

My Taiwanese Background and Me

My Taiwanese background has influenced my school experience in many ways. Being Taiwanese is a large part of my life, and I have grown up with Taiwanese people and Taiwanese aspects all around me. Because of this, the culture of Taiwan has found its way into many of my school projects and assignments. The skills I have learned from attending Washington D.C. Taiwanese School ever since I was one and a half years old are used daily in high school as well.

Going to Washington D.C. Taiwanese School has shaped my experience in schools. Being one of the oldest students at school allows me to develop my leadership skills and act as a role model for younger students. I have refined my leadership skills to use at school during school projects, making group projects much easier to deal with.

At school, whenever a big project is announced, I immediately think about my Taiwanese background and how I can incorporate that into the project. My teacher once assigned a project named the "Individual Media Project." As the name suggests, the project did not have many guidelines besides needing to be a form of media, such as a newspaper, book, website, song, or movie. Coming up with a topic was not difficult at all, as I knew that I wanted to share facts about my Taiwanese background with my peers. I ended up deciding to make a website on Taiwanese Culture at taiwan-culture.weebly.com. This made me look closely into my culture and research various aspects of Taiwanese culture. However, me being Taiwanese myself, this was not a challenging thing to do as I had a multitude of sources right at my fingers. I interviewed my mother about the languages spoken in Taiwan and had an endless selection of visuals from the thousands of pictures taken from the annual summer trips to Taiwan. Additionally, my own background information from previous experiences at Taiwan with my family made the research process extremely easy.

Interviewing my family is a common assignment that is often given at my school. Through these interviews, I have learned extensively about the Japanese occupation in Taiwan in the 1900s, the 1990 Wild Lily student movement, the political situation in Taiwan, and the Hakka people. The people in my family and the connections that they have all allow me to learn about Taiwan whenever I wish to.

The annual Taiwanese speech contests held at Taiwanese School have also contributed greatly to my experiences at school. In high school, my teachers have tended to focus on presentation skills, such as eye contact, engagement, volume, and enunciation. All of these skills came easily to me because of the countless speeches I have had to prepare over the years for Taiwanese School. Enunciation especially is not a problem because of the different words in Chinese and Taiwanese that can be confused with each other because of slight mispronunciations.

The skills I have gathered from WDCTS will continue to contribute to my future experiences. Leadership and presentation skills are not limited to school and will be to my benefit for most, if not all, careers. Being trilingual in English, Mandarin, and Taiwanese will allow me to pursue interests and possibly even a job in Taiwan itself. I will definitely end up continuing to learn about the fascinating and vast culture of Taiwan in my future and applying it to my life outside of family and home.