

(1)滞在日程

第1日	6月21日(土)	United Airline 6643便にて 関西空港着 阿武野高校各ホストファミリー出迎え
第2日	6月22日(日)	阿武野高校ステイ1
第3日	6月23日(月)	阿武野高校ステイ2
第4日	6月24日(火)	阿武野高校ステイ3
第5日	6月25日(水)	ホスト交代(阿武野高校 北野高校)
第6日	6月26日(木)	北野高校ステイ1 午前 オリエンテーション 昼休み 生徒集会にて紹介 放課後 歓迎パーティー(同窓会館)
第7日	6月27日(金)	北野高校ステイ2
第8日	6月28日(土)	終日各ホストファミリーと共に
第9日	6月29日(日)	終日各ホストファミリーと共に
第10日	6月30日(月)	北野高校ステイ3
第11日	7月1日(火)	北野高校ステイ4 りんくうタウン観光後 United Airline 6642便 関西空港発帰途に

(2)交流の日々

1 Lauren & Sさんご家族

Laurenのホストになって

1年5組 M.S.さん

Laurenと共に過ごした一週間は毎日が新鮮で楽しくて、一週間いたと思えないほど本当にあっという間でした。

クラブ帰りに私のクラブ仲間と一緒に淀川の河川敷で日が暮れるのを待ってから花火をしました。花火をしていたら、Laurenが「私の住んでいる所では花火は1年に1度の決まった日にしかできない。」と言っていたので、文化の違いに驚きました。でもその分、その時は楽しんでいるようで、特に線香花火は初めてだと言って気に入ってくれました。そして、アメリカで花火ができるその日には花火をいっぱい買ってする！と言ってくれたので嬉しかったです。HRの時間には、お菓子を食べたりフルーツバスケットをしたりしました。初めはLaurenがクラスに馴染めるかどうか不安だったけど、その心配は無用でした。私のクラスメイトはLaurenに明るく接してくれて、クラスの一員として受け入れてくれたからです。そのおかげで、みんなで楽しめました。他にも、留学生とホストのみんなでUSJに行ったり、クラスの友達を私の家に招待してバーベキューをしたり、私の姉と3人で梅田へショッピングに行ったり・・・と、本当に色々なことをしました。

Laurenはたった2年間日本語を学んでいるだけなのに、とても日本語が上手だったので、コミュニケーションに困ることはあまりなかったです。また、「霧雨」のような難しい単語を知っていることには驚きました。それに比べて私は英語を3年間以上学んでいるのに、中学校で習った簡単な英文でさえ、なかなか使いこなすことができなかったのでもっと英語を勉強して、上手に話せるようになりたい！と思いました。ただ、私が話す英語でだいたい伝えることができました。もちろん、完璧な英語ではなかったです。私の知っている単語を並べただけで、文法的にはぐちゃぐちゃだったけど、Laurenはそんな私の英語を真剣に聞いてくれました。そして、「伝えようと努力すれば、伝えることはできる。」という事を学びました。でも、自分の思っている事を的確に伝えるには、単語の知識をもっともっと増やさなければいけないと思いました。

最後に、私にこの貴重な体験をさせて下さった先生方、共に生活しサポートしてくれた家族、Laurenが楽しい学校生活を送れるように協力してくれたクラスメイトや女ハンのみんな、感謝の気持ちでいっぱいです。皆さんがいなければ、私もLaurenもこんなに素晴らしい経験をすることができなかったと思います。本当にありがとうございました！！

Laurenを迎えて

Sさん（保護者）

留学生受け入れの話聞いた時、娘も私も「楽しそう！やりたいなあ！」と直ぐ思い

ました。英語が流暢に話せる訳ではないのですが、異文化に興味もあるし、日常生活では全く使う機会のない英語を使うことが出来る…。いい経験になるだろうと思ったからです。

ローレンとは会う前にメールでやり取りをしていたし、写真を送ってもらっていたので、北野に到着したバスから降りてくる留学生の中から直ぐに見つけることが出来ました。

緊張のご対面です。娘は最初頑張って英語を使おうとしていましたが、どうも口数が少なくなるので、それよりは日本語でもいい話した方がいいと、結局日本語を使うことが多かったようです。幸いローレンは日本語がとても上手でした。家への帰り道、私は慣れない英語を頑張って話しながらの運転で道を間違えてしまいました。

私がイメージするアメリカ人は陽気、自己主張が強い、良く喋る、表現力が豊か...だったのですが、ローレンは謙虚で大人しく礼儀正しい、時間にも正確。食卓の椅子を引く時にも音が鳴らないように持ち上げて引くほどでした。(…緊張もあったのでしょうか)過去のホストの方からの報告で「用意に時間がかかる」「最終日荷造りが大変で手伝った」とか読んでいたので時間には余裕を持って行動した方がいいかなあと思ったりもしましたが、ローレンの場合全く心配ありませんでした。ただ、自己主張が強くないので、何が本当にやりたいのか、本当はどう感じているのか少しわかりにくかったように思います。なんとなく日本人的な印象を受けました。

少し困った事はローレンには食べ物の好き嫌が多い事。シーフードは全くダメでした。アメリカ人ですが普段もオレンジジュースは飲まないマクドナルドには行かないということでした。好きな食べ物はと聞くと「トースト!」と答えがかえって来た時にはちょっとビックリしました。

お昼にお好み焼きを作ろうとしましたが、阿武山のホストの家で食べたと言うので、我が家ではたこ焼きを作ることにしました。でもタコは無理。工夫してチーズ、ハム、ベ-コン入りのたこ焼きと一緒に作って食べました。それなりに食べてはくれましたが、あまり好みではなかったような印象を受けました。やっぱりたこ焼きはタコ入りが一番ですよね。残念でした。

