PUKYONG NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

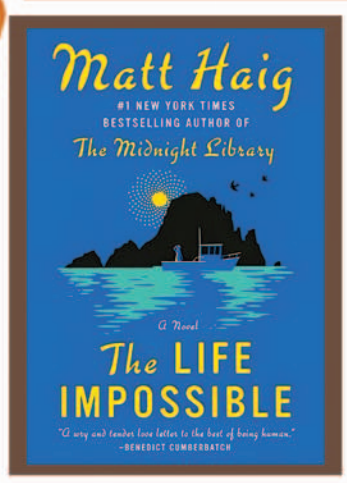
THE PUKYONG HERALD

No.848 Sep. 23th(Wed). 2026

Fall into Reading

Autumn book guide for students

September has arrived with the start of a new semester, and autumn is just around the corner, bringing a cool, gentle breeze. Autumn has long been known as the "season of reading." The Korean expression "Deung-hwa-ga-chin," meaning "keeping the lamp close," describes a time when one draws close to the light and devotes oneself to learning, embodying the idea that autumn is an ideal season for reading. This fall, join the writers of the Pukyong Herald as we explore new stories through books chosen from our own perspectives.



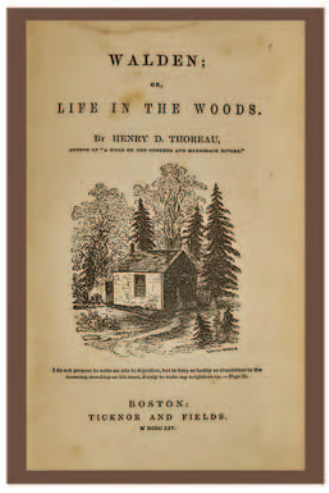
"The Life Impossible" is the latest novel by Matt Haig, the author who sparked a wave of "healing fantasy" with his bestselling novel "The Midnight Library." The story of "The Life Impossible" begins when Grace, a 70-year-old woman who has been living a monotonous and uneventful life, receives an unexpected letter informing her that a music teacher she worked with 40 years ago has passed away and left her a house in Ibiza, Spain. With curiosity, Grace travels to Ibiza. There, the unfamiliar surroundings and mysterious events she encounters transform her ordinary life into a remarkable and mysterious adventure.

For university students today who may feel the monotony of everyday life or struggle with emptiness and depression, "The Life Impossible" offers a chance to look at life from a new perspective. With its quiet atmosphere and sense of shift, autumn offers the perfect backdrop for a story about finding new possibilities in life. The novel reminds readers that it is never too late to begin again and that new possibilities can emerge when we least expect them. This makes "The Life Impossible" a meaningful choice for anyone looking to pause and discover a new sense of possibility this autumn.

When the cool autumn breeze sets in, many turn to reading to clear their minds. "Walden" by Henry David Thoreau is an excellent choice for reading in the fall. This classic book captures the story of the author living alone for two years in a small cabin in the woods.

In the book, Thoreau points out that people often overlook happiness because they focus too much on material possessions and the opinions of others. Instead of chasing endless social pressure, he chooses to look inside himself and focus on what he truly wants. His journey encourages modern readers to step back from the competitive world and think about how to live a meaningful life. He conveys the message that people can find true freedom and peace when they simplify their lives by keeping only what is necessary.

"Walden" is a suitable book for autumn because the peaceful scenery of the woods and the pond described in the book provides comfort to readers. It helps people lay aside complex thoughts and worries and move forward at their own pace. As a new season begins, this story offers readers a chance to reflect on their own lives. Pick up Walden this season to step away from daily noise and discover a quiet, balanced pace for your life.





"Olive Kitteridge" by Elizabeth Strout takes place in a small community in Maine. The book is a collection of 13 interconnected short stories centered on the main character, Olive Kitteridge, and her neighbors.

The novel explores the everyday lives of ordinary people facing family conflicts and the challenges of aging. Through these stories, Strout examines the complex emotions and inner worlds of her characters. The story follows Olive, who seems blunt at first glance but slowly shows her own gentle way of understanding other people's pain. As she ages, Olive comes to understand both the fragility and value of life by reflecting on her past. Through these various episodes, the book portrays realistic moments of a small-town community where everyone's lives are quietly intertwined.

