

Life Topics

Reflections

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by

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***This book is dedicated to you, the students,
without whose help it would not have been possible.***

Life Topics Reflections

- * Ideal for classwork in Reading, Writing, Conversation, Presentation, Debate.
- * Emphasizes Creative and Critical Thinking skills.
- * Designed for a wide range of students. Lower-level students benefit from simple, natural English. Advanced students gain from a greater range and depth of ideas.
- * Includes thought-provoking issues that are fun, relevant, and meaningful.
- * Encourages passionate classroom discussions and inspiring classroom experiences.
- * Explores many sides of important social and personal topics.
- * Enhances students' self-awareness and understanding of their environment to help prepare them for life.
- * Comes with an Internet page at <http://www.LifeTopics.com>

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is to not stop questioning."
– Albert Einstein

Table of Contents

1. Cat Café	06
2. Sad Songs	10
3. The History of Consumerism	14
4. A Sense of Purpose	18
5. Santa Claus	22
6. The Same-Sex Wedding	26
7. World Festivals	30
8. What Makes You Happier: Experiences or Luxury Goods?	34
9. Teenagers and Stress	38
10. Superheroes	42
11. Gratitude	46
12. Processed Foods and Addiction	50
13. Minimalism	54
14. Flow	58
15. The Benefits of Being Scared	62
16. Social Media and the Fear of Missing Out	66
17. Gender-Neutral Parenting	70
18. The Science of Altruism	74
19. Counterfactual Thinking	78
20. Mindful Eating	82
21. The Id, Ego, and Superego	86
Listing of Vocabulary	90

1. Cat Café



Pre-Reading Question: When and where did the first cat café begin?

Vocabulary: Match the words with their meanings or descriptions.

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. companionship 交わり | 2. cuddle 寄り添う | 3. judge 判断する |
| 4. self-esteem 自尊心 | 5. sociable 社交的な | 6. themes テーマ、主題 |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ___ a. a feeling of friendship | ___ b. one's confidence or self-worth |
| ___ c. to criticize another person | ___ d. to hold, hug, or embrace |
| ___ e. different topics or main ideas | ___ f. friendly and getting along well with others |

Vocabulary: Fill in the blanks in the sentences below with the correct word.

- Before you _____ another person, you should look carefully at yourself.
- The lecture went so well, that after she gave it, her _____ went up.
- The talk covered different _____, including world peace and hope.
- He was very talkative and far more _____ than the others.
- A dog can provide its owner with _____ for many years.
- My daughter loves to _____ with her cat, Cotton.

"Every problem has a gift for you in its hands."

– **Richard Bach**

[1] The world's first cat café, called the "Cat Flower Garden," opened in 1998 in Taiwan. It soon became famous, attracting tourists from Japan and around the world. In 2004, Osaka opened Japan's first cat café, called "Neko no Jikan" (Cat's Time), and a year later, Tokyo opened its first cat café. Perhaps because so many apartments do not allow pets, cat cafés spread quickly and became very popular throughout the country. Japan soon became well known for its cat cafés which served coffee, tea, and cake, cookies, and other small sweets. Most cafés had from 10 to 20 cats, for people to pet and play with. Customers, often businessmen, went to these places to relax, find **companionship**, and forget about their work and stress for a while.

[2] People love their pets. A 2011 study found that pet owners are happier, healthier, more **sociable**, and have higher **self-esteem**. Today, cat cafés operate throughout Asia, including in Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand. In 2011 they appeared in Russia, and in 2014 they emerged in Europe. They were found first in Italy, Denmark, and Finland, and later in Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, France, and England. In 2014, Canada

also opened its first cat café in Montreal, and that same year, cat cafés opened in California and Florida. Since then, they have spread across the U.S. Today, many other types of animals can now be found in "pet cafés," including dogs, birds, rabbits, owls, or even goats. Many cafés encourage customers to adopt their animals.

[3] The pet café trend has led to some exciting trends. At one university in London, students can **cuddle** with rabbits on Fridays. "Rabbits don't **judge** you on what you wear or what grade you got on your last assignment. They just want to cuddle," said one student. About a hundred students visit their cute, long-eared friends weekly, with some visitors saying it is the best part of their week. Another university in England has "puppy rooms" to help students handle the stress of exams.

