**Passages for recitation:**

**An unlucky day**

When I got up this morning, I had a strange feeling that it just wasn't going to be my day. First, because I got up late, I missed breakfast. Then, as I was dashing to the bus stop to catch my bus, I stepped on a banana peel, slipped and fell on my backside.

To make matters worse, the bus didn't stop for me because it was packed. I had no choice but to take a taxi. Not until the taxi got to my school did I realize I had left my wallet at home. After I did a lot of explaining and apologizing, the driver let me go. Finally, I arrived at the school gate. To my astonishment, I suddenly realized it was a school holiday. It never rains, but it pours.

**That unforgettable day**

I will always remember New Year's Day in 2001. Early that morning my sister and I received a phone call. We were told Grandma had fainted and was being taken to a hospital in Taichung. The moment we received the message, my uncle drove us to the hospital as fast as he could. It was a long journey from Taipei.

While we were on the road, holiday bumper-to-bumper（一辆接一辆的） traffic slowed us down to a snail's pace and a car accident the previous day made the congestion（堵车）worse. Consequently, we got stuck for more than six hours on the highway. We were worried about Grandma the whole time. As soon as we arrived at the Taian Rest Area, we anxiously phoned home. However, Grandma had died of heart failure just half an hour before we called.

**If I were a university student**

Going to university has been my dream for a long time. If I had the chance to become a university student, I would make every effort to expand my knowledge. I would not only study art as my major（主修课目）, but also minor in philosophy and English literature.

In the meantime, I would also involve myself in extracurricular activities such as swimming and mountain climbing. And last but not least, I would pursue the most beautiful lady on campus. With these goals in mind, I am determined to study as hard as possible to make my dream come true.

**If I won the lottery（彩票）**

To win the first prize in the lottery is most people's dream. If I were the lucky one, I would spend many sleepless nights out of excitement planning for the future. I would divide my money into two parts: half for my parents and half for myself.

Overseas travel would be the first thing that I would do. Romantic Europe, the wilds of Africa and mysterious Southeast Asia are the dreamlands that I would see. I would be able to put the drudgery（单调沉闷的工作） of studying aside and leave my world full of pressures far behind for a while. Oh! If only I could win the lottery!

**When I grow up**

When I grow up, I don't want to be like my parents. I don't want to be like my teacher, either. In fact, I don't want to be like anybody I know. Everybody is just too busy. They don't seem to have time for anything except work. They have their lives, but to me, they aren't really living. There must be more to life than just work.

I have, therefore, decided that when I grow up, I want to be a writer. I will travel around as much as possible to learn about life. Eventually, I'll write a book telling people how to live a full life. I may be too ambitious, but I believe that one day my dream will come true.

**My leisure-time activity**

When I have free time, I usually go mountain climbing alone. The mountain where I go all the time isn't very high or rugged; therefore, it only takes me about half an hour to reach the top. The surrounding scenery is very charming. It's no doubt the best place to view the rough sea.

Moreover, when in high spirits, I'll sing several folk songs. Sometimes I'll bring a novel with me and do some leisure reading. After climbing the mountain, I'll be exhausted, but soon I'll feel energetic again because of the fresh air at the top of the mountain. What's more, it makes me forget all my worries. As mountain climbing is so much fun, it's really worthwhile doing this healthful activity on a regular basis.

**Phase 2:**

**Flying a kite**

Kite flying is becoming increasingly popular. Young and old alike can be seen in parks enjoying this healthy outdoor recreation.

Some people enjoy watching the multicolored kites high up in the sky. Others find it thrilling to control a flying object. By tugging at the string the kite will ascend. A slack string will allow the kite to drift with the wind and descend. As far as I am concerned, flying a kite is fun because it gives me an excuse to laze away a sunny afternoon daydreaming while watching the delicate kites bobbing up and down.

**How I spend my weekends**

I welcome weekends with open arms. After school on Fridays, I grab a bite to eat and then immediately take a long nap. God knows I need the sleep to recuperate. Friday evening is my favorite time of the week. That's the time when I usually listen to CDs. I dim the lights in my room and let my mind drift far away. On Saturdays, I enjoy eating out with my family. After that I might do some shopping with Mom. Invariably, I sleep late on Sunday mornings, and soon after I get up, I start preparing for another grueling week at school.

Although weekends aren't very adventurous, by mid-week I find myself longing for them.

**The joy of reading**

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body. People who read are usually more open-minded and rarely bored. Through reading different kinds of books, you can broaden your mind and stimulate your imagination.

Furthermore, reading is not an expensive pastime. It doesn't cost you much money because you can easily borrow books from a library or friends. It is especially good for the whole family. For instance, my family likes to read. We often spend evenings together discussing literature and sharing insights from books. Hence, reading brings us closer together.

**Why learn English?**

There are many advantages of learning English. English is an international language. If you can speak it, you'll have little difficulty traveling anywhere. And if you can read it, you can acquire firsthand information about what is going on in the world. Mastering English, however, can't be done overnight. It takes time and patience.

To begin with, you should get yourself a good dictionary. Consult it when encountering a word you don't understand. Any reading material is fine, but make sure you study for at least two hours every day. Keep in mind that there are no shortcuts to learning English. It takes a lot of hard work, but the reward is well worth the effort.

**One way to improve your English**

My classmate, Lily, and I are the best students in our English class. Do you know how we improve our English? We meet twice a week in a coffee shop to practice. We spend the whole afternoon discussing a wide range of topics in English. Then once a week an American friend, Stan, does language exchange with us. We teach him Chinese and he teaches us English. In less than six months, we have improved by leaps and bounds.

We have also met other Americans through Stan. Now we have quite a few American friends. And of course, we always speak English with them. This way of learning English has worked wonders for us. Maybe it could work for you, too.