



# I Choose to Teach!



A PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENT CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
APRIL 2005

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## CONSIDER THIS - A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

MONICA MASINO, SCTA PRESIDENT, ARGOSY UNIVERSITY

There's been a lot of talk about the state of education. No doubt you have heard comments from both sides of the issues about Proposition 98 (funding for kindergarten to community college education), merit pay, and retirement. Often we fail to realize the impact these issues have on us because we are still students ourselves. But consider this—after spending five long years in school to **earn** your degree/credential all the while racking up loans that are equal to a monthly mortgage, **passing** all the required state exams that recognize you as highly qualified in your subject area, and then securing a job as a teacher in a school district; do you think it ends there?

Depending on when you are awarded your credential, you may still be required to take and pass any newly created state exams to maintain your credential status. How about waiting another 5 to 10 years to become a permanent teacher at your school site?

Okay, so you make it past the next 5 to 10 years and you become a permanent teacher, how about getting paid according to the achievement of the kids in your class? All right, after you've taught for 20-30 years you'll want to retire and enjoy your golden years with your family, will there be a retirement system around to provide an income?

These are only some of the questions we should be thinking about as **future** educators. If you are not sure about how issues such as merit pay, the Public Employee Retirement Act, and Proposition 98 impact your future, do your research! If you are unclear as to where you should start, contact your executive board members, request a visitation for your next chapter meeting, talk to your local representatives, and lastly, read! Read! Read! **Be informed, don't sign a petition that will silence your voice!**



Annie Pestolesi, UC Davis, rallies to support educators and public schools, March 14.

**May 25** - Action Day for a Better California rallies:  
4:30 - 6:00 pm

- State Capitol, Sacramento
- Pershing Square, LA

**May 9** - Student march in Sacramento (see page 7)

**April 20** - Student walk-outs (see page 7)



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The SCTA / *Choose to Teach!* is a publication by the Student California Teachers Association an affiliate of the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association. The submit information or articles, please contact:

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### MAY 2005

- 5 NATIONAL DAY OF THE TEACHER
- 11 CALIFORNIA DAY OF THE TEACHER
- 21 CSET EXAM
- 30 MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY

### JUNE 2005

- 10-12 STATE COUNCIL/SCTA BOARD MEETING, LOS ANGELES
- 18 CBEST & RICA EXAMS
- 26-29 NEA STUDENT PROGRAM LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, LOS ANGELES

### JULY 2005

- 1-6 NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY, LOS ANGELES
- 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY
- 15-17 SCTA NEW BOARD ORIENTATION, BURLINGAME
- 16 CSET EXAM
- 18-22 CTA PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE, ASILOMAR
- 31-AUG. 5 CTA SUMMER INSTITUTE, UCLA

### SEPTEMBER 2005

- 5 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
- 10-11 SCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, BURLINGAME

### OCTOBER 2005

- 14-16 CTA REGION 1 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, BURLINGAME
- 21-23 STATE COUNCIL/SCTA BOARD MEETING, LOS ANGELES
- 28-30 CTA REGION 2 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, RENO, NV

### NOVEMBER 2005

- 5-6 SCTA FALL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, SOUTH (TBD)
- 11 VETERAN'S DAY HOLIDAY
- 24-25 THANKSGIVING RECESS

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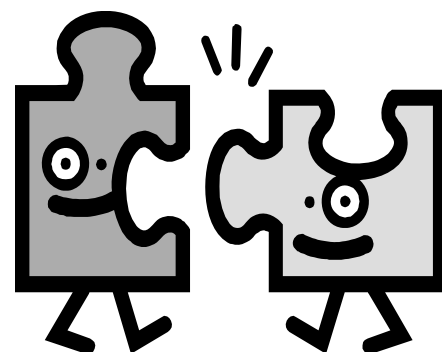
## TIPS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

DEANNA ARELLANO, SCTA NORTHERN REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

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Transferring from a Community College to a four-year institution can be a stressful, confusing and disillusioning experience - but it doesn't have to be. As with any endeavor in education, you simply need to do your homework. Below are some of the things I learned along the way - my tips for those who are shopping for a four-year college.

