

Study! Study! Study!!

Why do we have to study all the time? Why do adults always say, “If you don’t study hard, you won’t have a bright future!” Why is studying so important for a bright future?! English? Where can we use it in Japan? Social studies? Do we really need that knowledge!? And how about all the other subjects? How are they useful? I was not motivated to study until this past summer.

In July, a group of Taiwanese junior high school students visited my school. They couldn’t speak Japanese and I couldn’t speak Chinese, so we had to use English. I was worried, but I talked to a student while we were eating lunch. In Taiwan they eat lunches that companies bring to the school. She laughed and said, “Our lunches don’t taste very good and there are only two kinds of side dishes. This lunch we got here has many delicious side dishes!” We also talked about reading books and manga and watching anime. Another student complained about getting too much summer vacation homework and having to go to cram school every day – as we do in Japan! It was really fun to be able to communicate in English with students from a different country!

I realized that the Taiwanese students, despite the differences in our countries, cultures, and languages, were just like me, and what they felt and thought was not very different! At the same time, I felt that all the time I had spent studying English was for this day and maybe a future one!

In August, I went to New Zealand for a homestay and visited a junior high school in the countryside. Half of the students and some teachers were Maori. We joined a Maori language class and a traditional event with chanting and dancing. Some of the teachers had black tattoos on their faces, necks, and arms. I had never seen such scary tattoos before, so I was surprised. That made me feel a little scared of those teachers, too. One teacher explained it, “Our tattoos are part of our culture, and each design and place on the body has its own meaning. We want to pass that culture onto the next generation.” I was embarrassed that I had felt scared because of the tattoos. I had judged the teachers by their appearance. I wished I had studied more about other countries’ histories and cultures at school! At the same time, I thought it was cool that a Maori teacher would deeply value her people's beliefs and want to pass them on.

Through these experiences, I realized that gaining more knowledge about many things has become much more meaningful and broadens my view of anything I study. Also, communicating with and understanding people who have different cultures, lifestyles, and languages from our own will help us create a brighter future for all of us!

Now, I found an answer to why I have to study hard. Hey everyone! What are your answers?

Oh, excuse me, I have to return to my studies. Thank you.

7 番 伊藤 颯希

尚絅中学校

An Answer to Our Question