



The Write Way

"Master the Word and You Shall Master Your World"

A Northwest Vista College Publication from the Staff at the Centers for Academic Reading and English Support (CARES) in Juniper Hall
New and Returning Students

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Happy October from CARES!



ALAMO
COLLEGES

NORTHWEST VISTA COLLEGE

Congratulations on getting through your first month of classes at NVC! Whether you are a new or returning student, getting back into a routine after a long summer can be difficult at times, but you did it, and you did it well. Now that you have a couple of weeks under your belt, it's a good idea to take some time and reflect on your first few weeks at Vista. If you are having trouble keeping up with some of your classes, think about what you can do to make sure you succeed. You might

consider talking to your instructor and getting some feedback or setting up some group study sessions with classmates. We also hope that you took advantage of the services at CARES and that you will come visit us again soon.

... from the Reading Faculty

A Message From Jenny Martin

An important lesson that I learned while attending college would have to be that I was in control of my destiny. If I wanted something bad enough, I quickly learned that I was going to have to do whatever it took to make it happen. If that meant going through a lot of struggles and hard times, then so be it because in my heart, I knew I



Jenny Martin (l) and daughter Elizabeth

was going to succeed no matter what. I was a young mother. I had the honorable duty of raising my daughter while attending UTSA. Sleepless nights? Yes. Early classes? Yes. Holding down a job to make ends meet? Yes. Working extremely hard to make sure I received the highest grades on all of my assignments? Without a doubt! Since the age of five, I always had the drive and passion to teach. I had a goal and I WAS going to achieve it. It may have taken me a little longer to finish my two degrees, but that does not matter... I did it. I was hired as a Reading Instructor back in the summer of 2001 here at NVC. I have been blessed with having the opportunity to not only teach at an incredible institution of higher learning, but to meet wonderful students every semester! My dream has come true! Never forget that YOU, and only you, are in control of your destiny. You can make your dreams come true!

Tips To Help you Ace Your Exams

Midterm season is coming up sooner than you think! Don't worry, though; the CARES labs have got you covered. Even if you cannot find time to come into the labs for tutoring, make sure your study time is truly enhancing your learning experience.

Following these eight study tips could help you maximize the time you do spend studying!

1. Do learn to say no to things that will distract you.
2. Do rank study tasks in order of priority.
3. Do make time to study every day.
4. Do reward yourself for working hard.
5. Do use your best time to study (morning, afternoon, or night?).
6. Do study in small chunks.
7. Do use your planner to keep track of study time.
8. Don't Procrastinate!

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The CARES Labs

The College English Center
JH216 Mon -Thurs: 8AM-9PM
Fri-Sat: 9AM -2PM

Developmental English Lab
JH229 Mon -Thurs: 9AM-9PM
Fri - Sat: 9AM -2PM

Developmental Reading Lab
JH110 Mon -Thurs: 9AM-5PM
Advocacy Center
JH308 Mon - Thurs 8AM - 5PM
Friday 9AM-2PM

Visit us at:
<http://www.alamo.edu/nvc/tutoring/cares/>



Setting Sights on Your Future

Goal Setting Brings You Closer to Your Dreams

To make your dreams a reality, you need to be realistic about your goals. Strive to reach goals you know you are capable of attaining. For example: You wouldn't try to make yourself run a marathon tomorrow if you have never trained for one, right? Don't set yourself up to fail because you will just give up on future goals.

Also writing down your goals on paper will enable you to look at them every now and again. This will help remind you of things that were once important and can keep you accountable.

Think about all that you will gain when you reach the goal (not just the materialistic things either. Think about peace of mind, happiness, comfort, a family, security, etc.) These things will keep you motivated. Own it! Dream as big as you want to because you deserve just as much as anyone else. The first step to having others believe that you deserve everything you achieve is to believe it yourself. Celebrate every time you reach a goal (no matter how small).

Meanwhile, keep these next five things in mind when setting your goals and stick to them as much as possible. Your goals need to be:

Specific—Define your goal and be as specific as possible. (Not just a nurse, but a pediatric nurse.)

Measurable—You need to be able to measure it in some way. (How will you know you reached your goal? Deadlines/ achievements/ etc.)

Action-Oriented—What are the actions needed to complete the goal? You need to have a plan to know what you need to DO to get to your goal.

Realistic—Be sure that you can reasonably do it and that the outcome is within your control.

