

Dear Ten,

Your letter, J, is breathtaking. Very beautiful. You translated it from a Korean poem. It is about friendship, about a special friend. The last line runs: "I found she was important to me after we parted company. Now she makes me often think about her."

J, may I copy this poem to the whole group?

Thank you for your warm and positive letter, I. Before you came here you thought England was a cold, stiff place. But you say you find your host family very warm and friendly, and school too. England will seem cold to some people and warm to others. It depends on the culture you come from.

Maybe I, you will find people in this group who do find England hard to live in.

Ali, your last letter was brilliant. You are like a plane taking off. You tell me in the letter that your Dad is not a hard man. You say he is a self-made man. He left school at 12. He started working when he was 12. He lived in a village then. He was very poor. It was when they came to the city of Gaziantep that your family became rich.

A, you clearly admire your father. You write: "My father graduated from primary school- I graduated from Business School. I am an accountant now. I want to learn English FOR my father." I can feel how much you love him and model on him.

I understand how you need to see your family as well as listen to them on the phone.

S, the devaluation of your currency is very worrying. You did not say how much it has gone down. This means that everything here is more expensive for you. UK devalued a year ago. We went down 15% against the German Mark.

E and I, when did Poland last devalue? Was it a big devaluation?

Yes, S, I realise you are learning a lot. Your spoken English is moving forward by leaps and bounds. You are right when you say you have the power to learn. You also say you are using this power.

Be good if you wrote a bit more- your writing is still pretty weak.

Tell me, what kind of student were you in Switzerland, seven years ago? You mention this but do not give me picture.

J, I have noticed that you often help S when he makes mistakes. I think I have noticed that sometimes his careless mistakes annoy you. Maybe he learns in a very different way from you. I have noticed that you are a very careful learner. I think A learns in a way similar to yours. Maybe I am wrong. If so, please tell me.

E, you write: "I have never been in England before. England is beautiful to see. I like this country, because it is cleaner than Poland. The roads don't have holes like in my country and particularly like in my town. I notice the holes because I love driving my car. In England I would have a problem with driving on the

left." E■, you also tell me you intend to become a teacher of English. You should do well.

Thank you for your letter, dear Chocolate Person. I am happy to know that there are things here that make you happy. Your English is not terrible, Si■; you make loads of mistakes but you say what you want. Gradually the mistakes will fall away. If I corrected everything you would get depressed and not learn much from it.

M■, A■ has written about his father. You say that your father's house is like your house. What kind of man is your father? Is he like you? Are you more like your father or your mother? What is, or was, your father's job?

L■, it is good to hear your voice full of life and happiness. It is also good to see how much better your English is when you feel well. When you are happy you write longer, better sentences. You make more mistakes AND your language is fuller and better.

You are happy because you got a letter from your parents which you read over and over again as you walked to school. Please don't happily walk under a bus!

You were shocked in your host family when the girl started to eat her supper before her parents began to eat. You say this would never happen in Korea. It is rude here, too, but it often happens. Yes, customs are really different from country to country.

Yours,  
Mario.