

## The News

Here is the seven o'clock news:

In Taipei a burglar has just stolen some diamonds.

The diamonds cost five million dollars. The police have not found the man yet.

A typhoon has arrived in Taipei. It has damaged many cars and houses. There have been heavy rain and strong winds.

There was a fire in an office in Kaohsiung. The fire started at 10 o'clock this morning. It lasted for half an hour. No one was hurt.

There has been an accident in Taichung. A driver was driving carelessly. He hit a woman. The woman, Mrs. Wang, is in hospital. She has broken her leg.

Finally, the weather. Tomorrow will be wet and windy. The typhoon will leave Taipei in the late evening.

Good night.

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## The Typhoon

It is the second day since typhoon No. 8 has been in Taiwan. Mr. Liu and his family have to stay at home. Mr. Liu is now watching TV. Mrs. Liu is reading a magazine. Heidi and Gilbert are studying because they will have a test soon.

At a quarter to seven the whole family will have dinner. After that Mr. Liu will send an e-mail to his friend in Canada. Mrs. Liu will prepare the clothes for work because she thinks she has to go to work tomorrow. Heidi and Gilbert will play computer games. They will not go to bed early because they don't think they have to go to school tomorrow.

## Me and My Friends

My name is Ben. I am seven years old. I have many friends. Most of them are my age. Some are older. Some are younger.

My best friend is Harry. He is seven. He lives near me. We go to the same school and are in the same class. Harry helps me with my math homework. I help him with his English homework. I can spell better than he can.

Harry is 3 feet 5 inches tall. He is taller than me. I am only 3 feet 4 inches tall.

He weighs 65 pounds and is quite fat. He doesn't like sports, so he doesn't get much exercise.

We both have black hair and brown eyes, but Harry's hair is longer than mine.

I like sports and play football or go swimming every day.

Every evening Harry and I play computer games. Sometimes we play on my computer. Sometimes we play on his. Harry usually wins!

## Where I Live

My name is Daisy. I live with my mother and father in an apartment. The apartment is on the fifth floor of a tall building. There are 14 floors and a car park in the basement. My father parks his car there.

Our apartment is not in the center of the city. It is 2 miles from the center. My father works in the city, so he goes to work by train every day. He doesn't drive his car. He uses his car only on weekends. Then he takes us into the country or to the beach.

Our apartment has three bedrooms. There is a bedroom for my mother and father, one for me and one for my brother. There are a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom. We do not have a garden, but there is a small balcony. There are some plants on the balcony. In summer we often sit out on the balcony because it gets very hot inside the apartment. Our apartment is small, but we are very happy in it.

## The Best Present

Mary wanted to buy a birthday present for her father. But her family was very poor. She didn't have any money.

Mary was very sad. She cried and cried. Then, she had an idea. She could make a present! Mary used a piece of paper to make a card. On the front, she drew a beautiful picture of birds and flowers. Inside, she wrote, "To the best Dad in the world. Happy Birthday."

On her father's birthday, Mary gave him the card. He looked at the picture and the note. Then, a tear fell down his face.

"Why are you crying?" Mary asked. "You hate it, right?"

"Of course not," he said. "I love it. I'm just so happy. And I'm lucky to have a wonderful daughter like you."

## Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year is a special holiday for everyone, isn't it?

During Chinese New Year, all of the family from all over Taiwan meet together. At that time, people enjoy talking, eating and playing cards together. Younger people can not only get red envelopes with "lucky money" inside but also have fun playing.

It's also a time to welcome the new year. Everybody cleans his house. Friends visit each other. Children can't quarrel with each other. And people wish each other good luck.

The only one bad thing about Chinese New Year may be the bad traffic. It is said that on some days, the highways between Keelung and Kaohsiung are like a very large parking lot.

## Rules

Many times a day we talk with different people. When we talk to someone face to face, we try to be polite to them. But do you know there are also rules on the Internet?

Here are some of them:

1. When you type, do not use all big letters. For example,

“HELLO!HOW ARE YOU?” looks like you are shouting.

It will be much better if you write like this, “Hello, how are you?”

2. In a chatroom, it is polite to say hello to other people when you enter, and say goodbye before you leave the room. If you don't, people may think you are rude.

3. If you make a joke, remember to tell people. We need to be careful, or we may make them feel bad.

If you follow these rules, you can help make the Internet a better place.

