“Write, write, and write some more. Think of writing as a muscle that needs lots of exercise.”

–Jane Yolen, author of *Owl Moon* and *Lost Girls*. 
Community Service: a Way to Happiness

By: Fahad Alsemari

On Friday, September 23rd, 2011, there was a lecture about community service for international students given by Ms. Christine Reinhard, ACCESS Director. It was great and inspiring because it provided ACCESS students with a lot of information about how they can give back to the community. After that, I still remember, five student-leaders presented their community service groups. To me, it wasn’t a presentation but more of an orientation to what I should do. In fact, I was very convinced that I must help those in need.

Although this is my first time to volunteer through ACCESS, I chose one community service group: Hunger Team. The weekend came, and as planned I went with my group and there were many beautiful surprises that led me to further learn and have more ambitions to achieve my goals. The first surprise was that I felt extremely happy when I helped needy people, especially when I helped an old man and a child, and then I saw a smile on their faces. It was awesome. The second surprise is the most important: I felt close to God in a serene manner because I am doing something good and this is what people need. I felt I was helping myself by helping others who are in need. The third surprise was that I learned new English words and idioms. Not only this, but the experience also has helped me learn a lot about job skills and working together as a team. Not to mention, we spent fun time together. Everyone seemed to be enjoying their time.

Finally, I believe that there will be more surprises coming soon because next time I am helping other people. Also, I would like to say thanks to ACCESS, Ashland University, because they are giving me the opportunity to learn a lot of ways to feel happiness. If you are a student, do not waste the opportunity to help others and rush to register now.
Saudi Students’ Problem at ACCESS
By: Rashed Almalki

As usual, when many Saudi students at ACCESS finish their classes, they do not like to spend their free time reading some beneficial books. Many of them say, “It is boring” and others say, “It will waste our time”. In fact, they do not know what the benefit of reading books is and how to develop their second language. According to Ms. Dalia Gonzalez, a high school teacher, “Sometimes students do not know the benefits of reading, or they do not care at all. Reading helps us learn more words and helps us on our grammar also.” But the question is how can Saudi students see the value of reading? In fact, there is a solution to this problem, and it will help them like reading books. The solution is ACCESS should require students to read at least two books a semester.

Reading two books a semester is a good idea for students who do not like to read books after finishing classes. It will help them know a lot of new vocabulary. They can use the new vocabulary in public places such as malls, gyms and markets. In addition, they can get more information to talk about, like when they give presentations or talk about some specific topics in a speaking class. More importantly, it will educate them by reading more and more books. Also, it will exercise their minds tremendously.

Some students may object to this solution by saying, “too much reading will make us confused, and we will not be able to understand a lot of information clearly.” Other students think reading two books a semester is impossible with the huge load of homework we have every day. In this case, we will waste our time if we read two books and at the same time we have a lot of homework to do. A final objection argues that reading two books will make students hate reading books. For example, some students have to finish reading two books in one or two months; at the same time, they have their own personal responsibilities such as taking care of their families and children.

To my objectors, reading two books a semester will refresh your mind. Not only that, it will also help you learn a lot of important things to use in the future, whether in speaking or in practical situations. And to those who said that reading is a waste of time, students can arrange their time by making schedule every day and organize their time neatly. In my experience, I was required by my teachers to read two books in three weeks and I could organize my time every day by making a to-do-list. For the last objection, students have the weekend; buying groceries, doing the laundry and all big family chores can be done during the weekend. Organizing time will keep us focused; therefore, we will learn more.

In conclusion, it does not take a lot of intelligent understanding to come up with a way to solve this problem. Reading two books a semester is a smart solution to develop students’ mental activity. Also, it can help them speak very well and understand clearly. Moreover, reading two books will increase their vocabulary. Finally, my advice to all international students is to read as much as they can.
Why Is Homework Important?
By: Chao Hu

Homework must make most students feel sick. Even teachers may not like homework, because they need to spend more time to check it. However, homework has been used for a long time as a necessary tool of education. It is very important for both students and teachers to review classes and improve the quality of education.

On one hand, homework can help students and teachers to review the class material. One class may be only 50 to 60 minutes. It is too short for students to find out the problem and understand well. Homework is the one tool which can enhance the length of the class. Students can discover the problem in doing homework. Through solving these problems or mistakes, students can understand the main points better and catch more details that are given by the teacher.

On the other hand, homework is an efficient tool to improve the quality of education. Homework can help teachers get a response from students, and know how the class is going. For instance, if most students miss a lot of questions or do not do well in the homework, that means they miss a lot in class. It shows that the way teachers teach is not easy to understand. The more teachers adjust the way, the better students will understand.

All in all, homework is regarded as an important tool by teachers and students and helps them enhance the length of class so that they can review the class content and understand better. And by doing homework, teachers can adjust the teaching method, then improve the quality of education.

