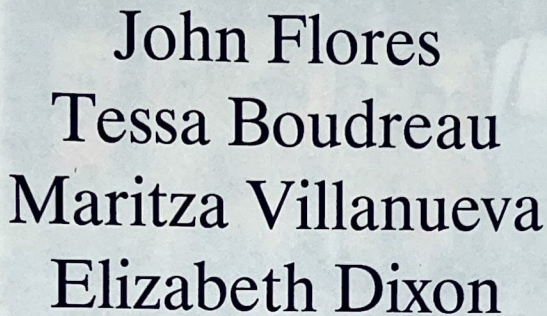


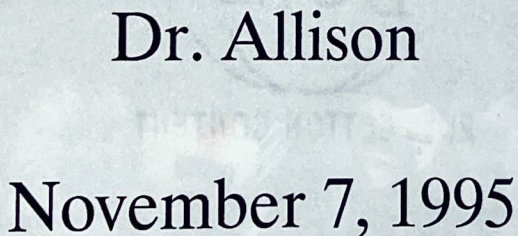
The future belongs to those
who believe in the beauty of
their dreams.

-Eleanor Roosevelt



John Flores
Tessa Boudreau
Maritza Villanueva
Elizabeth Dixon

Composition 101/BG



Dr. Allison
November 7, 1995



John Flores



Dear grandchildren,

It is the year 1995, and it is a very difficult time in this year. I'm sure whatever time you are in, it is easier to get things done, since I'm sure by now you are much more advanced and industrialized. Anyway, let me go ahead and tell you a few things about your grandpa.

I graduated from Bruni High School a couple of months ago, and let me tell you, I had a blast. I was in all the sports that were offered. I was on varsity in football, basketball, baseball, tennis, and track ever since I was a freshman. It was very easy for me in high school. While I was in high school, I did odd jobs around the town that I lived in, so I could get spending money. I would cut lawns and paint houses on the weekends. Besides that, and my parents supporting me, I would also work every summer to get the money I needed for school clothes. I had a summer job teaching at a program for future engineers called TexPrep. In this program, high schooler's would take classes in many different math departments. I taught basic algebra. I have to admit, it was tough earning my money, but it wasn't anything compared to how tough it was for my parents to get money. Both my parents, Juan and Hilda, your great-grandparents, worked in the fields, cutting down trees when I was a kid. Neither one of them graduated from high school. They had money problems, so they had to drop out and work. Yet, they made it through the rough times and managed to raise me well.

Right now, I'm in college, and I don't have my parents around me anymore. They're about 150 miles away from Corpus Christi, and it's hard to keep in touch with them. College also isn't what I expected. It is much harder than high school. I graduated from high school as the valedictorian, but college, so far in the first month, has made me feel like I'm stupid. There is a lot of work that is expected from you. Not only do I have to read about 100 pages a night for different classes, but I also have to write a paper almost every week. Besides the work, I also have to worry about groceries, my job, and money. Let me give you some advice. While you're in high school, take every class that is college bound, because while you're in high school, you don't have to pay for your education. In college you have to pay for every little thing.

Let me give you some examples on how much I pay so that I can get through college. My tuition and fees are \$950.00. The apartment I live in is \$325.00 a month. Then I have to buy groceries, and essential things like toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc. I bet you are laughing right now, because I'm sure these costs seem like very little to you. Even \$5.00 is a lot to pay for a meal in 1995. You probably are paying \$5.00 for just a drink by itself. All this stuff is expensive when you have a job that pays only \$4.50 an hour.

Well, I better let you go. Your grandpa is a busy man, as I'm sure you are too. I wish I could've had more time on this earth to be with you and share certain experiences, but I guess everyone has to go. I'll see you in another world if God is with us. Take care of yourself and follow your dreams.

