

Name: Noa Sakamoto(Kita High School)

Title: What I Experienced in Sydney

Twelve days in Australia from July 27 was a great moment ever for me. There are two reasons why I decided to participate this program overseas. The first one is because I wanted to challenge something that I can only do now. Going abroad during high school days had been my dream since I was a small child. The second is because I want to know different ways of thinking and values around the world. Knowing various ways of thinking and values would surely expand my ways of thinking. I tried my best to participate in anything so that this experience would be fruitful for my life.

What impressed me most about this trip was visiting local schools. We went to a first local school in Sydney on July 29th. I went to Wenona School. I was taken to classes with my buddy there. My buddy loves Japan and our culture and was very happy to share many things about the difference between Japan and Australia. I was surprised that many students went out to garden and ate snacks during the canteen time. At that time, I had a chance to introduce Japanese snacks. There were many local students who were interested in Japan. So we were able to exchange a lot of cultural information to each other.

From July 31st, we went to Blue Mountain Grammar School for three days. Some of the students there were taking Japanese class and learning as a foreign language. In that class, we taught Japanese to Australian students. I was surprised to find that there are many students that are taking Japanese and the students there were very good at Japanese. Also I was really happy that there were many Australians who were interested in Japan.

I went to these two schools and there were a lot of surprises. There were so many things that I didn't know and I learned there. I was especially impressed at the students' motivation and attitude toward participating in classes. Australian students asked the teacher immediately if they have some questions. On the other hand, I usually communicated my thoughts only to my friends. The students never stopped talking during the class. So many students are raising their hand to express themselves. The students told their opinions to each other and also they respect the different opinions. The students talked more than the teacher. They made the class more exciting by themselves. It surely was a cultural shock and I cannot help being surprised at the sight.

Everything I had seen was so inspiring to me. Because of being with such students I was inspired and became a little more proactive. When I go back to school, I am thinking of being like such students; willing to participate and telling opinions. And I want to keep learning English and tell a lot of people what I've discovered in Sydney, so that I can contribute in our school through what I experienced.



Name: Natsumi Kokubo (Kita High School)

Title: People that I met

In fact, I experienced that I went to the foreign countries by this project for the first time. I was timid so far and was not able to apply, but I decided to apply for this project in eleventh graders.

When I was chosen as this project, I was very glad. So I looked forward to leaving Japan. But, I was shocked when I heard the self-introduction of the member who participated in this project for the first time in English because they spoke English better than me. I read the sentence of a textbook and the textbook of the English word to be able to catch up with the member that participated in a project from the day. And there was the moment that I can try for the first time one's English in this project when I left Japan and got an airplane which go to Sydney from Hong Kong. It was time to talk with a cabin attendant. She asked me if I wanted something to drink. So I told her I wanted orange juice. It was very simple English conversation. However, I thought that I was able to speak right English and I was very glad when she handed orange juice to me.

We inspected the Sydney city after arriving at Sydney and we were divided into three schools of Winona and St. Aloysius College and shore and took a class. When we went to Winona, students of the number of people same as us stood and waited for us in front of the gate of the school. In fact, we were surprised because we were not informed of it. Furthermore, I was very uneasy because we had to talk only in English. My buddy was Kate. She talked to me a lot. But, I couldn't understand most of the English she spoke. So I was sorry. However, she explained the English words that I couldn't understand in Japanese that she knew and simpler English words. So I was able to gradually talk with her in English. It was the same as homestay.

My buddy was Amy when I stayed at Blue Mountain. Because she took Japanese class at her school, she was able to understand Japanese a little. So she sometimes spoke to me in Japanese. And she and I told her family Japanese, and they sometimes talked to us in Japanese too. For example, "Oyasumi" and "Itadakimasu". And conversely, her family taught me English. Thanks to that, my English ability has improved.

In this way, because I was able to meet many kind people in this project, I could learn about Australian cultures and I was able to improve English ability. If I didn't participate in this project, I wouldn't have met such wonderful people and I wouldn't have learned a lot about Australian Cultures and so on. I don't forget having learned about Australia and people who met in this project. And I think that this experience will help my future. This project motivated me to study English.



Name: Sae Shibata (Kita High School)

Title: My Days in Australia

It was my first trip to Australia. I was really looking forward to going there. At the same time, I was a little nervous for communicating with native speakers there. Upon arriving at Sydney airport, I faced an accident which I had to overcome. I bought a sim card and put it to my phone but the sim didn't work. I needed to ask a staff and was told how to do it and somehow I could solve my problem. It was my first conversation in Sydney. I became a little confident after that and wasn't nervous to talk in English anymore.

I experienced lots of wonderful things but I want to tell you two out of my great memories. They are introducing Kendo and homestay. First, I want to tell you my performance of Kendo. It was my dream to share Kendo for non-Japanese. When I visited Blue Mountains Grammar School, my dream came true. At first I showed Kendo in front of the students there. Then I performed in a Japanese class and at a dinner party at school. There were many people at the dinner party. I was really tensed because it was first time for me to perform it in front of so many people. But it went so successful that I was really happy that people appreciated Kendo. Karate and Judo are famous in the world. Unfortunately, Kendo isn't so compared to them. So I really want people all over the world to be aware of Kendo. There was a chance for me to coach Kendo to some primary students. At first I showed my performance to them. After that, some of them said, "I want to try!" so I taught them how to do it. In about 5 minutes or so, they showed me their performance. Soon after another student came. The boy whom I taught Kendo now became a coach and he started to teach others how to do it. He was such a great coach and I was very impressed. It was one of the most wonderful moments in Australia.

Secondly, I want to tell you about my experience with the Australian family. My Japanese family have accepted 28 exchange students but for me it was the first homestay. I had always wanted to try homestay abroad. Actually it was one of the reasons why I joined this program. My host family was such wonderful people that they always tried to make me happy. We visited lots of beautiful and exciting places. The last night of the homestay they held a party for me. Many people of my host sister's friends joined the party as well. We had a BBQ, played games, and talked a lot together. I met many Australian friends. I had a really good time with my host family and new friends.

In this program, I had lots of valuable and fantastic experiences. I appreciate to Nagoya City Board of Education a lot for offering me this chance to visit Australia. From now on, I'll continue to study English hard and I'll keep trying to broaden my horizons.

