

Flora: Background

Flora is a 33 year old female from Tianjin, China. She has lived in Tianjin her entire life. Flora works as a manager's assistant in an international trading company, which manufactures riflescopes for the United States. She loves swimming, watching TV, playing racquetball, and learning about makeup. She is a shy girl and would usually rather listen to others than speak. She is very hardworking and enjoys school when it is interactive and student-centered.

Flora attended high school in Heping district and college at Tianjin Technology and Science University, majoring in finance. Flora is the only child of her mother and father, who also live in Tianjin. She is married and has no children. Her husband speaks a little bit of English, but they seldom communicate using English.

Flora loves English because she thinks it is a beautiful language, it is another way to express herself, and it is convenient for communicating with foreigners. She has studied English since the age of twelve, when she was in sixth grade. In school, she studied grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing, but practiced little listening or speaking. Her English classes were very centered on the teacher lecturing and writing on the blackboard in Chinese. As a result, she was forced to practice speaking on her own, but did not have anyone to practice with.

Flora plans to use her English to write to her friends and husband, and in her job, as she has to communicate with people from the United States by phone and email. Flora's boss speaks English at an intermediate level, and can help Flora to communicate when she needs it. Flora would really like to improve her listening and speaking skills, particularly pronouncing words like a native-speaker would, and understanding slang, as well as more professional/work related English.

Asked to assess her English skills, Flora said she is strongest in reading and listening, and weakest in writing and speaking. Asked to say what skills she most needs, she gave this ranking: speaking, listening, writing, vocabulary, reading, grammar.