Why Is Homework Important?
By: Eman Al Juaidan

Most teachers give their students homework for many reasons. The first reason for homework is that teachers want to make sure that the students understand the things they learn in class. By the students working at home on their own, they realize what they need help with and what they can do on their own. Secondly, homework is important for students because it keeps them reading, researching, and thinking; all of which will help them to improve their skills. By researching for information for writing assignments or reading assignments, the students are learning skills that may help them in the future for their jobs. Also, homework shows the teacher who is studying and working hard to give him/her the best they can and who is not. Homework can tell a teacher a lot about a student, such as whether or not they need extra help or whether or not they are even trying. Finally, homework is important for the student to remember how to write properly by making the students refresh their skills through practice. Practicing what a person learns is the best way to learn how to do something right. Homework is very important for all students. It is also important for the teachers so that they get to know each student individually.
How to Make Kabsa

By: Waleed Abbas

My favorite dish is Kabsa. Kabsa is a Middle Eastern dish that originated in Yemen. Kabsa is mostly served in Arab states around the Persian Gulf in many occasions, such as weddings, funerals, and birthday parties. Kabsa is basically a mixture of rice and beef or chicken. When I was thirteen years old, my father taught me how to cook this dish. Not only that, but my father also allowed me to cook for my entire family. After one month of learning from my father how to cook Kabsa, I sequentially became a good Kabsa maker, so I am able to teach how to cook Kabsa. It is not difficult to make Kabsa if you have the right ingredients, instructions and cooking temperatures.

The first step in making Kabsa is having the right ingredients and materials. There are a lot of utensils that you should have before making Kabsa such as a large pan, a knife, a mixing spoon, and a serving plate. The ingredients are: medium tomatoes cut to small pieces, chicken or beef, rice, salt, onion, vegetarian oil, chili peppers, tomato paste, garlic, hot water, and special Kabsa spices, which you can find in a Middle Eastern store. These ingredients are important to make Kabsa. When you have these ingredients, you can make good Kabsa.

The second step in making kabsa is following the right instructions. You should clean the chicken or beef and the rice. Then, put vegetarian oil in a large cooking pan. Wait for one minute until oil is hot. Next, put onion in the pan and stir it with a mixing spoon until onion is brown. Put tomato pieces in the pan for 5 minutes and put one cup of hot water in the pan. After that, add three spoons of tomato paste, three spoons of salt, two spoons of Kabsa spices, three chili peppers, and then mix these all together. Then, put chicken or beef in the pan and keep adding hot water until water covers the chicken. Also, cover the pan with a lid and wait around 15 minutes. After, add the rice in the pan and wait for 20 to 25 minutes. Finally, take the chicken and the rice from the pan and put it in the big plate. Then enjoy.

The last step in making Kabsa is having the right cooking temperatures. This is very important to pay attention to when you make Kabsa because if you do, the Kabsa will be nice. In the first 15 minutes, the temperature is high and then low for 5 minutes. After that, the temperature is low in the last 20 to 25 minutes. Maybe someone will ask why is following this way important? Well, if the rice and chicken are seared, the Kabsa will not be delicious. The second answer is that in the pan there is a lot of water, so you have to evaporate the water without burning the chicken or the rice.

In conclusion, making Kabsa is easy for any one as long as they follow these steps. There are some things that you cannot do without such as the Kabsa spice. Kabsa is the national dish in Saudi Arabia. Lunch time there is the most popular time to eat it, except of course special occasions such as birthdays, family parties, weddings and even funerals.

Delicious Kabsa
Recently, the issue of education has become increasingly popular in peoples’ lives, and how to educate teenagers has also become very important. In some nations, youngsters are encouraged to work or travel for one year before they start to study in college. In this essay, I aim to explore the strong points and weak points of this view.

As far as I am concerned, there are arrays of different benefits from this measure. To start with, this measure can enrich youngsters’ social and work experience because young students should not be treated as passive recipients of predigested ideas. Moreover, it is obvious that youngsters are able to improve their physical and mental abilities. "No man is an island" working and traveling in vast places; people should not only look after themselves, but also they need to work together and follow the group. So team spirit and independent character will be cultivated in this kind of environment. Last but not least, this measure can broaden students’ horizons because not only will they visit different landscapes and historical sites, but they can also learn about different cultures, traditions and languages in different places. In short, in modern society, young people only learn theoretical knowledge which is not enough; instead, they should be well-rounded people with well-rounded education.

As a matter of fact, every coin has two sides; this idea also has some little problems. For instance, traveling or working for one year to learn about life will hold the student back because it is one year that does not go toward their university degree. It will waste a lot of time for learning. Personally, although there are some weak points in this measure, it is still a feasible and constructive idea for educating adolescents.

In summary, this issue has a host of strong points, but in the meantime there are some disadvantages in it. So we should absorb the benefits while remove the drawbacks. Personally, I believe encouraging youngsters to work or travel for one year after they graduate from high school will be an effective way to educate them.
**Game of the issue**

What starts with “e”, ends with “e” and only has one letter?

Use your Ashland email address to send an email with your answer to: internashland@gmail.com. Students with the correct answer will enter a drawing to win a prize.

**Joke of the Issue**

Doctor, will I be able to play the piano after the operation?

Yes, of course.

Great. I never could before!!
Pix of the Issue

Stevie holding a prize he won in his Reading class

From right to left: Fahad, Naif, and Majed celebrating Green Day at AU campus

Saudis displaying traditional artifacts on the Saudi Day