

Not What I Expected

Javier Valladares

BEFORE YOU READ: When you *expect* something to happen it means you think it will probably happen. Talk about a time when something happened and it was *what you expected* and another time when it was *not what you expected*.

When I first arrived in this country, it was a sad time for me because it was not what I expected.

It was difficult to be far away from my family. I missed them very much.

Getting to my first job was hard. I had to take two trains. I was afraid I would take the wrong one by mistake. Then I would go in the wrong direction. On weekends, the trains were not running. I had to find alternative transportation.

Working as a dishwasher was tough. The people at the restaurant treated me badly. When it got busy, they yelled at me. They used offensive language. It was difficult to endure such treatment.

There were many challenges, but I persisted. I was able to move forward. I have learned many things. I have learned to be patient, to work for a better job, and to learn English. I know that if I study English, I will find a better job and continue to improve my life.

AFTER YOU READ: Read the box on the right and answer the questions.



Javier Valladares with his co-worker in the kitchen where they work.

Critical & Creative Thinking

When we talk about “critical thinking,” we mean being able to analyze something and think about it from different angles. (Critical has several meanings. Look it up to learn some of the other ways it can be used.) “Creative thinking” means to generate new ideas. What are some ways Javier uses critical and creative thinking? What are some ways you use this transferable skill in your life?

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