



MEI NEWS

ISSUE 6 • FALL 2015

THE FRONT PAGE

There is something magical about autumn. Between the beautiful, fall foliage, the cooler, crisper weather and the plethora of plump pumpkins that seem to be everywhere, everything about this time of year seems to be a celebration of color and abundance.

At MEI we are also celebrating a new semester, new students and new learning opportunities!

Have you even wondered about the difference between “tell” and “say”? Well, this issue of the newsletter includes a vocabulary lesson where we look at words like these - pairs of words that often confuse learners of English (and even some native speakers of English!).

You’ll also have a chance to read two student essays - “Advice for Learning English” by Badr Alghamdi and “Challenges Faced by International Students” by Yi-Ya Wang. Both writers are students in this semester’s 003 Reading, Writing and Grammar Class.

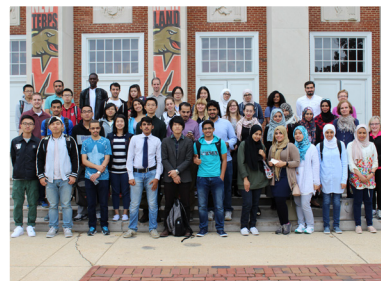
And while everyone works hard at MEI, we also know how to play. We have taken some great trips this fall including a visit to President George Washington’s home at Mount Vernon, and a tour of The Smithsonian Natural History Museum. Closer to home, we enjoyed an afternoon of bowling at The Terpzone as well as a reception during which MEI students got to meet their Speaking Partners.

Finally, don’t forget to check out our upcoming dates and events section - the semester moves fast, and we don’t want you to miss out.

Your Friends at MEI

If you have photos of you and your MEI classmates at MEI events or traveling together that you would like to submit to the newsletter, send them to ask-mei@umd.edu with the word “photos” in the subject line.

Visit us at mei.umd.edu or on Facebook at facebook.com/meiusa



IN THIS ISSUE

- **THE FRONT PAGE**
Fall 2015
- **A FALL POEM**
- **WHAT’S UP AT MEI**
Upcoming Dates and Events
- **VOCABULARY CORNER**
Confusing Word Pairs
- **FEATURE STORY**
UMEI 003 Narratives
- **VOCABULARY CORNER**
Confusing Word Pairs
Answer Key
- **THE BACK PAGE**

AUTUMN FIRES

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
(FROM A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES,
1885)

In the other gardens

And all up the vale,

From the autumn bonfires

See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over

And all the summer flowers,

The red fire blazes,

The gray smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!

Something bright in all!

Flowers in the summer,

Fires in the fall!



WHAT'S UP AT MEI

UPCOMING DATES AND EVENTS

Nov. 4 1:00-3:00 **National Zoo**

Nov. 4 3:00-4:30 **International Coffee Hour, Dorchester Hall**

Nov. 11 1:00-3:00 **TOEFL/IELTS Test Prep Workshop**

Nov. 11 3:00-4:30 **International Coffee Hour, Dorchester Hall
SPONSORED BY MEI!**

Nov. 18 12:30 - 2:00 **Ice Skating** - note earlier start time

Nov. 18 3:00-4:30 **International Coffee Hour, Dorchester Hall**

Nov. 25 12:00-2:00 **International Food Festival, Cole 3109**

Nov. 25 3:00-4:30 **International Coffee Hour, Dorchester Hall**

Nov. 26 to Nov. 27 **UMD Closed for Thanksgiving holiday**

December 9 **Final Conferences** - Teachers will tell you where and when

December 9 3:30-5:00 **Final Ceremony - McKeldin 6137**

January 4 to January 21, 2016, Mon. - Thur. 10 am - 12 pm
IELTS Exam Preparation Class (See notice on next page)

THE MEI VOCABULARY CORNER

*Every issue, we look at a specific topic connected to English grammar or vocabulary.
In this issue, we look more closely at confusing word pairs.*

If you have a question you would like us to address in a future column, send it to us at ask-mei@umd.edu.

The following word pairs often confuse learners of English. Use a dictionary to help you choose the correct word in each sentence below. You can find an answer key with explanations at the end of the newsletter.

1. Did she (tell, say) you the good news?
2. Everyone should (remind, remember) the importance of not giving up.
3. I asked my brother for (advice, advise).
4. We (finally, at last) had to buy a new car.
5. We tried to (lend, borrow) some money from friends.
6. My wallet has been (robbed, stolen)!
7. I took a map with me so I wouldn't (lose, loose) my way.
8. She is trying to find a good (job, work).
9. If you have a question, please (rise, raise) your hand.
10. There has been a serious accident, (involving, including) 8 cars and 3 trucks.
11. Following the bank robbery, the police (followed, pursued) the robbers but were unable to catch them.
12. We have heard a lot of news about the event over the (past, passed) few months.
13. In some streets, parking is permitted only on (alternate, alternative) weekdays.
14. The (principal, principle) reason for global warming is the emission of carbon dioxide.
15. Do you think that people will read (fewer, less) books in the future?
16. He spoke (continuously, continually) for more than two hours.
17. The law (prevents, prohibits) smoking in restaurants.