娘は見かけによらず(?)少林寺拳法初段。Laurenに少林寺の型を教えてあげました。真剣な顔つきで一生懸命取り組んでいたのが印象的でした。一つ一つの動きの意味を教えたら、納得していました。最後の夜は娘の学校のお友達に来てもらい大勢でのパーベキューを楽しみました。Laurenは日本語で自己紹介、日本の子は英語で自己紹介。同じ年頃の子たちとの交流も楽しかったようです。

最初の2～3日はお互い気を遣っていましたが、それが徐々に慣れ、Laurenの性格もわかり心が通じ合えるようになったらもうお別れ。もう少し長くいて欲しかったです。子供たちも私もとてもいい経験をさせていただきました。とても楽しいアツと言う間の - 週間でした。有り難うございました。

2 Daisy & Tさんご家族

Daisyに出会えて

2年3組 E.A.T.さん

Daisyと過ごした一週間は、本当に毎日楽しかったです。Daisyが来日する前にも、今年の春にKentに行った先輩が「Daisyはすごく日本語が上手だから心配しなくていいよ。」と言ってくれていたのですが、どこまで日本語が通じるのかわからず、初めて会ったときは本当に何を話したらいいのかわかりませんでした。

しかし、実際話してみるとほとんどの会話が日本語で成り立ち、Daisyの滞在中、私が英語を話すことは全くと言っていいほどありませんでした。逆にDaisyと一緒に来た学生と英語で話していると「Daisy, 英語が上手!」と思ってしまうほどでした。彼女は中国人なので、中国語、英語を使いこなし、さらに日本語も日常会話ができ、本当にスゴイと思いました。

日本語で会話をしていたせいなのかもしれませんが、Daisyとは普通の学校の友達と遊ぶようにカラオケ、映画、プリクラ...と日本の高校生が出入りしている場所に行き遊びました。Daisyはジャニーズが好きだそうで、初日から「山P～?、松潤～?」とか言っていて、日本ではその雑誌も買って、「花より男子」の映画も観ててなんだか幸せそうでした。Daisyは「また日本にきたい!」、「帰りたくなーい」とずっと言っていたので、日本での生活を楽しんでくれたようで良かったです。

最後にお別れをする時に、「あなたアメリカに来たときにはシアトルに来て、私と一緒にカナダに行ってショッピングしよ～!!」と言ってくれたので、いつかDaisyの家にも行ってみたいです。Daisyとは本当に仲良しなお友達になれたと思います。

この国際交流を支えて下さったみなさんに心から感謝しています。今後、もっと多く

の人がこのような体験をして成長することを願っています。ありがとう。

デイジーを迎えて

Tさん（保護者）

アメリカからの交換留学生がうちに来る！と決まり、一番楽しみにしていたのは祖父でした。早くから部屋の用意をして、日本の食べ物が合わない困る、とピザのチラシを取り置き。

いざ迎えてみると、デイジーは「アメリカからのお客様」ではなくて、普通の「愛子のお友達」でした。日本語がべらべらに話せたのも、そう思わせる要因のひとつではありましたが、興味関心が、娘達とまったく同じだったのです。

買い物に行っても愛子と一緒に靴売り場でとまり、雑誌売り場でティーン雑誌を立ち読みし、化粧品売り場でお買い物。

ジャニーズが好きで、週末には娘と9歳の妹と3人で「花より男子」の映画を見に行き、松潤がかっこいい～～！！いや、小栗旬が！！と、男の子話に花が咲き・・

学校でかっこいい男の子を見たよ～～など、私たちにも報告してくれたり、同じ年の妹さんがいるということで、9歳の妹とも楽しく過ごしていました。私たちも構えることなく、一緒の時間をすごすことができました。

そして、彼女は私たちも見ならわなくてはならない、とてもよいしつけを受けていると思いました。

毎日の朝ごはんの後の洗い物はデイジーがやってくれました。

アメリカでそれはデイジーの仕事だそうです。

祖父の気にしていた好き嫌いもまったくなく、どれもおいしいよ、全部好き、じいじ、すごい～～（祖父が食事を作っていたので）と喜んで何でも食べてくれました。

デイジーのお父さんは厳しい人で、好き嫌いを言うと、嫌いなものをお皿に倍載せるのだそうです。だから、嫌いって言わなくなった・・とのこと。

携帯もみんなは持っているのに、持たせてもらえない。「あなたはみんなではない（you are not Minna!）」と言われると言っていました。

南アフリカやカナダにも住んでいたという中国人の御両親は、真の意味で国際的に通用する子育てをしてこられたのだな、と感心しました。自分をしっかり持つこと。どこの国でも受け入れられ、誰にでも好かれる明るい性格。食べ物の好き嫌いのない事は自分

が一番助かりますものね。

娘が留学をひかえていることもあって、留学生の送別会にデイジーも連れて行きました。

各国の留学から帰ってきた先輩方や、今から世界へ飛び立つ子供たち。

各国からの留学生も混じってのお食事会にも参加してきたようです。

せっかく日本に来たのに、日本らしいところを見せてあげるところか、人種のるつぼみ
たいな場所に連れて行って・・・まあ、今の日本の一部であることには変わりありませ
んし、我が家の日常生活の中の一片ですからね・・・