Your grandfather,
John Flores

December 1995

To my Grandfather, Grandmother,

My little grand I bet you think that life while I was growing up was simple and that my generation didn't really do anything for fun. I know that's the way you think because I initially thought the same about my grandparents.

My generation is known as Generation X because its make-up varies greatly. You can't just put one word on us to describe us. More than half of my generation won't be able to find a good paying job in their major after graduation. We are also the generation that will face the greatest economic burden so far supporting Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare so that our parents and grandparents will be taken care of for the rest of their lives.

I have personally gone through a lot of changes within the past year. I should be in my sophomore year of college, but I let my financial situation become a major factor in my choice of schools. I didn't want my mother to have to pay for any of my education so I chose the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). Getting in there was no easy by any means. There is quite a bit of politics involved in earning a nomination to USAFA, let alone receiving an appointment because the tax payers' foot the bill for the education at USAFA, all the military academies for that matter. In the spring of my junior year, I had to start the application process for USAFA. I couldn't start petitioning the Senators in the 11th Congressional District until the fall of my senior year. I had to ask one of them about why I would need a nomination to an academy, USAFA in particular. The Senators from Texas received about 800 petitions the year I went in. I received nominations from Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, and a presidential nomination because my father is retired military. I received an appointment to enter as the graduating class of 1999 in the middle of March 1994. I had also applied for an Air Force ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) Scholarship, but in case USAFA didn't pan out. I received the scholarship as well. I turned down the scholarship to go to USAFA, not only to save my mom money, but also because I thought it was the perfect place for me to be. I attended Basic Cadet Training (BCT or "beast") the summer of 1994 and was sent home in the middle of it on Medical Turn Back status because of knee problems. This meant that my appointment would carry over until the next year so that I could become part of the class of 1999. I took that year off from school because I was determined to go back and become a member of the "Class of 99." I didn't count on having severe personality conflicts with USAFA's way of life, but I did. I saw resigning from USAFA as the only way to preserve who and what I was. I was lucky to be a late add as a freshman in Texas A&M-CC for the Fall 1995 semester. I advise you now do not take any time off between high school and college if you plan on getting a college education. It is extremely hard to get back into the swing of things after a year of playing. I regret turning down my ROTC scholarship because I think I would have been just fine in an environment that wasn't 24-7 (24 hours a day seven days a week) like USAFA.

Recently I witnessed a mockery of a trial. It was the O.J. Simpson murder trial. O.J. Simpson, a Football Hall of Famer,

November 1995

To my dearest grandchildren,

Hey little ones! I bet you think that life while I was growing up was sedate and that my generation didn't really do anything for fun. I know that's the way you think because I initially thought the same about my grandparents.

My generation is known as Generation X because its make-up varies greatly. You can't put just put one word on us to describe us. More than half of my generation won't be able to find a good paying job in their major after graduation. We are also the generation that will face the greatest economic burden so far supporting Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare so that our parents and grandparents will be taken care of for the rest of their lives.

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Recently I witnessed a mockery of a trial. It was the O.J. Simpson murder trial. O.J. Simpson, a Football Hall of Famer,

was being tried for the murder of his ex-wife and a friend of hers. O.J. paid about 8 million dollars (an unusually large amount of money in my day) for his team of defense lawyers. The LAPD handled the evidence poorly, and the key detective is an accused racist. The trial was televised and went on for nine long months. Maybe for you a trial that long and one that is televised is no big deal, but I found it to be extreme. Also, the LAPD cannot go after anyone else for the double murder because they botched the evidence. The prosecution's case lost all credibility when the key detective was portrayed as a racist, whether he was or not did not really seem to hold any relevance other than the defense team's claim that the LAPD and Mark Furman (the key detective), in particular, had it in for O.J. because he was an African-American man married to a white woman. O.J. was found not guilty due to reasonable doubt as he should have been due to the poor quality of evidence. I however feel that O.J. killed those two people, but we will probably never know for sure.

