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Summer Study Program in Denmark- Learn. Love. Play – Exchange program

20910 陸玟蓁

My trip to Denmark was an unforgettable experience, especially the time spent with my host family. It gave me a real sense of what it's like to live in a different culture. This trip not only gave me the chance to visit a local school and learn about Denmark's education system, but also to explore the city's landmarks and enjoy a day trip to Sweden. Our host family was very warm and friendly. Their hospitality made us feel at home right away. Although I remained quite shy, I still had a wonderful time with them. During our first meeting, we shared some gifts from Taiwan. Over the next few days, they showed us their way of life, and I also shared some information about Taiwan with them. With the host family's support, we were able to stay in a totally unfamiliar country very comfortably. The teaching methods and environment impressed us, especially how they encouraged independent learning and creative thinking. On this trip, we followed the local school teachers and saw many famous landmarks in Denmark, such as the Little Mermaid and the colorful houses. These were truly unforgettable experiences. The day trip to Sweden was also very enjoyable. Although it was only one day, we had the chance to visit Malmo's famous spots and experience the unique feel of a Swedish city. Overall, the trip to Denmark was a meaningful and fulfilling experience. It not only helped us learn more about the local education system and culture, but also deepened our gratitude for the warm

hospitality of our host family. This kind of cultural exchange made me appreciate the diversity of the world even more, and it gave me precious memories that will always be with me. It gave me a real sense of what it's like to live in a different culture. This trip not only gave me the chance to visit a local school and learn about Denmark's education system, but also to explore the city's landmarks and enjoy a day trip to Sweden.



107-22 吳卓昱

During this summer vacation, I went to Denmark. This journey was planned by my school as part of an inter-school exchange program, and I have vivid memories of the trip.

First, I took a rather long flight to Denmark. After enduring a cramped 18-hour flight, I finally arrived at my destination: "Here I am, Denmark!"

In the first few days, I visited Copenhagen. Not only did I walk through the streets to immerse myself in the exotic culture, but I also took a boat ride on the river in the center of the city.

The buildings beside the river in Copenhagen feature colorful facades, steep gabled roofs, and timber frames. Much to my surprise, Danes usually rely on bikes or walking for transportation. As a result, the traffic and road configurations are remarkably friendly to pedestrians and bicyclists.

I also visited Kronborg Castle, which is majestic,

fortified, and towering. The guide mentioned that Kronborg used to be a fortress that controlled ships shuttling between Denmark and Sweden.

Later, I met my host and their family. The Danes were enthusiastic. Unlike us, they were all extroverts. I had been worried about talking with them at first, but it turned out they were patient when I struggled with my English. I chatted with them about everything—politics, sports, education, and more.

During the days I lived with them, they brought me along to experience their spare time activities like bowling, having reunions after school, and strolling along a lake near their home. The activity I enjoyed the most was bowling. Even though it was my first time, I even managed to get more than one strike, which means I knocked down all the bowling pins in one turn. I felt a sense of accomplishment, and I enjoyed it very much.

This was my first time going abroad, taking a flight, and talking with foreigners. I experienced and learned a lot. My host told me he will be coming to Taiwan next year, and I look forward to entertaining him and sharing our culture with him.



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10805 徐翊臻

I had a memorable vacation during this summer break. I signed up for the school's Denmark travel education group, which was also my first trip to a European country. I was really looking forward to the trip while suffering from insomnia the night before I left. This trip provided me with many special experiences and unforgettable memories.

We visited a lot of attractions during this trip. On the first day, we visited a local high school. As soon as we arrived, we could clearly feel the differences from Asian culture. Each student could wear their own clothes, and the atmosphere was not as serious and heavy as in an Asian school; it was relaxed and free. In the next four days, we visited the local canals, the famous Little Mermaid statue, Novo Nordisk A/S, and the majestic Kronborg Castle, all of which were as beautiful as in a fairy tale. They captured my attention. Kronborg Castle is the place I liked most because it was shockingly huge and adorned with fine carvings.

Unlike most people who travel abroad, we stayed in a local house. I felt fidgety before meeting my partner, as I didn't know what her personality would be like. Actually, they turned out to be friendly and energetic, so I got to know a lot of local classmates and experienced a completely different culture from that in Asia. According to my classmates, school would end at three thirty, and they could go out with their classmates after school to play and go shopping. There is no academic pressure and cram school like in Asia, and the culture is relatively open. The way to greet each other is with hugs and kisses. It was really a special encounter for me.