Timely—Set deadlines to your goals and stick to them. This will prevent you from wasting time and will keep you on track.

S.M.A.R.T way to Set Goals

Enthusiasm can be contagious! If you are excited about what you are doing and where you are headed, others will be excited for you! Friends and family will start asking you about how your goals are coming along. This is great for accountability and motivation!

Don't let big goals scare you. There's a fine line between being realistic about goals and dreaming big, but you can do both! Set periodic goals for yourself. Instead of saying, "I want to own a big house and a fancy car." First tell yourself, "I want to graduate from college and get a great job."

This ensures the likelihood that you will be able to get the fancy car and big house. So be **S.M.A.R.T.** and set your goals for a brighter future.



Health and Wellness Tips For Students

What better month to start a health kick than the month of October! With all of the treats and sweets at our fingertips, getting in the mindset of becoming a healthier individual just might keep you from putting on those daunting pounds over the holidays. It is just downright scary to think about eating healthy and exercising on a daily basis for many of us because there never seems to be enough time in a day. It will be the gut-wrenching subtle changes that make a difference until becoming healthier turns into a habit. How often do you watch TV? Try using Tivo to record your favorite show and get moving. Not only will you feel better and more energized after a good workout, but you will save yourself 20 minutes of commercial time for every 60 minute show. If you still prefer the couch and your show, try small bursts of exercises during the commercials like jumping rope, sit-ups, push-ups, jogging in place, squats, or grab a set of dumbbells and work your arms. Let's get off to a good start by being a part of the "Celebrate Vista"-Homecoming 2012, Tuesday, October 2-Saturday, October 6. Some of the events include basketball and volleyball games with employees vs. students, a 5k Vista Dash for Dollars and to top it all off, a Family Fun Day! You can find more information at:

www.alamo.edu/nvc/homecoming

Getting One Step Closer to Your Dreams

Benefits of Getting an Associate Degree at NVC

Earning your degree at Northwest Vista College can serve as a pathway towards not only an Associate Degree, but it serves to open many more opportunities in higher education, the job market, and personal satisfaction as well.

Job Market: More opportunities open up to you because you can apply for higher-paying jobs that require degrees or years of experience. You can substitute a degree for years of experience. Having a degree translates into several characteristics/traits that employers like, such as stamina,

Graduation Office and filled out a form. Nothing else is required. You are not required to even go to the ceremony if you don't want to.

Personally: Earning an AA degree is one HUGE step towards your final goal of earning a Bachelor's Degree and securing the job of your dreams. Not only will you be able to look beyond entry-level positions, you can focus on a job in the career field you plan to stay in. This would also then be a great opportunity for you to make sure you enjoy working in this field before completing your degree. Also, knowing that you are past the half-way point of earning a four-year degree will be great motivation for you to continue working hard.

On average, individuals with AA degrees earn a minimum of \$8,000 more a year than a high school graduate.

persistence, determination, goal-setting, following through, etc.

Academically: When you graduate you take a degree and the entire core curriculum with you. When you earn the AA, you are core complete and cannot be forced to retake courses. (Unless going to a private college or a university with unique core curriculum requirements, ie: Capstone). The only difference between a student with 60 hours who transfers and one with 60 hours who graduates is that the one who graduated went to the

Who Can Help You Graduate?

When you are ready to leave NVC, don't just transfer to a four-year college. Go see the Graduation Team for a degree audit, to submit your graduation application, and leave NVC with a degree!

Graduation Team

Cypress Campus Center (CCC), 108C

486-4340

Nvc-graduation@alamo.edu



Abir Zeidan: A Student Never Hesitant to Ask a Question

I first met Abir several semesters ago, and I remember being impressed with her desire to learn. She was in her first semester of college and struggling with understanding and comprehending the English language, but this struggle never slowed her down. Abir was a very determined, motivated and dedicated student. She was never at a loss for questions, and if the answers given did not answer her questions, she would persist until she comprehended and understood the answer. Abir spent hours in the lab, working on her lab assignments, doing homework, asking questions, and always seeking more information.



Abir Zeidan

Today she is still that determined, motivated and dedicated student. She is currently in Math 0303 and English Composition II, and she is a straight A student. And yes, she continues to struggle, with English being her second language, but as always she is never at a loss to ask questions.

Abir is from Aley (The Mountain), Lebanon. She came to the United States five years ago with her family in order to escape an unstable country and find safety. Her father is still in Lebanon, but is hoping to one day join his family here in San Antonio.

