



King Ling College

S5E Group 3 Grand Tour Report



Class: 5E

Destination: Seoul, Korea

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Introduction

With the rise of popularity of K-pop music and Korean drama, students are enthusiastic about the culture of Korea. However, it is next to impossible to truly learn about a country and its cultures until you actually step foot on that country's soil. Therefore, our class decided to choose Korea as the destination of the grand tour.

During the four-day trip, not only did we go sightseeing in some scenic spots, we also visited places of special historic interest and a university. The grand tour is another type of learning that provided us with a unique opportunity to interact with the Korean, appreciating the life of the local people, as well as understanding more about the Korean culture.

Day 1

Spots Description

Our journey started at the Incheon International airport. After settling in, we went to enjoy our first dinner in Korea. The delicious Ginseng Chicken soup gave us energy for the next spot. After having a nice dinner, we shopped in HongDae, an area around the HongDae University that sells good products at a rock-bottom price.



Taking photo at the Hong Kong International Airport.



The beautiful hotel in Korea.

Reflection

HongDae District was crowded even at night, many teenagers were shopping there. We are all happy to shop in HongDae, buying snacks, clothes and accessories.

The shopping zone is near the HongDae University, students can relieve their tension and stress by shopping there conveniently, without walking or travel for a long distance. In Hong Kong, it is not as convenient as in Korea. Universities are mostly located on the hill, students have to take a bus to reach the shopping mall. Our group suggest that the government may develop the university zone into a shopping

street like HongDae. Not only allowing university students to relax from busy schoolwork, also turning the zone into a tourist spot. It can attract more tourists to visit Hong Kong, and boosting the economy.

Unlike the huge shopping mall in Hong Kong, HongDae is full of local small shops with reasonable prices. We enjoy shopping there, buying many souvenirs and snack. Every small shop in HongDae has its own style, some selling stylish clothes, some selling cute accessory, every shop is different. However, the shopping malls in Hong Kong are more or less the same, full of chain shops that sell homogeneous, expensive brand items, not the taste of students. For tourism, small business lets foreigners enjoy local flavor, and appreciate the life of local people, while chain shops are all over the world, without local characteristics. It is same for tourists to travel to other cities where are full of chain shops. I hope there will be more small businesses in Hong Kong, instead of big chain shops.

Day 2

Namsangol Hanok Village

Spots Description

We have been to Namsangol Hanok Village for our second day of our trip. The houses built in traditional style is called hanok, which were the residences of high government officials. They have been restored so as to preserve the original atmosphere of the area. In front of the houses, there was the setting of traditional Korean game “casting arrow into the pot”. This is a game which requires our concentration. Hardly can we throw the arrow into the pot.



The setting of the traditional Korean game “casting arrow into the pot” in front of the houses.

Moreover, there is a traditional Korean style garden nearby. It is a getaway in the country, letting visitors to retreat from the concrete jungle, and enjoying the natural scenery.



The furniture of ancient Korean noble.

Reflection

Our tour guide Mira had taught us many Korea traditional etiquettes, for example, male should cross the wooden threshold with left foot first and female should cross the wooden threshold with right foot first. It shows that Koreans abide by the rules set by ancient Korea tightly, we appreciate more their traditional customs.

We observed that there were all age groups of Korean and even the foreign students studying in Korea visiting the village. The reason that they visit the Namsangol Hanok Village is that they want to protect these traditional cultures and pass them to the younger generation. Korean has a strong sense of belonging to their country. We think that is why Korea's culture can be conserved for a long time.

More importantly, Koreans spent many resources on promoting culture to local and even foreign visitors, however, Hong Kong government can hardly do this. The Korean culture makes Korean proud of their country. What we should learn from Korean is to be proud of our traditional culture, but not refuse to learn from them because it is tedious. Although not all of the traditions are worth-learning, passing etiquettes and customs to the next generations is our responsibility.

Day 2

Insa-dong

Spots Description

Insa-dong was the residence of rulers and nobles at Chao-xian Period (1392~1910). During the later period of the Japanese Occupation, the noble were forced to sell their own things. That is why many antique stores are there nowadays. Afterward, more than 70 of galleries were opened there. Other than galleries and antique stores, handicraft and souvenirs are also sold there. These all make Insa-dong a famous destination for understanding culture.