The book offers a deeper look at human relationships and the complexities of life. By presenting imperfect characters in a realistic way, "Olive Kitteridge" encourages readers to develop a more compassionate understanding of others and reflect on their own lives. This novel makes a deeply engaging read for anyone seeking emotional depth in the crisp autumn season.

The three books introduced in this article offer more than just a brief escape, helping readers build inner peace and restore balance. The core messages of these books encourage people to realize the value of small everyday moments. Taking a step back from busy schedules and reading these stories will provide a valuable opportunity to clear the mind and gain fresh perspectives this autumn.

By Kim Gang-ri kgr__herald@pukyong.ac.kr / Yun Ye-seo yys__herald@pukyong.ac.kr / Jeong Hyo-jae jhj__herald@pukyong.ac.kr

Published by Pukyong National University / **President** Bae Sang-hoon / **Executive director** Kim Jung-kyu / **Chief editor** Han Tae-yeong / **E-mail** hty_herald@pukyong.ac.kr / **Printed by** 부산일보사

Pukyong Herald Photo Essay Contest

Winners share their experiences and reflections

The Pukyong Herald hosted its English Photo Essay Contest from July to August under the theme "Hidden Gems in My Neighborhood." The contest was open to Korean and foreign residents of Busan, Ulsan, and Gyeongnam, as well as students enrolled in middle schools, high schools, or universities in the area. Participants introduced hidden attractions in their neighborhoods through photographs and essays. Below, this year's award winners share the stories behind their works.

Jeong Il-hyun Grand Prize Winner



I took the photos with the hope of preserving the lovely moments I shared with my partner for a long time. I feel happiest when I see my partner enjoying my photos, and it is even more meaningful that I can capture the moments when we walked and laughed together. I realized that even ordinary moments can become special memories depending on how we look at them. I am happy and grateful that the photos I submitted led to a wonderful result. I thank the Pukyong Herald for providing this meaningful opportunity.

Lee Tae-young Second Prize Winner



I think this contest gave me an opportunity to become more interested in English writing by organizing my thoughts and expressing them in English. It was also a valuable experience that allowed me to learn new English expressions while putting what I wanted to convey into words. Although I had some doubts about my writing skills, I am grateful that I achieved a good result. I hope to continue improving my writing so that if there is another event like this in the future, I can achieve an even better result.

Han Tae-yun Second Prize Winner



I am very happy and grateful to receive the second prize for my writing about a hidden path in Gwangalli. While writing this piece, I realized that even an ordinary place in my neighborhood can have its own special story and beauty. It was meaningful to look at a familiar path from a new perspective and share what makes it special to me. This experience taught me that we do not always have to look far away to find something worth appreciating. I hope everyone who reads this can find their own special place.

Kang Riel Third Prize Winner



As someone from Jinhae, I have always felt disappointed that people think only of cherry blossoms when they hear the name Jinhae. After thinking about which place to introduce, I found a place that even locals don't know much about: the Jinhae NFRDI Environment Eco-Park. I hope many people will take this opportunity to discover Jinhae in the summer and visit the Jinhae NFRDI Environment Eco-Park.

By Han Tae-yeong
hty__herald@pukyong.ac.kr

Busan

Various Aspects of Busan

From food to entertainment, discovering the charm of Busan

Over the years, Busan has been attracting more international visitors than ever. According to the Busan tourism statistics, the number of international visitors surpassed 2.4 million in 2026. As more visitors explore Busan, the city has prepared distinctive attractions only Busan can offer. This fall, the Pukyong Herald introduces several events and places where visitors can experience Busan's charm.

The "Dalmaji Culture Festa" takes place around Dalmaji Hill in Haeundae. One of its main activities is walking along Moontan Road, a trail on Dalmaji Hill. Visitors can choose from three courses based on their interests, all of which include activities such as pottery and leather crafting. After the activities, they can listen to music or continue their walk. The festival runs from September 12 to November 21, closing briefly for the Chuseok holiday period. The "Dalmaji Culture Festa" offers visitors a chance to experience local culture and activities.

The "Busan Dwaeji Gukbap Grand Fair" takes place from August 16 to October 18. "Dwaeji Gukbap" is a traditional Korean dish of pork broth served with rice. It offers unique styles served across restaurants and different ways people enjoy it, such as mixing the rice directly into the broth or adding cubed radish kimchi juice to it.

