

LIFE PREP 101

Preparation from CHINESE CLASS

Near the end of my junior year of high school, it was time to decide which classes to take my senior year. After signing up for all of the required classes, I still had one open space. Deciding how to fill it was an important decision to me, so I knelt and prayed for guidance. As I pondered what to do, the Spirit suggested that I study another foreign language. I'd already studied several years of Spanish, so I began to browse our school's language courses. German, French, Italian, and others seemed interesting, but none seemed right. I finally reached the bottom of the list and read "Mandarin Chinese." I didn't know any Chinese people or even anyone who spoke Chinese, yet I felt the Spirit confirm that this was the right choice.

Despite my misgivings, I signed up for the course. I've felt and expressed gratitude to God for that decision almost every day of my life since. **Choosing to learn an unfamiliar and difficult language—even when it wasn't required—helped me when I was called to serve a Chinese-speaking mission in Taiwan. And that experience has led me to every internship, job, and opportunity I've had** until now as a young adult. This experience taught me that Father in Heaven cares deeply about our education and that He expects us to pursue the best education possible, even when it's inconvenient, uncomfortable, or challenging. When we follow Him by making that sacrifice, He always blesses us.

Brandon C., Utah, USA

Preparation from MATH

My parents taught me the importance of studying and showed me how learning more skills helps us feel more confident. But I still struggled in school because I didn't have much desire to study. I just didn't think it was important. Then one day in high school I realized I wasn't in school for my parents or for my teachers—I was there for me. When I understood that education was important for my future, my performance at school began to improve, and I earned much better grades.

Everything I learned at school has helped me. My parents are divorced, so I've had to do a lot to help around the house and take care of my siblings—cooking, cleaning, and helping them do homework. I studied at a high school where I learned to cook at a professional level, and **I've been able to use those and other skills I learned at school to help my family.**

The things I learned at school also help me to learn spiritually. For me, it's all connected. Take math, for example. **Studying math helped me understand the importance of managing my finances and keeping a budget. So when the missionaries explained tithing to me, I understood how important it was to budget for it,** and it was easier for me to start keeping the law of tithing once I was baptized. When you study at school, you get used to learning and finding knowledge, which prepares your mind to study the scriptures. And I've learned that it works both ways—studying the scriptures can also help me have a clearer mind at school.

Jessica P.,
Liguria,
Italy



You learn a lot in school, but that's not the only way we need to learn important lessons. Life itself is a school, and we can learn valuable lessons in many places. Take advantage of the chances you get to learn now, because they'll prepare you for life's "tests" and open up many opportunities to you in the future. Here's how several people from around the world learned that different forms of education better prepared them for the future.

Preparation from a FIREWORKS STAND

A family friend operates a fireworks stand, and I've worked there every summer for eight years. I've learned so much there. I helped set up and manage the tent, build and stock shelves, and sell fireworks.

If you've spent June or July in Oklahoma or anywhere in the southern United States, then you know how hot it gets. We sell fireworks right when the heat seems to be at its worst. That means tensions can run high when people sit out and bake in the heat. **and that situation has taught me probably the most valuable lesson of all: how to work in harmony in difficult situations.** I know there will be tension or problems in future job situations. Now that I'm 16 and will have more job opportunities, I know that **I'll be prepared to handle those experiences with patience and not be a burden on my coworkers.**

Working at the fireworks stand taught me both life lessons and practical lessons.

Regan H., Oklahoma, USA

Preparation from an HONORS CLASS

One of my teachers in middle school encouraged me to take an advanced-level class, even though I found it intimidating. **She helped me to have higher expectations for myself and to be willing and excited to try new things. This prepared me to take harder classes in the future and to participate in internship programs.** Looking back, I feel that what I learned from the experience helped me to become who I am today and to make important decisions. While the academic material I learned was important, I consider the principles I learned to have greatly impacted my life. This continues to bless me in my education, employment, Church callings, and extracurricular activities.

Katherine C., Washington D.C., USA

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLAYTON THOMPSON

Patience

Work
in
HARMONY

Higher
Expectations



important
decision



PUT FORTH GREAT EFFORT

“You must get all of the education that you possibly can. Life has become so complex and competitive. You cannot assume that you have entitlements due you. You will be expected to put forth great effort and to use your best talents to make your way to the most wonderful future of which you are capable.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “Words of the Prophet: Seek Learning,” *New Era*, Sept. 2007, 2–4.

Preparation from

FAMILY SCRIPTURE STUDY

Both of my parents learned English when they were in college, and they wanted to raise my siblings and me to speak English in the home. We learned by reading the Book of Mormon in English. At first we’d just read the Book of Mormon and be done, but my mom said she wanted us to read to understand. She told us to pick a verse that stood out to us and explain how it applied to us. **This helped me to be confident in speaking and expressing my thoughts in English.**

I’m grateful that my parents helped us understand the importance of learning and that they used the Book of Mormon to teach us the gospel and as the number one tool for teaching us English. It was a resource we all had access to, and it helped prepare us to read other materials in English. I know that I’m able to speak English better now because of our family Book of Mormon study. Knowing another language has helped prepare me for school, a mission, and jobs that require English-speaking skills.

Louena H., Tonga

Preparation from a

MERIT BADGE



When I was growing up, my dad always emphasized the fact that knowledge is one of the only things we can take with us after this life, so I’ve always tried to get as much education as possible. This desire helped me as I worked toward my Eagle Scout Award, but I remember thinking several times, “When will I ever need to know this?” But now I realize that **I really do use the skills I learned.**

For example, when I was working on my personal management merit badge, I had to create and live by a budget for three months. I thought it was going to be a pointless activity, but now that I’m in college and manage my own finances, I use a budget every day. **Learning how to create and live by a budget has been very beneficial to me as I put myself through school, live on my own, and manage life’s daily expenses.** I don’t have any debt, and I’m happy because I know I can be financially stable. The activity that I thought would be unimportant when I was 15 has ended up being a part of my daily life.

Matthew B., California, USA



BUDGET expenses