

## LOOKING AT LANGUAGE

## Excuses Excuses

A fifth-grade pupil wrote in an essay: "I have enjoyed my boyhood so much that I am looking forward to my adultery."

A young woman wrote to advice columnist Dorothy Dix: "I have been an adolescent for the past six or seven years. When will I grow up to be an adulteress?"

Eventually little boys and girls do grow up to become adults and adulteresses, at which point their writing is supposed to get better. But that is not always the case. If you wonder why Johnny and Jane can't write, take a look at some of the prose miscreated by their moms and dads. Here are some poor excuses for excuse notes that were actually received by teachers throughout our land:

- ◆ Please excuse Raul from school yesterday. He had a stomach egg.
- ◆ Susan was not in school today because she had her first menopause.
- ◆ Stanley had to miss some school. He had an attack of whooping cranes in his chest.
- ◆ Gerald was out last week because his grandmother died in Kentucky again.
- ◆ Please excuse Margie for being absent Wednesday and Thursday as she was sick with a stripped throat and an absent tooth.
- ◆ Ronnie could not finish his work last night. He said his brain was too tired of spelling.
- ◆ The basement of our house got flooded where the children sleep so they had to be evaporated.
- ◆ I kept Monica home today because she was not feeling too bright.
- ◆ Please excuse my daughter. She had an abominable pain.
- ◆ Please can Jill not have Jim today? She had Jim last week and is still sore.
- ◆ Please excuse Lupe. She is having problems with her ovals.
- ◆ Ralph was absent yesterday because he had a sore trout.
- ◆ Please refuse Robert's absents last Friday. He had a sour thought.
- ◆ Please forgive Clarence for being absent from school the past few days. He was home sick from an operation. He had trouble and had to be serpent sized.
- ◆ Please excuse Redbird. Every time she coff she make whoopie.
- ◆ Jennifer was late due to our clock getting unplugged and waking up late.
- ◆ Please excuse the stink on Bill's clothes. We've been spraying the garden because it is full of abnoxious incests.
- ◆ Please excuse Jane. She had an absent tooth. Wednesday she will have an appointment with the ornithologist.
- ◆ Please excuse my daughter's absence for the past week, as she had a case of the fool.
- ◆ Please excuse my daughter's absence. She had her periodicals.
- ◆ Please excuse Connie from gym class to day, as she had difficulty breeding.
- ◆ Paulie was late because he was not too early. He is never in no hurry. He is too slow to be quick.

Is there any excuse for the disrepair of these excuse notes? Or are the parents just too slow to be quick?

Dr. Richard Lederer, the author of many books about language and humor, lives in southern California.

His current book is "COMMA SENSE: A FUN-DAMENTAL GUIDE TO PUNCTUATION," by Richard Lederer and John Shore. He is the 2002 recipient of the Toastmasters International Golden Gavel Award. Explore his website at [www.verbivore.com](http://www.verbivore.com)



Richard Lederer

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## Lucky Us—We Have The Boca Raton Museum Of Art

Enjoy the following special exhibitions: *James McNeil Whistler: Selected Works from the Hunterian Art Gallery* presents an intimate introduction to the art and times of this important expatriate American artist who was one of the key artistic figures of his period (1834-1903). Never before shown in this country, the exhibition provides a first-time opportunity to view 93 works and personal memorabilia from the pre-eminent collection of Whistler's estate. A dozen paintings and over 50 prints span 40 years of Whistler's work depicting personal clients, acquaintances and models. Paintings and graphics from his travels to France, the Netherlands, and Venice and to resorts in England and renditions of

his beloved river the Thames trace the various episodes in his turbulent life. The etchings, drypoints and lithographs retained by Whistler are recognized as the best impressions of any given image. Also included are personal items such as silverware, porcelain, letters and manuscripts and books providing an intimate disclosure to his life, and alluding to the late Victorian vanguard taste preferred by Whistler and many of his contemporaries, which influenced his art and lifestyle, squarely placing him as a progressive thinker in his time.

The Boca Raton Museum of Art is located at 501 Plaza Real at Mizner Park in Boca Raton and is open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: 10am-5pm; Wednesday: 10am-9pm and Saturday and Sunday: 12pm-5pm. For more information, call 561.392.2500 or visit [www.bocamuseum.org](http://www.bocamuseum.org).

## Remembering Thanksgivings

By Anita Finley

As Thanksgiving approaches, those of us who have lost family members should take this day to celebrate their lives and the memories we shared with them for Thanksgivings past. I remember how much fun I always had when I was a little girl, helping my mother and grandmother prepare the Thanksgiving feast. The smells of the turkey roasting, the sweet potatoes and other vegetables cooking and oh, yes, those pumpkin pies! It was a lot of preparation, especially since we did not have dishwashers or other modern conveniences to shorten the work. As I look back, I am happy to remember those special occasions, but thrilled to start new memories with my family, as I am now the grandmother. We live in a new era and I would rather spend the time with my family, grandchildren and friends than "slaving over a hot stove," as they say.

Thanksgiving at our home when we really had a lot of people sharing our two-turkey party. Some of the guests were elderly and couldn't make it up our 2 flights of stairs easily. Each year they called and said they couldn't make it, because the stairs were not accessible for them. Each year we insisted they come and we put them in chairs and 2 of our strongest men (my sons), would lift the guest up the stairs. It made everyone happy and my sons felt that they made a difference that day. Now those people are no longer here and the day is less eventful. As the song says, "Those were the days, my friend..."

Thanksgiving is a time to rejoice with your family and friends and to remember those with whom you have shared so many of those other Thanksgivings. You deserve to relax and rejuvenate and remember.

Go to your favorite *TooJay's* at the following locations: **Coral Springs:** The Walk at University (954) 346-0006; **Plantation:** The Fountains (954) 423-1993; **Boca Raton:** Polo Shops-5030 Champion Blvd. (561) 241-5903; Regency Court Plaza-3013 Yamato Rd. (561) 997-9911; Glades Plaza-(Entrance Butts Rd.) (561) 392-4181; **Palm Beach:** 313 Royal Poinciana Plaza (561) 659-7232; **Palm Beach Gardens:** Loehman's Plaza-4084 P.G.A. Blvd. (561) 622-8131; **Lake Worth:** 419 Lake Avenue (561) 582-8684; **Wellington:** The Mall at Wellington Green-441 (561) 784-9055; **Jupiter:** Bluff's Shopping Center-4050 U.S. Hwy. 1 (561) 627-5555; **Stuart:** Regency Square-2504 SE Federal Hwy. (772) 287-6514; **Vero Beach:** Treasure Coast Plaza (772) 569-6070.

## No Thanksgiving Would Be Complete Without A Bird...

Starting to think about your Thanksgiving plans? Why not leave the preparation to us?

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