I like Denmark very much. People in Denmark of all ages always wear blissful smiles. In addition to visiting many beautiful places and getting close to European culture, this trip also broadened my horizons, taught me about the lifestyles of different people on the other side of the world, and helped me make many good friends. I believe this trip will be the most unforgettable experience in my life without question.

10820 石皓中

I visited Denmark on an educational trip during this summer vacation. I found lots of things to be different from Taiwan and had a really good time.

When I arrived in Denmark after taking an 11-hour flight from Bangkok, the first thing that shocked me were the high prices. A bottle of water cost about 80 NTD. This was quite funny since you can actually drink the tap water there.

The first thing we did in Denmark was head to the school where we would meet our new friends. I was a little jittery at first because I wasn't confident in my English communication skills. After having a small chat with my new Danish friends, however, it turned out that it wasn't too difficult to understand what they were saying, which brought me an overwhelming sense of relief.

A few days later, I was taken out by my homestay family to visit the capital city of Denmark, Copenhagen. I was totally fascinated by the neat and ordered buildings downtown. Although the buildings weren't as tall as the skyscrapers in Taipei, they were all carefully painted and maintained. This is why the city looks so beautiful compared to those in Taiwan.

I also watched a football match with my homestay family in Copenhagen.

I had never watched a football game before, but the match was by no means boring to me. The fans of F.C.KØBENHAVN, the football team of Copenhagen, sang loudly throughout the whole game, cheering on the players on the football field. Not until the second half of the game did any team score a goal. As the tension of the game mounted, the opponent team found an opportunity to break through the defense, and suddenly an opponent player ran straight towards the goal with the ball. While the player was approaching the goal quickly, the audience burst out yelling "Nej, nej, nej," meaning "No, no, no" in English, hoping that the opponent team wouldn't succeed in the attack. Unfortunately, the goalkeeper failed to catch the ball, and the opponent team scored the first goal in the match. The Copenhagen football fans let out their disappointment by shouting loudly. Even though the game finally ended in a tie after Copenhagen's team scored a goal before the game ended, my homestay family still argued that their team should have won the match. I guess European people are just very passionate about football.

We only stayed in Denmark for a week, and soon we had to say goodbye to everything there. I miss the beautiful scenery, the pleasing weather and my homestay family a lot. I don't know whether there will be another chance to visit Denmark, but I definitely hope there will be.



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20103 張永宜

The biggest cultural shock I experienced in Denmark was their sleep schedule. People typically go to bed at around 9 or 10 PM. In Taiwan, I usually go to bed around midnight or 1 AM. So, during my stay in Denmark, I felt well-rested every day. It had been a long time since I went to bed at 10 PM and slept until 7 AM the next day. It was such a wonderful and satisfying experience.

I chose to go to Denmark with the school because visiting Scandinavia is a rare opportunity. I wanted to experience Nordic culture through this educational trip.

On our first day, we visited the exchange school and found that their courses are similar to university-level ones, where you can choose classes based on your interests. We also met our Danish partners, who were all very kind and welcoming.

In Copenhagen, which is the capital of Denmark, we saw the Little Mermaid statue. It was smaller than I expected, but it was quite exquisite. We took a boat tour to see Copenhagen's unique buildings and visited a 14th-century castle, which was truly impressive.

I have unforgettable and joyful memories with my Danish partner. She took great care of me and enthusiastically introduced me to Danish culture, helping me gain a deeper understanding of Denmark's unique features. I am really looking forward to their visit in March next year, and I can't wait to introduce them to Taiwanese culture.



20407 張芯菱

Before heading to Denmark, my impression of the country was that its social welfare system was highly developed. In class, my teacher mentioned that Nordic welfare systems provide protection "from the cradle to the grave," and after visiting, I realized

it was true. The government takes care of every aspect of people's lives: there are subsidies for education, housing, and even nursing homes for the elderly. However, the price of such a comprehensive welfare system is higher taxes; Danish citizens pay nearly half of their income to the government. Aside from this, one of the things that shocked me was the high cost of living in Denmark. Items that I could buy in Taiwan were about four times more expensive there, and I felt overwhelmed while shopping at the supermarket.

Overall, my exchange in Denmark taught me a lot about the different ways societies can function. The Danish model, while different from Taiwan's,



has its unique strengths and challenges, especially in balancing high living costs with the benefits of a strong welfare state.