Everyone of us get a free calligraphy in Insa-dong and chat with local Korean.



The shopping mall in Insa-dong which is full of art elements.

Reflection

At the center of Insa-dong, there is a small shopping mall. The most attractive characteristic is not about different kinds of shops there, but art culture.

Along the stairs, there are children-style drawing hanging on the wall. Although the drawing looks like children work, but the hidden information may shock you, as the paintings promote children right and also environmentally friendly. The drawing created a happy atmosphere in the shopping mall.

It is good to integrate art into a shopping mall as it is an effective way to promote arts to tourists and locals. In Hong Kong, there are many creative artists who draw cartoons, they are all talented. The shopping malls may cooperate with them, not only promoting art, but also making every mall unique.

Other than the drawing, graffiti or write messages are allowed. It shows that the Korean government values art culture. In Hong Kong, although drawing on the wall is treated as vandalism, our government do a lot to promote the art culture, like encouraging to set up art workshops and gallery in the industrial building zone. Compared the two art zones, Insa-dong is more success than The Art Village of the Hong Kong Industrial Building because the art culture at Insa-dong is combined with shopping and eating there, art is mixed with Korean's daily life. On the other hand, there is probably no anybody in the industrial building zone at night but it is crowded from day to night in Insa-dong.

Hong Kong Government should promote the local art culture into our daily life instead of just in the Industrial area.

Day 2

Sungkyungkwan University

Spots Description

Sungkyungkwan University is a famous university in Korea with over six hundred years of history. We are pleased to visit this long-standing university and attend a talk there. The talk included a brief introduction of Sungkyungkwan University such as the life in the university and also how to get into Sungkyungkwan University. We also walk around the campus, there are many historic buildings, including the examination hall of students and even the royal court of the king in the past. Humanity, righteousness, propriety and wisdom are the school motto of Sungkyungkwan University, which perfectly fit the idea of Confucianism.



Myeongnyundang is the main lecture hall preserved in Sungkyungkwan University.



Taking photo with Korean students in Sungkyunkwan University.

Reflection

We have been told that only the top one percent of students in Korea can get into Sungkyunkwan University. After knowing the fact, we realize that it is really hard to get into a good university, except working very hard from now on. Entering a university is not a piece of cake and it will affect our whole life. Therefore, we have to be very serious when preparing for the DSE. Apart from entering university, choosing a suitable faculty is important. Yet, we can only have limited choices if we cannot get an excellent result in DSE. In other words, excellent results in DSE are essential.

The culture of China really affects Korea a lot. Most of the cultures in Korea are similar to China like the building structure and some moral standard. The royal court we saw is similar to that of Chinese Emperor, and humanity, righteousness, propriety and wisdom are in vital importance in the culture of both Korean and China. After visiting the Sungkyunkwan University, we discovered that Chinese cultures are very influential. Many countries in Asia such as Korea and Japan are influenced by Chinese culture. It reflects that Chinese cultures like Confucianism are meaningful and worth learning. Being a Chinese, we should also learn the convention and culture of China.

Day 2

Myeong-dong

Spots Description

Myeong-dong is located at the central zone of Seoul in Korea, it is one of the symbolic districts in Seoul for shopping and tourism. We went to Myeong-dong commercial area, where it is full of high-class and well-known shops on both sides of the street. Moreover, we can find a diverse range of cuisines, big shopping centers, and luxury items nearby. Not only does Myeong dong specialize in brand chain shops, but also for banks and securities company. Myeong dong was being chosen as the ninth most expensive shopping street in the world for three consecutive year from 2011 to 2013. Every tourist choose this place to visit which is a mecca for shoppers.



The shop selling basketball cap in Myeong-dong.



The mouth-watering strawberry mochi bought in Myeong-dong.