From August 16 to September 2, citizens voted for their favorite Dwaeji Gukbap restaurants. The result will determine the Top 20 restaurants, while citizens who submit compelling stories alongside their nominations will be selected as the "Gukbap Lover," a name given to citizens who love the dish. On September 19, chefs and food experts had a discussion about Dwaeji Gukbap at the "Gukbap Talk," and from September 28 to October 14, the Top 20 restaurants selected through the vote will be introduced. Lastly, the Gukbap Showcase will take place from October 16 to 18. Dwaeji Gukbap is closely connected to everyday life in Busan. The fair offers visitors a way to experience the city's local food culture.

Bosu-dong Book Street offers a glimpse into Busan's history and traditional book culture. The street first took shape during the Korean War, when Busan was the temporary capital of South Korea. Refugees opened small book stalls to make a living, and the area soon became a place where students and locals could find and buy books. Today, visitors can walk along the street and explore its bookshops. Unlike modern bookstores, where books are usually arranged by category, the shops in Bosu-dong often have books from different fields together.



▲The Bosu-dong Book Street and Gwangalli Drone Show

In addition to the three attractions mentioned above, Busan offers a diverse range of other activities and destinations for visitors to enjoy. The "Starry Sea Busan Night Market" offers a variety of local foods, and the "Gwangalli M Drone Light Show" will light up the sky every Saturday throughout the year. Visitors can also enjoy colorful fountain shows at the "Dadaepo Sunset Fountain of Dreams" throughout the year. Checking out these local attractions will help you fully enjoy your trip to Busan.

By Ma Yun-seo
mys__herald@pukyong.ac.kr

Nepal Underwater

Himalayan climate warning behind Nepal's floods

On August 26, massive floods struck northern Nepal. According to Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, more than 1,350 people were killed, and over 5,000 went missing due to the floods. The disaster began when a glacier and the rocks surrounding it collapsed in the high Himalayas, triggering a powerful flow of ice, rock, and sediment. The debris rushed into the river system, causing flash floods that swept through villages and damaged roads, bridges, and hydropower facilities. Experts say they are still investigating the extent to which climate change contributed to this massive flood, but the disaster demonstrates how climate change can increase the risk of extreme events and put more lives at risk.

The actual scale of the destruction extends far beyond the initial casualties. The floods severely damaged communities across northern Nepal, burying homes and other buildings under mud and debris. Roads and bridges were swept away, cutting off remote areas and making rescue operations more difficult. Hydropower facilities were also damaged, while large areas of farmland were destroyed, threatening local food supplies and livelihoods. Thousands of people were displaced and forced to seek shelter in temporary facilities, facing shortages of essential supplies and difficult living conditions.

This massive flooding was triggered by a glacier collapse. As global temperatures rise, rapidly melting glaciers can form large lakes in the high mountains. These lakes are held back by natural dams of ice, debris, and gravel, rather than solid rock. When heavy rain falls, or ice blocks drop into the water, these unstable dams can breach under high water pressure. When a dam collapses, a powerful rush of water, mud, and rocks can instantly sweep away downstream villages and bridges. This danger is becoming more serious as glacial lakes continue to increase. According to researchers at the University of Kashmir in India, the number of glacial lakes in the Himalaya-Karakoram region increased by 1,362 over nine years, from 4,136 in 2008 to 5,498 in 2017.

A major factor behind this crisis is accelerating global warming. The Himalayas are warming at a rate much faster than the global average. This is because, in high-altitude areas like the Himalayas, melting snow and glaciers reduce the surface that reflects sunlight, exposing dark bedrock that absorbs much more heat. According to the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the rate of glacier ice loss in the Himalayas increased by 65% in the 2010s, and up to 80% of their ice could disappear by 2100. Furthermore, the frozen ground beneath the surface is melting. Without this icy natural glue holding the mountains together, the ground becomes so weak that massive landslides can occur even without heavy rain.

Nepal's steep terrain also makes it highly vulnerable to climate-related disasters, as landslides easily destroy crucial roads and block rescue efforts. Moreover, climate inequality worsens this tragedy. Despite producing just 0.1% of global carbon emissions, Nepal suffers severely from melting glaciers. Nepal lacks the funds and technology needed to drain dangerous glacial lakes or install early warning systems. Ultimately, the country is paying a heavy price despite accounting for a negligible fraction of global emissions.

