

2019 Kyoto UK-Japan Young Scientist Workshop

Reflections of the UK team written on the plane returning from Kyoto

NEWHAM COLLEGIATE 6TH FORM CENTRE, EAST HAM

Teacher

I have really enjoyed my time in Japan. My students' public speaking skills tangible improved from their first presentation to their final summary presentation. There are limited opportunities for presenting at school due to curriculum constraints. However, it is a valuable experience that prepares them for the academic world. At the end of each workshop day, the students were excited to explain the post graduate science to me. They could access the content thanks to the work of the facilitators and professors. The students made good links between their A level studies and the new science they were learning. It was a rare opportunity too see theory in real life.

Student

In one word I would describe my experience in Japan as being surreal. The sights, food, people, activities and culture of Japan were simply amazing and to have participated in a university workshop truly showed the broad horizon that is out there for us to explore. One thing I will miss about Japan is the connections I made with the Japanese students from working together in the workshops to exploring Kyoto and I will particularly miss the heat!

Student

Everything about our trip to Japan was fantastic. If I had to list the best parts of the trip, I would say it was the new friends I made, the Japanese culture and my experiences in the laboratories during the workshop. Overall, I would definitely recommend this trip to everyone as it has given me a much deeper insight into science and the rest of the world

Student

My time in Japan has allowed me to grow as an individual and has been an experience I will treasure for ever. I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about new aspects of Biology beyond the school curriculum in a Japanese university environment where communication as well as content is a challenge. Learning that I can interact using the language of science has broadened my future career paths as I am now considering the possibility of studying Biology abroad, knowing that I can adjust comfortably to cultural barriers. Having the opportunity to witness current research at a global level was incredible and I will really miss learning about the Japanese culture with the help of my amazing Japanese friends. The bond that we created in such a short time together solely due to our mutual interest in science has been unforgettable and I look forward to staying in contact with them.

Student

The UK Japan Science Workshop has been the best experience of my whole life: from the cutting edge research that we were fortunate enough to witness and participate in to the enlightening cultural exchange when we gained an insight into a

completely different world, the programme has done nothing but open my eyes to endless possibilities. The interdisciplinary nature of the projects we were working on highlighted how fundamentally inseparable the sciences are and allowed me to look at my future prospects through a new lens. It was an absolute privilege to be able to become friends with so many incredibly gifted, lovely and bright Japanese students that I am sure will be my friends for life.

ST MARY REDCLIFFE AND TEMPLE SCHOOL, BRISTOL

Teacher

What an incredible experience for all involved! It was a true privilege to see meaningful friendships develop between the Japanese and British students during the workshops, at the hotel and in the city of Kyoto. The students will cherish the memories formed for years to come: a trip of a lifetime.

Student

I am thankful for the expert knowledge that was provided during the science workshop at the university. Not only were the professors and students happy to help and explain things at any time, they were also a great fun. We may not always have understood 100% of what the others were saying but I can guarantee this: they were all kind and excellent company and always up for a laugh and a joke whether it was adding ridiculously large amounts of reagents or taking silly photos on my computer, we enjoyed every minute.

Student

The UK-Japan Science trip had been one of, if not the, best highlights of the year so far. The Japanese students were so kind and welcoming and so patient through the communication difficulties. I really enjoyed participating in the workshop and learning about the history of the city was outstanding and a real insight into Japanese culture. Thank you so much for this opportunity which has provided memories and experiences to treasure for ever.

Student

My experience on the Japan-UK Science Workshop has been invaluable as it has allowed me to become more knowledgeable about areas of top field research and has impacted on my own personal growth. My participation in my team's investigation into 'Microscale separation of bio-related materials' meant that I could experiment with cutting-edge technology whilst meeting some passionate and genuinely lovely individuals. My Japanese partners helped me learn about the ins and outs of Japan and without them Kyoto simply wouldn't have been the same! This trip has inspired me to think about a future trip to Japan, as well as making me look forward to learning more science and studying at university. Thank you for this opportunity.

Student

The UK Japan Young Scientists Workshop has been one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life. From the challenges of communicating and working together in a team of international students, to the insights into cutting-edge scientific development, every moment of the trip brought something exciting and new. I would

wholeheartedly recommend this-workshop to anyone interested in exploring new cultures, or anyone enthusiastic about science and engineering.

