

Highlights

- Football Party
- Birthdays
- Manners
- Grammar

The ELI Weekly

*The Weekly Newsletter of
the English Language Institute
Volume 104, Issue 8
October 19, 2007*



UF Football Celebration *Let's root for the Gators!*

Come cheer on the Gators as they take on the University of Kentucky!

Where: Sonia's apartment (across the street from Norman Hall.)

When: Saturday, October 20. We will meet at Norman Garage at 3:00pm and walk to Sonia's apartment.

Cost: Bring a few dollars for pizza if you want and something to drink.

Go Gators!

Notes from the Office

So Long to a Very Dear Friend

As some of you may have noticed, **Illy Verdes** has been on vacation.

Unfortunately, she will not be returning to her position at the ELI. She says she will miss everyone very much!

If you need student life or immigration help in the next few weeks, please be sure to speak to **Barbara Earp**. The office will be short-handed until the admissions assistant position is filled. We apologize for any delays this might cause in processing requests, and we appreciate your patience.

The Next Trip

Next weekend, we will be holding our **Midterm Picnic at Lake Wauburg**, which is also our Welcome Picnic for our new B-Term Students. Come out and say hi to the new ELI students! Details about the picnic will be on the Activities Board and in next week's *Weekly*.

Birthdays

The following are ELI Birthdays for the week of October 19-25:

Students:

October 21: Olfat Alaamri
October 23: Tatsuya Hirazawa
October 23: Nicol Miranda
October 24: Hye Jung Choi
October 25: Karen Ramones

Staff:

None this week!

Manners and Culture

Hey, everybody! I'm down to just a few questions once again. Let me know what you're thinking about in this crazy culture of ours!

Q: Why don't Americans take their shoes off in the house?

A: A perennial favorite from our Asian friends, this one! Here's an answer to the question that I published way back in Fall 2000:

This is a question that comes up every semester. And it is one that honestly seems to illustrate the point that there are simply going to be differences in cultural perception and personal habits among different groups of people. The answer is that it's not just Americans. It's pretty much a division of East and West. In the West, the foot itself is perceived, generally, as less than sanitary. As a matter of fact, going barefoot in many public places is actually sometimes a violation of sanitation regulations--this is particularly true where food is being sold or prepared. If we were to walk into the house of an acquaintance and remove our shoes upon walking in the door, it would be perceived as the act of a rude (if not perhaps even slightly crazy!) person. Among very close friends who are just plain comfortable in the house with no shoes, it's okay, but you should remove yours only if your host does!

Q: What is Thanksgiving? Why do you celebrate it?

A: It's a traditional US holiday that commemorates the Pilgrims, one of the first groups of migrants to come to the US mainland to settle from England. They endured a lot of hardships, and there are stories of a great feast that they held along with the Native American people after a particularly good harvest one year when times were getting better.

In modern times, the holiday has come to symbolize the time that we stop and share with our friends and family and give thanks for all the good things in our lives. It is the most universal holiday on our calendar, in terms of the number of people who get together to celebrate it. Notably, the travel industry has an incredible time; the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and the Sunday after are the 2 busiest days of the year at US airports and train stations. And that Sunday is the single most traveled day on rural US Interstate highways, as well.

Commercially, it's also an interesting weekend. The day after Thanksgiving, on Friday, it's considered the start of the Christmas shopping season. Many places have very large sales, and the malls and stores are very, very crowded with bargain hunters. It's a good time to shop if you're looking for something particular to take back home!

Here at the ELI, we do also have our annual Thanksgiving potluck celebration—you'll be hearing more about that next month!

Q: Why do so many Americans eat fast food?

Q: Why do the people in America eat so much canned food?

Q: Why do the people in America use so many credit cards?

A: The answers to these three questions are similar—it's all a convenience factor. And these things are inexpensive in the short run and very easy to get. And none of them require much (if any) effort to use or to consume. All of these factors

combined make them very attractive to the person who doesn't have a lot of time to spare in his/her daily life—and we do spend a lot of time in a hurry here. This is in no way to say that these things are superior to their less convenient counterparts. Fresh food is usually healthier and better for our health. Credit card use can get us into a mess of trouble in our personal finances, if we're not careful about how and when we use them. But what is sacrificed in quality or good sense is worth it in terms of the time and effort saved to many people.

Grammar

Folks, I don't have any grammar questions this week! So, along with my plea for more manners questions, let's hear what you're wondering about in grammar, too!

Quote of the Week

When you dance, your purpose is not to get to a certain place on the floor. It's to enjoy each step along the way.
--Dr. Wayne Dyer

UF English Language Institute
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
English Language Institute
PO Box 117051
315 Norman Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611-7051, USA
Phone: (352) 392-2070
Fax: (352) 392-3744
Email: StudyEnglish@eli.ufl.edu
Webpage: www.eli.ufl.edu