しかも最終日はマレーシアから帰国中の御近所さん家族との花火。

英語しかしゃべれないイギリス人のパパさんや、インターナショナルに通う娘さん、日
本人ママさん。

イギリス人パパさんは花火を上に向けて持ち・・・

デイジーは花火を振り回し・・・

最終の日本の夜に日本らしくないメンバーで過ごしました・・・

日本らしいといえば、浴衣を着て花火をしたことくらいでしょう・・・？

私たち受け入れ家族は、飾らず素のままですぐすことができました。

「アメリカの女の子」でも、「中国人の女の子」でもない、ただのデイジー。

「私たちのお友達」になってくれたデイジー、ぜひまた日本に来てもらいたいと思って
います。

じいじもデイジーとの再会を待ち望んでいます。

デイジーと一緒にすごす機会を与えていただき、関係者の方々に感謝いたします。

3 Angela & Iさんご家族

Angelaと一週間過ごして

2年7組 M.I.さん

私がAngelaと過ごした一週間は、戸惑うこともたくさんありましたが、本当に楽しい
日々でした。

Angelaは日本語を勉強し始めたばかりだったので、あいさつぐらいの会話しかできず、
ほとんど英語で話すことになってしまいました。ところが、私は英会話が得意ではなく、

何と説明していいのかわからずに、途方に暮れることが何度もありました。「これって何て言うん？」と母たちに相談するのをAngelaにすっかり覚えられ「ナンテイウン？」と真似されてしまうほどでした。電子辞書やジェスチャーで一生懸命に伝えようとすると、Angelaも真剣に耳を傾けてくれました。しかし、単語が分かって、私のJapanese Englishではしばしば通じないことがあり、改めて正確に発音することの難しさを思い知りました。bathとbusの違いやrとlの違いをAngelaは教えてくれましたが、なかなかその通りには発音できずに、情けない思いをしました。

Angelaはとてもお茶目な子で、好きなものがあると、周りが見えなくなるほどでした。一緒に海遊館に遊びに行った時も、生き物が好きなAngelaは、それぞれの水槽に顔をくっつけて動こうとせず、座り込んで写真を撮ったり「Shark! Shark!」と叫んで、とても喜んでいました。日本のマンガも大好きで「NARUTO」が一番おもしろいと言っていました。下宿している兄が家にいたら、マンガの話で盛り上がっただろうと思います。日本で売られているマンガは、漢字が使われているので読めないと、残念そうでした。

Angelaは好奇心も旺盛で、家族で日本語で話している会話の中に知らない単語があると辞書で調べたり、街を歩いていて不思議なものがあると、「あれは何？」と尋ねてきたりしました。

Angelaと話していると日本とアメリカの相違点をたくさん知ることになり、改めて勉強になることが多かったです。せっかく慣れてきたころにホームステイが終わってしまったので、とても残念でした。せめてあと一週間あれば、もっとコミュニケーションがとれてお互いのことが分かり合えたのではないかと思います。しかしこの一週間は私の人生において、本当に大きな意味のある一週間となりました。

Angela、ありがとう。

Angelaのホストファミリーとして

Iさん（保護者）

今回、娘からホストファミリーをお引き受けしたいと初めて聞いたとき、とても意外な思いを抱きました。いつも真っ黒になってテニスばかりをしている娘が、国際交流に関心があるとは思ってもいなかったからです。しかし、同時に嬉しくもありました。何ごとにも、前向きに取り組むのは良いこと。私たち家族にとって、ことばや食事のことなど細かな不安はありましたが、ホストファミリーをさせていただくことによって、少

しでも世界が広がりそうな期待や楽しみがありました。何よりも、国籍や年齢に関係なく、友人がまた一人増えるのは素直に嬉しいことです。Angelaと過ごせたのはほんの短い日数でしたが、娘は無論のこと私も多くの刺激を受けることができました。普段は無意識に流してしまっている数々のことに気づかされ、貴重な経験をさせていただきました。

Angelaは、明るく気配りのできる小柄なブロンドの女の子でした。動物が大好きで、わが家の48kgある超大型犬バーディーともすぐに仲良くなり、庭でよく遊んでいました。不思議なことに、バーディーは英語で話しかけられても理解し、心と心で通じ合うものがあるように思えました。Angelaは日本のアニメが好きで、それがきっかけとなり日本語や文化に興味を持ったようです。ただ、日本語の勉強を始めて日が浅いためか、あいさつとごく簡単な会話しかできませんでした。私たちの拙い英語でほ、細かいニュアンスを伝えるのが難しい場面が多々あり、特に娘は「もっと英会話ができれば……」と痛感したと思います。それでも、同年代の共通点が助けとなり、楽しくおしゃべりしながら一緒に満員電車で通学し、あちこちに遊びに行った報告を聞くと、とても微笑ましく思いました。

少しずつ慣れてくると、「アメリカ人の若い女の子は、こうだろう」と私が勝手に持っていた先入観を、大いに反省することになりました。食べ物の好み一つでも、Angelaによると「大部分のアメリカ人と違って、肉よりもお魚が好き。生魚のお寿司が大好きで、じゃがいもは大嫌い。」「えっ、ほんと？」確かに国籍・民族に関係なく、一人一人好みや価値観が違うのは当たり前のことだと、改めて確認した次第です。日本語についても、はっと気づかされることがありました。ほとんど日本語が分からないはずなのですが、音を聞く力がとても優れているように思いました。例えば、私たちの口癖をすぐに真似をして、「やっぱり！」ってどういう意味かと聞いてきます。「～位」というのを「くらい」と「ぐらい」はどう違うのかと聞かれ、説明に困ったこともありました。お店によって「いらっしゃいませ～」の言い方が違うのもおもしろいとも言っていました。外国の友達と仲良くなるためには、何よりもまず自分が日本をよく知りきちんと理解していなければならない、と聞いたことがあります。娘にも、自信を持って日本のことを話せるようになってほしい、そして広い視野と広い心で相手を理解できる人になってほしいとつくづく思いました。