For the past two years a girl named Shannon Faulkner was in a legal battle with the all-male Citadel, a state-supported military academy, trying to get in. She was allowed to enter as a cadet this year while the legal battle was still going on, only to drop out a week and a half after she entered due to what she termed "personal reasons." The Supreme Court threw her case out saying it was "moot." There were several girls ready to pick up Faulkner's spot to continue that case, but now they must file their own lawsuits.

Another case that is up for review by the Supreme Court this session is a Colorado State Constitution amendment that was passed in 1992. This amendment basically says that any homosexuals, lesbians, or bisexuals are not to be counted as a minority and can not say that they were discriminated against due to their sexual lifestyle. One of the justices seems to be in favor of upholding this amendment as constitutional while the others don't necessarily seem too sure. Frankly, I'm hoping it is declared unconstitutional.

All my love, your old grandma.



Maritza Villanueva



November 1, 1995

To my dear grandchild,

As you are now approaching high school I want you to realize that your high school years will always be your "golden years". At the time, you'll think of them as awful days full of homework, but as you go on to college, you'll realize that those days were the most carefree. I still recall my first year in high school, and I remember the good times as well as the embarrassing ones.

I went to Simon Rivera High School in Brownsville, Tx. The first day of school, I walked into Rivera, and I realized that I was faced with new challenges. Not only was high school bigger than junior high, it was also full of new people I had never seen before. Seeing all these new faces really scared me, so I started looking for my friends. As soon as I found my friends, we started comparing our class schedules and that's when the big question arose: "How are we going to find our classes?" We noticed that the seniors were running all around school with fishing rods, calling all the ninth graders "fish", so we knew that they wouldn't be much help to us. (When I say "fish", I mean ninth graders). But as the bells started ringing, we started going our separate ways in search of our classes. By the end of the day, not only did we find our classes, but we found out that high school was going to be blast! Not only was high school the place to "socialize" and be invited to "parties", it was also a place where you could be yourself. Of course, there were rules in high school such as: no fighting, no kissing in the halls, and no obscenities. But these rules never hurt anyone, people always found a way to have fun even if it had to in a "safe" way. One thing that I will always remember in high school, is "school spirit". Every time there was a game or any kind of competition, we would dress up or paint our faces in our school colors. There was nothing like going to a game or pep rally and cheering until your voice was gone. You might not know what a pep rally is, it is a gathering of the whole school with the purpose of cheering and showing your school spirit.

Even though there were a lot of good things to admire my first year in high school, there were also a lot of serious things. In my first year in high school I was exposed to a lot of new things that I had never taken into consideration. I was exposed to a place where there was a whole new wave of people and not all these people were good. This is where I realized that not only were you invited to parties, you were also invited to drugs, sex, and alcohol. Of course, you'll get invited to these in junior high, but when you get to high school, things get more serious and more deadly.

My first year in high school was one of those years where I grew aware of the problems in society. This happened when Carla Villarreal was murdered in 1992. The loss of Carla made all of us more aware of the dangers in society. Today, murders are committed everyday, but I had never had someone from my high school get murdered before.

Violence was not the only problem that we had to confront while I was in high school. There were also other things such as teenage pregnancy. I remember that when I walked into school that year I saw a lot of teenage girls pregnant, and it scared me

to see so many of them at the same time.

Even though I was learning and realizing many things, I was also getting involved in school. I participated in many extracurricular activities such as Debate, Air Force R.O.T.C, and U.I.L (University Interscholastic League). I was a proud Staff Sergeant in R.O.T.C, I was captain of Debate Team and participated in many events such as Ready Writing and Literary Criticism in U.I.L.

Your first day of high school might not be the same experience as it was to me. But I want you to understand that even though you have more freedom in high school, it doesn't mean you take it all in one big swallow. The more freedom you have, the more responsible you'll have to be. The older you get, the more mature you'll have to become. My first year in high school was fun, but I did not ignore the problems around me or give in to the bad crowd. I suggest you do the same, because not only can high school be fun, it can also be a blast! So please take all this into consideration and remember to be responsible. And please, remember your gramma as you're walking down the aisle in graduation.