## Hi There!

Hi there ! Can I tell a little about myself? I'm Tammy Ford and I come from San Francisco, California. I have lived here all my life. I'm fourteen years old and go to junior high school. There are six people in my family: my parents, my two older brothers, my little sister and I. My father is a fisherman. He has his own boat. Mother has a small flower shop in the city. Every day my mother smells like flowers. But Father smells like fish! My brothers study in high school and play on the football and basketball teams. My little sister is still in kindergarten. I think school is wonderful. I can see all my friends and play sports. Our teachers are nice and we have very little homework. In my free time, I like to go skateboarding, play softball, and go to the movies. I also like to go with my friends to the ocean and watch the boats.

## Two Good Girls

Mary and Kathy are friends. They are going to school. They wear clean blouses. Their shoes and socks are clean too. They are carrying brown bags.

The girls go to school by bus. They are good girls. They do not run about. They do not play on the road.

Mary and Kathy are in Second Grade. They sit near their teacher. They listen to her. They do their lessons every day.

Mary brings bread to school. She likes bread and butter. Kathy brings a piece of cake. The girls eat in the playground. Where is the playground? It is behind the school.

What do you see in the picture?

There are children in the playground. They are playing. Are they fighting? No, they are not.

Kathy throws a ball to Mary. Mary catches it. She throws it back to Kathy.

What is the teacher doing? She is looking at the children.

Ring! There goes the bell. All the children go into the classroom again.

## Tony Gets a Book

Tony and his sister go to a bookshop every evening. The bookshop is near their house. They look at the books.

The two children go into the shop. There are many books. Tony takes a book. He looks at the pictures. They are beautiful. Tony likes them. His sister looks at the pictures too.

Here is a good book. It is a big book. Tony puts it on the table. He is reading it. He reads five pages every day.

He puts the book back. He does not buy it. He has no money.

The shopkeeper looks at Tony. He is a kind man. He is not angry with Tony. He shows Tony the new books.

The shopkeeper is holding a book. He calls Tony.

"You are a good boy," he tells Tony. "Take this book."

The shopkeeper gives Tony the book. The boy is happy.

"Thank you very much, sir," he says. "You are kind."

Tony takes the book home. He reads it at night. He puts it in his cupboard.

## Reading Makes a Full Man

There is a Chinese saying, "There are gold mansions in books." The saying talks about how valuable books are, and also how much a person can get from reading books.

Books take us far away and allow our imagination to soar.

My favorite books are detective stories. I usually imagine myself as the detective and try to solve many mysterious cases. I can sit and read for hours without standing up. Every time I finish a story, I always feel like I've completed an important task, solved a difficult problem, and helped save many people. I learn many interesting things from the books I like to read; even though they're not true stories. I learn to pay more attention to detail, be more conscious of people and their actions, and be more creative. A detective needs to think quite differently from others to figure out who the criminal is. Believe it or not, I've become more patient ever since I started pretending to be a detective. I use patience when I take difficult tests like math by treating questions like a mystery from a detective story. And you know what? I'm getting better grades now!

Reading is important. It makes us a better person and helps us enjoy life in many ways. A gold mansion? Mine is a castle.

## The Gingerbread Man

Once upon a time, there lived an old couple in the country.

One day the old woman baked a little gingerbread man. But when it was done, she opened the oven, and as quick as a wink, the gingerbread man jumped down and ran out of the door.

The gingerbread man shouted to the old couple, "Run, run, as fast as you can. You can't catch me! I'm the gingerbread man!"

"Stop! Come back!" cried the old couple. They ran after the gingerbread man, but he easily ran away from the old couple.

The gingerbread man ran on and on. He met a horse.

"Stop! Stop!" called the horse. "I want to eat you."

The gingerbread man laughed at the horse.

"Run, run, as fast as you can. You can't catch me! I'm the gingerbread man!"

Finally, the gingerbread man came to a river. He stopped. He could not get across. A sly old fox came up to him.

"I will take you across," he said "climb onto my tail."

So the gingerbread man climbed onto the fox's tail.

"Gingerbread man!" called the fox. "you are too heavy for my tail. Sit on my back."

"Gingerbread man!" called the fox. "You are too heavy for my back. Sit on my nose."

But when the gingerbread man sat on the fox's nose, the fox tossed him up into the air.

The fox gobbled him up.

And that was the end of the gingerbread man.

## The Martin Family

The Martin family took a two-week vacation last summer. The day before the trip, all of the family members helped with the preparations. Mr. Martin asked the neighbors, the Smiths, to check the mailbox every day and take out any letters or advertisements. After lunch, Mrs. Martin took all the extra food out of the refrigerator; she gave some to the Smiths, and she threw away the rest. Mary and Susie Martin cleaned the whole house. They swept and washed the floors in all of the rooms.

That evening, the Martin family ate dinner at a restaurant. When they arrived home, Mr. Martin told the family to take off their clothes and put on T-shirts and shorts. Then his youngest daughter Cindy began to wash and dry everyone's clothes.

