

What Is Beauty?



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Mustafa El Makrani Advanced 2

There are over 7 billion people on the planet. That is over 7 billion pair of eyes. Each pair is watching the world in a different and unique way.

What are we seeing then? Are the eyes our only window into life, into beauty?

In a book called *The Prophet*, written by Khalil Gibran, the main character, Al Mustafa, was asked by a poet to speak of beauty. He responded, "It is not the image you would see, nor the song you would hear. But rather an image you see though you close your eyes, and a song you hear though you shut your ears."

Make a connection—we don't actually need to see things with our eyes. Sometimes we can feel beauty, community, and family attachments.

The distinctive way each one of us perceives the world makes it almost impossible to conceive of an example worthy of modeling, makes it almost impossible to create what could be called The Ultimate Guidebook to a beautiful journey on earth.

There are a lot of factors that interact with each other to make up one's lifetime. In that lifetime, numerous feelings and experiences are encountered, and depending on how they are understood, one's identity is shaped.

I am not going to write about philosophy, yet I would like to share the view from my window.

Although our perceptions are different, we kind of agree that, first, life is not as easy as it looks; and second, beauty is out there alongside hideousness, sometimes in the same place and at the same time. It depends on what we do choose to see.

With that in mind, can we boldly say that everyone is responsible for his happiness and sorrow as well? I think we can, only if this responsibility is combined with a conscious acceptance of the inevitable.

With this kind of quality, the enigmatic smile of the Mona Lisa will still look beautiful, even if the woman in the portrait was weirdly facing forward.

Our life span is negligible compared to the universe's. We are going to miss out on a lot of things. But let's not get all

FOMO, consumed by a Fear Of Missing Out. There are a lot of things to enjoy since we don't have the luxury of time to spend on grieving.

Beauty is out there, in the rising smell of the first raindrops when they hit dry dirt, or the sound of a squealing guitar. It can be found in a moment of joy and laughter spent with loved ones, and even in a random smile just barely spotted on a face in the crowd.

Keep in mind that photons travel millions of light years to intersect with planet Earth's trajectory. Let's absorb those photons through our retinas and enjoy the view.

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Ask your teacher to submit your best in-class writings to Jennifer.

An Interview with Mrs. Kaoutar Bakchane

Soukaina Loudghiri
Intermediate 6

Student Voice: *Where are you from?*

Mrs. Kaoutar Bakchane: Originally, I'm from the South of Morocco. That's where my father comes from. I was born in Nador, and raised in Nador and Fez.

SV: *Have you ever lived outside of Morocco?*

KB: No, never.

SV: *Tell us about your life as a student. Where did you study?*

KB: I did half of primary school in Nador and Taounate. I did the last year of primary school, junior high, high school, and university in Fez. We had to move a lot.

SV: *What did you study?*

KB: When I was in my first year of high school, I decided on English. I loved the sound of it. I was in the literature stream. I was given German at first.

SV: *Why did you choose teaching?*

KB: After high school, I did two years at university and took an exam to go to a school of translation in Fez. My dream was to be a translator, but it didn't happen. I took an exam to teach and this is how I became a teacher. It became how I earned money. After one year, I became a teacher and went back to university and got my B.A. I was teaching and studying at the same time.

SV: *How long have you been a teacher in life?*

KB: I started my career really young. I was 19. At 19, I was in the classroom, teaching. The students were almost my age. This is my eleventh year, actually.

SV: *How long have you been a teacher at*

the ALC?

KB: This is my fifth year. Time goes really quickly.

SV: *How is teaching at the ALC different from teaching at other schools?*

KB: It's different in many ways. Class size is different. Classrooms are very different. All of our classrooms are audio/visual. The relationship between teachers and students and staff. Students are really good here. The textbooks are amazing. Good topics. Up to date. Doing it slowly, but surely. We don't get our students to do too much when it's important not to do too much.

SV: *What do you enjoy most about teaching?*

KB: I was born to be a teacher. I believe it. I adore teaching Juniors classes. I love when I can get someone to learn something from me. I have students in Beginning 1 and Beginning 2, and when I hear them speaking good English, I know that I helped them reach that. I feel proud.

SV: *What, in your opinion, is the role of a teacher in the classroom?*

KB: Facilitator.

SV: *Describe your teaching style in 3 words.*

KB: Facilitation. Communication. Creativity.

SV: *What qualities do good teachers have?*

KB: They should be very patient, very creative, open to new teaching methods, and be ready to learn from their students.

SV: *What qualities do good students have?*

KB: Motivated and creative. Asking questions and being willing to learn.

SV: *If you weren't teaching English, what would you be doing?*

KB: Anything with English. Maybe tourism, or maybe translation. Anything to do with English, because I love it.