Love,

Gramma Maritza

Elizabeth Dixon



Elizabeth Dixon



November 1, 1995

Dear Grandchild,

I was sitting in the living room the other day and started thinking about how when you are my age a day in your life will be totally different than a day in my life. I decided that I would write this letter to you so that you will have something to look to for comparing your life to mine when you are ready to see just how life was when I grew up.

Today is Tuesday, October 19, 1995, so I got up around 8:00 and got ready for class. I got together my books and walked to class. The walk takes about ten minutes. You see, I live on campus. I don't live in a typical dorm, however. Texas A&M - Corpus Christi decided to try something different when it went to a four year college. (It was Corpus Christi State University, an upper-division, two-year college, until 1993.) There is an apartment complex that consists of two-bedroom and four-bedroom apartments on campus that are used for students. I live in a two-bedroom and have a roommate who is from Houston whose name is Catherine Berry.

My first class of the day is English. It is held in a computer lab that has an IBM compatible at every chair. We can put information on the computers and "mail" it to each other. We can also send feedback on our work and other messages to each other.

Next I have Freshman Seminar which is a class for freshmen only. We work on things that will help us become better students like study skills, memory work, and last week our professor, Dan Holbrook, gave us an assignment that made us do minor research in the library.

After that I have a short break that I use to relax or grab some lunch from the student center. I can choose from Taco Bell, Whataburger, a pizza place, or a submarine sandwich place.

Then I have Public Speaking which is part of the basic curriculum here at Texas A&M - Corpus Christi. My professor is Dr. Kelly Miller who is a really great teacher. She's young and can relate to us while at the same time making sure we learn and do the things that we need to do to become good public speakers.

My last class of the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays is College Algebra. We use a graphing calculator in this class. My professor, Wesley Petty, hooks his calculator up to an overhead projector so the whole class can see what he is doing.

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays my day is a little different. I only have one class on those days. It is Political History of the United States with Dr. Robert Wooster. We are in a large lecture hall that is two stories high. Dr. Wooster uses a microphone and an IBM compatible computer that projects outlines and other information onto a screen that helps us follow his lecture. He can also display movies or other images with the use of a laser disc player. This class is what I expected college to be like. We have a grader whom we turn all of our work in to, and Dr. Wooster doesn't really tell us to do our readings. He just reminds us every now and then. We are mostly on our own but I feel that if I needed help he and my grader, Jason Gentry, would be more than willing to help.

The funny thing that I have noticed is that mostly men teach

classes like math and science while women teach classes like speech and English. This may be because I am only in my first year. I'm not saying that this is wrong but I thought things might be different now that I am in college.

I also hold down a part-time job at Riviera Lanes, which is one of the three bowling centers in Corpus Christi. It is about 20 minutes from the campus. I work 3-4 nights a week for about a total of 25 hours. I don't find it that hard to manage with school because most of my hours are on the weekends.

At work I am responsible for welcoming people and checking them in. I give them a lane and rental shoes if they need them. If needed, I show them how to use the automatic scorekeepers. When they are done bowling, I check them out. At the end of the night I count down my cash register and take a tally of the day's business. I then check the registers from the snack bar and lounge. When I have compiled all of the information from all three cash registers I put it into the main register. Since Riviera Lanes is a corporation we are monitored by our owners who live in Virginia. Our register is "polled" at 4:00 am by another computer. The last thing I do at night is set the alarm and lock the door.

As you can see my life is rather busy with school, work, and going home on the weekends. I use all sorts of technology every day and every day new things are being invented and old things are being improved. I know things will be different when you are my age. I can only hope that you will be wise about the things you do and the choices you make in life.

Love,

Grandmother Elizabeth

101.1.1