- 1. Research prospective schools well in advance of your scheduled transfer date.** Don't wait until the semester before you are ready to transfer to start thinking about where you want to transfer! Often, the school and the major you choose will mandate the classes you will need to take at your community college in order for your transfer to be successful. Also, don't forget to research more than one prospective college, in case your #1 choice does not work out.
- 2. Ask yourself what kind of college experience you are looking for.** Do you want to live on campus or off? Join a sorority or fraternity? Participate in activities in the local community? Do you want a quarter or semester system? Do you need a campus that is close to home or work? Or do you need to live within five miles of the beach? Before you choose a campus, be honest about what kind of things you can and cannot live without during your college years.
- 3. Seek out financial aid early.** To qualify for federal aid, you will most likely need to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The application process is year-round, but priority registration occurs every spring. Apply in paper (most financial aid offices have applications available) OR online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>, but **APPLY EARLY!** Visit or speak to the financial aid office on your community college campus as well as those at your prospective colleges. Look for grants and scholarships as well as student loans!
- 4. Visit prospective college campuses.** Nothing will tell you whether or not a college campus will fit your lifestyle more than visiting the campus. Walking around and getting a feel for whether or not the college is a good fit for you is often something that can only be discovered in person. While you're there, take a tour of the campus and talk to some of the locals! If you know what your major will be, schedule (in advance) a meeting with students and professors in that program. Sit in on a class if you can.
- 5. Visit the college website.** If you can't make the trip in person, the college's website is your next best resource. Many university campuses advertise tools for prospective students on their websites, including information for prospective parents (you know, those people who pay the bills). Reviewing the website can also give you insights into campus life, academic standards, and their commitment to the community.
- 6. Speak to the college's staff and students.** Don't be afraid to contact by mail, e-mail or in person the department chairs, professors and office staff, especially those in your major. If you decide to transfer to that campus, these will be the people with whom you will be interacting most often. Speak with students who are seeking the same educational goal as you, those who live on campus and those who don't, as well as the students and adults who work on the campus.
- 7. Speak to advisors and counselors on your community college campus.** Some community college campuses have counselors whose sole responsibility is to assist students who wish to transfer to four-year institutions. Many campuses have TAA's (Transfer Admission Agreements) with local colleges that will guarantee your admission in advance, as soon as their entrance requirements are fulfilled by you.
- 8. Speak to advisors and counselors on your prospective university campus.** Though transfer counselors are a valuable resource, no one has more up-to-date information than a counselor at the school to which you want to transfer. (I'm also sad to report that not all community college counselors are as wonderful as mine were ☺) University advisors can often advise not only about general education requirements for graduation, but also can



## TIPS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

assist with planning your final term at the community college prior to your transfer. If possible, talk to an advisor in the department of your major.

9. **Make the most of your time at the community college level.** Classes at community colleges are often smaller than those at the university level, and are usually less expensive. Complete as many classes as you can prior to transferring! Remember that some universities do not allow you, after you transfer, to complete any classes toward your baccalaureate degree at the community college level for one simple reason - they want your money! Also, should you learn later that you are just one class away from that Associate degree or Certificate program back at the community college, keep in mind that tuition often rises for students after they have earned a baccalaureate degree.

10. **Don't be discouraged by the amount of time it might take to get your degree.** In a perfect world, it would really take four years to get a "four-year degree". So what happens if, after you transfer, you find out you received some incorrect information and have to spend three years at your new college instead of two? Don't complain! (Things happen, get used to it ☺) Hang in there and apply for another grant. Think of it as one more year to take advantage of Student CTA! Oh, and enjoy the time you have at your new college, it goes so much faster than you'd think!



### **DO SIGN THESE COALITION PETITIONS**

#### **THE CALIFORNIA TAX FAIRNESS ACT OF 2005.**

A constitutional amendment that protects homeowners and requires that big businesses pay its fair share of property taxes.

**SAME PERCENT VOTE REQUIREMENT INITIATIVE.** Forces people who sponsor ballot initiatives to live by their own rules. 2/3's equals 2/3's. Fair is fair.

**THE CHEAPER PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR CALIFORNIA ACT.** Requires the state to negotiate for *real* discounts for millions of uninsured and under-insured Californians.

**USED CAR BUYERS BILL OF RIGHTS.** Allows car buyers to get out of a purchase within a three-day period.

**REGULATION OF ENERGY.** Allows for the Public Utilities Commission to regulate consumer rates and terms of retail electric services.



### **DON'T SIGN THE GOVERNOR'S PETITIONS**

**CALIFORNIA LIBE WITHIN OUR MEANS ACT.** With this act, we will lose salaries, programs for children and school building maintenance.

**PUT KIDS FIRST ACT.** This eliminates the current probationary two-year period and increases it to 10 years.

**THE EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING ACT.** This deceptive initiative pays teachers based on student scores on state standardized tests.

**PUBLIC EMPLOYEE UNION DUES ACT.** This proposal is an attempt to silence the voices of teachers, firefighters and police officers by singling out public employee unions.

