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## JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

### “It Just Feels Different”

By Jennifer C. Mann

I was really nervous

Cuz my English.

The school here was kinda like the schools in Iraq.

I was a really good student *there*.

But, you know, the war ...

--and ISIS

And all that. *You know*.

I didn't go to school for like two years.

It really got me down.

So I looked at it from this way

and I start seeing

my experience here.

*I'm gonna be honest with you.*

It just feels different.

Like every day.

People-- they have different situations.

They are from different countries.

So you don't know everything.

Can't know it.

Then in school here,

I was like, “Nah.”

I don't really care about it.

Like in the end,

I didn't have the chance to explain how I feel about all that.

I was really pissed off.

I was really mad.

Why would they make it difficult?

The teachers.

I didn't know how.

Like I don't know what it was... a long paper?

I was like, I'm not doin' this.

I liked reading... well, not much, like, not that much.

Sometimes writing.

But, like...

Teach somebody about something sometimes!

Showing.

Not like just telling.

No, I'm not doing that.

Just going to work.

Just take a break.

I don't think I can do it.

It just, it just, feels different.

I texted you.

Remember?

After that I was thinking...

I was like I cannot stop here.

I cannot just stop here.

I already started.

I'm gonna push myself.

I started working hard.

A big change.

It's like a race.

Like you're racing yourself.

I believed in myself.

I told myself

That's not an excuse that the teacher's not good.

Like *come on*.

I see myself.

I'm in the United States.

The land of dreams.

*Literally.*

I can make it.



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