



Language Learning Expectations Initial Language Skills Student Perceptions of Exchange

District 5440 Outbound Student Orientation

Survey results from a presentation by Norm Samuelson

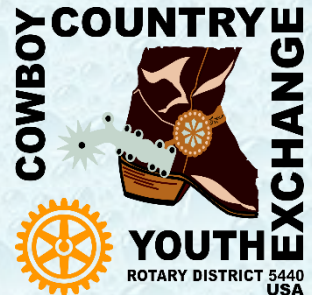
rotary
youth
exchange



Rotary



rotary
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exchange



How many outbound students
have begun working on your
language skills?

Failure to learn the language is the number one reason why students fail to assimilate into the host culture and is the factor most correlated to early return.

How long to become proficient

- Foreign Service Institute (FSI) of the Department of State has compiled learning expectations
- Time it typically takes English-speaking learners to achieve general professional proficiency in speaking and reading
- FSI students are 30-40 years old, native English speakers, good aptitude for formal language study, plus knowledge of one or more other foreign languages
- It will probably take you longer

Language Learning Difficulty

- Time to proficiency depends on:
 - Language learning ability
 - Motivation
 - Learning environment
 - Intensity of instruction
 - Prior experience in learning foreign languages
 - Similarity of target language to learner's first language or languages previously learned
 - The level of proficiency you wish to attain

Category 1 (23-24 weeks - 575-600 class hours)

- Languages that have the same linguistic derivation as English and most typologically similar

Danish	Dutch	French
German	Italian	Norwegian
Portuguese	Spanish	Swedish

- Some like German usually takes longer (30 weeks, 750 class hours) because of its relatively more complex grammar.
- Some are taught in public school

Categories 2 & 3 (44 weeks - 1,100 class hours)

- Significant linguistic and/or cultural differences from English
- English learners require more time to learn

Croatian	Czech	*Finnish
Lao	Polish	Slovak
*Thai	Turkish	

- * Finnish and Thai are significantly more difficult to learn for English speakers than the other languages in the same category

Category 4 (88 weeks - 2200 class hours with second year of study in-country)

- These languages are known to be exceptionally difficult for English speakers
- Primary factor is the difficulty of learning the writing system

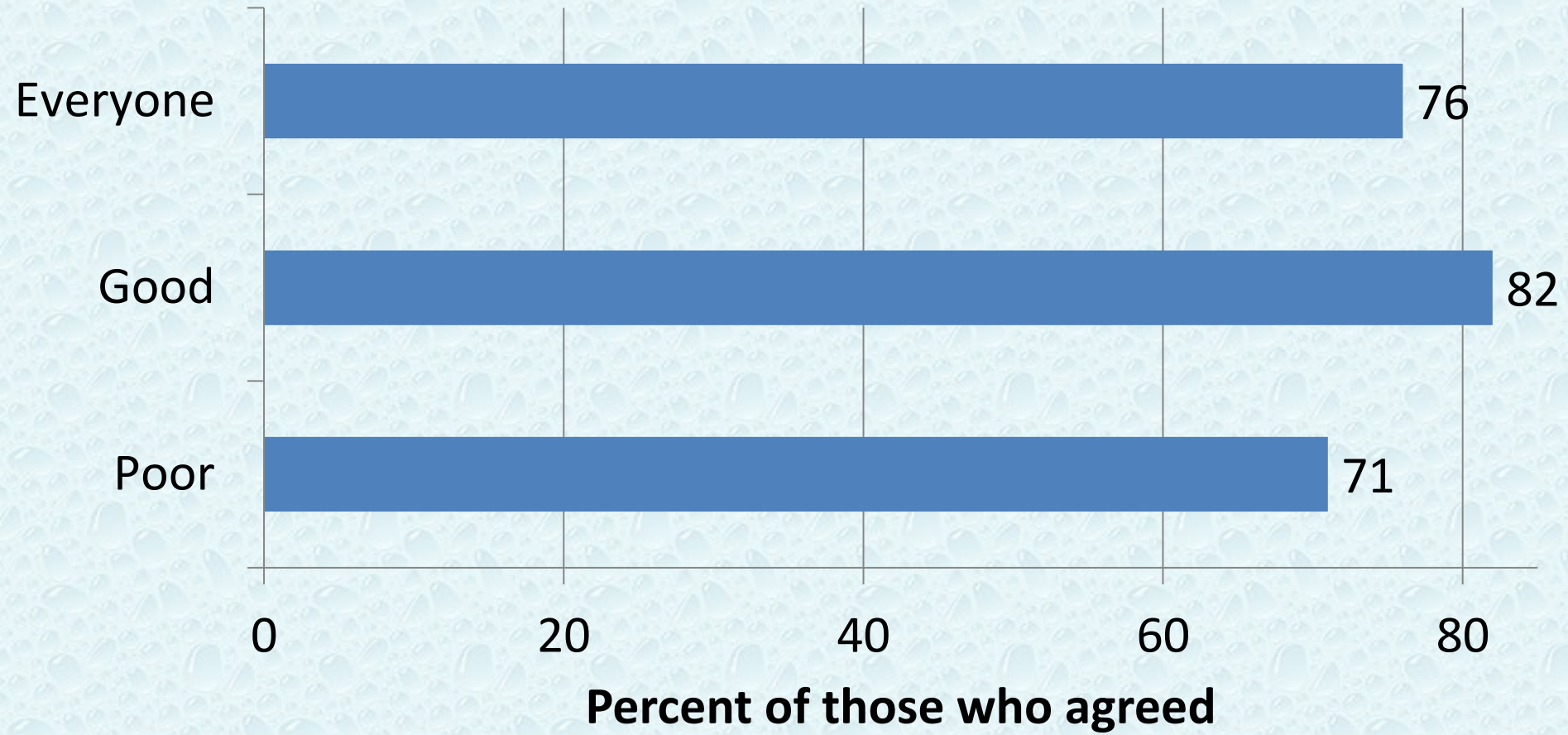
Arabic (all varieties)	Cantonese	Mandarin
Japanese	Korean	

