Effective Study Abroad Programs for Students in Elementary to High School

Yinghua Academy
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Program Overview

• A 14-day summer study abroad program.
• Designed for 6 – 8th grade students.
• Chinese speaking teacher chaperones.
• Alternating Southern route and Northern route itineraries:
  – Taiwan and China
  – Sister schools exchange (class visits, host family placement, local cultural experiences)
Program Goals

• Provides students an opportunity to be immersed in an environment of Chinese language and culture.
• Provides students an opportunity to use their learned language functionally.
• Stirs up students’ curiosity to learn through real-world experiences.
• Measures students’ authentic proficiency.
Student Participant Criteria

• Open to 6 – 8\textsuperscript{th} grade students.
• Applicants must complete application with parent’s signature.
• Candidates must demonstrate a strong motivation and commitment to use Chinese language during the entire trip.
• Candidates must be able to attend all meetings and activities before, during, and after the trip.
Program Funding

• Cost per student depends on total number of participants, time of year, and destination.
• Parents are main sponsors for the travel costs.
• Other potential financial sponsors:
  – School’s past FLAP grant or future grants
  – Hanban grant (when traveling to China)
  – Parent-organized school fundraising
Preparing for the Trip

• Attend weekly “World Traveler Club” meetings.
• Partake in video-conference with sister school students.
• Complete weekly pre-trip homework leading up to the trip.
• Attend evening monthly meetings (6 times) with parents leading up to the trip.
During the Trip

• Set goals to seek opportunities out of your comfort zone!

• Contribute to the group’s journal shared with parents via Blog/WeChat/Line

• Complete Traveler’s Notebook: Assignments that allow students to benefit from experiential learning.

• Conduct research project—Topics of Interests
游学北京生活体验

Traveler’s Notebook

游学北京生活体验

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After the Trip

• Students assess goals set versus goals met
  – reflection of one’s own experience
• Students maintain relationships with sister school friends in China/Taiwan
• Students present in an assembly to student body
• Students complete research project on Topics of Interests
Benefits of the Program

• Students gain confidence in their learned language and are stimulated to learn more.
• Students gain in-depth understanding and “eye witness” perspective of Chinese culture.
• Students develop and solidify their friendships with sister schools’ pen pals.
• Students’ worldviews are broadened.
Program Challenges

• Affordability of the trip
  – Limited by family’s ability to pay
  – Dependent on available grants and fundraising opportunities

• Student safety
  – Students are young; clear expectations must be set and enforced.
  – Students with specific health concerns
  – Local health hazards
Tourist vs. Traveler
Sister School Visit
First arriving at Hohhot Number Eight Middle School.

In China, they consider grade 7-9 as middle school.
Culture Exchange Performances
Class time!
Host families
Local Attraction--apricot orchard
谢谢！Thank You!
Effective Study Abroad Programs
Checking and Reflecting Your Goals

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