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## BOOKS FOR EVERY CHILD!

TRAN QUACH, SCTA CHAPTER PRESIDENT,  
CSU FULLERTON

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This year, CSU Fullerton SCTA celebrated *Read Across America* with *Topaz Elementary*. A majority of the students at *Topaz* come from low-income families, whose daily struggle to provide food, clothing, and shelter, usually leaves books at the bottom of the list of priorities. Our goal was to give a book to every first grader so that they would be excited about reading.

With the help of the *STEP* program on campus, we began a campaign to collect 130 books. While our efforts were strong, by the end of February we still had not reached our goal. Feeling discouraged, we thought about ending our collection efforts and donating what we had collected so far to the school's library. Instead, after 5 days of fundraising, \$103 was collected, enough to buy 95 children's books.

On March 2nd, Leslie Fichtner, Neil Oda, Cynthia Gutierrez, Roy Bird and Tran Quach arrived at *Topaz*. Since there were 5 first grade classes, we were each able to visit one. We each read a Dr. Seuss book to our class and then surprised the class by telling them that we are donating that book to their class. Then, we brought in the bag of books and presented each student with a new book and bookmark. The teachers and students were so surprised. The students were excited and proud to show off their new books.

As we reflected on our community service we were able to achieve our goal of giving a book to each first grader. More importantly, we succeeded at getting them excited about reading. We still had enough books left over to donate them to the school's library. We can't wait for *Read Across America 2006!*

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## GREEN EGGS & HAM

TAMMY TANNER, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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Room 12 at *Forest Hill Elementary* in San Jose enjoyed a fun-filled day to celebrate Read Across America. They began their day with reading stories to their Fourth grade reading buddies. The Kindergarten and First grade class even made Green Eggs and Ham for snacks! The class read their own stories that they had written to the other classmates. Throughout the day parents of the children came in and read stories to the class. They got a special visit from The Cat in the Hat, which was played by the school principal, Maria Wetzel. She read to the children as they enjoyed listening to her and seeing her all dressed up. Overall this was a very exciting day for all who participated in Read Across America.

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## CAUGHT BY SURPRISE!

TONI BICE, SCTA NORTHERN REGIONAL VICE  
PRESIDENT, CSU CHICO

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Many of you attended a workshop at November's Fall Leadership Conference that introduced you to the importance of building a relationship with your local Service Center, one of the available resources for Student California Teachers Association Chapters. One of the key points from that training was the opportunity to petition for additional funding from them for your chapter's events. On January 18<sup>th</sup>, your Northern Regional Vice Presidents, Deanna Arellano and I, attended the Golden Gate Service Center meeting in San Francisco. About mid-way through the agenda, Service Center Chair Steve Savage announced that every year they allot a portion of their budget to support Student CTA. He lamented that they had not been able to present that money to anyone in years past. Grateful that this time two SCTA representatives were in the audience, he then proceeded to hand us a check for **\$1,000** to be used by Student CTA to increase membership in that area and to send members to upcoming conferences!!

Student CTA: **THIS COULD BE YOUR CHAPTER!** Remember to keep in contact with your Service Center and always try to have one representative from your chapter at each of these meetings. For more information about how to contact your Service Center Chair, how to petition for funds or how to attend a meeting, contact any SCTA Executive Board member today. Meetings are held just 4 times per year and dinner is usually provided for you!! Don't miss your chance to get money to help your chapter!! We hope to see an article soon from your chapter sending out this same type of good news!

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## VOLUNTEER AT THE NEA - RA

The 2005 NEA Representative Assembly will be held in Los Angeles from June 30-July 6. This is your chance to represent SCTA as a volunteer. If you have the time for just one day, or you are able to help for more days, please sign up.

Positions available

Ushers  
Information  
RA Telephones  
Delegate Services

NEA Fund for Children and Public Education

For more information, please call 650-552-5300.

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## TO GIVE IS TO GET!

LEO SOLIS, SCTA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, RIO HONDO COLLEGE

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CTA annually holds a Good Teaching Conference in the north and south. At both conferences, SCTA members may volunteer and assist the GTC Planning Committee in exchange for free registration and hotel accommodations. Two members share their experiences as volunteers.

**Rebecca Wagoner, Riverside Community College** - Ever since I began my college career, SCTA has been there offering me so many opportunities that I never knew existed. I was able to attend the Fall Leadership Conference in San Francisco, the "I Can Do It" (classroom management) seminar at Cal Poly Pomona, and just this last weekend, I was able to volunteer and participate in the CTA *Good Teaching Conference* held in Hollywood. I always come home with so much new information, innovative ideas, great friends, and a renewed excitement and love for the wonderful and rewarding profession of teaching.