During this exchange program in Denmark, I spent about a week living with my host student and her family, sharing meals and experiencing their daily life firsthand. Throughout my stay, I was warmly welcomed, and my host student's parents were particularly fascinated by Taiwanese culture. Every day during meals, we had conversations about cultural differences. The school classes were also very engaging, and the one that left the strongest impression on me was a physics lesson. Although I had already learned the material before, understanding it in English proved to be quite challenging.

This trip to Denmark was an amazing experience, and I'm looking forward to their visit in March next year. I'm excited to host them and offer them the same hospitality I received!

20409 陳巧瑛

The city's appearance was the first culture shock I experienced—large, low, and well-designed buildings, a stark contrast to the high-rise, densely packed structures in Taiwan. Additionally, the atmosphere within the family and the class felt different. It was freer, more casual, and more lively, which I really enjoyed.

This was my first time visiting Denmark and Sweden, and my most cherished memories are centered around the friendship I built with Victoria and the deeper understanding I gained of Denmark. I thoroughly enjoyed every moment with Victoria's family, from savoring ice cream while feeling the sea breeze, to eating pizzas and pasta in the backyard, playing card games, shopping in the flea market, and so on. Through our conversations, I found out more about their perspectives on their culture, politics, and everyday customs. It was truly a delightful and fortunate experience to have met Victoria and her family.

Our team from Yanping visited several iconic travel attractions, including the Little Mermaid Statue and Nyhavn in Copenhagen, Novo Nordisk in Hillerød, Kronborg Castle in Helsingør, and Saint Peter's Cathedral in Malmö. I had only seen these places in pictures before, so experiencing them in person was truly awe-inspiring. Denmark's architecture is one of the main reasons I love the country. Additionally, the gatherings between Yanping and Birkerød Gymnasium gave us plenty of opportunities to chat, creating unforgettable cross-cultural memories for us. I was thoroughly fond of the casual and lively atmosphere both within Victoria's family and the class.

Making new friends and embracing the “hygge” spirit in Denmark has created incredibly valuable memories and has made this the best trip I've ever been on.

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20723 賴湘綦

The exchange program in Denmark was an unforgettable and precious experience. It was my first time leaving Asia, and everything felt new. Upon arriving at Birkerød Gymnasium, the school I visited, I was stunned by what I saw. The whole campus was so big that I couldn't imagine it was a high school.

As an introvert, I was nervous about my homestay. However, my host Bjørk and her family were very friendly.

They live in the beautiful countryside. Compared to the fast-paced life in Taipei, I prefer the laid-back lifestyle there. During the few days I lived with Bjørk, what surprised me the most was that Danish teenagers like social activities very much and often hold parties after school or on weekends. I participated in three parties in just one week. One of the most memorable parties for me was a girls' party I attended at a sushi restaurant. We talked about Danish and Taiwanese culture and I was surprised by the openness and maturity of the students.

On my last day with Bjørk, I took classes with her. I was impressed by the way students interacted with teachers. Compared with Taiwanese students who don't like to answer questions in class, their interactions with their teachers were as cordial as with friends, and they expressed their opinions very enthusiastically in class.

Whether their answers were correct or not, they were always affirmed by both their classmates and teachers.

Another difference that shocked me is their daily routine. In Taiwan, we have 9 classes a day. And we don't have many other activities except school, but in Denmark, each of them has their own class schedule.

The time they arrive at school is determined by the time of their first class of the day. The number of classes

every day is also different. Sometimes they may arrive at school at ten o'clock and finish at two in the afternoon, and school will be over at 3:30 pm at the latest. After school, they will arrange their own time, but almost all itineraries are very relaxing. However, although their class schedule seems very relaxed, I think their course content is also substantial, including preparing for classes in advance and completing reports during the semester. They get their grades more by completing specific reports rather than by taking exams.

During this trip, I experienced a different culture and broadened my horizons. I learned how to open my mind to different things. In Taiwan, I have almost no chances to speak English. But in Denmark, I had to communicate in English all day. In addition, as an introvert, I was influenced by the enthusiastic and extroverted personality of my Danish classmates, which made me braver to chat with others and express myself.



208-39 辜柏鈞

During my exchange program in Denmark, I experienced significant culture shock, particularly with their short school days, which end at 3 PM. Danish students typically spend their afternoons socializing or participating in leisure activities, which was very different from Taiwan's rigorous schedule of nine classes per day. Initially, I was nervous about my English skills, but the Danish students' friendliness and patience quickly eased my concerns. This experience not only improved my confidence in speaking English but also allowed me to immerse myself in Danish culture, visiting landmarks and enjoying time with my host family. The friendships I formed are invaluable, and I am excited to welcome my Danish friends to Taiwan next year to share our culture with them. This exchange program broadened my horizons and made me more open to new experiences and perspectives.