The tragedy in Nepal is a clear warning to the world. The series of glacier collapses in the Himalayas shows how climate change leads to massive casualties, proving that melting glaciers and changing terrains are not distant future issues, but direct threats to our safety. Since Nepal lacks the capacity to manage disaster prevention on its own, countries responsible for climate change need to take action. To prevent similar disasters, real-time monitoring and early warning systems for dangerous glacial lakes are essential. International support is also needed to help mountainous nations prepare for future disasters and protect their communities.

By Lim Han-bi
lhb__herald@pukyong.ac.kr

News

Free Tuition for Regional National Universities

Navigating the opportunities and dilemmas

Starting next year, South Korea will cover full tuition for freshmen at 30 regional national universities, including Pukyong National University and Pusan National University. As more young people and jobs move to the Seoul metropolitan area, cities outside the capital region face growing concerns about their future. In response, free tuition at these universities has been introduced to retain young people in local areas. The government hopes this policy will help address population decline in non-metropolitan cities and promote more balanced development nationwide.

As for the expected benefits, the policy could reduce students' financial burden and make universities outside the capital area more attractive. Students who attend a nearby national university can save not only on tuition but also on the high living costs of the Seoul metropolitan area, such as rent, housing deposits, food, and transportation, by staying local.

However, the policy has also raised questions about fairness in funding between regional private and national universities, as giving free tuition only to regional national universities could make it harder for private universities to compete. In a survey conducted by the research agency Research & Research on behalf of the Korean Association of Private University Presidents, 64.5% of 500 high school seniors across South Korea expressed the opinion that the government should provide full scholarships without distinguishing between national and private universities, while 25.0% disagreed.

There are also concerns about national universities becoming too dependent on government funding. Universities need sufficient funding to recruit qualified professors, maintain facilities, and provide diverse programs. If government support is insufficient, universities could face serious financial problems, and a lack of funding could also affect the quality of education. In the long term, simply making tuition free may not be enough if regional universities cannot maintain strong academic programs.

One of the biggest challenges in implementing this policy is that many high school seniors still prefer universities in the Seoul area rather than regional universities, even if they offer free tuition. The survey found that 59.1% would still choose a university in the Seoul metropolitan area, and 62.5% said they would still be willing to attend a university in that area even if it leads to a financial burden. For many students, studying in Seoul is seen as an investment in their future, as major companies, internships, professional networks, and many creative jobs are still concentrated in the capital.



▲Pukyong National University, one of the regional national universities

In the end, free tuition is an important first step, but it cannot solve regional decline by itself. The policy may help students financially and strengthen regional national universities, but it can also create competition with regional private universities, along with concerns about government funding and the quality of education. To have a lasting effect, these national universities need to build their own strengths and become more competitive. They need programs connected to local industries, more internships and company partnerships, and better chances for students to find jobs in the region. The goal should not simply be to make tuition free, but to create universities outside the capital area where students can receive a good education and build a future without feeling compelled to relocate from their home regions.

By Oh Ye-jin
oyj__herald@pukyong.ac.kr

Lessons from a Nobel Laureate

Craig C. Mello reflects on curiosity, discovery, and his Nobel Prize journey

For many students, a Nobel Prize winner may seem like a distant figure whose discoveries exist only in textbooks. However, on September 18, Pukyong National University (PKNU) students had the opportunity to meet Nobel laureate Craig C. Mello at the university's 80th-anniversary special lecture program.

Mello was awarded the 2006 Nobel Prize alongside Andrew Fire for their discovery of RNA interference (RNAi), a biological process in which double-stranded RNA suppresses the expression of specific genes. Their work transformed scientists' understanding of gene regulation and opened new possibilities for biomedical research. Yet Mello's story extends beyond the discovery itself. During his visit to PKNU, Mello met students through a public lecture and a smaller roundtable discussion, offering them an opportunity to look beyond the Nobel Prize and hear from the scientist about his experiences.

Mello's visit to Korea gave him the opportunity to meet students and researchers at several universities. After giving several lectures in Seoul before arriving at PKNU, he said he was impressed by the enthusiasm of Korean students and the country's vibrant scientific environment. He also highlighted the growing opportunities in genetics, genomics, and medical science. Yet as science continues to advance alongside technology, Mello believes that the most important element should remain at the center of research : human curiosity. When asked about the increasingly prominent role of artificial intelligence (AI) in scientific research, Mello emphasized that AI should support researchers rather than replace them. "I would hope that humans are enabled by AI, not sidelined," he said.

