

Japan School Trip 2009

UK-Japan Bilingual Collaborative Dramatic Performance with additional funding provided by the British Council

Partners in the Project:

UK: South Wolds School

Japan: Nagano City High School

Description of the Project

A group of students from South Wolds (Year 11 students) worked together collaboratively with students from Nagano City High School for six months prior to the proposed October/November visit to devise and write a script for a production which will be performed in both Japanese and English whilst in Japan. A second group from our school (Year 12 and 13 students) planned to write and perform a traditional English pantomime in Japanese to be performed in front of local primary students, and wider community audiences in Japan. This group also planned to spend their time teaching English to students at Komaki Primary School. Before the visit to Japan, both UK and Japanese students planned to develop bilingual posters to advertise their events, and develop a collaborative web-site where they can work together before and after their visit.

Report

Group 1:

Prior to the visit in October 2009, the South Wolds Year 11 students wrote a play based on the Cinderella story in simple English and sent it to the Japanese partner students at Nagano Ichiritsu Senior High School. Unfortunately, the Japanese students were under a lot of exam pressure and they did not get their translation done before we arrived in October for our three day programme at their school. Consequently we used some of our time together at school in Japan to work collaboratively on the translation of the play from English into Japanese. This turned out to be a most constructive and enjoyable activity – perhaps the highlight of our three days.

After the play had been translated into Japanese, the students then performed it in front of each other in English, then in Japanese. The students also spent time together sightseeing and engaging in Japanese cultural activities and they came to a surprise birthday party which we held at our hotel for one student in the group.

It was a great success and firm friends were made. Two of the Japanese students in the group are now planning to join our school for ten months from this April and we are hoping to send our students to Nagano Ichiritsu Senior High School for longer periods.

Next year we will return to Nagano Ichiritsu Senior High School where we plan to develop a product cooperatively which we can market in both Japan and the UK.

Group 2:

Unfortunately the programme at Komaki Primary School was cancelled earlier in the year due to the Swine Flu epidemic, however we ensured that we met the teachers at the school to plan the activities for the following year.

The Group 2 students joined the Group 1 students at Nagano Ichiritsu Senior High School, and joined in with their project.

For the rest of our time in Japan we did the following activities:

- A trip to the Ajinomoto Olympic Training Centre in Tokyo to establish a sound basis for working with Japanese Olympic athletes at Loughborough University for our Musubi Project (see the Musubi Website made by our students at: <http://www.japanese-at-southwolds.org.uk>)
- Apple picking in Nagano
- Zen Buddhist meditation in Nagano
- Participation in the Soba Matsuri at Togakushimura
- Sightseeing near Nagano with members of the Nagano International Friendship Society

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