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Jietian Ren

Jietian is an exchange student from China.

What I Believe

Good morning everybody! It is my honor to speak here, and I am very glad to share my topic with you. Then today I would like to talk something about what I believe.

What do you believe? It is really a good question. I believe many things. I believe that the sun will rise from the East tomorrow; I believe there are miracles in the world. I also believe that if you keep working hard, you will gain something eventually

I still remembered one of my friend liked math very much. Once he met a math problem, though he used many different methods, he did not solve it at last. We thought he was so stupid, because he spent so much time doing something that cannot be done. However, he just told us, "Though I did not solve it, I learn how to think and solve problems from different ways."

This thing made me understand that as long as you work hard, you may not succeed, but you must harvest something. In addition, what you get is often more important than success. Success is only this time; instead, what you learn in the process of hard work can be used for lifetime.

That is all, thank you for listening.

An Open Letter to Students

Dear students,

You always think that school never teach you something that you really need and want; you think that all things are teachers and schools' faults. However, you forget school is not just your school it is for all students. Schools can only teach students the skills that most students need to learn, rather than customizing classes for you.

When you are all denouncing teachers, have you ever thought about your attitude to your teachers; have you ever respected your teachers? Everyone knows that America is a free country, but sometimes I really cannot understand its freedom. At school, if a student fall asleep in class, no one will say that this student does not respect teacher, because it is his right to sleep. However, if teachers wake up the students who are sleeping in their class, they need to say sorry, because she violate the students' right to sleep. Don't you think it is ridiculous?

I really hope students can be good at themselves before they blame others.

Writing Activity

1. Have you ever heard the terms “good loser” and “bad/sore loser”? A good loser is someone who is kind, congratulates the winner, and finds a benefit in losing. A sore loser reacts in a negative way; possibly screaming, accusing someone of cheating, refusing to continue or try again. In “What I Believe,” Jietian discusses her friend’s determination to solve a math problem which he ultimately fails to do and his reaction to losing. Was her friend a good or bad loser? What was the outcome of his reaction? Do you agree or disagree with his assessment of the situation? Write a story or a poem about what it means to you to be a good loser/bad loser.
2. Think about a time when you lost or failed at something. How did you feel? How did you behave? What would you have done differently? Write a poem or story discussing what happened, how you behaved, and whether or not you would have done something differently and why?
3. Do you agree or disagree with the writer’s view in “An Open Letter to Students”? Why do you feel the way you do? Write a letter in response to the writer’s views.
4. In “An Open Letter to Students,” the writer suggests that students are just as guilty of bad behavior in school as the teachers. Think about a time when you were unhappy with a teacher’s behavior. Were you correct to feel unhappy? Why or why not? Was there anything you could have done to change the outcome? Write a story or poem discussing that time.