faults of parts, material, and system as well as to keep hardware and software in good working condition. It is important to understand that regular and systematic inspection, cleaning, and replacement of worn parts, materials, and systems help a computer function more efficiently, and can keep it from slowing down.

Preventive maintenance plans are developing based on at least two factors (environment and use). Computer location or dusty environment such as construction sites require more attention than an office or home environment.

The following are considerations to keep dust from damaging computer components:

- Clean/replace building air filters regularly to reduce the amount of dust in the air.
- Use a cloth or a duster to clean the outside of the computer case. If you are using a cleaning product, put a small amount onto a cleaning cloth and then wipe the outside of the case.
- Dust on the outside of a computer can travel through cooling fans to the inside. Accumulated dust prevents the flow of air and reduces the cooling of components and this makes hot computer components that are more likely to break down.
- Remove dust from the inside of a computer using a combination of compressed air, a low-air-flow ESD vacuum cleaner and a small lint-free cloth.
- Keep the can of compressed air upright to prevent the fluid from leaking onto computer components.
- Keep the compressed air can a safe distance from sensitive devices and components.
- Use the lint-free cloth to remove any dust left behind on the component.



credit: theroidguy.com

Internal Components

Below is the basic checklist of components to inspect for dust and damage:

- CPU heat sink and fan assembly – The fan should spin freely, the fan power cable should be secure, and the fan should turn when the power is on.
- RAM modules – The modules must be seated securely in the RAM slots. Ensure that the retaining clips are not loose.
- Storage devices - All cables should be firmly connected. Check for loose, missing, or incorrectly set jumpers. A drive should not produce rattling, knocking or grinding sounds.
- Screws - A loose screw in the case can cause a short circuit.
- Adapter cards – Ensure that they are seated properly and secured with the retaining screws in their expansion slots. Loose cards can cause short circuits. Missing expansion slot covers can let dust, dirt, or living pests inside the computer.
- Cables - Examine all cable connections. Ensure that pins are not broken and bent and that cables are not crimped, pinched, or severely bent. Retaining screws should be finger-tight.
- Power devices - Inspect power strips, surge suppressors (surge protectors), and UPS devices. Make sure that the devices work properly and that there is clear ventilation.
- Keyboard and mouse - Use compressed air to clean the keyboard, mouse, and mouse sensor.



Regular Preventive Maintenance

Doing a regular preventive maintenance of your hardware can reduce potential hardware and software problems, computer downtime, repair costs, and the number of equipment failures, and more importantly, improve data protection, equipment life and stability, and save money.

Conclusion

I advise you not to obstruct vents or airflow to the internal components. Keep the room temperature between 45 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit (7 to 32 degrees Celsius) and keep the humidity level between 10 and 80 percent, because the temperature and humidity recommendations vary by computer manufacturer. Finally, research the recommended values for your computers in extreme conditions.



QUOTES ABOUT BOOKS

BY RACHEL JOSEPH

Books without the knowledge of life
are useless,
for what should books teach
but the art of living? ~ JOHNSON

A good book is the precious life-blood
of a master spirit, embalmed and
treasured upon purpose to a life
beyond life ~ MILTON

Dreams, books, are each a world, and
books, we know. ~ WORDSWORTH

Some books are to be tasted, others to
be swallowed, and some few to be
chewed and digested ~ BACON

I cannot remember the books
I've read any more than the meals
I have eaten; even so,
they have made me. ~ EMERSON

There is no friend as loyal
as book. ~ HEMINGWAY





Children

BY OSMAN MOHAMMED

If I wish I were a new person
 I live as a child for you, my homeland,
 I wish I were a new person
 And all creatures have changed their skin,
 The universe becomes a kingdom for children
 The kingdom of the child and the beautiful imagination
 A new kingdom ruled by children.
 Yes, let judgment for children to paint a new world,
 Change the face of our distorted old world,
 Let the children eat what they want,
 Sing morning and evening, chase butterflies
 in the fields
 Rise up the hills and drink from the source
 of cold fresh water.
 Then you see no wars, fights, or clamor,
 Because the world of the child is free,
 The world of creativity and astonishment,
 let the child sleep wherever he wants
 And the age partner chooses to build a life in which a
 person overflows to see the light of darkness.
 No more state security, fabricating accusations.
 No more grieving by the authority
 that is chasing people to pay the levy,
 because the story is: a person who has a decision.



credit: abdulrahman alhinai

Let him build cities covered in wonder, wrapped
 by years and the night of fear,
 He brings out precious things and organizes
 Let him flies as he pleases and where he pleases,
 without oppression and antitheses of time.





NATURE

BY RACHEL JOSEPH

Take time to look around you
And see what nature has in store for you
The morning sun rising behind the hills
The whole surroundings with light it fills
The beautiful flowers with its petals opening
Spread its sweet fragrance to the surroundings
Dew drops on the grass shine and blend
Like diamonds embedded on rings of gold
The cuckoo on the tree sweetly sings
What joy to the world it brings.
The wonders of nature are so never ending
God's gift to us who's so ever bearing.



ELC at UTAS-Salalah

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Salalah صلالة



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Motto*

Where Technology is invented

*University
Vision*

To be at the forefront of higher education institutions in technological education nationally and regionally

*University
Mission*

To provide a high quality learning, training and research environment towards developing technological, innovative and entrepreneurial capabilities to meet the ever evolving social and economic needs



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