20844 潘瑋宇

The students in Denmark are so enthusiastic and outgoing! They will start talking to you even when you are alone. Sometimes it was scary for me. It was absolutely a special and unforgettable trip to Denmark. Their school left me with unforgettable memories. The splendid school building, large campus, and lively atmosphere during classes made me very envious of them. Maybe this trip wasn't like a typical group tour in which you can visit all the top tourist spots and play all the time. However, the experience of living and spending time with the locals made this journey even more interesting. While chatting with my host family, we shared details of our lives and introduced ourselves. Sometimes, they even took us on trips. We got deeper introductions and more interesting stories of each spot than in a regular tour. These were all unique and rare experiences for which I'm grateful.



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20910 陸玟蓁

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20911 黃昱禎

In Denmark, they will invite many friends to their birthday party. My buddy, Devin, for example, invited 70 girls to her eighteenth birthday party. I was very shocked by that, because in Taiwan, it is uncommon to have a birthday party with more than 10 people.

I was both excited and nervous about making new friends. I looked forward to meeting foreign friends and sharing interesting cultural stories, but I was also afraid of not knowing how to chat, potentially leading to some awkward silences. However, I soon realized my worries were unnecessary. My study buddy, Dixen, and her family, were all very kind, and our casual conversations were filled with laughter.

We often hung out with everyone's study buddies after school. Our first gathering was bowling. At first, I was really nervous since it was my first time bowling, but the result turned out to be surprisingly good—I got first place! I was so happy at that moment and immediately fell in love with the sport.

One thing that left a deep impression on me was that almost everyone had a trampoline at home, which is quite rare in Taiwan. They even taught us new trampoline games, which were a lot of fun.

It's also worth mentioning that on the evening after we said our goodbyes, Dixen and I unexpectedly ran into each other on Stroget Street. We were amazed by this coincidence and took a precious photo together. Now, I'm eagerly awaiting our reunion next March!

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My summer vacation: exploring the charms of Türkiye

10719 詹斯涵

Türkiye, located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, is a bridge between the East and West, both culturally and historically. As an imaginative teenage girl, I have always been captivated by this exotic country, with its abundance of history and diverse geography. It was undoubtedly on my must-see list. Luckily, I had the opportunity to visit this summer vacation, unveiling the mystery of Türkiye.

The first stop was the Grand Bazaar, where vendors generously offered you a taste of their specials with a big smile. The bargain sounds between the merchants and the customers echoed through the streets. Rows and rows of goods were displayed, which varied from candies to exquisite woven carpets. You could even smell the spicy fragrance of various spices and the sweetness of the dried fruits just by passing by. As the proverb goes, "Smiling back is a gesture of goodwill." Even though I had no clue what they were saying to me, I still wore a friendly smile on my face.

The tour guide always told us to obey the moral standards and customs wherever you go. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" sure is the best way to explain it.

The next day, we woke up at the break of dawn to get a glimpse of the sunrise of Cappadocia. When we arrived at the hot air balloon launch site, I was still sleepy-eyed. The moment the hot air balloon took off, a

thrill of excitement flooded my body, and, simultaneously, a surge of consternation and nervousness took over my mind. As we were ascending closer to the sky, the scenery below grew smaller. The feeling of towering over majestic valleys and unique rocks would make anyone emotional. I am a person not easily moved to tears, yet I surprisingly felt my tears streaming down my cheeks; it seemed that all the frustrations in my school life vanished into the clouds. As the balloon landed, I stepped out of the basket, feeling the ground beneath my feet once more. It turned out that riding a hot air balloon wasn't as scary as I anticipated. I was thrilled that I had achieved the goal of getting over my fear of heights.

Türkiye is not only rich in historical sites, but also vibrant in its cultural diversity, offering visitors a unique blend of ancient history and modern charm. I will never forget this memorable experience in this beautiful country.



A hot air balloon ride in Cavusin Village of Cappadocia



Mevlana Museum, one of the biggest pilgrimage centres in Türkiye

Walking out of Northern Taiwan

10817 謝昀真

During my summer vacation, I took a three-day trip to Kaohsiung and Chiayi with my family. Instead of staying in hotels as we had done on previous trips, we planned a few but fulfilling tourist spots to visit. Staying away from electronic devices and the routine Taipei city view, I experienced the beauty of nature and local culture.