MEI Maryland
English Institute

Language skills that last a lifetime

IELTS EXAM PREP CLASS

Monday through Thursday
January 4 to January 21, 2016
10 am - 12 pm

Registration required - by November 25, 2015
Register with Amparo at the MEI front desk

Deposit: \$250.00

Total Cost: \$818.00



FEATURE STORY

These stories were written by students in Ms. Mehrtens' UMEI RWG 003 class.

CHALLENGES FACED BY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

BY YI-YA WANG

Every year, many international students come to the U.S. to study. They may have to face different challenges. Because the students come from different countries that have different cultures, they have to learn many new things. I can still remember when I first came to the U.S.; I didn't have any directions to find an apartment, bus stops, or how to open a bank account. Thus, how do international students face their challenges, and how do they do in this condition in the U.S.? In my opinion, there is some advice that could be easily and quickly shared to be successful to live in the U.S. and enjoy American life. For instance, we can meet local friends, we can learn history, and also we can watch TV shows.

One piece of advice is that international students should meet some local friends in the U.S. Meeting local friends have many advantages for international students. People in the U.S. do many activities in their free time. If we go out with these people, we can find out what they do, what they enjoy, and what the latest fashion trends. We can learn easily through our friends. Also, friends always help us when we face the challenges. I totally can understand to meet native friends for some international students is a little difficult. They may be shy, or they may feel an impediment to speak to native people. However, if we do not make friends, we will not know what kind of life they live, how they enjoy their time, or which places they like to visit.

Moreover, American history is very fantastic and interesting. I suggest international students should learn or know some history before they come to the U.S. For example, there are a few dates that was very important in their history such as Independence Day, Martin Luther King Day, and Memorial Day. When you recognize the historical significance of these dates, you will not sense that is strange in their life. Actually, American people have some particular lifestyles from their history. We should have some knowledge or common sense, then we will know what they celebrate, and what they usually do on these different dates.

Finally, watching TV shows is very common in the U.S. How can watching TV shows make it easier for us to live in the U.S.? First, when we watch TV shows, we will find some informal English in conversation that we will not learn in the class. That is their language in their life, and it is a

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CHALLENGES *(continued)*

different way to learn English because many Americans do not speak formally English in their life. Second, some TV shows show American lifestyle. There is a different lifestyle between international people and American people. Sometimes we will realize Americans' way of life as we watch TV shows. Therefore, when we come to the U.S., we will not have feeling that we need to face many challenges, and we may be happy to join American life.

International students face different challenges and problems when their life begins in the U.S. They should find a method to solve challenges and problems. Also, there are many ways to figure out the challenges such as we can meet local friends, learn history, and watch TV shows. I will encourage international students: do not give up to get along with people who live in the U.S. even if it is so difficult to get together with them. Everyone who is from a different country has a different culture and lifestyle. Thus, living in a strange place should have time to get along with each other. We should be more patient and spend more time to learn a new life.

ADVICE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

BY BADR ALGHAMDI

The U.S. is one of the strongest countries in education and students from around the world dream to get a degree from any university in the U.S. In fact, universities in the U.S. have a lot of requirements to get admission, but the most important thing is the ability to speak English, so students should work hard to improve their English. There are two important advice people always say to students who want to be successful in the U.S.: speak as much as you can in English and don't miss your classes.

First, international students who want to be successful in the U.S. should forget about their first language and speak English all the time. Also, they should try to make friends who are native speakers to improve their language, which means that international student should practice English with people who have very good pronunciation and a lot of vocabulary that they will need to speak well.

Next, when students live in the U.S., they should respect the time because if you respect the time, people will respect you. One important thing about respecting time is do not miss classes because if you do, then you will miss information that you need to pass classes and be successful. Also, professors in universities feel free to help students who don't miss classes and who are punctual, if they have bad grades or have difficulty to understand something.

In conclusion, learning English and respecting what you come to do are the most important factors that international students should do to be successful. If they do, they will come back to their countries with their dream done.

