

Lesson 1 A Journey into Yourself

Discovering Yourself through Challenges

"To grow into a better version of ourselves, we should not stay as we are." That was the first thing our teacher said to us on the first day of school. She wanted us to start the semester by pushing ourselves out of our comfort zones and learning more about ourselves. To help us do so, she gave us an assignment to challenge ourselves in three different ways. The three challenges could involve hobbies, exercise, our studies, or even our relationships. The important part was trying something new for each one. She told us that we should share our experiences with our classmates when we finished the challenges.

Challenge 1: Ticket for One

These days, I tend to watch movies on streaming services. However, if I go to the theater, I usually watch an action or science fiction movie with my friends or family. Those are the kinds of movies they enjoy.

Going to the theater alone was something I had never done before. So, for the first challenge, I decided to give it a try. It was nice to choose the movie and the seat on my own. I didn't have to worry about anyone else's preferences. I saw the experience as a good opportunity to watch something different, so I chose a historical drama that I had been curious about.

At first, it felt a bit awkward and lonely to sit in the theater by myself. But once the movie started, I became completely absorbed in the story. It was so satisfying just to focus on the movie itself. There was nothing to distract me! This experience made me realize that I sometimes enjoy doing things alone. After the movie, I promised myself that I would try to make my own choices more often and enjoy more activities by myself in the future.

Challenge 2: Riding the Waves

Ever since I was a child, I've always been afraid of water. So I have never enjoyed water activities or felt comfortable while doing them. For the second challenge, I decided to try to overcome this discomfort. However, I wasn't sure what to do at first. One day, I came across a video clip of my cousin surfing at an indoor pool on social media. It looked fun, and I liked the fact that it took place in a shallow pool, not in the ocean. I messaged my cousin about it. She assured me that it wasn't too hard, so I signed up for a beginner course.

At the beginning of the lesson, it was hard just to stand up on the board. After some help from the instructor, however, I learned how to balance properly and even managed to surf a few waves! It gave me such a rush of excitement. Being in the water wasn't as bad as I had thought. While the experience didn't completely change my mind about water sports, it did help me discover my sense of adventure.

Challenge 3: A New Look

Of all the challenges I chose for myself, the third one made me the most nervous: changing my hairstyle. For many years, I had kept the same hairstyle because I had been worried about my forehead. I had always thought it was large, and I didn't want to draw attention to it. Since I was feeling confident after the first two challenges, I went to a hair salon and talked to the stylist. He listened to my concerns and helped me find a shorter hairstyle that suited me.

The next day at school, my classmates were a bit surprised. But overall, the reactions were positive. I realized that trying a different look wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be. In fact, it made me feel more confident about myself. I didn't expect that stepping out of my comfort zone would have such a positive effect on how I felt about myself.

I learned a lot about myself through this assignment, and I found out that my classmates did, too. One of them tried new foods from different countries, while another joined a creative writing club. Through these experiences, we all realized how important it is to push ourselves to try new things. We gained different perspectives on life and had a lot of fun, too! My classmates and I even talked about setting more challenges for ourselves. There are always more things that we can discover about ourselves, and it's exciting to keep learning and growing. We never know what we're capable of until we try!