[4] Different café **themes** are becoming popular. At hammock cafés customers spend their time relaxing on hammocks. In chocolate cafés, they can choose from among many different chocolate treats. There are different anime themes too, like Gundam, Snoopy, and Super Mario, as well as themes such as Hello Kitty and Barbie dolls, robots, and ninjas. London has one place with over one hundred breakfast cereals from around the world. Some cafés are decorated to look like cafés from the 1950s, with designs, tables, chairs, and wall pictures that bring back those years. Others cafés have movie-related themes as "Back to the Future" and "Alien." So, if you're in the mood for a "different" café experience, you have all kinds of great choices.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

– **Winston Churchill**

Active Outline: Choose the correct answer.

- The world's first cat café opened in _____. (Japan / Taiwan / The UK / America)
 - Before long, they quickly spread throughout _____. (Japan / Taiwan / The UK / America)
- Studies have found that pet owners are generally healthier and happier. (True / False)
 - Cat cafés became popular in Europe and the US beginning in _____. (2004 / 2005 / 2014 / 2015)
- At one university in England, students can spend time with rabbits on _____. (Mondays / Wednesdays / Fridays / weekends)
- Which is **not** mentioned as a theme for a café? (Gundam / Barbie / robots / fish)

Creative Writing I: Review an animal or pet café. *Be creative, and use your imagination!!*

While in the (country / city / town / _____) of _____, I visited a (cat / dog / _____) café that had just opened. When I opened the door, there were _____ (cats / dogs / _____) that (ran / flew / came / _____) to me. The room was very _____, and I noticed that the walls had _____ on them. The animals had many interesting names, such as _____, _____, and _____, and while some were playing with _____, others were resting and _____ on chairs or _____. The other customers there looked _____. The animals were _____. The cutest one, named _____, suddenly

_____ and began to _____ and _____. It remained there for _____ minute(s), and after that started to _____. In addition, there was _____ that was _____. It's a _____ way to spend your time and _____. Before I left, I decided to buy (a / some) _____. The one thing that I think can make the place better is _____. In the future, I (will / will not) return because _____.

Reverse Questions: Write the questions that you would need to ask to get the answers below.

1. _____ ?

Answer: It was called "Neko no Jikan."

2. _____ ?

Answer: They first appeared in 2014 in California and Florida.

3. _____ ?

Answer: Cuddling with rabbits and puppy rooms help students handle stress.

4. _____ ?

Answer: Some café themes today might include ice cream, baseball, and "Star Wars."

Discussion: (Answer a couple of these).

- I. Whom do you know who has a pet? Describe the animal, and the feelings towards it.
One person I know who (has / had) a pet is _____. The pet (is / was) a _____, named _____, and looks like _____. The feeling toward the animal are _____.
- II. Can a pet be considered part of the family? Explain.
I (do / do not) feel that a pet can be part of the family because _____.
- III. Many people go to cat cafés to relax. Where do you go to relax?
Outside of my home, a place I go to relax is _____. While I am there I will _____.
- IV. Which would you prefer to go to, a "Star Wars," baseball, or ice cream café? Why?
I would prefer to go to a ("Star Wars" / baseball / ice cream café) because _____.

Creative Writing II: Create your own "pet café."

After much thought, I have decided to create my own café. But it will not have cats. It will have (animals as / the theme of) _____. I like this idea because _____. This café will appeal to many people because _____.
The name of the café will be _____. It will be located in _____. This is a good location because _____. In the middle of the café will be a large _____. It will be _____ in color. The nicest part of the café will be _____. The inside of the café will also have _____ and _____.
The price to enter the café will be _____. In addition, if people like, they can buy _____ and _____.

My Feedback: Give feedback and write down some questions to ask the speakers.

_____ ? _____ ?
 _____ ? _____ ?

Discussion / Debate: Answer a couple of these questions, and discuss them with your classmates.

- I. Describe your favorite café. Why do you like it?
- II. What special-themed café would you like to go to (such as an owl or Gundam café, etc.) Why?
- III. Do you believe that pet owners are really happier, healthier, and more sociable than people who do not own pets? Explain.
- IV. If your university had a pet café, what animals would you like to see there? Would you visit it? Explain. If not, why not?

Make up two questions of your own to discuss with the other class members. Be creative !!