Reflection

We went to Myeong-dong on the second day of our tour, after the nice visiting of Sungkyungwan University. Myeong-dong is a crowded and prosperous place, it gives the feel of Mong Kok district in Hong Kong to us, where we can see different colour of skins of tourists there, and we cannot see the end of the street. Our tour guide gave us two and a half hour to shop. However, time is never enough. Our girls have already planned for this place in detail, so when we arrived at Myeong-dong,

the girls rushed into the beauty shops that appeared in front of us everywhere. Their eyes were sparkling towards those shops. The boys could only follow and got into the beauty shops to buy masks. When we entered the shops, it is excited to find out that we can communicate well with the sales by Putonghua. There is no communication barrier between us and the Korean. We can easily get what we want and understand what people are saying.

Although we come from two different countries, we can use the same language, Chinese, to connect with each other. It is great to see the power of Chinese language affecting other parts of the world, many people around the world learn Chinese as it is an international language. It is important to promote world's communication, learning other cultures and improving relations.

Going to Myeong-dong is an unforgettable experience, we believe our class will not have another chance to travel together after graduation. This is a good chance for us to create a memory, at the same time broadening our horizons and learning more about other countries.

Day 3

Lotte World

Spots Description

Our group went to the Lotte World, which is a popular theme park in Korea. It consists of two parts, indoors and outdoors. Being the world largest indoor theme park, there are many amusement rides, such as bumper car and coaster ride. All of the games there are very exciting. It brings much happiness to our group, all of us enjoyed playing there. Also, there are some restaurants and shops in the Lotte World. For the popularity of the Lotte World, many visitors from other countries will surely reach there for a day, shopping and playing in the theme park.



Taking photo with Lotte World's cartoon.



The drop tower in Lotte World.

Reflection

A friend in need is a friend indeed. We helped each other in the trip. When we were in the mirror maze, a teammate lost his wallet. He was worried as all his money was in the wallet. We did not leave him alone and helped him to find out the wallet. Fortunately, we found that his wallet was under his package. No money was lost. This showed that the spirit of "TEAM". We helped each other in the whole trip.

Besides, when we were queuing up to play the coaster ride, we saw the car seems flying in the sky with a high speed, all of us were scared. In the beginning, some of us wanted to give up, but we encouraged each other to play the coaster ride. With the support of each other, we finally finished the whole game.

Encouragement between friends is very important, giving confidence to each other. In our school life, when we are facing examinations, the support from friends motivate us to work hard. It could surely help us the strive for an ideal result in examinations.

At last, we were all tired, especially the girls. Being gentlemen, boys should help ladies. Not only do the boys help the girls, but also the boys should help the weakness. For example, in the Lotte World, we bought many souvenirs. Actually, those packages are very heavy and large. Girls just like the parallel traders shopping in the Lotte World. Boys should help them to carry the packages. In school life, besides the knowledge, we learnt the manner among people.

Day 3

Dongdaemun Shopping Town

Spots Description

In the past, there were four doors in Korea that protected the palace and major economic buildings in the four directions. Dongdaemun and Nandaemun become two huge shopping districts after the occupation of Japan but the other two doors were destroyed in the wars.

Dongdaemun is the east door, brand shops and wholesale occupied the market there. Four shopping malls are the major combination of this tourist spot. Most of us visit the malls in the middle as the price there are relatively low and we can haggle over the price there.



The Migliore shopping mall in Dongdaemun.

Reflection

We are glad that our trip has Dongdaemun as one of the spots, as we can buy fashionable clothes in a more reasonable price when compared to Hong Kong. Dong Da Men is very similar to Mong Kok in Hong Kong, full of trendy shops, busy roads and young people.

We appreciate the planning of the area. To begin with, they separate the retail stores and wholesale markets to enable the market will not be in chaos because the business hour of retail and wholesale is different. Besides, stores selling brand goods and stores selling local clothes are separated to different shopping malls which help buyers to target malls to be visited according to their budgets. Lastly, shops sharing the same target group are on the same

floor, like the first floor is for woman clothing. Buyers do not need to visit all floors and search every corner to find what they want. Dongdaemun's shopping malls are really well organized and Hong Kong should learn from this design in future planning of shopping malls.