However, he cautioned against treating AI-generated answers as unquestionable facts, emphasizing that "if AI tells you an answer, it doesn't mean it's the answer," but rather "a starting point for the next question." Referring to physicist Richard Feynman, he quoted, "I would rather have questions that can't be answered than answers that can't be questioned." He also rejected the idea that students should simply avoid using AI in education and learning. Instead, he encouraged young people to learn how to use it responsibly and effectively. "If handled properly, AI is simply going to accelerate science," he said, describing AI as "just another powerful tool."

As he talked about his own discovery of RNAi, he mentioned that the discovery of RNAi was accidental. "We didn't expect it," Mello explained. While investigating how genetic information could be introduced into an organism, Mello and his colleagues noticed that certain genes were being silenced. At the time, however, Mello and Fire did not fully understand how the process worked. Their discovery instead opened the door to further research into how genetic information is regulated and how RNA could be used to influence gene activity. "RNA interference is just an example of how fundamental research in a tiny, seemingly insignificant little animal can lead to breakthroughs that change medicine," he said. Despite receiving the Nobel Prize, Mello pointed out that the award did not fundamentally change the direction of his research. The recognition did, however, create new opportunities to bring RNA research into medical applications.


▲Craig C. Mello on the left

As his conversation with students came to an end, Mello returned to the importance of young researchers in shaping the future of science. He expressed optimism about the scientific potential he saw in Korea and across East Asia, while emphasizing the need for continued investment in research and the development of young scientists.

By Sharma Aanshi
aanshiherald@pukyong.ac.kr

Interview

Same Person, Different Student

How university changes us along the way

Starting university can feel like the beginning of a completely new chapter. But after a few years, as students move from freshmen to seniors, their experiences can change them in unexpected ways. How different does university life feel from those first days? A senior international student, Ingjin Khet, looks back on her university journey as she enters her final year at Pukyong National University, reflecting on the changes she has experienced, the challenges she has faced, and what she has learned along the way.

Q. What was your first impression of university life, and how has it changed since then?

Ingjin : My first impression was that everything felt bigger, and I had more responsibilities. No one checked whether I went to class or reminded me about deadlines. It felt like freedom, but also a little lonely, especially as an international student. Now university feels less like an obstacle and more like a place where I belong. The campus that once felt like a maze has become familiar, and I no longer see independence as something to be afraid of, but as something I know how to handle.

Q. How does university life feel different now compared with when you first started?

Ingjin : As a freshman, every assignment felt like a crisis, and every professor seemed intimidating, especially with the language barrier and my poor time management. Now, I know how to manage my time, which professors I can turn to, and which problems are actually worth worrying about. My daily life has also shifted from simply adjusting and surviving to pursuing things I genuinely care about, including research that has changed the rhythm of my week.

Q. What has changed the most about you during your time at university?

Ingjin : Probably resilience-learning to be patient with myself and with slow processes. Research taught me that good insights take time. I used to want quick answers; now I'm more comfortable with letting understanding build. I've also become more confident in moving between languages and cultures without feeling like I have to fully belong to either one.

Q. As you approach graduation, what are you most looking forward to and what are you most worried about?

Ingjin : I'm most looking forward to seeing a long project through to completion and turning years of interviews, coding, and analysis into something meaningful. What worries me is the uncertainty afterward - the possibility of losing the community I've built here and having to find that sense of purpose on my own.

Q. What is one thing you will miss most after graduation?

Ingjin : The thing I will miss most after graduation is spending time with my friends and classmates. We have shared many memories, supported each other through difficult times, and grown together. After graduation, we will all follow different paths, so it may be difficult to meet as often as we do now. I will especially miss the simple moments and being surrounded by people who made my university life special.


▲Ingjin Khet

Q. What advice would you give to your freshman self?

Ingjin : Stop trying to have everything figured out through short-term solutions. Put yourself in uncomfortable situations and embrace unfamiliar opportunities, even when they scare you a little. Those are often the experiences that shape you the most.

By Fontana Alessia
af__herald@pukyong.ac.kr