How many inbound students
wished they had worked more on
their language skills before
arriving?

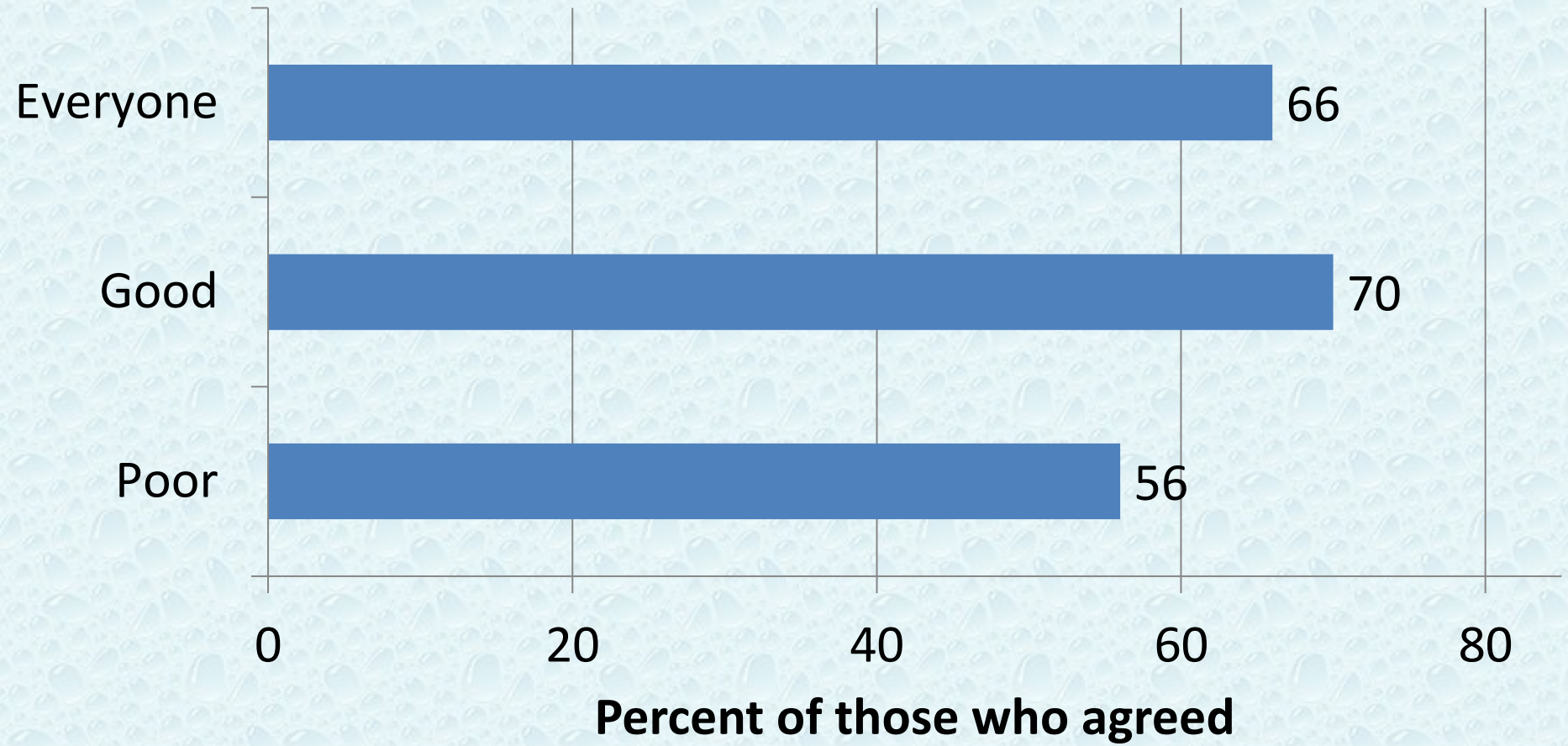
Post-Exchange Survey

- Survey of returning Rotary Exchange Students
- Asked to rate how they felt on a 5 point scale
- Compared:
 - ✓ Good (4 or 5) initial language skill
 - ✓ Poor (1 or 2) initial language skill