THOMAS HARDYE SCHOOL, DORCHESTER

Teacher

My third time with students in Japan on the science workshop and the students amaze me every time. Part of our students grows up on this trip. They learn to be considerate of others, to be polite in a foreign culture and to communicate with peers and adults in a different language. Every part of the week contributes to an increasing maturity. They meet strangers with whom they about different scientific techniques and how to speak in public. I take children to Japan, but I bring home young adults. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in organising this experience

Student

I am so glad that I had the chance to be on this trip which has been an absolutely unforgettable experience. Everyday has been great whether it was taking part in the workshops which were a fantastic taste of research or exploring Kyoto with all the other students, trying the many different foods and experiencing the culture (including the *onsen* which managed to be a lot of fun). This truly fantastic trip is the kind of thing you can only get once of in a lifetime.

Student

This trip had been absolutely amazing! It has truly allowed me to have a first hand taste of life as a research student as well as experience in working in an international team. I am incredibly grateful for having this opportunity and would highly recommend it to anyone interested in science and culture. Thank you!

Student

This amazing opportunity has not only provided me with an incredible view into practical uses of science but also lifelong friends and a deep respect for a beautiful culture. I could never have imagined the wonderful ways in which science is integrated into daily life, and the presentations left me speechless at the complexity of developing new, useful ways to make our world more efficient. I am so grateful for the whole experience, something that will alter the way I think in our every-changing scientific world for ever.

Student

The Japan 2019 Kyoto Science Workshop has been an absolutely awesome opportunity that will stay with me forever! The trip has provided invaluable experience of scientific projects and communication with international scientists during my enlightening first visit to Japan. Not only have I participated in a workshop which provided a unique first-hand experience of fascinating experiments and a glimpse into Japan's amazing culture, I have also made life-long connections to carry into the future. Thank you.

UCL ACADEMY

Student

This trip has made me see the world from a completely different perspective. Now I understand how to develop research in science and the key rules motivation and patience play in it. Not only has it opened my eyes from an academic point of view, but also from a personal one. As someone who was brought up in a very different culture than the English one, I thought fitting in and adapting to the Japanese culture would be very easy. However, I found myself being challenged by so many unexpected struggles such as the fact that I don't like tea. The first place my Japanese partners took me was a tea-room and even though I knew I wasn't going to enjoy a cup of *matcha* I still ordered one and drank it as I had been taught at the Rikkyo school. Throughout the trip I encountered many experiences like that one and because of them I think I have become even more adaptable, a skill I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to improve. Also, I love learning new languages and about different cultures and now I think my knowledge of Japanese language is sufficient for me to communicate basic messages. I am very thankful for all the wonderful memories and friendships this trip has given me.

Student

Truly this has been a once in a lifetime experience. The UK-Japan Science Workshop has taught me valuable life skills in communication and co-operation as well as helped me make new friends not only from the UK but also from Japan. I am whole heartedly grateful for having been able to take part in this cultural and educational experience

Student

During this trip it was not only enlightening for me to discover about the Japanese culture, but also about the different methods of research and attitudes to learning of both the university and the high school students I had the pleasure of meeting. I loved working on our project with the other students, using our joint love of science to overcome the language barrier. I was able to form new relationships and my eyes were opened to the world of research both during and after university in Japan and how this differs from the UK.

WELLS CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Teacher

I have been too busy to keep a diary! This trip has provided both students and teachers with a multitude of experiences that have challenged and enriched them. The lab-based workshops were core to the programme and the students relished the opportunity to engage with a real lab experience. I particularly enjoyed working with the students to understand concepts and the challenge of communicating without a common language. Ga and Andrew were fantastic, especially when they were asked to explain complex concepts in two languages. Thank you to them. It would be wrong not to mention the cultural element of the trip. I was amazed that within a week I had mastered the bus system and importance of a bow. The historic sites were fascinating, and I particularly enjoyed the difference in architecture. Thanks to

amazing local guides, in the form of MG and Sakai sensei, I felt I could truly appreciate the differences in culture. This is a trip I will remember for a long time.