Angelaが、この一週間を健康で楽しそうに過ごしてくれたことにほっとしています。今回一緒に過ごせた日々は、Angelaや娘にとって「初めの一步」であり、数年後に成長したお互いを紹介し合うことができればすばらしいと思います。娘や我々夫婦はもち

ろんのこと、同居している祖父母も楽しい経験をさせていただいたと感謝しています。
どうもありがとうございました。

4 Katie & Tさんご家族

Katie and I ー御縁ー

2年7組 A.T.さん

今回ホストの受け入れをして一週間という短い期間で非常にたくさんのことを学び、
得ることができました。

Katieと出会う前は多少不安はあったものの、楽しみだと思える気持ちの方が優っていました。だから、Katieのホストをした最初の頃は緊張はしませんでした。自分の英語が下手で伝わらなさ過ぎて困りました。しかし、寝食を共にするのはそれだけでお互いの理解が早まるので、沈黙だった登下校で会話がはずみ、より深い話ができるようになっていきました。

Katieは見かけによらず、かなり波瀾万丈な人生を送ってきたようで、その中の数々の武勇伝に私はただただ圧倒されました。もちろん、普通の会話もしました。好きな漫画、映画の話、アメリカでの学校生活の話、スラングなど家では常に話題が絶えませんでした。最初の頃は何を話そうか、必ず話題を探していたので、ここまで仲良くなれてよかったです。

最初は果てしなく長く思えた一週間はあっという間に過ぎてしまい、とうとうお別れの日が来てしまいました。Katieの前で泣かなかったけれど、お別れをした後はすごく悲しくて涙があふれてきました。この一週間、きっと誰のホストをしても楽しかっただろうけれど、やはりKatieのホストをしてよかったと思います。今回協力してくれたたくさんの人達、そしてKatieに引き合わせてくれた縁に感謝したいです。

Katieと過ごして

Tさん（保護者）

学校での説明会に出席すると、ようやくホストファミリーを引き受けるという実感が湧いて来た。経験はないが、とにかく楽しく気負いなく出来ればと思った。私なりに考えた目標はお別れの場面で「またぜひ遊びにいらっしやい」と言えるものにする事。そのためにはお客さん扱いをしない無理のない接し方を心掛けたい。我が家で守って欲しいことは早めに伝えておく。後は日本の食文化を我が家のいつものおかずで体験してもらおうと決めた。

6月25日夕方、六稜会館の前にバスを迎えた。プロフィールの写真の顔を探している私たちにKatieが体調を崩しているとの情報が入る。長旅にこの暑さ、楽しくても慣れない土地での移動に疲れているとは思っていたが...。顔合わせにドキドキしていた心臓が硬く縮んでしまった感じた。同じテーブルにつくが、ただでさえ緊張する場面に不安が加わってなかなか会話は続かない。ほどなく解散となり、そろそろと動き出した車の中から私たちホストファミリーの日が始まった。

家の中の案内、荷ほどき、夕食と時間を追うにつれてKatieの表情はほぐれて顔色も良くなって来た。私も肩に入っていた力が抜けていくのを感じた。

出会いは想定外の不安の中で始まった。そして続く6日間は想像以上に楽しい日が待っていた。回復して来るとKatieは素晴らしい才能を発揮してくれた。彼女は実に話術に長けていた。説明も巧みで表情豊かな話し振りには、皆が引き込まれてしまう。又、私たちの話に耳を傾けては根気よく分かり易く話してくれた。

夕食は毎日笑いに包まれた賑やかなものになった。私たちは、居間に座りながら未だに行ったことのないワシントン州や彼女が長く育ったアーカンソー州へと旅したような気分だ。アメリカの高校生活に違いを知り、豊かな自然の中で出会う生き物の話に目を丸くするといった具合に。彼女の自動車事故の話にさえ笑いのオチがついていた。笑いがもたらす力はすごい。一緒に笑うことでお互いの心を解放させ、その距離は一気に縮まってしまう。(私の目尻のシワは絶対に深くなったと思う。)

Katieがよく話題にした家族の様子はご両親のお人柄をよく映して共感することの多い内容だった。子を思う親の気持ちに国や言葉の違いなど関係はない。娘たち同士の話題も、同世代の関心事に差はなかったようだ。人の付き合いの中に「本質は同じ」という寛容につながる心を持ちたいと思う。そして、「同じはずなのに違う」にぶつかってしまった時にその事を思い出す回路も合わせて持ちたいものだ。

Katieが「郷にいれば郷に従え」を実践しようとしているのはよく分かった。慣れないお箸を初日から使い続けた彼女は三日目にはそれだけで食事を済ませ、最後の日には、きちんと左手にお茶碗を持って食べていた。和風のおかずを必ず一口は試していた姿に

は好感が持てた。

ふだん日本人同士だとやり取りは口から出る言葉や書かれた文字が多くを占める。Katieと私たちの間は違っていたので、自然と言語に頼らないボディランゲージのセンサーの感度を上げていたのだと思う。彼女の一生懸命な様子や控え目で気配りのできる人となりは、よく伝わって来た。

Katieは秋からカレッジでコミュニケーションを学ぶという。彼女にぴったりの専攻だと思う。きっとその専門性を深めて行くことだろう。今回の経験が彼女にとっていいものであったと思いたい。我が家の娘たちにとっても貴重で素晴らしいものであったように。空港での見送りに私は目出度く「また、いらっしゃい」と言うことができた。そしてKatieからは笑顔の返事を受け取った。

(3) 北野高校を訪れて

(the Impressions of the International Exchange Program June to July 2007)

The questions they are requested to answer are as follows:

- (1) Did your Kitano family accommodate all of your needs?
- (2) Would you prefer to stay with one family for your entire visit or not?
- (3) Though it was a short stay, did you enjoy most with your Kitano host family?
- (4) What did you think of Kitano? What did you enjoy or what was difficult to do at Kitano?
- (5) Do you have any suggestions that could help to improve our exchange program?

