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English 110

Cover Letter

My former high school includes a middle school as well and when I finally reached 5th grade that was going to be my first encounter with a monolingual classroom environment. I can't lie, I was intimidated by the sound of these new English words, they sounded too proper to even understand at least for me. Just like the speakers and writers we analyzed I also had an accent, a heavy one, and my writing wasn't even close to standard. Fortunately for me and other of my classmates struggling with the formation of their language and literacy there were programs provided by school named "Read 180" and "Achieve 3000" which were programs created with the sole purpose of strengthening the reading, speaking, and writing of delayed students. These programs/courses were provided online which was very convenient since you were able to practice whenever you wanted from wherever you were.

Being introduced to these programs meant so much to me, I started to see improvements in my work and felt motivated to keep learning. The staff were also a big contribution to my success, they never made you feel uncomfortable or left out due to your "limitations", they never hesitated to provide their undivided attention to your learning process and they created a welcoming environment. As an immigrant you feel stuck on whether you should feel privileged for having an opportunity to acquire a beneficial education or that really you're just delayed because you have to figure everything out on your own.

However, my school didn't make me feel any lesser than anyone else, on the contrary they valued students like us because we challenged them to be better as well every day and that's a

gesture I will always admire. This was just the beginning of my journey and thanks to organizations like these I was more eager to learn, ready to tackle new levels of English and prove to others that I am capable of improvement and worthy of accomplishing great things just like everyone else. Many of the authors from the stories we have read in class have proven that by being perseverant and staying true to yourself you'll be able to overcome any adversity in your path and that's what I strive for every day.

WLLN Final Draft

Unhealthy and unrealistic are just some of the few words used to describe social media, a platform that is so unpredictable, you don't know what to expect next. Unlike others, I think of social media as my escape, a place to find motivation when it is needed, and where I can relate to the world around me. That's where I fell in love with quotes. Who knew that such a short piece of writing can contain so much meaning and even make you relive a moment all over again. My collection of quotes and poems are endless but there's one in particular that stood out to me. "*Choose your hard*" it said, you have two options both equally hard and must choose which risk is the one worth taking. Followed by the words "*Pick wisely*" leaving me with something to think about: Coming to the United States at a young age and having to adapt to the culture in every way was challenging but staying in my native country would've been as well, but did I make the right choice? What would've happened if I had stayed? And like a yo-yo my head starts spinning. The power of words was just mesmerizing to me, how you can arrange them like puzzle pieces to create a masterpiece.

Marriage is hard. Divorce is hard.

Choose your hard.

Obesity is hard. Being fit is hard.

Choose your hard.

Being in debt is hard. Being financially disciplined is hard.

Choose your hard.

Communication is hard. Not communicating is hard.

Choose your hard.

Life will never be easy. It will always be hard.

