How can you expand your vocabulary, improve your grammar and enhance your writing?

Read books in English!

We recommend:

In *House on Fire*, William H. Foege describes his own experiences in public health and details the remarkable program that involved people from countries around the world in pursuit of a single objective—eliminating smallpox forever. Rich with the details of everyday life, as well as a few adventures, *House on Fire* gives an intimate sense of what it is like to work on the ground in some of the world’s most impoverished countries—and tells what it is like to contribute to programs that really do change the world.

Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine. The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, they are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years. HeLa cells were vital for developing the polio vaccine; uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the atom bomb’s effects; helped lead to important advances like in vitro fertilization, cloning, and gene mapping; and have been bought and sold by the billions. Yet Henrietta Lacks remains virtually unknown, buried in an unmarked grave. Now Rebecca Skloot takes us on an extraordinary journey, from the “colored” ward of Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 1950s to stark white laboratories with freezers full of HeLa cells; from Henrietta’s small, dying hometown of Clover, Virginia—a land of wooden slave quarters, faith healings, and voodoo—to East Baltimore today, where her children and grandchildren live and struggle with the legacy of her cells.

*The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* explores the clash between a small county hospital in California and a refugee family from Laos over the care of Lia Lee, a Hmong child diagnosed with severe epilepsy. Lia’s parents and her doctors both wanted what was best for Lia, but the lack of understanding between them led to tragedy. Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Current Interest, and the Salon Book Award, Anne Fadiman’s compassionate account of this cultural impasse is literary journalism at its finest.
As an epidemiologist researching AIDS, Elizabeth Pisani has been involved with international efforts to halt the disease for fourteen years. With swashbuckling wit, fierce honesty, and more than a little political incorrectness, she dishes on herself and her colleagues as they try to prod reluctant governments to fund HIV prevention for the people who need it most: drug injectors, gay men, sex workers, and johns. With verve and clarity, Pisani shows the general reader how her profession really works; how easy it is to draw wrong conclusions from “objective” data; and, shockingly, how much money is spent so very badly.