Angela Miles (Kentlake H.S)

Q1) My host family was kind and hospitable. They presented a beautiful room for me with a futon and air conditioning and a table and gorgeous Japanese ornaments.

I thoroughly enjoyed it. I was fed every meal and the Iwata family always showed a genuine interest in my needs and wants. All of my questions were answered.

They held a deep concern about my safety.

Q2) This is a difficult question for me because there are reasons why I do and don't want to stay with a single host. I like trading off because it allows me a broader experience, but I don't like saying goodbye. There are both benefits and disadvantages between switching and staying. It is more advantageous for the program if the exchange students are required to switch, for they obtain a wider perspective of Osakan school life.

Q3) The number-one aspect of my Kitano stay was perhaps spending time with my family. I liked interacting with them and educating them about my culture while also absorbing new information about Japan and the language and culture. It would have been nice if we went on more family trips... but Minako and I had enough fun going out together or with friends. I liked going to the sushi bar and the aquarium. Taking purikura was fun!

Q4) Kitano was an exceptionally high-class school. There were a lot of towering expectations that really bore down upon the students. The hallways and classrooms were clean and organized. The students were rather shy most of the time, but always friendly and cheerful. The environment was professional and orderly. I would not enjoy attending such a school, but I did enjoy visiting it. The history of this school is certainly shocking and amusing.

Q5) I think we took a lot of English classes. I would have preferred a wider range of class electives, although I liked assisting the classes with their English skills. We also should have come at a better time, when students were not preparing for a big test. However, there is not much to improve on in my eyes so far, because I really enjoyed my time here and have made precious memories.

Opportunities are like a young bird's first attempts to fly. When the bird leaps, it must spread its wings and hope for the best, and if it is the right time, it soars through the sky and a turbulent burst of satisfaction rushes through its heart. This is how I feel about the opportunity that I had taken to experience Japan. I had seized the opportunity and finished Kitano High School with a wonderful experience, valuable memories, and good friends.

Useful are the experiences I have accomplished. I have learned many things, such as the fashion in which students learn and the respect they hold for their

teacher. It is magnificently orderly in contrast to some of the classes I attend at Kentlake. The students at Kentlake have more freedom to speak, but it is not always as quiet and concentrated as the classes at Kitano. In a silent atmosphere, it is easier to hear the lesson, but I would do no good in such an environment because I learn best hands-on, not lecture style. I also experienced a school schedule where I saw all different types of classes, such as English, astronomy, differential calculus, P.E, and music. The teachers were helpful and treated me courteously. I was always acknowledged. Lunches are completely different than the ones I ate in America during school. There are submarine sandwiches, pizza, burritos, nachos, salads, hamburgers, and other types of similar foods in Kentlake's cafeteria. Kitano had udon, ramen, yakisoba, fried rice, and other comparable dishes. America has too many greasy foods, and I liked the choices in Japan better. But best of all is the vending machines with the cup that drops down. It fascinated me beyond all known proportions and I got a rush of excitement every time I bought a drink.

The most precious thing any living thing can have is memories. If we did not have memories, we would not be ourselves. That is why the memories I have experienced in Kitano High School are so important. I enjoyed getting to know people here, exploring the school, having super fun parties, and attending active classes. I can remember my first impressions on this school. I considered this place to be a top-notch place for learning. I met new friends. Best of all were the times after school, where Minako and I and some other friends and her family enjoyed our time together. For example, we went to Universal Studios Japan with all exchange students and hosts. Minako and I went to the aquarium and it was loads of fun, plus we took purikura and went shopping. Mika and I also spent time together and it was nice to see each other again. Her family made sure to look after me. We all went to a sushi bar and I felt like a part of the family. I will never forget anything I did here in Japan with my Kitano stay. I'll be sure to feel humongous waves of nostalgia when I am home in America.

But most important in my mind is all the friends and acquaintances that were produced from this exchange. I met new ones and old ones. I cried when I met up

again with Tomoko, but they were blissful tears. The teachers were significantly respectful and I took pleasure in observing their classes. Minako is a good host and I made a friend out of her, as well as her cheerful family and even Birdy, the drooling dog. Mika and I spent time together again and there were many new faces that took a stand to say hello to me or even make conversation, and I was pleased whenever anybody approached me with interest or a pleasant smile. It made me feel welcome and warm. Even the other exchange students are more familiar to me after the program has finished, with their crazy antics and ideas. The other hosts, Anna, Aiko, and Minako Sumikawa, will also be missed and we made friends too. Most everybody is so shy and modest here, but always helpful and friendly. I will genuinely miss everyone here, and this motivates me to definitely come back some day in the future.

In the end, this entire incident proved special to me. It will be difficult to summon another experience more extraordinary than this one. Kitano did a fascinating job welcoming us to the school and I feel blessed that this group of individuals allowed me a taste of Japanese school life and the culture. There will be one thing for certain: it will be hard to forget every diminutive detail of the days spent at Kitano and Osaka.