"Now," said Mr. Martin, "we can begin to pack our suitcases for the trip."

## The Right Use of Time

First, if you want to be a good time user, you have to know which things are the most important of all like if you have much homework, there are tests tomorrow, and your mother asks you to help with the housework. You should decide what is more important to do first. Then finish it step by step. Don't be worried or nervous about it; just keep doing what you are doing. For students who have trouble staying focused, it may be helpful to make a study schedule. That way, the things that need to be handed in the earliest should be worked on first.

Second, use your time carefully and smartly. As an old saying goes "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Study, exercise, rest and activity are all important parts of your life. You can't miss any one of them.

Third, make good use of your time. Time flies and sometimes is wasted easily. It's also a good idea to start early. This is how we can better succeed.

Besides starting early, we can do two things at one time. For example, we can study or memorize English vocabulary when we are waiting for the bus or MRT. Also, we can take a rest when we are on the bus on the way home.

Last, never wait until tomorrow what you can do today. If not, you will get more and more things and one day you will find that you have too much to do and not enough time to finish them. These sayings tell it best: "Time is money" and "Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today." Remember, yesterday is gone, and tomorrow is yet to come. The most important day is today. It is the time you should use smartly. Live for today, and spend every single minute you have well: for one today is better than two tomorrows.

## WHEN I HAVE TROUBLE

When the trouble comes, they don't go away so quickly. Of course everyone wishes that they would just disappear, but they don't. Problems like to stay.

When I have trouble at home or at school, I often hope to talk to my best friend. But guess what? Sometimes on a really bad day, my friend is absent from school because of the flu or cold. I can only depend on myself. Of course there are times when my friend is there and I can share my problems with someone. That helps a lot and I feel much better after talking to him. He can listen to me and give me some advice.

I also try to read some books. Reading makes me feel good, because I can run away from this world and be in the world of the book. Be a hero, a traveller, an astronaut... whatever the book is about.

The best is to call up my friend. Whenever I have trouble, I try to call him up. We somehow arrange to see each other in a fast food restaurant or a tea shop. We tell our parents that we need to study together for a test, but what we really do is talking.

## The Sly Fox and the Red Hen

There is a hen. They call her "the Red Hen".

She lives on a farm.

Red Hen has some chicks. They go chick chick here and chick chick there.

Here is a dog. His name is Ruff.

Ruff goes woof woof here and woof woof there.

"Nobody comes near Red Hen and the chicks!" he says.

The chicks say, "We are hungry, Mommy!"

Red Hen goes to look for some food.

Here comes the Sly Fox. He sees Red Hen.

"The dog is asleep. I can catch Red Hen now," he says.

Sly Fox follows Red Hen. He has a bag.

He thinks, "I'll have a chicken sandwich. I'll have a chicken soup.

I'll have a barbecued chicken. Yummy!"

"What are you looking for, Red Hen?" asks Sly Fox.

"I am looking for some food," she says.

"I have some in my bag," he says.

Red Hen looks into the bag.

"In you go, Red Hen," says Sly Fox.

"Help! Help!" cries Red Hen.

Red Hen is in the bag. Sly Fox runs home.

"Home we go. Home we go," he says.

Sly Fox is home now. He is very tired. He falls asleep.

## An Unforgettable Experience

“Could you take care of Ling when I go to the U.S.A.,” Amy asked me on a sunny day. I was twelve years old and Ling was only three months old. She looked so small and weak. She couldn’t even fly. No pets were allowed in my family, but because it was a special situation, Mom agreed. Then I began my job as parent of a baby bird.

I had never taken care of an animal before, especially a baby. Ling was too young to eat by herself, so I needed to mix the food with water and feed her spoon-by-spoon. I suddenly realized how tiring it is to take care of a baby.

But there wasn’t just inconvenience taking care of Ling. Ling had a wonderful voice. She liked to chirp and sing songs. When I came home every day, she would jump with her wings flapping and toddle toward me. It was like she was welcoming me. She was very cute.

Ling and I became very good friends. She loved to snack with me. Her favorite snacks were potato chips and chocolate! It was very nice to have a companion like Ling since I don’t have a brother or a sister.

As Ling grew every day, the most unwanted day was getting closer. Amy was very happy to see Ling. She said that I did a fantastic job taking care of her. It was very difficult for me to part with Ling. She was like my best friend. However, I had to let her go. It was the most difficult thing I’ve ever done in my life.

I learned a lot from taking care of Ling, and I’ll never forget the happy time we spent together.