SV: *What interests do you have outside of the classroom?*

KB: Reading is a major one. Spending time with my daughter comes first.

SV: *What are you reading for enjoyment right now?*

KB: *Eleven Minutes* by Paulo Coelho.



c/o Mrs. Kaoutar Bakchane

SV: *What's your favorite word in the English language?*

KB: *Amazing.* Or *glory.*

SV: *What's your least favorite word in the English language?*

KB: *Loser.*

SV: *What word do you overuse?*

KB: *Great.*

SV: *What's your motto?*

KB: You can delay your dreams, but never let them go.

ALC-Fes Teachers Impress at All-ALC TEFL Conference

Sara Yousfi
Advanced 5

The period from 31 January to 3 February witnessed an important event organized by the ALC-Meknes. Indeed, the 22nd annual All-ALC TEFL Conference

took place in Meknes and lasted four days.

Hotel Tafilalet hosted hundreds of ALC teachers who came from all over the country to represent their cities and share their creative ideas. Many themes were broached, such as academic literacy, peer

coaching, the use of lesson time, inclusive classes, and technology.

Mr. Abderahim Amghar and Mr. Jamal Morelli are two ALC-Fes teachers who worked hard to make this conference a real success.

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Mr. Abderrahim Amghar

During the long hours he has spent teaching, Mr. Abderrahim Amghar noticed that some teachers were not willing to help each other to improve. They forget that one hand has no effect while clapping, and believe in the old Arab proverb, “your friend in the craft is your enemy.”

Mr. Amghar emphasized the issue of a lack of collaboration between teachers in his workshop.

First of all, he dwelled on the role of collaboration in teaching. For him, collaboration has a strong influence on teaching practice. Without it, teachers will never quit the old-fashioned way of teaching, and won't alter their classroom activities.

He proved that the lack of collaboration will only lead to a boring classroom, and an infinite routine that will make learning seem difficult to students. Mr. Amghar sees mentoring and peer coaching as effective solutions.

He explained that peer coaching has many advantages, since it incites teachers to work together, reflect on current practices, and refine and build new skills.

Moreover, he stated that the relationship between the mentor and mentee makes mentoring beneficial for both of them.

Indeed, mentoring helps participants to develop specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's development and satisfy the mentor's personal growth.

Mr. Amghar, made ALC teachers more familiar with those methods by presenting their various types, characteristics, and models.

Mr. Amghar also claimed that he learned so much from his colleagues, which made him a better teacher. By collaborating with other ALC teachers, he understood the importance of applying a student-centered approach. He assumes that since students are the main goal of the learning circle, they must be given huge importance.

He also realized that teachers must consider what their students enjoy

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Mr. Jamal Morelli

Mr. Morelli's long experience with students enabled him notice the temptation of technology on his students. This pushed him to think that time wasted on Whatsapp, Facebook, and other social networks could be turned into a way of learning and enriching their knowledge without their being obliged to get rid of their phones.

Moreover, he asserts that the majority of students pretend to learn English while practicing it with their classmates, who are in the same levels as they are, from the same country, and have the same accent.

The question is, wouldn't it be way better if students could get in touch with native speakers?

Using Skype is an effective solution. Social networks enable students to interact with native speakers from all over the globe and practice their listening and speaking skills in real-life situations.

Mr. Morelli gave ALC teachers and administrators the opportunity to meet people who share his idea and who are available to talk to Moroccan students. Indeed, ALC-Fes teacher Mr. Mitch Virchick shared some of his deep thoughts with Ms. Rohini Chowdhury, who is a famous children's author.

Mr. Morelli proved that, through Skype, students are obliged to use only English, while they learn new expressions, exchange ideas, and discover other cultures. Furthermore, Skype raises the students' awareness, turns them into successful public speakers, and makes the classes more fun.

Due to students' own focus on engineering or becoming doctors, Mr. Morelli stated that creative writing is no longer given critical importance in most classes. Creative writing enables the writers to be totally immersed in a story, to become more fluent, and to be free to express their feelings.

Mr. Morelli also highlighted an issue that has been ignored in our country: a high rate of illiteracy and the lack of reading. Mr. Morelli wasn't surprised to hear that none of his students have ever borrowed a book from a library, which pushed him to

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What Inspires Me

Yassine Rechachi

Intermediate 3

Whenever I go up the roof of the apartment where I live, and I look at Mt. Zalagh, I like the view. Then, I start dreaming and imagining a different life. I feel like I want to escape from the place where I live, where there is a lot of traffic, and pollution, to nature.

I feel like Mt. Zalagh is the place where I have to be. I want to go and stay there and live far, far away from all the materialistic things, without laptops, phones, Wi-Fi, and the other things. I feel like I want to go backward, to the age of my grandfathers, where I would be surrounded only by nature, which symbolizes the simple life.

