

# Describe a friend



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Describe a Friend There are thirty international at EC, from over 20 different countries. Although we all share the common bond of being foreigners studying in a new country, it is really our differences that separate us. Each of us is our unique in our way. There is one student here, however, who is often considered to be not just unique, but downright strange. His name is Arence and he comes here from Zimbabwe. If you were to ask anyone to name the one thing that Arence is passionate about, you would probably more than likely get the same answer from all of them: The Simpsons. Arence is totally obsessed with that television show.

The Simpsons is, of course, the very famous American cartoon show. I understand that the show is very popular with adults in America, especially with college students. But back home when a twenty year old watches cartoons as much as Arence, most people think he did not have a fulfilled childhood. I asked him why he still watches the show and he answered, " I just enjoy it." But I think it goes more deeply than that. Arence actually arranges his scheduled around the show so that he can watch it both times it airs each day. Not only that, but he even leaves off his homework for the commercial break. And he doesn't just watch it when it comes on, but he also tapes the show so that he can watch it over and over again. He has seen the episodes so much that he will quote along with the show, speaking in a voice like Homer Simpson or Mr. Burns.

The lobby where the television is located is intended for 100 students to share. Every night Arence makes his way down from the third floor, places a chair right in front of the TV and prepares to watch his show. The lobby has two couches and tables and chairs where students sit down to study. Every night everyone in the lobby kind of waits for Arence to come down for his

nightly ritual. Even though everyone knows that Arence is there to watch The Simpsons, sometimes other students will approach him and ask him to turn the channel to another show. They are just teasing, of course, and they only do it to get a reaction from him. It isn't that they really want to watch something else. Arence doesn't get mad or upset or anything, he just turns to them and says, " Please don't do that to me."

All of this may sound like a harmless thing that happens on campuses around the country, but something happened this week that proves that Arence isn't just a fan of the Simpsons, he is obsessed. It had been raining all night by the time Arence rearranged the lobby and made his presence known. As I looked at him, something happened and I could actually see his mood change before my eyes. It was like following the destructive path of an angry wind slashing across an island. What caused this violent mood change wasn't someone teasing him, or even someone taking his place in front of the TV. Arence stood there, shaking uncontrollably, a mixture of anger and sadness overcoming him and it took a few minutes for him to calm down enough to say anything at all. And when he finally did speak, it wasn't even a sentence, it was just a wicked outburst that was immediately followed by an eerie silence that fell over the whole room. I stood there looking at Arence, the quiet still surrounding us, and even though the room had now grown dark I could easily make out the look of actual anguish on Arence's face caused by the fact that he would have to miss The Simpsons that night because the storm had knocked out the power and he couldn't turn on the TV.