

В конкурсе эссе в рамках программы Американского центра НБ ТГУ и TELTA
«New approaches to effective academic writing»
лучшими были признаны :

1) **About the Attitude of Gratitude**

The winner: Осин Владимир

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Факультет: Институт Кибернетики

Gratitude in our lives

Nowadays, the moral component of society is seriously changing. The principles that have been fundamental in the behavior of people take on new meaning. One of these principles is the ability to be grateful. Why should people be grateful? The majority of people learn about the necessity of being grateful from their parents in the early childhood, for example, when they receive gifts. Gratitude begins with one simple word – «thank you». In Russian language, the meaning of this word is associated with gratitude to God, that is, the word “thank you” literally means «God help us». In any case, this word conveys the emotional spirit and joy of the opportunity to be thankful. That is why it should be used consciously, and not as a cliché.

Many people today say that gratitude is a convention. Some people may add to this that the need to be grateful depends on the social status, wealth and so long. The dynamics of the modern world rolls over, and it becomes more difficult to be a man who can express his feelings.

As a result, it can be said that the ability to thank each other for help or service is vital in today's society. After all, it is the basis on which human relationships are built, and we should not forget that thanking someone we become better. As Seneca said: “the perception of gratitude is more valuable than the gift received, as gratitude, being a virtue, raises the soul”.

2nd place: Ланговая Екатерина

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Институт социально-гуманитарных технологий

Thank you for my childhood.

For every person at least once in his life it is very important to be thankful to somebody. For me, that person was Natalia Fyodorovna . An elderly lady, who lived with us in the door.

I spent my childhood in a small wooden house in Tomsk. At the age of 6 I spent most of the day in the company of my younger sister and 5-6 guys of my age. We built tree houses, played hide and seek, stole apples from the neighbors. But every day we did the same work: went to the store, carried water from the pump, helped around the house and drank tea with Granny Natasha. It's hard to describe it now. In my memory there is a picture of a small, fragile elderly woman who walked with a cane, always wore warm clothes and laughed a lot. We played cards, cooked pies, watched TV. In winter, we cleaned snow in the yard and helped heat the stove, and in summer we weeded the beds in the garden and prepared wood.

Once Granny Natasha died. She just disappeared. I often think of Granny Natasha. She showed me kindness. Simple kindness that is so rare today. Natalya Fyodorovna just smiled, despite the loneliness, illness and old age. She smiled made people around her happy. And now, almost 15 years later, I can say that I thank her for my childhood.

3d place: Аксёнов Владимир,

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Государственный Университет, ГГФ

Gratitude like a currency in the present-day world

Most of us have accustomed to say “thank” and to feel gratitude to the person, who did something good for us. Perhaps, in the response to that, we will do something good too. Nevertheless, the certain spiritual component (sense of gratitude, very important), more often disappear at all. Instead there are usual commodity relations: one good turn for another.

Even between friends it’s becoming quite normal. For example, I had helped one my friend with study and then he was thinking of: how could he express the gratitude? In the end he invited me to a football match. In such way the gratitude transformed into something material, became a fee.

The problem might be more serious. Indeed, such barter trade – one good turn for another, have always existed. For example, between unfamiliar persons - who will do something only for nothing? The fact is that sense of gratitude start to use in the meanest way: if somebody wants to gain specific thing, he (or she) will hint or generally talk up what he needs to receive in exchange for his help. It will be a bit embarrassing or even shameful. Of course, in this case there is no sense of gratitude at all.

Apparently, market relations are entering not only in material life, but in moral part of one [life] too. And as usual, nobody cares.

2) What would you tell a foreigner about Tomsk

The winner: Аполонская Карина

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Институт социально-гуманитарных технологий

**A SENSE OF ORIGINALITY OR WHAT IS ATTITUDE OF LOCAL
RESIDENT TO HISTORY OF TOMSK LIKE**

Thousands of people arrive in Tomsk every year with the only purpose – to see dozens of monuments and museums that are located within the city. Originality of Tomsk is incontestable. Foreigners, who come to Tomsk, have a strong desire to be a step closer to Russian history, culture and people.

But, how can foreigners understand better Russian people if they do not know their attitude to history? As for this question, I would like to tell a foreigner about attitude of one inhabitant of Tomsk area to history of his city and region.

Some years ago, a hereditary Cossack decided to restore the same fort in Semiluzhki that was built in 1609 by Cossacks, earliest explorers of Siberia.

Nowadays, inside the fortress there is a wooden church, a bath-house, a well, a barnyard, a patrol tower and many other buildings typical for the life of Russian people of the 16-17th centuries. Any visitor of the fort can put on old clothes, hold shields and swords, which are kept there, grind grain with a millstone, warm up in Russian bath-house, swim in a water bowl, drink herbal tea or milk from a pitcher, which was traditionally used at that time.

What conclusion can we make from the information above? It should be undoubtedly noticed that the resident of Tomsk area tries to keep up cultural possessions of the area. Moreover, he tries to show other people originality of the area he lives in. Peculiarity of people is expressed through their history.

2nd place: Теслюк Анна

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Институт социально-гуманитарных технологий

What would you tell a foreigner about Tomsk?

Sometimes when you have got acquaintance with someone for a long period of time it is a bit challenging for you to describe him or her in a nutshell. There is the same situation for me with Tomsk but I will try my best to do it in my essay.

To my mind, the chief reason to fall in love with Tomsk is its careless and cheerful atmosphere because of the increasing number of students. Undergraduates who come there to get a diploma from one of the well-recognized Tomsk universities make this town captivatedly lively and fill it with hustle and bustle.