Daisy Chen (Kentwood H.S)

Q1) My Kitano host family was deeply accommodating in every single way possible, and I was incredibly grateful for how welcome everyone made me feel. My room was stocked with the various mechanics of everyday life and my host family patiently led me through the intricate process of Japanese life while letting me indulge in every possible whim. I think I might have been spoiled beyond reason during my time here because everyone was so nice to me. I am so grateful for the hospitality that my host family showed me.

Q2) I think there are both benefits and drawbacks to having a double host family system. Benefits are that you get to experience two entirely different approaches to

Japanese life, meet more people and have a much wider range of experiences. Drawbacks are perhaps that it is a bigger hassle and a bit more work on both ends to have everything arranged. On my part, selfishly, I quite liked the two-host system because I get to reap all the benefits of this exchange program while someone else labors under the weight of organizing everything. So for that, I want to say thank you very much to all the staff at Kitano who helped make this happen!

Q3) I was a rather special case during my stay at Kitano in that my host, Aiko-chan, has an American dad, and that made communication somewhat easier language-wise, although I daresay we managed just fine without outside assistance. I think my favorite part of the stay was basically spending time with Aiko-chan and stampeding about the school in ice cream-induced happiness. We went to the karaoke and sang loudly, frightening everyone, took purikura and had taiyaki! I absolutely had a lot of fun, and I enjoyed every moment to the fullest.

Q4) I thought Kitano High was a beautiful school, both in its people and its architecture. The classes are all orderly and the teachers all seem like incredibly competent people. What truly amazed me about this school was how hard everybody worked, it was quite a thing to see in action, and it makes me feel like I should work harder. The class I enjoyed most was English grammar because there were various aspects about it that were actually quite interesting that I never quite realized before. It was quite an enlightening experience to sit through and I think I actually learned quite a lot from it. Math class was definitely the hardest for me, because it's my worst subject and it more than doubles in difficulty when taught in a different language; however, it was an interesting class to sit through.

Q5) There is really nothing at all for me to complain about because every moment of my stay was perfect, so I suppose I have no suggestions. Thank you very much, everyone, for making my stay so enjoyable.

For me, there has never been any question of where I would go if I could go on an exchange program. For me, it has always been Japan. I love the language, the culture, the people, the food c my list is endless and I am sincere in the listing of every single one of them. My stay at Kitano High School has been an absolutely unforgettable experience, and every moment has imparted to me a new learning, a

new experience or new friends - whom I shall duly treasure forever.

I remember distinctly the first moment I glimpsed Kitano High School, and as the occasion proposed, we oohed and aaaahed accordingly. The architecture was magnificent in both scale and design and there was a pride among the students walking the pavement, knowing of the great things that will one day come of them and their learning. The welcome party was thrown with much aplomb and, apparently, over 9000 yen worth of snacks. Attention, food and performances were lavished on us in abundance, and it was an amazing experience that I will forever remember in both memory and pictures.

That night, I went home with my host sister Aiko-chan, and I was received with the fanfare of grandpa's good cooking, whose food I will forever miss. I was ensconced in lovely rooms and hailed by her beautiful family. They showed me every possible hospitality, and they were charming and gracious, patiently listening to my poor Japanese and letting me indulge in my every whim. Afterwards, we did everything we could possibly think of, stampeding about Osaka over the next few days. Aiko-chan and I went to the karaoke with her awesome friends, singing Seishun Amigo with accompanied dance. We took purikura and frightened other customers with our loud enthusiasm, we dressed in yukata, shopped, and watched the Hana Yori Dango movie. Every moment was perfect and my time here has definitely epitomized the Japanese experience for me. I would not change a single thing and I would not give my time at Kitano High for anything.

At school, the classes I attended truly amazed me. The teachers all seemed utterly competent and the students seemed to work *so hard*. I was shocked by the level of dedication and motivation with which every single word was written and the attention that they paid to their education. My classmates were all incredibly friendly, with all smiles and nice words. I will remember everybody for always. After school I was shown around the various clubs that Kitano offered, the variety underscored by how hard everybody worked in each and every club. Truly, the devotion shown in this school is remarkable and I will take my example from the students and work harder here on after.

I had far more fun in Japan than is humanly possible and I have been granted

beautiful memories to take with me and treasure forever. I want to thank every single person in Kitano High School for making my stay here so thoroughly enjoyable, and hopefully, one day I will come back and visit you all again with time for more classes, photos, shopping and memories.

Katie Wehmann (Kentlake H.S)

Q1) I think that my host families more than provided for my needs. Sometimes going up and beyond the call of duty. When I was not feeling well they stayed up with me through the night even though they had to go to work or school in the morning. They always made sure that I felt at home.

Q2) Really there's no way to answer that question. I love both of my host families. Though if I just stayed at one house I would get into a routine. Though there would be no fun in just doing the same thing every day. So I would say that changing families was very important. I really enjoyed seeing the different families and how they lived.

Q3) The thing I liked most about my Kitano family was dinner time. Everyone in the family spoke enough English that it wasn't uncomfortable, and it was fun sharing stories and learning new words and trying new food. Each dinner was full of laughs and good food.

Q4) At first I was worried. I thought that Kitano was going to be very strict. Yet as it turns out it was a very nice school. I like the layout of the school and the students were always accommodating. The most difficult thing to do at Kitano was to keep up with the clubs. I'll admit the swim club could swim in circles around me. Though one thing that I found very interesting was that students ran the clubs and not teachers, and with students running them they were twice as good!

