

Hard Changes in Life by Theresa Leverett

Hello everyone, my name is Theresa Leverett. My family and I moved to California on December 5, 2003. I live in a little town called Waterford. I go to Waterford Middle School, and I am eleven years old. When my family and I moved to Waterford we didn't know how things would end up for us here. So, we went with the flow of things in this town. My family and I may not be Mexican or Portuguese; these are the main nationalities in Waterford. We are Hawaiian and White, and we are happy to be what we are in life. We don't act like something we're not.

When I was a young girl, I did not know how to speak English because I spoke Hawaiian at home. When people spoke to me in English, I would get so mixed up because I did not understand what they were saying. I would ask my mom, "Mom what are they saying?" She would then translate for me. When I was around five years old, I started speaking English. It was confusing for me then because it was hard to speak both languages at the same time.

Even though it was hard for me to learn English, I was able to pick it up pretty quickly. I was very glad for my new accomplishment, but I started to forget my Hawaiian language. Sadly, I am not able to speak Hawaiian any more. My mom did not enforce the Hawaiian language at home when we started school. That is one of the reasons why I started losing my Hawaiian language. Even though I don't speak Hawaiian, I am able to understand what my family is saying to me in Hawaiian. I am very proud of my Hawaiian culture, language and heritage. I wish I would not have lost my Hawaiian language because it means so much to me and my family to keep our Hawaiian heritage in our family.

5th Grade, Waterford Middle School