

## Lesson 4 Class Resources

### **Our Happy Place**

Good Morning!

In this lesson I'm asking you to reminisce and focus on your happy place. It's a way of making ourselves feel better during this time and it will also serve as a reminder that there was life before 'lockdown' and there will be again. That's what the rainbows signify.

Below is a description of my happy place and you'll find that your writing is naturally longer for this exercise. Let it take you to that happy place. I look forward to reading your work and discovering what it is that makes you tick.

Have fun writing!

### **My happy place is a place that I visited in Jamaica last year, called Little Ochi: -**

The grey-blue ocean stretches far beyond where the eye can see. Waves lap tenderly to the rocks at shore as the cool breeze provides temporary respite from the sun's burning rays. Fishermen parade the length of the sea front trading their wares, today's catch: Yellowtail Snapper, Parrot and Doctor Fish. It is early afternoon and we sit, unmoving, watching the boats push out to sea; returning quickly with yet another haul. Our spot is a replica of the boats at work. Rooted on stilts and a roof adorned with dried palm leaves.

Distracted for a brief moment by the flies that took the opportunity of a break in the wind to linger we almost miss the African-esque beauty striding by. A large orange bowl of fresh fish is balanced without effort on her head as she talks idly to her female companions.

I turn to look behind me and notice a young girl leaning nonchalantly by the stone steps leading to the bar. Wearing royal blue trousers, a faded red top and a small black apron I assume she is a waitress in training, working her way up by sweeping floors and collecting bottles from the tables as diners replenish their souls with festival and fish. Her face looks remarkably familiar. Smooth, dark skin and bright eyes that were already beginning to dim, masking a sadness and hardship. I remember her. That little girl of many years ago who cheerily but shyly approached our table trying to sell her bunches of guinep. I bought some and paid her more than required. Her smile was enchanting then and I thought of it, and her, for many years afterwards.

Little Ochi is not one of those places you visit just once or even twice, it's a place you keep coming back to because sooner or later everybody knows your name...or at least your face. Nestled in the Jamaican outback or 'country' as the locals would refer to it, the seafood restaurant has occupied its space on the black-sand beach of Alligator Pond for eons. Despite being a world away from the over-developed north coast, Jamaicans will travel for miles to come and eat here and tourists, who know their way off the beaten track, are frequent visitors.

It's difficult to explain the lure of this place; it holds a fairy tale magic that makes every visit even more distinct, more exceptional than the last. What remains constant is the culinary excellence; fresh seafood – fresh because it's caught from the very sea that mesmerises you. Cooked in a multitude of ways – jerk, curried, steamed, baked or fried and served with plantain, bammy or festival, every diner leaves with their belly full.

Over the years, little has changed about the place. In fact, the most significant change can be attributed to forces of nature. Gradually the sea has crept further onto the shore and where once the surf could wash over your feet as you stood at the water's edge there are now boulders to serve as a coastal defence.

The journey from the north is long; along roads prone to potholes and devoid in many parts of street lights. But lose your way and the locals are keen to point you in the right direction. Better still, if you stop by one of the many roadside bars they'll happily let you buy them a Red Stripe. It would be shameful however to drive the distance without a little detour through Black River. The darkness of the river bed gives one of the longest rivers in Jamaica its name. Here you can take a relaxing cruise with guides pointing out fauna and wildlife, the most intriguing being the crocodiles they seek out, enabling you to get up close and personal.

But, even without the detour, whiling away the hours, watching the tide rollaway whilst enjoying a feast fit for royalty in an untouched region of Jamaica is precariously close to perfection.

I hope you enjoyed reading this, I look forward to reading yours.