After a long drive on the highway, we took a break at the Yujing Mango Market in Tainan, where we saw various kinds of mangoes and candied fruit. We learned about this market through many foreigners who introduced it on YouTube, highlighting that Tainan's mangoes are renowned worldwide. Despite the heavy rain outside, the vendors and buyers under the large shelter continued as if an isolated festival were taking place.

We checked into the H2O Hotel in Kaohsiung. So unique was the hotel's name that I almost thought some of its structure might be made of water. In fact, the name reflects the hotel's aim to be a "home and second office." Out of curiosity, we visited its open-air bar. The bar wasn't bustling with noise; on the contrary, its peaceful and spacious environment made us feel comfortable.

The next day, we visited Shou Shan Zoo, which is famous for its wandering monkeys. We first took a train to tour the

zoo, but it moved too fast for us to properly admire the sights. So, we decided to explore it again on foot. Although the zoo didn't have as many species as the Taipei Zoo, the tourist route was straightforward, and the pathways were spacious.

Later, we checked into the VOCO Hotel in Chiayi. From the windows next to the elevator, we could see tall buildings towering over the city, while our room offered views of fields. It had been a while since I'd seen such breathtaking scenery made up only of fields and a clear sky.

On the final day, we visited the Fossil Museum in Tainan, the last tourist

spot of our trip. The museum featured not only fossils but also Taiwanese historical antiquities. I was particularly amazed by a special exhibition on rhinos, which revealed that rhinos once lived in Taiwan. Moreover, I saw many fossils and antiquities I had previously seen in textbooks, such as the fossil of the Archaeopteryx, the trilobite fossil, and the Sinkan Manuscripts.

After the three-day trip, I realized that many magnificent things should be enjoyed in person rather than admired through others' tourist experiences on the Internet. Whenever I reminisce about this trip, it will surely be a meaningful memory.



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Wandering Through Italy and France: A Tale of Two Cultures

10809 陳亮仔

During the summer of 2024, my family and I went on a very special holiday in Europe.

The moment I set foot in Italy, I knew this journey would be unlike any others. I was immediately drawn to its vibrant history and stunning landscapes. From the antique streets of Rome to the ancient ruins of the Colosseum, the warm golden color looks beautiful against the deep blue sky. When speaking of this majestic place, we must talk about its history. Once it was used as an arena, which held gladiator fights, animal shows, and other events. As I traveled through the swarming streets of Florence, the place where the Renaissance originated, and saw the sparkling canals of Venice, every moment felt like a step back in time. Every corner of this country whispered stories of history, art, and passion. I found myself captivated by the rich historical remains that make Italy so unique.

But the adventure didn't end there. A short flight took me to France, where the elegance of Paris the City of Light, awaited. When I stood on the top of its iconic Eiffel Tower, an overwhelming sense of astonishment engulfed me. I took in the whole city view of Paris and felt like I ruled the world. In Paris, there are many charming cafes, and most French people sit outside and enjoy the sun.



This habit was new for me! The Louvre, once a royal palace, has taken on the responsibility of protecting precious cultural relics, like the Mona Lisa, The Winged Victory of Samothrace, and Venus de Milo. Each art piece echoes centuries of artistic evolution. Paris offered a delightful contrast to the rustic beauty of Italy. Every moment in France felt like a scene from a classic film.

This trip to Italy and France was more than just a vacation—it was a profound learning experience. From the ancient ruins of Rome to the elegant streets of Paris, I discovered a wealth of history and culture that deeply enriched my understanding of the



world. Overall, I realized how crucial it is to preserve our cultural heritage. These structures are not just relics; they are stories that live in stone that connect us to our ancestors and their achievements. However, this journey also made me realize that protecting our modern culture is equally important. As we experience and create new traditions, art, and architecture, it's essential to ensure that these contributions are preserved for future generations, just as we value ancient structures.

Not only do Italy and France leave an inerasable mark on my heart, but the memories will continue to inspire me long after the journey has ended.

Volcano Eruption

10840 鄭修杰

This summer my family and I went to Kyushu, which is one of the four main islands of Japan. Compared to Tokyo and Osaka, Kyushu is a place with lots of natural landscapes such as gorges, volcanoes, waterfalls…… and so on. At that time I witnessed a volcano eruption with my own eyes in Kagoshima.