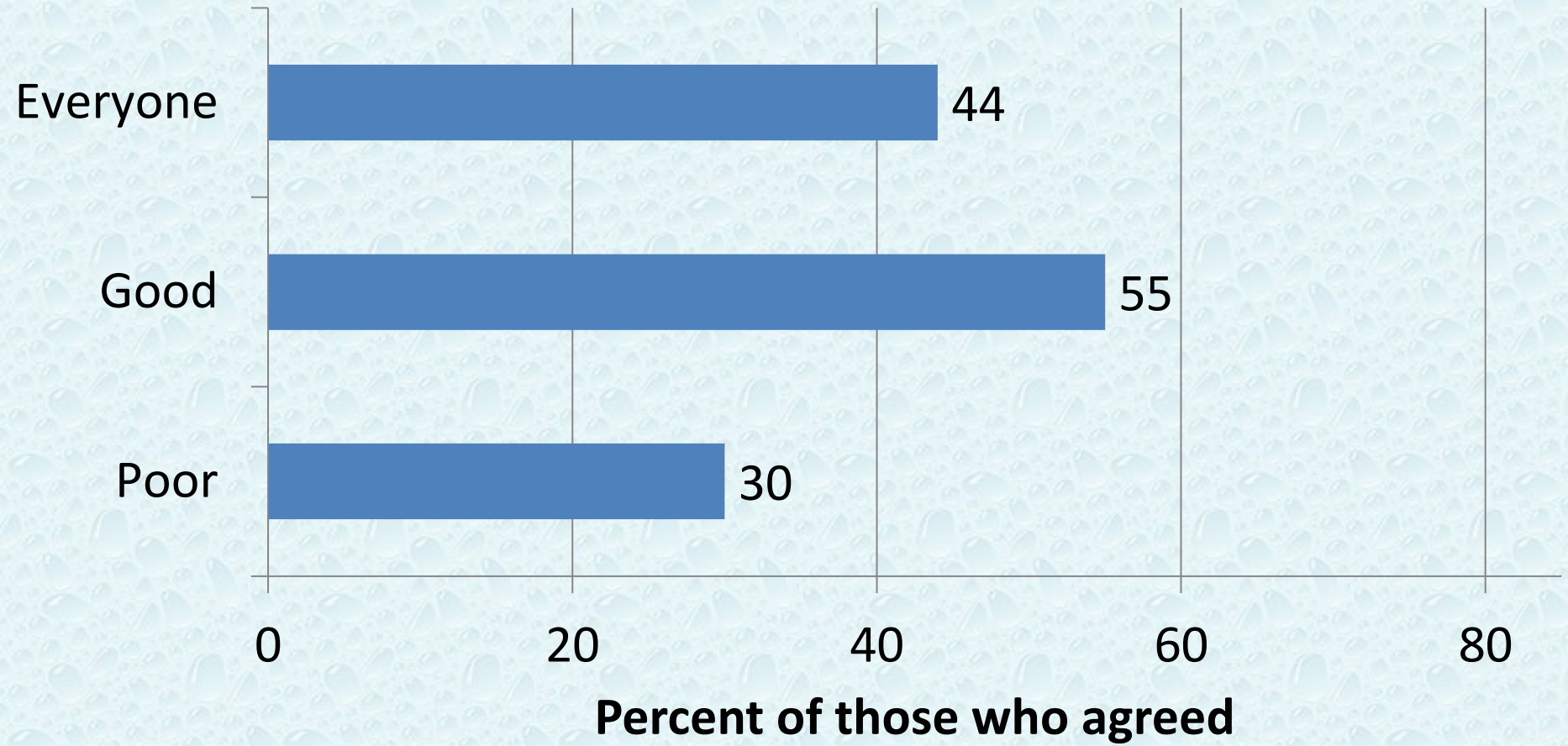
“My exchange fulfilled my expectations”



