

By Kate Maher

I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Kurashiki on the Sister City student exchange 2006, but I feel there are some things that could be changed for the students to benefit more next year. It was really good to stay with the homestay family because you were fully immersed in Japanese culture tradition, but I feel that four days at a Japanese school is a little bit long because you can get a fair idea of what life is like in a Japanese school and I think that two days would be long enough otherwise boredom starts to set in when you can't fully understand the language or what is happening around you. It was also good to spend a day at the primary school to see what life is like for a younger Japanese person. It was a lot of fun playing outside with the little kids and I'm sure they enjoyed themselves too. Going to the Peace Park and Museum was one of the best days because it was one of the more meaningful days over the two weeks. Even though some things at the museum were quite graphic and intense, this was important so you could have a small idea of what it was like when the bomb dropped. The 3 hour busride was well worth it. My homestay family were very kind and looked after me very well. I couldn't have asked for a better family. Going to Washuzan Highland Park was fun and exciting, a good way to spend our last day in Japan because we got to spend time with the friends we had made over the two weeks. We definitely needed more than 2 hours at Aeon shopping centre because it is a big mall and it takes a while to get around to all of the shops. I look forward to returning to Japan in the future and taking my family to show them all of the exciting things I saw and did.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to visit Japan.

Yours sincerely

Kate Maher