It was in the scorching sun that we took a walk in the Senganen (仙巖園), which is the former residence of Atsuhime (篤姫), and immersed ourselves in an atmosphere full of history. Suddenly, the floor shook violently, and there were a series of banging sounds

with doors shaking. We felt a chill of trepidation and bewilderment as a staff member ran towards us and said that the Sakurajima volcano had just erupted. At first we thought that she was asking us to take refuge, but then we understood her body language. She was simply telling us to come over and have a look. Directly above the volcano, a thick black smoke was floating, but it quickly spread and disappeared. Although volcanic ash is bad for people like me who are prone to allergies or asthma, I couldn't help but keep watching. This spectacular scene was impressive and is still fresh in my memory.

Later, my aunt told me that a long time ago in Australia there were some reckless and stupid people who wanted to see a volcano from closer up, so they paddled boats near it. Unfortunately, just then the volcano happened to erupt, and they ended up dying a painful death. When I heard this, an overwhelming sense of shock flooded over me. I felt it was a good thing that the Sakurajima volcano didn't erupt so violently at that time, and that no one was injured or died.

You cannot experience the feeling that you have when you see this kind of stunning scenery with your own eyes by simply looking at it on a screen or a book, especially if it is accompanied by a dramatic event. I think that this is probably the purpose of traveling.



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Scuba diving- A new perspective of the Ocean.

10835 馮耀德

Water activities are the first things to pop up when the scorching summer crosses your mind. Cooling down in the water is a luxury that air conditioning can't match. Every summer, my family and I go snorkeling in the northeastern coast of Taiwan, but this year, we decided to take things up a notch: going scuba diving in the Philippines.



Our trip started in Cebu, a hub for divers all around the globe. After a bumpy four-hour ride, we arrived in Moalboal, which is renowned for its wide variety of sea life. The boat took us to a bay, where a sardine run may be seen if you're lucky. After making my way through a lot of colorful coral, I chanced on the famous sardine run. It wasn't until a moment had passed that I figured out I was in the spectacular sight. Surrounded by tens of thousands of sardines, watching millions of sliver silhouettes turning in unison, the breathtaking view left me in awe. This is nature's pure beauty. Then, we got to Oslob, another famous diving attraction on the island. Oslob is not famous for its astonishing sea life, instead, its spotlight is on one thing: the

humongous whale shark. After ten minutes of being submerged, a shadow, roughly four meters long and a lot wider than I am, engulfed me. I was mini by comparison. I turned around, and the silhouette was unmistakable: a whale shark. Despite their large size, the gentle giant swam gracefully through the sea, with its mouth wide open to feast on krill and small fish. Swimming only meters away from it was an unforgettable experience.

My diving trip in the Philippines was truly a remarkable and fresh experience, giving me a brand-new perspective of the sea. The endeavor left me with tons of beautiful memories and a strong curiosity to pursue more mysteries of the vast sea.

The Experience of Joining a Swimming Camp

10810 陳思穎

I really enjoy water sports such as surfing, swimming, and canoeing. My preference for these activities stems from the refreshing and cooling sensation that water provides. To avoid sweating while exercising, spending time in water is the best option. This summer, I decided to enhance my swimming skills and work towards earning certifications as a lifeguard and coach.

As a senior high school student, I rarely initiate conversations with strangers. Therefore, my father encouraged me to call and register for a swimming summer camp myself. Overcoming my fears, such as stuttering when talking to unfamiliar people, was my biggest challenge, particularly when it came to pressing the call button. After choosing which camp I wanted to attend, judgment day finally arrived. I was overwhelmed with anxiety as I dialed the phone number. Summoning all my courage, I pressed the button, and the call connected. To my surprise, I discovered

that the person on the other end was also a bit nervous!

One of the requirements to obtain a swimming coach certificate is to teach in front of my classmates. The night before the exam, I struggled to fall asleep as anxiety flooded my mind, leading to a bout of insomnia. The next day arrived quickly. When it was my turn to teach, my classmates provided me with encouragement. Thanks to their support, my teaching went exceptionally well, and I received praise from them. I feel fortunate to have met such kind classmates, especially the woman sitting in front of me, who greeted me with kindness when we first met.

After attending this camp, I gained skills that allowed me to swim faster. Moreover, I overcame my dread of making phone calls and speaking in front of large groups. It truly was a joyful weekend at the swimming camp. I am immensely grateful to have met such wonderful classmates. By conquering these challenges, I successfully earned both the lifeguard and coach certificates!