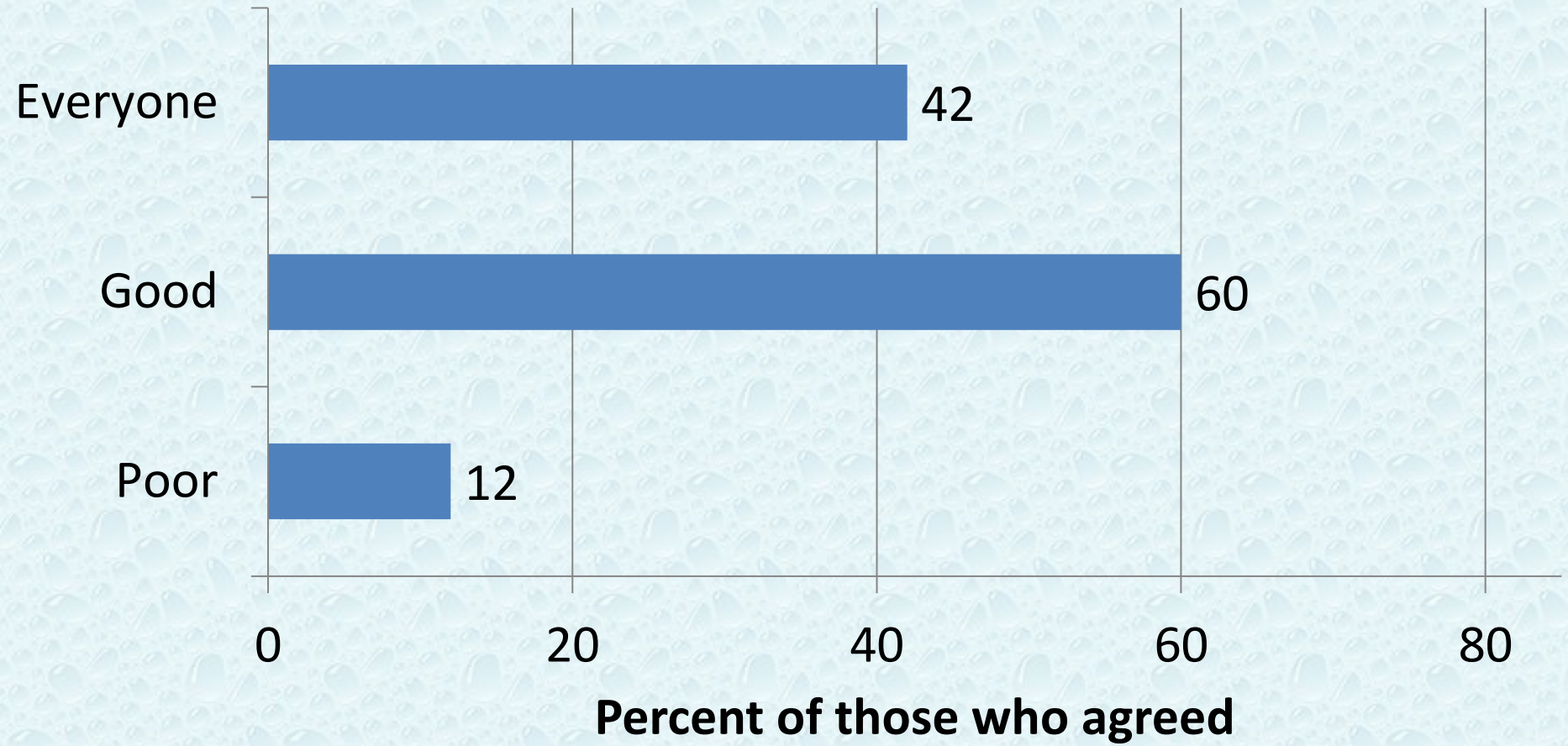
“I was supported by my host families”



“I was supported by my host club”



“I had a positive school experience”



Good Initial Language Skills

- Students with good initial language skill reported everything in a more positive light
 - Better club support
 - Better host families
 - More valuable exchange overall
 - MUCH better school experience

What can you do?

- Use the language programs we set up for you (Rosetta Stone or Pimsleur)
- Periodicals like People and Time in your host language
- Buy a “501 Verbs” book
- Learn two feeling words a day
- Find radio and TV in your host language

Improve Your Language Skills

- Movies in your host language
- Music from your host country
- Find some native or fluent speakers
- Set aside 30 minutes every day
- Duo Lingo (phone app)
- iTalki (web site, practice via Skype)
- YouTube subtitles

Improve Your Language Skills

- [Duolingo.com](https://www.duolingo.com)
 - Can be used on a computer or is available as an app
 - Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Turkish.
- [Italki.com](https://www.italki.com)
 - Has many options ranging from free to whatever fits your budget.
 - Language Partners 50/50 English and Target Language.
 - Same languages as Duolingo + Mandarin and more.

You can improve your exchange

- Find a tool that works for you
- Make time every day
- Don't wait until school is out to start

This is your exchange!

Lot of exchange things are
beyond your control.

Control the things you can.



Questions or Comments?

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