

## Reflection on Perth Study Tour 2014

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I am a typical Hong Kong student whose mother tongue is Chinese. Except from English lessons, I seldom speak English as I lack the confidence and motivation to speak English to other people. However, this attitude has been changed when I decided to sign up for a two-week Australia Exchange Program organized by our school this summer. Here, I would like to share what I have learned and improved during the trip.

Arriving in Australia, I was looking forward to learning as much as possible about Australia and improving my language and communication skills. However, it was not as easy as I imagined. This is because of my weakness in my personality. That is I did not have the courage to speak to locals, I was so afraid to make mistakes and misunderstood by the locals. So, in the beginning, when I wanted to ask some questions, I would tell my roommate Yvonne in Chinese and she would help to ask our host family. Day after day, I started to think that I could not continue doing this because the purpose of this trip was to improve my language and communication skills. Thus, I finally took up the courage to talk to my host family without any help from my classmates. That day onward, I talked to my host family or other locals without worries. This experience has helped me to gain more confidence, I have realized that things will just get better if I am willing to try and take initiative. Throughout the chats and communication with the locals, I have known more about their culture and lifestyle. Moreover, with more interactions with my host family, our relationship got better and more intimate.

I benefitted a lot with the arrangement of the homestay. First, we had to travel on our own to get to our school campus. We read a map to find which bus we should take and how to get there. On the first few days, we got lost in the street but we found the way back home finally. Besides, no one could give us morning call in the morning, so we had to wake up on time and made the breakfast ourselves. Moreover, we learned to wash and dry our clothes. During the homestay, I became more independent because I had to do most of the things and made decisions on my own.

I feel honored and fortunate to be able to participate in this exchange program, it is an eye-opening experience which widens my horizons. I am so satisfied because I can learn many things that I can't learn in Hong Kong. With such experience, I think I can develop myself to become an all-round adult in the future. Lastly, I want to thank our school and teachers who gave me this opportunity to explore the world and myself.