“Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing.”

-Benjamin Franklin
Saudi Arabian Habits
By: Fahad Alsemari

At the present time, many cultural habits ended or were forgotten with the passage of time, but there are some habits with benefits to society that usually stay strong and are passed on. In Saudi Arabia, communities still adhere to these habits. Since the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a wide country, I will address the habits of the central region, called the ‘Najd’. There are habits in ‘Najd’ that have a distinct impact on the community and lead to love and solidarity between people. We can see these feelings of love during happy occasions such as: invitations, celebrating the birth of a baby and family meetings.

When a guest comes to someone’s house from outside the city, the host must slaughter a sheep or a camel in honor of the guest and then invites the relatives and neighbors to attend the banquet. The meaning of this is to say welcome. After the banquet is over, one of the attendees invites the guest to his house. Thus, guests coming from different areas are invited over and over, each time to a different house until they leave.

When it comes to the newborn, the father invites relatives and neighbors over a dinner banquet. If the baby is a boy, the father usually buys two sheep. If the baby is a girl, the family gets one sheep only. The mother stays at home. Her female friends, relatives and neighbors visit her and bring her gifts, clothes for the newborn and sometimes even money.

There are families that meet daily, weekly or monthly for dinner or just for drinking Arabic coffee and spending fun time together. Sometimes they talk about the future of the family or share family news. In some cases important events happen during these family meetings. For example, some people get engaged or some decide to help others in need.

In conclusion, there are many useful habits in society that must be preserved because they are the heritage of generations. These generations should be proud. My point is that habits are advantages enjoyed by people all over the world.

Nelson Ledges Quarry Park
By: Mohamed Alkhadhari

Going to Nelson ledges is my best experience in America. First of all, I went camping with my friends in Nelson Ledges. The weather was sunny, and the wind was blowing. When we arrived there, we pitched the tents and set up the chairs. Next, we went to see the lake. Some people were swimming in the lake. I sat near the beach, and started looking at the sky and was enjoying the beautiful nature in Ohio. It may be strange for some people, but I think that everyone should appreciate the beauty of nature. Other people were singing songs. Some people were playing the guitar and dancing. Then at night we went back to the tents, and we made some hotdogs for dinner. We also started a fire in front of the tents where we ate and relaxed. I went to sleep around 2:00 am. The next day, I woke up in the morning and made some coffee. After that we went to buy gifts. Finally, we gathered our stuff to leave. I had a great time in Nelson Ledges.
Everyone knows that if we did not have language, we wouldn’t be able to do anything. Language is much more important than any fancy technological device for communication. Sometimes language must be a tool, but I think it is not a simple tool; I prefer to call it a mark of society. Why do I make this kind of sense about language? Let me tell you about my experience of studying Japanese.

Almost all people worldwide believe that Japanese people are more polite than the rest of the world. I majored in Japanese in my undergraduate studies. When I had the chance to study Japanese in Japan, I wanted to discover the real things about this country and its culture. I was pushed by my interest to know what Japanese people really do. I spent a lot of time with Japanese teachers and friends; I did what the Japanese did. We spent all time together. We ate, traveled, went to parties and studied together. As time flew, I had much more experience of what the Japanese exactly do. Yes, most Japanese are very polite during their entire life. They try to do the right things in most situations. For example, they often pray to God, give thanks for having food, and they are very sincere about it. When I asked if they could live without praying, the answer was: “No, we must do our prayers.”

After I studied Japanese, whenever I talk about Japanese culture, there is always a voice reminding me that “the Japanese are so peaceful, friendly and calm through their use of language.” Their language makes them polite and respectful.

By contrast, in China we usually tell the world that we are the most polite country and that we have a longstanding history. But now I say sorry to my friends about our country’s advertisement. We were like that, but now we are not anymore. Nowadays Chinese people spend most of their time doing business. We lost the most important things for our heart, and we do not have enough nourishment to feed our emotional needs. In order to get more money, we get rid of the traditional polite way. But money is not enough for us.

In other words, I think language is not only a tool to have a conversation, but also a cultural mark for the country. It stands for the country’s education and development.

Watching Movies
By: Eman Aljuaidan

One of the best ways for international students to improve their knowledge and cultural experience is by watching movies in English. Watching movies helps international students improve their language. Movies help international students expand their vocabulary about various subjects. In addition, movies teach international students a lot about American culture. In fact, these movies present some true images about American life. To sum up, movies in English are very important for international students.
**My Trip to the USA**
By: Wael Mohamed

I am now 29 years-old. Many of my family members try to push me to get married and live a traditional life like many others. But I don’t like that life style. Every time, I want to have a new challenge in my life. Many of my friends asked me why I wanted to go to the USA. It’s really my new life challenge. I don’t like the one system mode to control me. Really I like to describe myself as the challenger of difficult situations and nothing can stop my dreams. I hope I will be able to achieve my goals. So whether I am successful or not, I will be satisfying my hopes.

Now, I start my academic life again after five years from my college graduation from Alexandria University in Egypt. Really it’s an interesting new experience to earn my Master’s degree from the United States which will be helping me to improve my social and financial situation, especially after I go back to the Gulf.

So I left my job in Dubai and left my family to achieve my dreams and prove to all people that I am right and I deserve the best all the time. This is not the first time for me to be alone, but I usually put myself in this kind of situation. The first time was when I finished my high school in Dubai and left to my home country to obtain my Bachelor’s in Egypt. The second time was when I left to France to complete my law diploma.

Therefore, all these circumstances pushed me to study for my Master’s in the US and accept new challenges. After ten years from now, I hope that God will still bless my choices.

**My Experience in the US**
By: Rashed Almalki

There are many things that I like about my experience in the United States. First of all, there are a lot of friendly people to meet and be friends with. For example, I became friends with three nice people in one night. Secondly, while I am walking in the streets or shopping in stores, I feel comfortable and safe. For example, yesterday I went to the park and the atmosphere was very nice. Most importantly, the United States offers a lot of services that people always need. To exemplify this, hospitals are available anywhere in this country and hospital employees are very helpful. In conclusion, the United States is a very interesting place to live in.