Student

I can't quite put into words how much I've enjoyed this trip. I've met friends I'll keep for life, learnt skills which will be incredibly useful for other times and experienced a whole new diverse way of life and culture. To think that months ago I was not sure about applying for this opportunity seems crazy and in hindsight I am so happy that I took the leap and signed up because I have had a truly pivotal experience. This trip has provided me with a superb cultural immersion and stretched my mind scientifically and I can't recommend it enough to anyone looking for an adventure.

Student

This science trip has been one of the most extraordinary and exciting experiences I have had. Having had almost no experience with foreign countries, going to a country such as Japan is enlightening, and I had countless 'first-times'. Having the opportunity to work as a student would at the university not only gave me an insight into what I want to do in the future but also was very rewarding with a presentation at the end. Thank you for this experience and I hope to visit Japan again soon.

Student

Thank you so much for this trip. Although it is called a science trip and the science was amazing, especially the privilege of working in Kyoto University, I want to make clear that it is so much more than that to me. I have learned so many things about the world and myself and it has been, without hyperbole, one of the greatest experiences of my life.

WYCOMBE ABBEY

Teacher

Wow-what can I say? Another absolutely fantastic workshop made possible by the Clifton Scientific Trust. Having been involved with the Cambridge workshops for several years, I was confident that what was to come would be excellent, but the range of opportunities and experiences, both scientific and cultural, afforded by the briefing weekend at Rikkyo and the trip to Kyoto was incredible and something that I and my girls will remember fondly and draw upon in the future. Thank you so much – the girls are more focussed than ever, looking forward to their future careers in science and future trips to Japan., perhaps even to study. I wish you all the very best going forward and hope that many more students benefit from your great work and learn to keep asking questions!

Student

First of all, I would like to say a massive thankyou for organising such an amazing trip to Kyoto! I enjoyed every single moment in Kyoto and there are some highlights during our visit which I think will stay with me for the rest of my life. The three-day science workshop was excellent. We had full support and learnt a lot throughout. I now have a deeper appreciation of science being a language and no matter where you are there will still be communication. The iCEMS science festival was really

amazing as I had a chance to talk to a CiRA lab about iPS cells. Overall, it was an unforgettable experience.

Student

I am extremely grateful to have been given the chance to have the most amazing week in Kyoto, Japan, as part of the Clifton Scientific Trust Young Scientists Programme. **Two years ago, my older sister participated in the same workshop at Cambridge University and came away with a deeper passion and love for science. She went on to read Material Science at Oxford University after having a deep conversation about this workshop in her interview.** The thought that I may be able to search for and investigate this passion for science inside myself whilst also exploring a whole new part of a completely new continent and culture seemed truly 'too good to be true'. My time spent at this workshop has exceeded all expectations of and hopes for the trip. Not only was my workshop "Earthquake Engineering" a new idea for a British student but it also combined all my favourite school topics from a range of subjects: geography, history, physics and maths were the top subjects this course covered relating ideologies in a way I had never grasped before. The professors, teaching assistants and facilities of Kyoto University were of the highest quality imaginable, constantly engaging and questioning our natural logic. The seismic insulators and vibration test were brought to reality as we explored the tunnels under the recently renovated university Clock Tower. The Japanese students I worked with were motivated and diligent; even with the slight language barrier we always reached the correct understanding eventually on topics as diverse as academic theories and funny stories at lunch time. I have learnt a huge variety of key skills ranging from teamwork, presentation, communication, and also having the courage to take a step outside my comfort zone to try new things. I would like to thank with wholehearted gratitude every single person involved for, helping me find such an interest in engineering and the hunger and drive to want to learn and discover more about the world we live in. It was a truly unique experience and I will forever be grateful for everything I was able to explore in such a short space of time. I will be sure to keep in contact with the inspirational people I met.

Student

This trip and the workshop have changed my perception of science as a career substantially. It highlighted to me the effect of science research and how widely this effect can be felt. Before embarking on this trip, I viewed research in science as potentially solitary and quite abstract. However, through taking part in this workshop I have been able to see that teamwork is invaluable in science research. I was also able to observe how very technical science is being used to solve some of the largest challenges facing mankind today. Working with others from completely different backgrounds was also incredibly eye-opening and taught me to look at problems differently and pushed me to work in a way that was not in my comfort zone. Overall this trip not only improved my technical science knowledge but perhaps more importantly gave me communication and teamwork skills that will remain with me my whole life.