Abir stated her most difficult challenge in college has been the language. She has gained an extensive vocabulary thus far and is able to use these skills in her writing and speaking. She continues to ask many questions, and even in an ordinary conversation she is not afraid to stop

you midsentence to ask, "What do you mean?"

As for her motivation she answered, "I love to learn". She further stated, "In Lebanon, there was no opportunity to continue my education". For Abir, that was, "just not good enough". She also stated that the opportunities offered here at Northwest Vista in the academic setting and the goal planning advice are beyond anything she has ever encountered.

While here at NW Vista, she has learned to work hard, study hard, accept all opinions and differences in cultures, and to help others when she can. The most important concept she has gained from being a student is to search for those answers to her burning questions. Her advice to other students is, "Use every opportunity that presents itself, attend class regularly, study hard, do your homework, do all of your lab hours and always ask for help".

Abir's future plans are to complete her core requirements within the next year, then to transfer to Saint Phillips College where she plans to get her degree in Radiography. Why Radiography? Because, as she stated, "The work is in demand and you can work in several different environments; it does not limit me to one place".

Where the future takes Abir, I can tell you she will always have questions and seek answers because for Abir a simple explanation is, "Just not good enough".

Recipe for Success

Useful Links and Resources

For this month, *Recipe for Success* is concentrating on Internet websites that will help all English students with their questions concerning those pesky Modern Language Association in text citations and Works Cited page entries. Also listed below are a couple of websites to help you better understand general grammar rules, reading, and studying.

MLA

* The Purdue University Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Links for Grammar

* Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Podcasts:

<http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/>

* Grammar Instruction with Attitude

<http://www.chompchomp.com/menu.htm>

Links for Reading & Writing

* The Writing Portal: <http://writeportal.ca/port/>

* Reading Improvement: [http://](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video_ri.html)

www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/videos/video_ri.html

Tips on Studying

* How To Study: <http://www.how-to-study.com/>

Critical Reading Tips

Critical Reading requires more than reading the words: you must interact with the material. Critical Reading is applicable to many subjects. Critical reading means taking notes. Taking notes can help you understand a reading and keep you alert. Here are some tips to improve your reading skills:

- Start by previewing the text. Read any headings, captions, charts, and lists as these provide clues to the writer's attitude, goals, personal viewpoint or approach.
- When reading the text, read sections slowly and carefully, underlining the most important points for each section.
- Circle and look up the meanings of words you don't know. Use a dictionary or reference books.
- Briefly, list the main points in the margins or in a notebook.
- Always annotate why you highlighted those ideas and whether the ideas relate to other readings.
- Also write your personal reactions to what you have just read; writing while you read aids your memory.
- Review your notes before class or writing your response.

Ask yourself the following questions as you read: What are the author's main points? What evidence and explanations does the writer use to back the main points? Does the support actually help me understand the main points, or am I left with questions and doubts? Has the author convinced me of his point of view? How has the piece changed my feelings or beliefs about the topic? What do I think about the author's message? Why? How does what I've learned connect to other things to experiences I have had?

Grammar LOL

How can a slim chance and fat chance be the same while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? If you find that confusing, you are not alone. The English language is complex, diverse, mystifying, and perplexing, with many loopholes within the grammar rules. This challenge can instill dread, anxiety, and frustration in many students. For those who welcome a challenge, try these sentences. Read them out loud and see if you can pronounce every word correctly. If you want help, come by one of the CARES labs in JH 216, JH 229, or JH110.

- * **The bandage was wound around the wound.**
- * **He could lead if he would get the lead out.**
- * **I did not object to the object.**
- * **The buck does funny things when the does are present.**
- * **The farm was used to produce produce.**
- * **The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.**
- * **They were too close to the door to close it.**
- * **When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.**

From : *You've Got Laughs! Al Lowe's Book of Internet Humor* www.allowe.com

Misery, Dracula, Night of the Living Dead

Movie Picks Just in Time for Halloween

Hey Folks! It's that frightful time of year again where our stomachs get tangled up in knots, we hear blood curdling screams, and can't sleep for fear of having nightmares. No, it's not finals; it's Halloween time, October!

I have to admit that this is one of my favorite times of the year where the season begins to change, and the night air is just a little more crisp. So what's better than studying for your next exam? Curling up with a nice spooky book. Some of my all-time favorites have also been turned into some very scary big screen thrillers. Here are a few book/movie recommendations to consider: Stephen King's *Misery*; what a gem that was. Who can forget Annie Wilkes, crazed "number one fan" portrayed by Oscar winner Kathy Bates?

