

JENESYS Programme 2008

Reflection

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The JENESYS trip to Japan is an experience that one could hardly forget. It is fruitful and inspiring in many ways; not only do I learn more about the history and culture of the country (which is what I expected in the beginning of the trip), but I have also developed close bonding with fellow delegates in Hong Kong and my home stay family in Japan.

From the months of preparations and gatherings before our trip, I have already realized that this trip is no ordinary sightseeing tours we get from travel agents. It is meant to be deeper and broader; deeper in a sense that the core values and culture of Japan are explored, and broader in a sense that we get to discover and experience different aspects of the country.

Even though I had high expectation before I go to Japan, the programme still surprised me in many ways. It does not only help me discover the culture and customs of Japan, but also allow me to reflect on the areas that I can develop on. For example, the sincerity and hospitality of my home stay family in Kagoshima showed me their passion in welcoming tourists around the globe. I am deeply touched by their effort in planning my trip and accompanying me throughout my stay. Although we sometimes find difficulty in expressing our ideas to each others, I can still feel their warm welcome through their sensitivity to my needs. Through their enthusiasm and friendliness, I understand how crucial the “hospitable culture” is in welcoming tourists and I will definitely learn from their example in becoming a warm and friendly host to tourists visiting Hong Kong.

Another area that I can improve on is the emphasis on every detail, no matter how inconspicuous they are. I have noticed that the Japanese are attentive to details; this is shown by various incidents we came across. When we were moving from city to city during our stay in Japan, some of us left their personal belongings in the previous hotels we stayed. To our astonishment, the hotel mailed our belongings to our travel agents. This is quite surprising to me, as I have seldom come across hotels that will provide such service. This incident shows that the hotels are aware of the needs of their customers, and it is such attentiveness to unnoticeable details that make

the Japanese famous in creating products that are even better than the original designs. I am often told that I am absentminded when taking exams and doing homework. I frequently lose marks due to careless mistakes. Through the scrupulous attitude of the Japanese, I realized the importance in being careful to every detail, as it is often the details that make a huge difference.

In addition to the areas I have listed above, there are other points that I believe we can learn from the Japanese. Their perseverance in protecting the environment, for example, is one of the aspects that we should develop on. Although I have heard that Japan is an environmental friendly country before my visit, I am still amazed by their determination in protecting the environment. In the Kobe City Resources Recycle Center which we have been to during our trip, I noticed the Japanese emphasis on environmental issues by putting it as a vital part of children education. Their dedication in protecting the environment is indeed very impressive, and it is such attitude that makes Japan one of the “greenest” countries in the world.

All in all, this trip has broadened my horizons in a lot of ways. It does not only bring me new insights of how Japan is like, but also deepen my understanding towards myself. I am truly grateful that I was given the opportunity to participate in this programme. Allow me to end my reflection by expressing my heartfelt thanks to those who have assisted us in different areas; the Japanese government and the EDB for organizing this once-in-a-lifetime trip, Ms Ho, Ms Kwok and Mr. Lam for helping us in our performances and accompanying us to Japan, the RTHK for recording every details of our trip, and last but not least, my amazingly talented companions who tolerated my shortcomings and accompany me in this unique journey.