Q5) If I could have changed anything it would be that we would have come before or after the testing cycle. That way we could have stayed longer and our classes wouldn't have been so structured. And I would have liked to see Osaka Castle. Though I guess that means that I'll just have to come back again some time!

Coming to Japan has been a fun experience. Whether I was walking through the gardens at the Golden Temple or standing in line to ride a roller coaster at Universal Studios Japan, it has been a great experience. When I first got off the plane I was terrified. After a week in Japan I revised it wasn't that scary as long as you had a great host. The first night we had a great home cooked meal. Then the next day I got to ride my first bus and train ever! It was so exciting. After arriving at the school we had a great welcoming ceremony. The orchestra and Dance clubs were amazing! The party was a lot of fun and I got to meet many Kitano students. Through homeroom I was able to get better acquainted with Kitano students. We had a party and played musical chairs. The classes were well organized and a lot of fun to be a part of. I have to say that even though I almost drowned swimming class was my favorite. After a fun full day of Kitano classes we went home. They took me shopping and to Universal Studios. I've never had so much fun. I've also decided that Mos Burgers has the best onion rings ever. And that the students of Kitano High are some of the greatest friends that I will ever have. Thank you for allowing me to experience your school.

Lauren DuCharme (Kentwood H.S)

Q1) My host family at Kitano was absolutely wonderful. Everyone was incredibly accommodating and kind to me, and helped me out with everything I needed. We usually spoke Japanese so I could practice, and I learned a lot, but fortunately they spoke plenty of English when necessary. They let me try a lot of new foods, but didn't mind if I couldn't eat something. My room was great; they allowed me to use my host's little brother's room, which was very generous, and it was spacious and had a western style bed. The accommodations were great.

Q2) I liked staying with two families. Even though I got to spend less time with each, it allowed me to have so many new experiences and meet more people, which I am glad for. Both of my families were fantastic, and I'm glad I met both. Staying with one family the whole time would probably be good too, but I personally liked staying

with both.

Q3) I greatly enjoyed everything with my host family. We went out shopping together in the downtown part of Osaka, which I thought was awesome, as well as going out to eat at a traditional Japanese steakhouse. Any time I got to experience something new was fun for me. Going to Universal Studios Japan was fun too! It was especially fun because all of the hosts and students got to go together.

Q4) Kitano is a great school, and I loved visiting here. My favorite classes were the ones that I got to participate actively in, such as P.E. (I got to do swimming!), grammar class, and my host's homeroom class where we played games. I also enjoyed going to math because I think math is universal and transcends language. The welcome party was fun, too, especially playing telephone! All the students were very kind, if a bit shy, and I enjoyed meeting them.

Q5) I think the exchange program was well-planned and well-executed. The transition between families was smooth, our schedule was correct and helpful, the commute was made easier by the train card we were given. I don't feel that there were any problems with my stay.

It has been the experience of a lifetime to visit Japan. I can't believe how lucky I am, having been given the opportunity to travel here and do so many new things. I've been interested in Japanese life and culture ever since I got my start reading Japanese comics when I was little. I had apprehensions about coming to Japan: would I be able to eat the food? Would everyone like me? Would I be able to communicate? But all my fears were assuaged when I arrived. I've broadened my horizons in so many ways. Through the new things I've done, the culture of Japan, and meeting new people, I've grown as a person.

First of all, I experienced many new things. Prior to coming to Japan, I was truly a picky eater. Anything that I hadn't tried before, I wouldn't eat. But coming to Japan forced me to try many new and delicious foods, like Okonomiyaki and Soumen, and even normal American foods like orange juice and yogurt. And it wasn't just new foods that I tried, either. I tried many other new things as well. My host taught me the beginnings of Shorinji Kempo, a martial arts style, I tried some Shodou, or Calligraphy, and I even did Purikura- a truly Japanese phenomenon that I only wish

existed in America.

Also, the culture of Japan was so new to me. Everyone seemed so polite and modest, especially in contrast with loud, brash Americans. I learned Japanese customs, like taking off one's shoes before stepping on the main floor of the house, and saying *itadakimasu!* before eating. The culture as a whole, though, is greater than the sum of its parts. One can look out the window of a train and see the Japanese cityscape roll by, and though there are no obvious differences to pinpoint, one simply *feels* that they must be in Japan and not in America.

Finally, I enjoyed meeting all the new people. I was so glad to meet my host family. I was nervous about meeting them, but they were warm-hearted and kind to me from the very beginning. The students and staff also welcomed me to their school and helped with everything I could possibly need. I loved playing games with my host's homeroom classmates. We spoke both Japanese and English, although our game transcended language- we all had fun, whatever language we spoke. Though our cultures were very different, there are some feelings that are universal.

I want to thank everyone for making my stay here the best it could be. My host family was so accommodating to me and the school students and staff welcomed me with open arms. Without all the kind and patient people I met, I wouldn't have learned as much as I did. I hope the friends I met can come visit me in America on the exchange program next year, and I know that I will absolutely return to Japan one day.

Debra Taylor, teacher delegate July 2008

Q1) Yes, my host families both accommodated my needs. They exceeded my expectation on hospitality, food, bedding, etc.

Q2) I would prefer you to leave the program as it is with two host families. Having two families gives the opportunity to meet more people and experience the culture in various ways. I did different things with each family, so I value each experience.

Q3) I enjoyed becoming acquainted with the family, the daughters, mother and

father. I enjoyed our outings to the ferris wheel, expo center gardens and karaoke. But most of all, I enjoyed establishing relationships with the family members.