El Clásico: A Clash Beyond Football

10835 馮耀德

El Clásico, the legendary derby between Spain's two most iconic football teams, FC Barcelona and Real Madrid, is more than just a football match. It's a spectacle that captures moments of superstars, passion and history. This essay dives into the origins, key moments, and tactics of this classic rivalry.

Origins of El Clásico

The roots of El Clásico trace back to the early 20th century, with the first official match between Real Madrid and Barcelona in 1902. Over the years, this rivalry has grown into the most significant fixture in soccer. The political, cultural, and social differences between the two cities, Madrid and Barcelona, further intensifies the rivalry. Madrid, the capital of Spain, represents the Spanish government, while Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, is a symbol of regional pride. These tensions have added a layer of complexity to the derby, making each match a fierce battle for regional and La Liga supremacy.

Iconic Moments in El Clásico History

El Clásico has produced an infinite number of unforgettable moments that are enclaved in every football fan's heart. One such moment occurred on November 2005, when Ronaldinho, the Brazilian maestro, received a standing ovation from the Santiago Bernabéu crowd after an extraordinary performance that

saw Barcelona triumph 3-0. This rare gesture highlighted respected the exceptional talent, even amidst intense rivalry.

In recent years, Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo have taken the spotlight, with their individual brilliance often deciding the outcome of El Clásico encounters. The two greatest players of all time competing against each other is truly a sight to behold. Their rivalry within the rivalry topped an extra dimension to the matches, captivating millions of fans around the world.

Evolution of Tactics and Playing Styles

El Clásico has also been a showcase for the evolution of tactics and playing styles. Both Real Madrid and Barcelona have influenced and adapted to tactic trends in the sport. Barcelona's tiki-taka style, characterized by short, precise passes, have revolutionized modern football under the guidance of Pep Guardiola. This approach led to an era of dominance for Barcelona, highlighted by their treble-winning season in 2008-09 and 2015-16.

On the other hand, Real Madrid's emphasis on counter-attacking style football, physicality, and individual brilliance has also had significant success. The different styles of the two clubs add another layer of intrigue to El Clásico, as each match becomes a tactical battle between controverting philosophies of the game.



Conclusion

El Clásico is more than just a football match; it is a global phenomenon that encapsulates rivalry and passion in this sport. From its origins rooted in regional pride and political tensions to its status as a global highlight, El Clásico continues to captivate and inspire millions. Iconic moments, evolution of tactics, and global impact of this derby ensures that it will remain a cornerstone of football for generations to come. Whether you are a die-hard fan or a casual observer, El Clásico offers a unique and thrilling glimpse into the heart of soccer.



Exchange Program

Travel

Sport

World

Pop

South Korea's martial law is out of reach? In fact, it is closer than you think

20530 黃慕彥

For a long-standing democratic country, this event was undoubtedly an unexpected shock.

On the evening of December 3, 2024, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol unexpectedly declared "emergency martial law," citing threats from North Korea and accusing the opposition of paralyzing the government. South Korea had not declared martial law in nearly 50 years, making the announcement particularly surprising. Once martial law was enacted, troops were deployed to prevent lawmakers from entering the National Assembly and clashed with protesters on the streets. This sparked immediate backlash, with both ruling and opposition parties, as well as labor unions, strongly opposing the move.

In the early hours of the following day, the National Assembly held an emergency session. All 190 lawmakers present voted unanimously to revoke martial law. President Yoon subsequently agreed to lift it. Although the entire episode lasted only about six hours, it caused significant damage to Yoon's credibility. Experts and media widely speculated about the political motives behind the declaration. Some analysts argued that it stemmed more from Yoon's internal political challenges than from a genuine external threat. Opposition parties and social groups criticized the overreach and called for an investigation. While the immediate situation subsided, political tensions in South Korea remained unresolved.

As a student, I can't help but compare this event to what we've studied in history textbooks. Taiwan endured 38 years of martial law—a painful chapter that serves as a reminder to cherish our democratic freedoms. Without the sacrifices of those who fought for freedom



in the past, we might not enjoy the democracy and rights we have today. Democracy is not something to take for granted; countless individuals have experienced the struggles and sacrifices required to achieve it. Yet even in a developed and mature democracy like South Korea, political crises can arise and threaten democratic systems. This incident shows that, even in modern society, leaders may make extreme decisions that prioritize personal political interests over the country's needs. It prompts me to reflect on whether Taiwan's democracy could face similar challenges and what measures we must take to prevent such setbacks.