This obsessed admirer takes writer Paul Sheldon captive after a car accident and forces him to write a book that brings back the title character, *Misery*, from the dead. Wilkes is so deranged that she goes to extreme measures to keep the author hostage in her remote house, breaking his legs with a sledgehammer rendering him immobile. If you've never read Stephen King before, *Misery* is a wonderful foray into King's often terrifying novels.

Next on my list is another classic, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Whether you've read the book or seen the countless remakes onscreen, it'll be sure to make you want to grab a necklace made of garlic and hide under the covers. The tale of a centuries-old vampire and Transylvania nobleman is quite intriguing and rather chilling. After reading the book mainly comprised of journal entries, letters, and newspaper clippings, your imagination can really get the best of you. Could there have ever been an undead Count who sucked the blood from the living, whose victims died and then rose again? I shudder to think of such a gruesome notion.

Although *Dracula* may have been a fictional brutal vampire, there is a particular allure about him as well as a humanistic quality in that you feel his sense of longing for a time when he was able to walk amongst the masses, a time when his family was alive and when he did not have to live in fear of the daylight.

If you're considering watching *Dracula*, my most notable favorite is the earliest rendition directed by F.W. Murrat in 1922, *Nosferatu*. If this German Impressionists take on Bram Stoker's novel doesn't frighten you, I don't know what will.

My last recommendation is not necessarily a book turned movie, but it wouldn't be Halloween if I didn't include my all-time favorite zombie flick. And that would be George A. Romero's *Night of The Living Dead*. The movie may be seen by some as just plain silly and gory, but if looked at closely *Night of The Living Dead* can be seen as a metaphor for America's collapsing social order, according to Romero himself.

Or perhaps you may not want to take it that seriously and love it for what it is, a plain old horror movie about the undead craving brains! Did you hear that? It sounds like something or someone scratching at the door trying to force its way in to your house.

I don't know about you, but I've got my zombie apocalypse emergency kit packed and ready! Do you? Well kids, it's time for me to sign off and help our students in the Reading Lab. I hope you have a safe and spooky holiday season. Don't forget to treat yourself after all that hard work you do too. Toodles!



It's That Time of Year Again!

Book Review: *Frankenstein*

With Halloween just around the corner, it is inevitable to get in the mood to be a little spooked. Endless scary movies will be playing repeatedly on different TV channels and Halloween festivities will be under way; however, don't forget about horror books! We grew up reading fun horror books such as *Goosebumps* by R. L. Stine, but let's not forget about the classics.

Everyone has heard of or seen some form of the character Frankenstein, the big, scary, "is he a real man?" creature with bolts in his neck. Mary Shelley, however, published the original novel of *Frankenstein*, in 1818, and it is a much different storyline than people who are unfamiliar with the novel would expect. The creator of the creature, Victor Frankenstein, is a curious person who wishes to recreate life. In doing so, he creates a monster that he abandons because he is so disgusted and disturbed. However, he returns to find that in his abandonment, the monster has been miserable and has not taken rejection so lightly, which in turn has caused him to wreak havoc and chaos. Some characters in the novel refer to the creature as a "monster," while others have mentioned the sighting of an "awful demon," but the truth is, all he wanted was not be lonely.

Shelley, who is often noted to have been ahead of her time, created quite an imaginative world with this classic novel. Readers will be surprised with the stark contrast between the tragedies of the characters in the original novel as opposed to modern, horrific stories of *Frankenstein*.

Author's Corner

James Patterson is a world class author who writes adult suspense thrillers. He is considered the world's best-selling fiction author. His books are fascinating with action-packed thrills, fast paced with short chapters, and much, much action. He makes his readers feel like they are right there in the middle of the action. His twists and turns of plot make his readers want to keep turning the pages.

Several of his books have been made into movies including one of his known books, *Along Came a Spider*. Several of his books have also been made into movies.

Besides adult thrillers, James Patterson writes books for children of all ages. His mission in life is to get kids everywhere excited about reading. He is so adamant about children getting excited about reading

that he created a website *KiddoRead.com*. It was created to help teachers, parents, and librarians to find the best books for their children.

For more information about his books and the author himself, visit www.JamesPatterson.com. Preview his books and choose one to read. What a great way to spend an afternoon!

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