

Our Lives Press

“Inspiring through the experience of others”



Our Lives Press is a not-for-profit organisation which publishes authentic and inspiring stories by authors from different cultures. The authors – from Ethiopia, Congo, Albania, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Somalia – describe how they have overcome barriers, learnt a new language and succeeded in making new lives for themselves.

The books are written in natural language and provide ideal reading material for those who want to improve their English language and literacy skills and will also appeal to anyone interested in the moving stories of refugees and migrants. My Level 1 class recently read one of the books together and really enjoyed it. Most went on to read other titles in the series. The books would also be suitable for Entry 3 and Entry 2 with support.

Marion Molteno, herself an author, came to talk to a mixed Entry 2 – Level 1 group at our college about the work of the publishers and the titles in the series. Over sixty students attended what was a very enjoyable and engaging session. The students had lots of questions to ask about the books and the authors and were also able to purchase copies of the books. Our Lives Press is happy to arrange further visits to ESOL and literacy classes in the London area. They are also on the lookout for new authors and can provide support for ESOL students to write, provided they have a really interesting story to tell. Contact ourlivespress@yahoo.co.uk

Each book costs £3, 10% of which goes to the authors and the rest towards publishing new writing. You can read more about the titles and order books through the Our Lives Press website www.ourlivespress.co.uk Below are reviews of some of the titles written by Level 1 students at South Thames College.

Standing on my own two feet by Faizia Zaman

The book is set in Bangladesh, Manchester and London and it is an autobiography. The author was brought up in the town of Sylhel in Bangladesh in her maternal grandfather's house. After marriage she came to England with her husband. Suddenly he passed away and she was left alone with five children. She faced lots of problems like money, housing and her children's

education. In the end she learned English and overcame all the problems.

I enjoyed this book because I am from Bangladesh and I came to London after marriage with my husband. I learned from her that we can overcome all the problems if we are self-confident and believe in ourselves. We have to solve problems patiently and become self-dependent. I would recommend this book to my friends and my husband.

Review by Julia Matin

Achieving against the odds by Helene Ramazani

This book is about a woman called Helene who left Congo because her life was in danger. She came to England as a refugee. After struggling a while she ended up making a happy life. I liked this book because although she was struggling she built a good life with her family in the end. I would recommend this book. What I learned is how strong women can be and also never to give up, no matter what.

Review by Sahra Ahmed

Finding the unexpected by Babush Tesfay

Babush Tesfay was born in Eritrea but he grew up in Ethiopia which was because the countries had war with each other for many years. He lived with his parents and brothers and sisters but unfortunately in just a few years some of his family died. He had terrible problems in his life as a young boy. He got married to a British woman and moved to England and then they had two children. I enjoyed the book because with the simple words I could understand what was going on in his life, but usually I never read these kinds of books because I've seen and heard enough about world reality.

Review by Mohammed Khoubyar

Never give up by Kristy Krasniqi

This is a story about a young woman and her terrifying life who was trafficked from Albania to Italy, France, Belgium then London. I enjoyed the book because it was a very interesting story. It was real life, so I believed it. I learned that really we do not know the bad side of life. I think reading the book is a good way to learn English so I would recommend it.

Review by Emilia Kaminski

Elaine Williamson