

MY NAME IS FATIMA



A short story by Hillary Gardner

Based on “Welcome Parents”
From the TV series “We Are New York”

WE ARE NEW YORK

Learn English with our stories



CREDITS

We Are New York Short Stories created and written by Hillary Gardner.
Edited by David Hellman, Rebecca Leece, Leslee Oppenheim, Moira Taylor, K. Webster. Designed by Renée Skuba.

Special Thanks: Kate Brandt, Vicki Herschman, Seungyeon (Jackie) Lee, John Mogulescu, Helene Sashin, Sam Seifnourian, Hilary Sideris, Anthony Tassi, Pauline Toole.



Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

Mayor's Office of
Adult Education

Anthony Tassi
Executive Director



My name is Fatima.

This is my friend, Carmen.

We are at my son's school.

We are talking to the parent coordinator.



This is my son's school.

My son goes to school in Brooklyn.

My son's name is Ismael.

Ismael likes school.

But, he likes soccer more than school!



This is my son, Ismael.

Ismael is watching soccer on TV with his dad.

I have a letter from school.

I show my husband, Sayeed, the letter.

**The letter says
the parent-teacher conferences are next week.**



I want to be prepared.

I call my friend Carmen for advice.

Carmen's daughter goes to my son's school.

Maybe Carmen has good advice.



Carmen and I decide to call 311.

**311 is the telephone number for
New York City information.**

**Carmen calls 311 and asks for
the phone number of the parent coordinator
at our children's school.**



Carmen says,

**“Can I have the telephone number of
the parent coordinator for P.S. 303
in Brooklyn?”**

**Carmen writes down the number for the
parent coordinator at the school.**



**The next day, Carmen and I meet with the parent
coordinator of our children’s school.**

**Her job is to help parents with questions
about school.**

She is very helpful.

She listens to all our questions.



She has useful information.

She gives us the *New York City Family Guide*.

**The guide has information for parents with children
in New York City public schools.**

The *Family Guide* is available in eight languages.



**The parent coordinator gives me
a *Family Guide* in Arabic.**

She gives Carmen a *Family Guide* in Spanish.

**She says, “You are natural leaders.
If you can speak with me,
you can speak with anyone.”**



Carmen and I are happy.

But, we are still nervous about using English at the parent-teacher conferences.

Last year we didn't understand anything.

I have an idea...



**“Let’s call some other parents.
We can prepare for the parent-teacher conferences together.”**

Carmen agrees.

We make a list of questions to ask the teacher at the parent-teacher conferences.

Carmen says, “Let’s practice them together.”



This is Pierre.

Pierre's son goes to my son's school.

He meets us in the park on Saturday to practice.

At first Pierre says, "I don't think I can do it."

But I say, "Yes, you can."



Pierre practices the questions:

Is there any extra reading I can give my son?

Is my child doing his homework every night?

Can you please slow down and explain what you mean?



This is Ming.

Ming's daughter goes to my son's school.

Ming is worried, too.

She says,

“Sometimes asking questions is not easy.”



We all agree it is not easy.

We make a plan.

We will meet again next Saturday.

**We will practice asking questions
out loud together.**



When Carmen gets home, she talks to her husband, Juan.

She explains the plan.

“I met with the other parents.

We are getting ready for the parent-teacher conferences.”



Carmen says,

“We are getting together next Saturday and you should come.

Parents need to get involved.

You should get involved, too.

We need to help our daughter.”



**The next week, Juan and Sayeed come to
the park with us.**

But, they don't want to practice questions.

They want to play soccer!



We start to practice our questions.

We laugh at our mistakes.

We have a good time.

Now, Juan and Sayeed want to get involved!



Finally, the night of the parent-teacher conferences arrives.

Sayeed and Juan are ready.



Juan asks,

“Can I get my daughter’s report card in Spanish?”



**Sayeed asks,
“How can I help my son with his reading?”**



**The teacher is very happy.
She says, “My door is always open.”**



**Carmen and I are very proud.
We are proud of our husbands.
And, we are proud of each other.**

Words used in this story

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> advice | <input type="checkbox"/> help | <input type="checkbox"/> play |
| <input type="checkbox"/> agree | <input type="checkbox"/> homework | <input type="checkbox"/> practice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> anyone | <input type="checkbox"/> idea | <input type="checkbox"/> prepare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> anything | <input type="checkbox"/> information | <input type="checkbox"/> question |
| <input type="checkbox"/> are, is, be | <input type="checkbox"/> job | <input type="checkbox"/> report card |
| <input type="checkbox"/> arrive | <input type="checkbox"/> languages: Arabic,
English, Spanish | <input type="checkbox"/> reading,
extra reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ask | <input type="checkbox"/> laugh | <input type="checkbox"/> say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> call | <input type="checkbox"/> leader | <input type="checkbox"/> school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> can | <input type="checkbox"/> letter | <input type="checkbox"/> show |
| <input type="checkbox"/> come | <input type="checkbox"/> like | <input type="checkbox"/> slow down |
| <input type="checkbox"/> day | <input type="checkbox"/> list | <input type="checkbox"/> soccer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> decide | <input type="checkbox"/> listen | <input type="checkbox"/> speak |
| <input type="checkbox"/> do | <input type="checkbox"/> make | <input type="checkbox"/> start |
| <input type="checkbox"/> door | <input type="checkbox"/> mean | <input type="checkbox"/> talk, talking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> explain | <input type="checkbox"/> meet, met | <input type="checkbox"/> teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> family:
child, children,
dad, daughter,
husband,
parents, son | <input type="checkbox"/> mistake | <input type="checkbox"/> think |
| <input type="checkbox"/> friend | <input type="checkbox"/> name | <input type="checkbox"/> time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> get involved | <input type="checkbox"/> need | <input type="checkbox"/> TV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> get ready | <input type="checkbox"/> night | <input type="checkbox"/> understand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> get together | <input type="checkbox"/> number:
phone number,
telephone number | <input type="checkbox"/> using (use) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> give | <input type="checkbox"/> parent coordinator | <input type="checkbox"/> want |
| <input type="checkbox"/> goes (go) | <input type="checkbox"/> parent-teacher
conferences | <input type="checkbox"/> watching (watch) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> guide | <input type="checkbox"/> park | <input type="checkbox"/> week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> have, has | <input type="checkbox"/> plan | <input type="checkbox"/> write down |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> year |

Visit www.nyc.gov/LearnEnglish. Get free copies of this story and other short stories based on "We Are New York".