My Impressions of Japan

This year from the September 23rd to October 6th I took part in the Cultural Exchange Program with Tamagawa Academy.

Since it had been my first time traveling Asia, arriving in Japan definitely was culture shock. But I soon started adjusting and more importantly understanding Japanese culture more.

My favourite day was second week´s Tuesday, October 1st. On that morning we didn’t go to the High School Building as usual but instead went to Tamagawa´s Elementary School where we got a small introduction by its headmaster. One thing I noticed was that we had to change our shoes to enter the building which we never had to do in any other building. After the introduction we got split into two groups, one would be going to the first grade English lesson the other ne to third grade´s.

When we entered the class there were round 30 children between 8 and 9 years old. After we got the chance to introduce ourselves to the lass, the children got the opportunity to ask us some questions in English to get to know us better. Then we were told to help the children writing an essay about natural disasters which they had already started writing last lesson. Although we tried our best, our help didn´t really seem needed since most of the children had already written good texts.

After we had visited the Elementary School, we went to a traditional Japanese village where you could go into the houses and see how Japanese people used to live like. We saw cooking places and bedrooms and even a small watermill.

After we had lunch in a small café we went to another building where we had the chance to dye cloths with indigo. Unfortunately, we only did that for about 45 minutes, but it was fun, and I would have loved to do it longer. When our cloths were dried, we sadly had to leave.

But our day hadn’t ended yet. Instead of returning to Tamagawa, we went to Machida where we had about half an hour free time before going to karaoke. Doing karaoke was a lot of fun and probably one of my favourite activities during the whole exchange. Since we had to leave way too early in my opinion, I am looking forward to doing it again sometime. I feel like karaoke brought us closer together as a group even though some people did not participate very much.

When we eventually had to leave karaoke, we all went for dinner in Machida before returning to Tamagawa.

Looking back, I am very glad that I had the chance to take part in the exchange, because it gave me the opportunity to meet many new people, make new friends, see things that I otherwise would not see in Europe, make many new experiences and try out activities that we don’t have in Germany, as well as bringing me closer to people I had already known.

I can only recommend to everyone to seriously consider this opportunity because you will not only have a great time, but it will change the way you see the world.

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