As always, there wasn't too much time for relaxing. There were so many terrific presentations, fabulous luncheons, motivating speakers, remarkable vendor booths, and let us not forget, over 1,000 teachers full of information and experience to chat with, that I almost didn't have time to shop! However, being a woman who knows her priorities, I was able to set aside a few hours for this most important activity! After all, it was another chance to meet some really great people.

In the end, I came home after three wonderful days with that same renewed sense of purpose, a big blue bag full of information and ideas, and a few new friends. It seems that the old saying is true; "To give is to get." My call to all SCTA members.....VOLUNTEER!

**Leslie Fichtner, CSU Fullerton** - The event was overwhelming and unforgettable! I would definitely do this all over again, if given the opportunity. The hotel and the food were indescribable and I am most grateful for allowing me to enjoy these wonderful extras, just for volunteering. The conference was not just about the food and the bed, but the workshops. Through this conference, I learned many new things in the workshops and was able to network and plan for an educational conference at Cal State Fullerton in 2006.

I attended workshop sessions that were full of inventive and exciting material and ideas. I chose to go to Rick Morris's, *New Management* workshop on Saturday. This was what I would label as the most impressive workshop I have ever attended. Rick taught all of us gentle and direct techniques in which to help the classroom to be a place of peace, rather than chaos. Next, I attended the *Writing Adventures: Exploring Structured and Systematic Writing Instruction from Language Essays* workshop with Patricia Padgett. She was helpful in providing useful methods in which to teach children vocabulary and independent writing. I will definitely utilize some of her techniques in my future classrooms. Lastly, I attended Ted Hook's, *Research-Based Strategies to Connect Expository Reading and Writing* workshop. This workshop involved many unique structural and creative plans that would benefit any student no matter their development in reading and writing. It allowed me to feel a lot more secure in teaching reading and writing to a diverse population of learners. Overall, I really appreciate the information that these speakers shared and thank you again for the opportunity you provided me for my career and leadership development.

This is what I would label as the most impressive workshop I have ever attended.

A special "Thank You" to all the volunteers; Gemma Landeza, Tamara Tanner, Julie Meyer-Houston, Evelyn Loughran, Peggy Guernsey, Chantaine Fauntleroy, Leslie Fichtner, Hector Palacios, Rebecca Wagoner, Shirley Velasco, Debra Urrea, and Chie Nudell.



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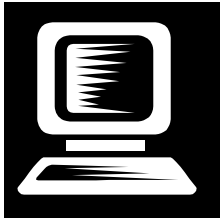
## NEW INTERACTIVE WEBSITE FOR MEMBERS

MONICA MASINO, SCTA PRESIDENT, ARGOSY UNIVERSITY

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As you may know, the NEA\* (National Education Association) is creating a new member-focused Web site. (That means you!) The new site, located at [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org), was launched last January.

The new web site is part of a larger endeavor, called NEA Interactive, that includes new web publishing options for state affiliates. In keeping with NEA's commitment to educators and students, the new site includes resources for teachers and education support professionals, as well as for parents, the press and the public. These resources include:



- Teaching Resources
- Online Professional Development
- The Latest Information on No Child Left Behind
- IDEA Tools
- NEA's Read Across America Updates
- NEA Professional Library
- Job Placement Services

NEA Student Program members will be able to take advantage of member-only discounts ranging from online professional development to long distance service discounts and other special offers. Visit [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org) and see why the National Education Association is the voice for public education. For more information, contact: Rick Geier, NEA Information Technology Services, [rgeier@nea.org](mailto:rgeier@nea.org) (202) 822-7184.

\*As a member of Student California Teachers Association, you are also a member of the NEA.

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## STUDENTS IN SOLIDARITY

LEO SOLIS, SCTA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, RIO HONDO COLLEGE

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If you haven't already heard, the California budget proposal is affecting all sides of the public spectrum; from police officers, nurses, educators, to prison guards, and above all students. That's why on March 5<sup>th</sup> the *University of California Student Association (UCSA)* and the *California State Student Association (CSSA)* decided to hold a Budget Summit at CSU Channel Islands. Student organizations from across the state, such as the *California Faculty Association - Student Interns (CFA)*, *Action In Defense of Education (AIDE)*, *Student CTA*, and many others united to decide on an action plan to mobilize all Higher Ed students.