Q4) I am very impressed with Kitano for various reasons. It is obvious that Kitano students and staff have pride in the school. The school is very clean. In my opinion, students are self-motivated. While I observed many club activities with what appeared to be no adult supervisors or coaches directing them. The students take leadership within these club activities. I can say that this is a big difference between schools in the USA and Japan, or at least Kitano. Our students are not as self-motivated and maybe some leaders would arise if given the opportunity, but it would be a challenge for us to expect our students to assume leadership of orchestra, baseball, etc. without at least one or two adults directing them. The students, within the classroom, are on task taking notes and listening politely. This is another example of their self-motivation. I especially enjoyed the courses where I could participate, not just sit and observe. For example, I swam with the girls PE class. In music class, we played guitars and sang, in English grammar and writing classes I was able to generate sentences for dictation to students and assist in editing paragraphs. The more difficult classes were ones that I just sat and observed. I appreciate how organized the coordinators were at Kitano. Mr. Fukomoto and Kobayashi, had schedules made for us with escorts to classes. This was helpful and contributes to an overall good experience at Kitano.

Q5) I would have enjoyed teaching an entire class of English if given the opportunity to plan a lesson of my choosing with grammar that you are currently learning.

June 2008, I had the privilege of escorting four students from Kent to Abuno and Kitano High Schools in Osaka, Japan. As a Spanish teacher at Kentwood High School, I have acknowledged Japanese teachers and students over the four years that I have been a Spanish teacher at Kentwood. However, this is the first year that I have become actively involved by hosting a teacher for one week and participating in Cherry Blossom Festival at Kentwood. When asked to accompany students this year, I was hesitant since I speak no Japanese and have only traveled to countries where I have a command of the language. After careful consideration and consulting my family, I was encouraged to participate in the teacher, student exchange. My

current life motto and one I share with my students is *Life is an Adventure* or in Spanish *La Vida es una Aventura*. I strive to be an example to my students and my willingness to step out of what is comfortable to me, makes me a model for them to also take advantage of opportunities that are presented to them. I didn't have time to learn much Japanese prior to arriving since I was assessing my students and preparing final grades up until the day before flying to Japan. I was told by previous teachers that everyone speaks English in Japan. However, I know from this experience that is an unrealistic expectation and I would have had many more conversations with people if I had learned basic Japanese prior to arriving. So, next time, I hope to be able to communicate in simple Japanese!

I thoroughly enjoyed the home stay, especially establishing relationships with the family members. Chie Takekoshi, part time English teacher at Kitano, agreed to host me. She is closer in age to my children, but I get along with all ages, so I was excited to meet her and her family. As it turned out, I had more time with her mother, Tomoko, who is closer to my age. We hit it off and had so much fun together. Their household is well run with their four daughters cooking, doing laundry and assisting to run the home. The daughters are all very beautiful and intelligent young women. Some highlights of excursions with Chie or her mother are the gardens at the Expo Center, the ferris wheel overlooking Osaka, going to a traditional Japanese bath/spa and singing karaoke. The family went out of their way to prepare delicious meals for me. I am sorry to have had such a short time with them. I think this is the beginning of a long relationship and I hope that they can visit me in my home so I can have the pleasure of reciprocating their hospitality.

Kitano has a reputation of excellence and it was a privilege to see the students in their classes and in club activities. Their self-motivation is evident as they take notes, and listen attentively to their professors. Students take leadership in club activities and seem to promote a high level of achievement in sports and music. I especially enjoyed the music class where we played guitars and sang two songs that I knew in English. The vocal quality of the Japanese students was so good! I love singing in choirs and this was definitely a highlight for me. In English grammar and writing I was able to participate by dictating sentences and editing paragraphs.

Participating in this way was enjoyable for me. The students seemed to enjoy also our participation in the classroom. I couldn't wait to swim in Kitano's pool. I was able to swim twice with the girls' PE classes. At first I wasn't sure how the teachers would manage to have all the students swim in the pool at the same time, but with the pacing of swimmers, we all managed to swim with enough space. It was refreshing to swim and fun to have been able to experience such a nice big swimming pool. Overall, participating in classes was enjoyable.

Kitano students and staff welcomed us with an orchestra performance and a contemporary dance of hip hop. They also shared snacks and beverages and a social time to become acquainted. I appreciated the warm reception. In addition, students who had gone to the USA but already graduated came to this reception. It was pleasurable to visit with them and hear of their goals for future education. Thanks for receiving us in such a fun way!

Since I have little knowledge of Japanese culture, everything was new to me. I am greatly impressed with how efficient Japan is. Even though there are so many people, the country seems to run smoothly. The public transportation is super fast, clean and punctual. Everywhere I went, people were friendly and courteous. Servers in stores and restaurants were always happy to assist. The food was also a surprise to me. There are so many tasty dishes that I have sampled. I purchased a Japanese cookbook to try to copy these wonderful foods when I return home. I love tempura, okonomiyaki, takoyaki and so many other dishes that I cannot remember the names. In addition, you have so many beautiful desserts, very artistic, all packaged so nicely. I wanted to sample and buy them all. The grocery store was amazing with so many prepared foods ready to take home. I could spend hours just sightseeing in the grocery store! I think Japanese young people are far more stylish than we are in Seattle. The boys' hair is far more styled than you would see in the USA. Walking the shopping centers and watching people gave me much pleasure.

I thank you for supporting and continuing this exchange. It is not something I would have imagined in my future as a Spanish teacher. However, it has been a delightful experience for me. I cannot wait to share my 400+ pictures and videos with family and friends. I hope to be a supporter for many years in Kent receiving

teachers and encouraging the program on our end.