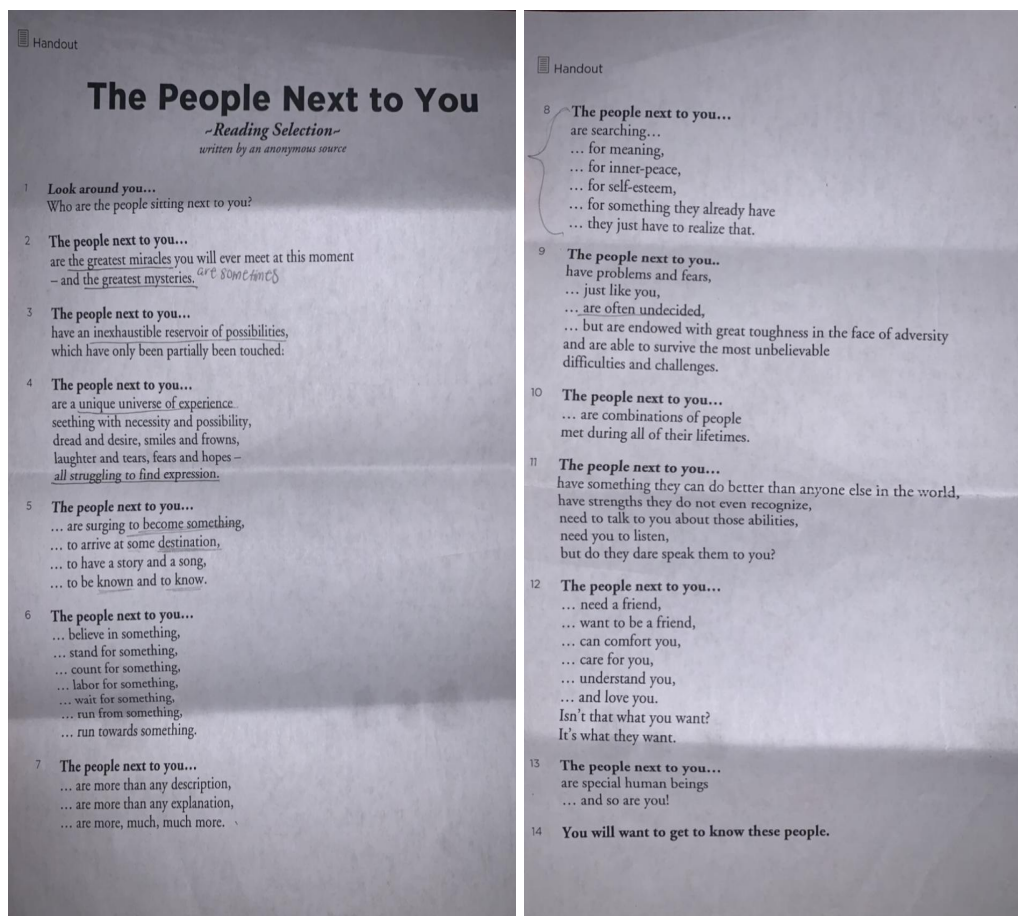
But we can **choose our hard.**

Pick wisely.

The social media platform, Instagram and TikTok specifically didn't only draw me to reading and seeking perspective but I was also introduced to varieties of real life topics. In a foreign country there's certain things that if they're not self-taught you will never know about it but social media has held my hand every step of the way. If you ask who has been my greatest teacher, my mentor, my best companion? It has been social media, hands down. It may seem absurd and for sure addictive but I promise you will always end up gaining knowledge on something new and useful every time. Anything from educational to entertainment, from content that makes you smile to content that makes you cry, all can be found in one place.

However as beneficial as social media can be, temporary breaks from it are also needed. That's why a few weeks before my last first day of high school I decided to attend a retreat and get away from the city. Early morning gatherings, sitting within a circle, being surrounded by 11 individuals. Each of us were assigned to read a stanza of what was about to become my favorite

poem. “*The People Next to You*” spoke to me from the start, every part of it was filled with truth and passion, so unique that even the source was anonymous. Sitting there feeling staggered and in disbelief all that came to mind was why I hadn’t encountered something this good before. One of those readings that would have you thinking deeper than what’s already on the paper, this reading was the type of mystery I enjoyed solving. But I’m sure that my reaction to this reading would have been distinct if I had a greater attraction to books in the past but what can you expect from an easily distracted teen just trying to make the most of her last few days of summer.



Recently I reread the poem and couldn't help to feel a sense of gratitude, my thoughts traveled back in time and remembered a certain someone: Back when I was a middle schooler in seventh grade we had a new English teacher named Mr. Olivencia, a skinny young bald headed guy with tattoos on his arms who always dressed like he was going to brunch after school. His tattooed arms would reach out for the assigned book and with no hesitation volunteered to read to us. I recall him reading "How to Kill a Mockingbird" to the class, a book with many characters but that wasn't an issue for him. Class was almost like going to the theater watching so many different personas being acted out except just by one individual. His ability to tell a story and impersonate it amazed me class after class, bringing stories to life was his gift and with every reading he demonstrated a tremendous amount of interest in his profession. My motivation to read initiated with him in a white walled classroom on the third floor. A sense of imagery and connection was built when he read and he would also share his personal stories to show how the book was tied up with real life. It felt like there was suddenly a purpose for why we were learning certain things in the classroom.

I realized how this time it was speech that had the power to captivate me, it didn't come from a traditional book or a piece of paper but from a single individual. It didn't matter which source or platform the art of language and literacy came from because what matters is the impact it had on your mentality, persona, everyday life, etc. All sorts of people regardless of their story, race, background, age and more have a higher chance of encountering something or someone they can identify most with thanks to all the variety of platforms we have today. Due to all these advanced platforms more people are able to communicate a story or even a thought that may have an

impact on our society. Maybe looking somewhere other than a physical copy of a book will result in something fruitful and transporting like it once happened to me.