W6A, Lesson 12, Essay 6, Draft 1

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2020/08/11

**The Tennis Ball Towers**

Today my teacher wanted me and my classmates to get into groups of six or seven, and said that we were going to have a fun class. But we all know that every “fun” class for the teacher can actually be a terrible class for us students. Last time the teacher said that we’re going to have a fun class, we were all bored and after the class we did not know what we had learned. It was about reading books from the Tang, Song, Yun, Ming and Qing dynasties – what a “fun” class!

But this time was different. After the teacher said “fun class” we all went crazy and hoped this fun class wouldn’t be like the last time we had “fun.” We hoped this time we would really have fun. Then the teacher came in and called on a few classmates to help carry the materials that we would use in class. After all the materials were carried into the classroom, we were all shocked at what we saw: some tennis balls, a pile of straws, some tape and some scissors.

“The group that you just joined will compete with the other groups to build something that can hold the ball and not fall over,” the teacher announced. “The group that is the fastest and has the tallest tower will be the winner. The competition will begin in five, four, three, two, one! Let the competition begin!”

The group that I was in gathered fast. We were fast, but we started arguing about how should we build the tower. The only materials we had to make the tower were straw and tape.

“I prefer we build it like a tower in the real world.”

But we abandoned that idea very quickly, because straws are very easily distorted.

“I prefer we use triangles to build the tower.”

“I prefer making the tower like a champion cup.”

“I prefer we make the tower like a cup.”

“How much straw and tape do we have?”

After five minutes of arguing we finally agreed on making the tower like a cup with a bowl on top, similar to a championship cup.

We first made the top of the tower. We used fewer straws because we wanted the tower to be higher. So we made the top of the tower into a small bowl that could hold the tennis ball and not break, leaving no space for other things. Then we started to make the cup, but not directly. First we stopped to think whether we had enough tape to make the tower. We decided we had to think of another way to make the tower because we didn’t have enough tape. Our best way was to connect the straws into one long straw. When we used this method to make the tower, we found out we didn’t know how to place the bowl on top, so we used all the tape we had left to fix the bowl in place. When we finished building the tower, we found that we were the first team to finish.

At the end of class, the teacher announced that we were the fastest group and our tower was the tallest, so we won the competition! But the best thing that we learned was how to work together. We wished that we could have more fun classes like this one.

Word Count: 560 words

*Notes: Jason, great job telling your story about a fun class activity. First of all, when and where did the story happen? Please give more orientation details (who, what, where, when). Also, please pay attention to the middle section where you quoted your classmates. How said what? Please let the reader know who was speaking. Finally, how has this experience affected your life? Since that class, what has changed about how you interact with your classmates? So the final paragraph can actually be two paragraphs: the end of the story (resolution), followed by the moral of the story (what you learned and how it changed you). Thanks!*