And when I gaze at the sky, I watch birds flying everywhere, which makes me jealous. I feel like I'm restricted while they are free. Some birds even stay stable in the sky without any movement, letting the wind moving them left and right. When I watch the scene, I feel like I want to fly and join them, but of course, I know that I cannot do it. So, I start imagining again.

The nicest thing is that the mountain makes me feel alive, of course, because it is nature. I'm lucky if I have a piece of paper and a pen, because I feel like the mountain spreads inspiration to me. My hand and my fingers start working and moving on the paper. The product might be a short story, a poem, a song, or maybe a conversation between nature and myself. I really cannot control what the inspiration brings to me. I really feel proud of nature, and that reminds me of the time when I read a poem by William Wordsworth, “Tintern Abbey.” Wordsworth loved nature, and he confessed that it gave him inspiration. That's why he was right when he called nature, “Mother Earth.”

Join the conversation.

Want to interview a teacher?Email alcstudentvoice@gmail.com.Message *Student Voice* on Facebook.

What's Life

Kaoutar Oubdil

Beginning 5

Life is a play,
So act,
And don't be shy!
Don't feel sad,
Don't cry!
Because there is no reason,
No why.

Struggle and fight!
Leave your stupidity and be smart!
Quit the darkness!
Search for light!

Just pretend,
Just act.
Pretend that you're smiling,
And put on a mask.
Because life isn't a hard task.
It's just a question to ask.
It's just a problem to attack.

Time and the Future

Yassine Rechachi

Intermediate 3

The relationship between time and future
Is that both of them are against me.
The future is a sharp sword,
And time goes quickly.
Of course, I know that neither of the two
Is going to wait for me.
Time runs quickly, and I do, too.
I'm following it, and the sword
is following me.
I can't stop, because if I do,
time is going to take
A lot of opportunities from me,
And the future will cut off my head,
And no one will remember me.
Even if someone sees me,
I'm not sure whether they will
forget me or recognize me.

Submit your poetry.
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doing in the classroom so as to create a comfortable and fun atmosphere that will make them more interested in attending the class. To make his idea clearer, he presented many creative ways to achieve this goal and make the students participate in their own learning, such as the use of pictures, videos, and games.

To sum up his conference, Mr. Amghar insisted that teachers share their ideas, worksheets, and suggestions with their colleagues so that all students can benefit from their efforts.

Find more at facebook.com/alcstudentvoice.

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introduce best-selling author Ms. Suzanna Clarke to the audience through Skype.

Using Skype interviews, Ms. Clarke talked to excited ALC-Fes students in Mr. Morelli's classes, and received donations amounting to 80% of the books for the new Medina Children's Library in Fes.

Finally, the effectiveness of the Skype presentation is already clear at ALC-Fes: two of the advanced classes have already adopted the Skype classroom idea. So, both students and teachers of ALC-Fes are already benefiting from the Skype classroom workshop.

I wish I could tell more details about all themes that were handled during the All-ALC TEFL Conference in Meknes. But, there are too many interesting suggestions, too many creative ideas, and too little ink and paper to capture the riches of this annual event.

We're Having a Party

S	B	J	A	C	O	S	T	U	M	E	G	H	S
O	S	L	U	M	B	E	R	M	R	L	P	O	E
I	G	V	S	E	N	D	O	F	F	I	P	U	D
R	P	R	E	C	E	P	T	I	O	N	I	S	O
E	O	K	G	A	L	A	N	E	C	L	M	E	D
E	C	O	M	Y	C	E	F	E	T	E	A	W	I
M	Q	E	B	A	S	H	G	O	P	A	S	A	N
S	A	L	L	N	I	G	H	T	E	R	Q	R	N
U	T	N	H	E	U	F	E	A	S	T	U	M	E
R	M	D	H	J	B	O	F	F	I	C	E	I	R
P	I	U	C	G	A	R	D	E	N	W	R	N	I
R	X	K	Q	K	Z	Y	A	N	Y	B	A	G	S
I	E	B	L	O	W	O	U	T	N	N	D	I	T
S	R	I	P	S	H	I	N	D	I	G	E	P	T
E	T	G	E	M	G	J	A	M	B	O	R	E	E
J	M	E	X	T	R	A	V	A	G	A	N	Z	A
G	E	T	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	F	I	W

Can you find these party words in the puzzle?

- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| all-nighter | extravaganza | housewarming | send-off |
| bash | feast | jamboree | shindig |
| blowout | fete | masquerade | slumber |
| celebration | gala | mixer | soiree |
| costume | garden | office | surprise |
| dinner | get-together | reception | tea |