

Japan Study Trip
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The Japan study trip I participated in this June 2026 was an amazing experience that allowed me to learn about Japan's culture, history, education, and daily life through my host family. Throughout the trip, I experienced Japanese life and culture, learned about their activities, built friendships, and gained an appreciation for what I learned.

One of the most enjoyable experiences was visiting Kanto Daiichi High School. Interacting and learning with Japanese students helped me learn more about Japanese daily life and their school culture, traditions, and daily routines. Even though there was a language barrier with some of the students, I realized that the students in both countries share many of the same goals, interests, and challenges. The cultural presentations and conversations showed me the importance of communication and respect in learning about other cultures.

The Shirone Kite Festival was another highlight of the trip. Seeing the giant kites and learning about the history behind the festival demonstrated how communities preserve their traditions and pass them on to future generations. I was also picked to be interviewed on a Japanese TV show. I was so nervous, but I was honored to be chosen to represent my school. Participating in activities such as mochi pounding and the kite workshop allowed me to experience Japanese culture firsthand rather than just observing it.

The most touching part of the trip was visiting Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the Peace Museum. Standing at the site where the atomic bomb was dropped and hearing stories about the lives affected by the tragedy made history feel real and

personal. The peace chime, the Children's Peace Monument, and the thousands of paper cranes served as a reminder of the importance of peace, understanding, and compassion. I also enjoyed visiting places such as Tokyo DisneySea, Shibuya, Harajuku, Miyajima Island, and Itsukushima Shrine. From the crowded streets to the peaceful shrines and beautiful gardens, I really appreciated Japan's environment and tradition.

In conclusion, this study trip helped me become more independent and culturally aware. Traveling internationally taught me how to be independent and navigate unfamiliar places, communicate with new people, and appreciate different cultures other than my own. I came home with lasting memories that I will hold dear to my heart. This experience inspired me to continue learning about the different cultures about the world outside of Hawaii.