

When I first heard about this camp, I thought it was a great opportunity to learn Portuguese and this is why.

Tudo bem? is one of the few expressions I know in Portuguese. How can I only know few expressions in Portuguese if it is my father's native language and the only one my father's parents speak? My father came to the United States to study and he always thought about going back to Brazil, his country of origin, but because of work, he still lives in the US. When I was born, he decided to speak to me only in English and that is why I know the two words he uses to greet me when he comes home from work. Tudo bem? is the question he asks me to see if I had a good day at school or when he picks me up from my soccer practices, but I feel that not everything is ok. I cannot talk with my grandmother. When my dad calls her, she also begins with Tudo bem?, but that is all I can understand and know how to say so our conversations are full of long silences.

I can share what I know about Brazil with the other people attending the camp. I know about Brazilian food, I have tried it many times. I have listened to Brazilian music and I love its rhythm. I know about Brazilian soccer, because now that I play soccer, my father tells me about the many times that the Brazilian soccer teams won important matches. I even know that Brazil has many good fruits: I have tried mango and passion fruit. I have also watched a DVD about two teenagers that live in a mountain in a poor area of Rio de Janeiro, but I have to read the subtitles, because I cannot understand what they say.

I would like to visit my grandparents, get to know them and talk to them but they only speak Portuguese and I speak English and can say only tudo bem so I am afraid that we would look at each other and not know how to communicate. Going to this camp would be a great opportunity to learn more about my dad's culture and language. I hope to learn enough Portuguese in this camp so that next year I can travel to Brazil and speak with my grandparents.