However, there is also room for improvement. Firstly, most of the goods sold in Dongdaemun are similar. The owners may try to import clothes from different sources so that customers can have more choices. Also, goods sold there do not have size to choose and shopkeepers keep convincing you that it is a fit size. But as consumers cannot try it on before buying, it will be inconvenient if it is not fit actually.

Day 4

DMZ

Spots Description

Korean Demilitarized Zone is a well-known spot for sightseeing. It is the frontier between South Korea and North Korea. As this border barrier runs through the vicinity of 38th parallel north, the DMZ also known as The 38th Parallel North. In order to take a closer look at history, we went through the third tunnel in the DMZ. The four tunnels in total have been so rumored that it was the short cut for the North Korean to attack the South Korea on the quiet. The third tunnel was discovered in October 1978 and the excavating was stopped.



Taking photo in DMZ.



The Earth model next to the third tunnel.

Reflection

This place pervades the atmosphere of grave. It really made us feel serious, especially when a soldier came up to check our passport. Watching the soldiers fulfilling their commitment, it was appreciative that they are loyal to their own country sincerely. This shown a paragon of loyalty.

Furthermore, The DMZ reminded us the tragedy of war. We could feel the tears of the Koreans. Separation of families, injuries and death. The pictures were unforgettable.

Although we are neither the citizens of South nor North Korea, we experienced a great history lesson in the DMZ. It was fascinating to visit such a meaningful site. It showed the importance of union. Unity is the key to success. The visit broadened our horizons and let us know more about Korea, know more about the world.

What is more, during the visit of the third tunnel, we really enjoyed the once evil but now fun tunnel. The tunnel is so low that we needed to bend our backbone to pass through but it was interesting. Although it was toilsome for us to walk out from the tunnel, finding a way out from the tunnel gave us a sense of satisfaction as we put our effort to pass through it. ' We reap what we sow ' was the best description for it. We learnt about diligence and perseverance, two of our school mottos. It also raised our awareness to preserve the precious, old things. It is our responsibility.

On the whole, visiting the DMZ was really a rare experience. It is really worth-going.

Day 4

KimChi School

Spots Description

Kimchi is the most traditional food in Korea. As our tour guide said, kimchi was invented in more than 1000 years ago. It has a long history. However, this food became more and more popular. Making kimchi is an easy task. A beginner need only 10 minutes to finish one kimchi pot. Learning how to make kimchi is not the most important thing but learning the spirit behind and the history. Learning Korea culture is the main theme of this trip.



The model showing how to make dried seaweed.

Before this trip, we thought visiting the Kimchi School would be boring. Compared with other spots, such as Lotte World and Dong Da Men, those are the fun places for us to play and shop. However, the thought was totally changed after visiting.

The aim of this Korea trip is to learn Korean local culture. Kimchi school is the best place for us to know more about Korean dining culture. The culture of consuming.

Reflection

Kimchi started 1400 years ago. Nowadays, the Korean enjoyed kimchi in almost every meal. They preserve their own culture very well even when being occupied by the Japanese. However, in Hong Kong, many tradition culture are diminishing, just like the Dai Pai Dong. The culture is the collective memory of Hong Kong people, we should preserve our own culture.

Kimchi was provided in our every meal in Korea, we can even ask the waiter for more if we want. Koreans are generous, they are happy to see diners enjoy the cuisine and ask for more. In Hong Kong, seldom are restaurants willing to add more food to consumers for free of charge, because they want to earn more. We should learn their hospitable attitude towards consumers from Koreans.

Conclusion

At the end of this invaluable and unforgettable four-day trip, we all got improvement on ourselves and achieved the targets set before the journey. The study trip leaves a lasting impression on us as the memories made on the trips have a sense of reality opposed to just words in a book or notes taken in class.

We have lots of chances to communicate with Koreans, especially to our tour guide. Through communication, we understand more about the convention customs of Korea, and enjoying the local flavor.

By visiting scenic spots, we broaden our horizons and widen our sight. We understand more about the history and culture of Korea, we have a bird's-eye view of our own culture.

The tour also allowed our class to have a great time together, which is the trip of a lifetime.

Group member list

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