## FRIENDSHIP

My friendship helps me a lot in my student's life. When some important test is coming, we can meet each other to study together. It is much better to have someone to help you studying. When we are together, we don't feel so tired and bored. If I have a question, I can always call my friend up and ask about it. My friend can do the same. Sometimes when you study alone, it becomes difficult or there are some things you don't know. Studying together makes both of us think harder.

On the weekends or during the holidays, we meet, too. When we don't need to study, we usually go to see a movie or play some games. We often browse the net to find some interesting things. We have a lot to talk about.

I sometimes hear stories about people who have met at their Junior High School and remained friends forever. I wonder if it is possible. I sincerely wish that it were.

## HEALTH AND WEALTH

People in Taiwan often go to temples to pray for health and wealth.

Let's have a look at wealth. Having a lot of money can surely bring happiness, can't it? There are some wealthy people who try to help the world, for example: some donate money to fight the pollution or help poor children. But some of these people often make others feel uncomfortable. Sometimes they are very greedy and even evil.

There are also hard-working people who got wealthy by doing business. They work very hard for many years and sometimes they get too old to enjoy their wealth. Because of working too hard and having too little sleep, they are often not healthy. They save a lot of money for their children, but if the parents are very ill, can their children be happy?

We are teenagers and it is difficult for us to think about these serious matters. However, because we are teenagers, we have a lot of time to think how to balance both: health and wealth.

## Hot Air Balloon

To make a hot air balloon go up, a burner is turned on. This makes the air inside the balloons hotter. Then the balloon will go up. To make a balloon come down, the burner is turned off. The air inside the balloon will get cooler. Then the balloon will go down. Underneath the balloon there is a large basket. That is where the pilot goes. That is where the passengers go, too. The burner is just above the basket. People can stand in the basket and turn burner on and off.

The balloon will go where the wind blows it. People have been flying in hot air balloon for over two hundred years, Before planes it was the only way for people to fly. Today people fly in hot air balloons for sun. Some people like to race hot air balloons. The first Hot Air Balloon World Championship race was held in 1973.

## **When there is a fire .....**

In public service lectures, fire fighters not only teach extinguishers, but also warn people never to go back into a burning building for any reason. Many people die each year from breathing smoke after rushing back into their homes to save valuables. When people who have lost their homes in a fire are asked what items they most regret losing, most reply "family photographs." Baby pictures and photographs of weddings, friends, relatives and vacations are often impossible to replace. Fire fighters recommend that people make copies of their important photographs and documents and ask a friend to keep them for the family. An alternative is to keep photographs as well as other valuables in a safety deposit box at a bank.

## Jack And the Beanstalk

Jack Brown and his mother are very poor.

His father died three years ago.

All they have now is a cow.

"Go and sell some milk." says his mother.

"We need money for food."

One day, the cow stops giving milk.

"Mother! The cow has no more milk," says Jack.

"Then go and sell the cow," says his mother.

"We need money for food." Jack goes to the market with the cow.

On the way, Jack meets an old man.

"Will you give me some money for this cow?" Jack asks.

"Money? I have something better," says the old man.

"Look! These are magic beans."

The old man starts to sing, "One, two, three, four, five! Magic beans will come alive.

Put them in the ground, water all around."

Happily, Jack takes the magic beans home.

"Beans?!" screams his mother.

"You silly boy! We can't buy food with beans," she yells.

She is furious and throws the beans out of the window.

Jack and his mother go to bed without food.

"Jack! Wake up!" yells his mother. "Quick! Look out the window."

Jack sees a big beanstalk.

The beanstalk goes up, up, up into the sky.

Jack jumps onto the beanstalk.

He climbs up until he sees a road.

Then he follows the road until he sees a huge castle.

## City Mouse and Country Mouse

City Mouse gets a letter from Country Mouse.

Dear City Mouse,

Please come visit me in the country.

We can have fun together.

Your cousin,

Country Mouse

City Mouse gets to the country.

"What a dusty, bumpy road!" he says.

"I feel dirty, messy and muddy. May I take a shower, please?"

"Of course you may," says Country Mouse.

Country Mouse shows City Mouse the bathtub.

"Hey, everybody can see me here! Don't you have a door?" asks City Mouse.

"We don't use doors in the country," says Country Mouse.

"Are you hungry, cousin?" asks Country Mouse.

"We have veggie soup and homemade bread."

City Mouse tastes the food.

"It's not bad," he says. "But I like city food better."

It's late and the two mice go to bed.

"Ouch!" yells City Mouse.

"This bed is too hard. It hurts my head, neck, back, feet and my bottom, too!"

"I'm sorry," says Country Mouse.

"That's O.K.," says City Mouse.

"But my bed in the city is soft and comfortable. One day you can come and try it."