By combining our efforts together, by having one voice, we will let our legislators know that education is not only our right, but it is our future. Since it was very important to hear from all sides, we were divided into four regions: North, Central, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Each region was asked to come up with demands, messages, and days of action. Afterwards, as a state we combined our ideas so we can work in solidarity.

As a student, I know that an education is important. As a future teacher, I know that without an education there is no future for me. This is the time to work together and collaborate with your Associated Students, clubs, and fellow students at your campuses.

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **April 20** — the Budget subcommittees will be meeting and students from across the state will be walking out in support of terminating budget cuts. But it doesn't stop there.
- **May 9, Sacramento** — Right before the May budget revise, students will be marching side by side on to our state

Recall the fee hikes. Terminate the budget cuts. Invest in the future of California.

Education is a right not a privilege. Students demand an affordable, accessible, and high quality education.

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# ADVENTURES OF A FIRST YEAR TEACHER: TAKING TIME FOR YOURSELF, PART 4

RHONDA LEWIS, SCTA PAST OFFICER, FIRST-YEAR TEACHER

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As a first year teacher, I have come to value time as a precious commodity. Each day seems too short to accomplish everything that I plan to do. As I prepared for my 3-week break in March, I thought of all the things I would accomplish — dynamic lesson plans, cleaning my classroom, organizing my papers. No where did I make plans to take time for myself. On the first day of my break, I felt guilty when I slept in and was a couch potato for the day. But it felt great. I watched a movie I had bought and forgotten since November, and watched the many TV shows I had Tivo'd. It is very easy to become wrapped up in all of the things we need to do; assignments, tests, work, family, etc. But you must make yourself a priority. You will be an ineffective student and teacher if you do not take time for yourself. So in your daily planner of appointments, schedule some time for yourself—even if it's just 10 minutes.

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*Rhonda Lewis is a first year teacher at North Tamarind Elementary School in the Fontana Unified School District*

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## WHO'S MORE STRESSED?

CHIE NUDELL, SCTA ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE, CSU NORTHRIDGE

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College students are stressed. School administrators are stressed. Teachers are stressed. We're all stressed! But don't forget that our young students are also stressed. I was reminded of this at a workshop at the *Good Teaching Conference* held in Hollywood last month. Out of all the workshops I attended, *STRESS* was overflowing with participants. Teaching young people how to manage stress early will help them to live a healthier lifestyle. Just as with academic instruction, relaxation techniques must be taught and modeled for students to understand.

Since most adults are unsure of how to cope with stress, it is understandable that most children also experience great difficulty. Often, adults fail to realize the stressful situations our students encounter each day. When we reminisce about our own childhoods, we may forget to remember the anxiety we felt when we were faced with school deadlines, difficult assignments, and endless tests. Children today continue to be overloaded with deadlines, lots of work, tests, tests and more tests. The pressure is definitely on.

To help students cope, you first want to remind them that there is good stress and bad stress. Good stress is vital as

## MEMBER BENEFITS

### **Attention Student Teachers!**

SCTA provide you with **\$1,000,000** liability insurance and legal protection when you work with students as a part of your preparation to be a teacher.

- CTA death benefit of up to \$2,000 that accrues to your beneficiary if you die while still a member of CTA
- \$1,000 accidental death and dismemberment insurance
- Disaster Relief Fund through FACT provides grants and no-cost interest loans to teachers who are victims of natural disasters in the state

**Not a student teacher?** SCTA still protects all members with low rates on auto, homeowners/renters and life insurance. Remember! It is important to think about the future and all that may lie ahead. So don't worry, SCTA has you covered!



it keeps us stimulated and gives us the drive to keep working. Too much bad stress can be detrimental to our health. After defining the types of stress, you will want to practice some relaxation techniques with your class. Taking 5-10 minutes out of your day will help keep your students focused for the remaining 5 hours and 50 minutes.

### **RECIPE for RELAXATION**

1. Close your eyes, forget anyone or anything that is physically near you. Don't think about anything going on in your life.
2. Create for yourself an ideal place. Decide:  
How you look  
Who else is there (that you can relax with)  
What you are doing  
Where you are  
What you are listening to (sound of waves, music, etc.)
3. Now that you have everything you enjoy, start to relax the mind. You are not thinking about tomorrow. As far as you are concerned, today will go on for as long as you like.
4. Examine all of your muscles to see if each is beginning to relax. As you do this, breath in deeply for 4-6 seconds from your nose, and breath out slowly for 4-6 seconds from your mouth.
5. This is optional, but you can tense your whole body for a couple of seconds, and then allow it to relax.
6. Enjoy your space.

**Practice this routine once daily for 10 minutes. For students, doing it just before an exam or after lunch will be a good time.**