Nevertheless, not only students are charmed by this extremely gorgeous place. Every year long distances are not able to prevent curious tourists from visiting Tomsk to see with their own eyes how modern architecture of office buildings harmonize with wooden lace ancient houses of generous Tomsk merchants.

Another thing that is worth mentioning is tolerance of Tomsk people. Historically that territory belonged to Tatars, then Russians had to settle down there looking for enough fertile grounds for farming. Tatars were very kind to aliens and helped them to overcome some hazards and obstacles while Russian people respect traditions of local inhabitants. And since then Muslims and Christians have been peacefully coexisted.

To summarize, I would like to say that Tomsk is the town of diversity in everything: in history, in population and views. That is why if you visit Tomsk once you will likely to come back again and again.

3d place: Кошеутова Наталия

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Институт кибернетики

“My American friend’s day in Tomsk”

B.

Nowadays, as many young girls I have a lot of friends. I have an American friend. He dreams to visit Russia especially Tomsk. Why Tomsk? Because I am from Tomsk and because of its beauty and uniqueness. I don’t know when he’ll come and how long he’ll stay but I know exactly that it’ll be unforgettable time.

First, we'll start with Voskresenskaya Mount. I'll show the place of foundation of the town.

You know, Tomsk is a religious center of Siberia. That's why we'll surely visit Bogoyavlenskiy Cathedral. My friend is a Catholic and I think it will be interesting for him to know about traditions of Russian Orthodox Church.

Certainly, we can't but visit squares of Tomsk. Lenin Square is bigger than Red Square in 4 times. There we'll come to the monument to Chekhov. The monument is unusual and ironic. Chekhov is with enormously large bare feet. Another interesting place to visit will be Novosobornaya Square. There is a monument to Russian ruble which is two meters high and weighs 250 kilos.

My friend is a football maniac. Of course, we'll go to the stadium "Trud" where we can find a monument to a football fan.

In addition to this, being in Tomsk there will be a chance for John to taste fresh delicious beer "Barkhotnoye" which is made in Tomsk.

To sum up, Tomsk is not as big as Boston but there is a lot to see in it. I believe my friend will enjoy his visit to Tomsk very much.

3) You've got a 10million ruble grant to improve some things in your local community. What will you do?

The winner: Анастасия Рябикина

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Институт Кибернетики

Money in the Service of Limitless Education

When you are to improve something the first thing you think about is your local community. The second thing crosses your mind is how you can help people around you. As I am a student and live in a town famous for its universities, I would like to make it possible to get a degree for handicapped people.

Nowadays, everything is about computers. So, I would like to spend my grant on technologies that would allow the disabled to use computers. It would employ visual-based interfaces for those who are disarmed or have problems using keyboards or mice. This interface comprises the following: eye movements are equal to cursor movements, clicking is substituted with winking. It is not just a concept – the USA have already created such an interface and conducted experiments with volunteers that showed the efficiency of the interface.

It is evident that for blind students audio-accompanying or Braille script lettering is the way-out in terms of operating computers. If I had enough money I would provide PCs with these features and allocate them in our university library. So, the access to such computers would be free and easy.

Surely, this approach is going to change students' lives entirely! Not only would students get a chance to study but to communicate with the world: use social networks, browse the Web, find new friends among the group mates and so on. Thus, the list of the advantages is countless as well as the number of students who need it.

2nd place: Потехина Анастасия

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Институт неразрушающего контроля

Let's act!

Nowadays there are many problems in the world, which require taking measures. Probably every ordinary person would like to take the actions to improve his environment, but he cannot do it because it requires money. So if I had received 10 billion rubles, I could invest it for improving some things in my local community. First and foremost, I would have spent for charity. Firstly, I would have donated money to children, the elderly at home. Children living in children's homes should not receive less than those who live in families. Secondly, some of the money I would have contributed to schools, kindergartens for the purchase of various educational materials that can help for the development of children and adolescents. Thirdly, we must not forget about animals! Donations to the kennels, zoos would be a good investment.

Furthermore, one should not forget about the improvement of the area. I would like to make more parks and gardens. To improve the ecological condition of areas many cities implemented environmental standards that help preserve the environment. These methods include waste separation, recycling and others. The creation of entertainment centers, coffee shops will give people the opportunity to meet more often and have a good time in cold weather. Also allocation of money for transportation will help substitute old buses for new, more comfortable ones. To sum up, people can use the money differently, but, in my opinion, improvement of life around us is the best way of investing money.

3^d place: Лемеш Екатерина

Национальный Исследовательский Томский Политехнический Университет
Институт социально-гуманитарных технологий

You've got a 10 billion rubles grant to improve some things in your local community.
What will you do?

Everyone knows that it's a big temptation to spend money on himself/herself. When you overcome this desire, you'll want to spend the money on something really significant. But it's difficult to imagine such a big sum of money and manage cash funds correctly.

First and foremost I'd visit all charities where everybody can make a gesture of nobility. Many reach people do this specific contribution to other people or something else. I mean they help poor people, orphans, animals' shelters, churches, etc. I'll do the same. If I had 10 billion rubles I'd like to invest about 5 trillions in the development of orphanages in my town. It isn't a secret that now orphans live in poor conditions. Next step will be to open the best Children's Cancer Center in my local community. For great majority of people it will be the only chance to save lives of their children, because only a few can pay for treatment abroad. Then I'd open a big Children's rehabilitation center for children with neurological

disorders. It'd help kids and parents to be together throughout a long period of rehabilitation. Also I can't ignore the fact that science is in decline in my region.

So I'd invest the money in the building and development of Research centers with unlimited possibilities. I'm sure that people from my local community would appreciate all these improvements.