VOCABULARY CORNER

ANSWER KEY

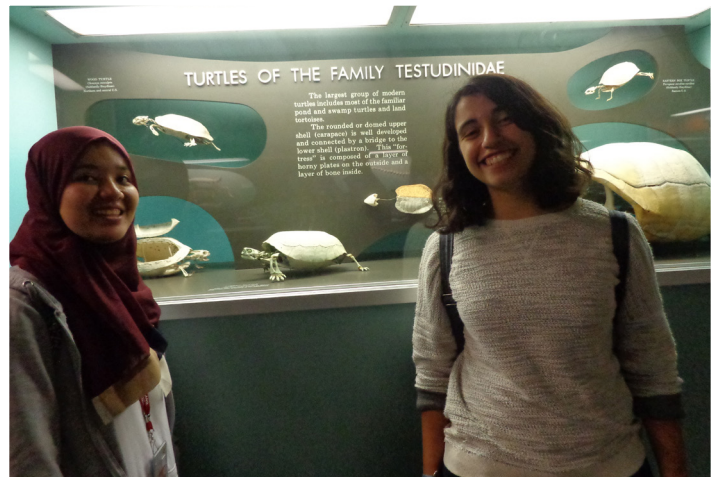
- 1. TELL/SAY:** The main meaning of *tell* is to say something to someone, so it is the correct choice. The main meaning of *say* is to use your voice to express something in words.
- 2. REMIND/REMEMBER:** If you *remember* something, you bring it back from memory yourself. If you are *reminded* of something, someone else makes you remember. The correct answer is *remember*.
- 3. ADVICE/ADVISE:** *Advise* is a verb, meaning the action of giving *advice*, which is a noun. The correct choice is *advice*, and the collocation is *to ask someone for advice*.
- 4. FINALLY/AT LAST:** Use *finally* when you want to make your final point, or, as in this question, to talk about the final stage in a process - here, the process of trying to keep an old car on the road. Use *at last* when you have been waiting for a long time for something to happen: At last, I understand the difference between finally and at last!
- 5. LEND/BORROW:** The correct choice is *borrow*. These two verbs both mean something is given for a period of time and then returned. The difference is in the direction of the giving: You *borrow* a book from a library; the library *lends* the book to you. The collocations are: *borrow from* and *lend to*. You can remember their meanings by the prepositions: *borrow* means you get something *from* someone; *lends* means you give something *to* someone.
- 6. ROBBER (ROB)/STEAL (STOLEN):** *Rob* and *steal* both mean take something from someone without permission. *Rob* focuses on the place or person from which the thing is taken; *steal* focuses on the thing that is taken, so the correct choice is *stolen*.
- 7. LOSE/LOOSE:** The verb is *lose*, meaning not be able to find. If you *lose* your way (the correct choice), you are *lost* and don't know how to get home. *Loose* is an adjective, meaning not tight or not attached - if your shoes are *loose*, they might fall off when you walk.
- 8. JOB/WORK:** *Job* describes what you do to earn money; *work* is a more general term. The two words are used differently. We say *get a job*, *have a job*, *find a job* (so *job* is the correct answer). We say *go to work*, *be at work*, *start work*, *finish work*.
- 9. RISE/RAISE:** *Rise* means to go upwards, e.g. the sun rises in the morning. *Raise* means to cause something to move upwards, e.g. I raised my hand. The correct answer is *raise*.
- 10. INVOLVE/INCLUDE:** *Include* means contain as part of a whole; *involve* means to be connected with, especially with difficulties or troubles. *Involving* is the correct answer.
- 11. FOLLOW/PURSUE:** *Follow* means to come after; *pursue* means to follow with the purpose of catching, so *pursued* is the correct answer.

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VOCABULARY CORNER *(continued)*

12. **PAST/PASSED:** *Past* is gone by in time, finished; it is the correct answer. *Passed* (pronounced just like *past*) is the past tense of *pass*, to go by or move by something.
13. **ALTERNATE/ALTERNATIVE:** As an adjective, *alternate* means one after the other or every other, so it is the correct answer. *Alternative* refers to a choice between two things.
14. **PRINCIPAL/PRINCIPLE:** *Principal* as an adjective means most important, and it is the correct choice. *Principle* is only a noun and means a basic truth or law, as in a scientific principle.
15. **FEWER/LESS:** Use *fewer* for items that can be counted and *less* for items that cannot. So fewer books is the correct choice.
16. **CONTINUOUS/CONTINUAL:** *Continuous* means without a break, non-stop; it is the correct choice. *Continual* means happening often, repeating, e.g. we have had continual problems with our car.
17. **PREVENT/PROHIBIT:** *Prevent* means to stop something from happening. *Prohibit* means to officially forbid something, so it is the correct answer.

Don't forget to keep a record of the words that you have learned. Review your notes from time to time and try to use new vocabulary items whenever possible.



THE BACK PAGE