So, what can a student do? It is crucial to broaden our perspectives and stay informed about international

affairs. In a rapidly changing world, paying attention to global news and understanding Taiwan's future development are vital. By studying historical events, I have come to realize that safeguarding democracy requires collective effort. When we encounter inappropriate policies, it is essential to speak out and take action. Staying engaged with current events and courageously expressing our opinions are small but meaningful ways to contribute to society.

In conclusion, this incident has prompted me to deeply reflect on the interplay between democracy, power, and responsibility. It has not only enhanced my appreciation for Taiwan's democratic system but also inspired me to consider how we can protect it in



an ever-changing world. I firmly believe that as future citizens, each of us bears the responsibility to uphold and strengthen democracy, ensuring it continues to shine brightly.

Democracy does not come easily, and we must remain vigilant to prevent history from repeating itself.

| Exchange Program | Travel | Sport | World | Pop |
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Brazilian Miku

90601 王妍心

Miku is a virtual singer who is loved worldwide, known for her cute voice and unique image. Her iconic outfit includes a white sleeveless shirt with a cyan tie, black arm sleeves, a pleated skirt, and knee-high boots, each featuring cyan accents. Speaking of Miku, it's hard not to mention the huge amount of fan art and derivative works inspired by her.

Recently, a trend started where artists design Miku in different styles from various countries. This craze began with a piece of Brazilian Miku fan art posted on Twitter (X). This Brazilian version of Miku stands out because of her tan skin and sun marks, making her look very attractive.

Many artists began creating fan art of Brazilian Miku, including the artist who created the Rabbit Hole Animation channel. He also posted his version on Twitter, which got a lot of attention, but he also got flamed by fans who dislike other interpretations of Miku.

Some fans believe there should be “only one Miku” and dislike different styles, especially those with sexual innuendos. They see this as a form of disrespect towards Hatsune Miku. On the other hand, some people oppose the Brazilian Miku design because she is only 16 years old, at an age not even old enough to drink in many countries.

This situation is similar to the “iwin” event: should underage anime characters be banned from wearing skirts or other revealing clothing just because they “might lead to inappropriate thoughts” in real life? This might seem too strict, but it is what we are going to face. Plato once said: “If sharp criticism completely disappears, mild criticism will become harsh. If mild criticism is also not allowed, silence will be seen as having ulterior motives.” Judging other people's work based on their subjective ideas without



being bound by law is very dangerous. If every piece of Hatsune Miku fan art faced censorship, she would not be as successful as she is now. Certain vocaloid producers like kikuo, maretu and pepoyo may not have a chance to create music for Hatsune Miku. Her popularity comes from the many fans who continuously create a lot of fan art and music. It's the music and stories that made Miku who she is today. There's a saying that “there are a thousand hamlets in a thousand people's eyes.” The freedom in derivative works allows fans to create their own versions of Miku through art and music. In other words, if creators had to stick strictly to Miku's original image, she wouldn't last as long or be as influential.

In the end, due to the controversy and criticism, the channel's founder made an announcement that he would stop creating Miku versions with sexual innuendos. While we still see new Miku designs from him, it's a pity that he cannot express the ideas he wants to express.

The balance between ethics and freedom of expression does not have clear answers, but the right to create and express oneself is something we all value.

Frieren

10819 王乃翔

“Frieren: Beyond the Journey's End” is an anime that aired in September 2023, and it shot to fame and received rave reviews almost instantly, with an IMDb rating of 8.9/10. It is quite possibly the greatest anime ever. In case you didn't guess, I am a great fan of Frieren myself. So what makes this movie such a fascinating work of art?

First of all, I think Frieren stands out because of its unique premise. Unlike many isekai animes and other fantasy tales, the story takes place after the defeat of this universe's villain. It focuses on the life of the practically immortal elf mage. This unusual starting point immediately draws viewers in. Secondly, the plot is unpredictable and masterfully written. This keeps it engaging. One example comes from episode 17, where a priest named Sein is confronted with the decision to say farewell or not. I really thought he would stay, completing the trinity of warrior, mage and healer. Yet to my and many people's surprise, he left, in keeping with his personal motivation. In confounding our expectations, this shows the movie's exceptional quality.

However, Frieren's high ratings are not based on this alone. It has emotional depth, too. Although the plot is simple and straightforward, the story is woven delicately together with countless emotional moments and messages for viewers to reflect on and draw inspiration from. Take Frieren, the main character, for example. She's an elf mage, and for ten years travelled with a group of adventurers. Saying farewell to them didn't mean much to her, because ten years were but a blink of an eye compared to her lifespan. However, when she attended the burial of Himmel, one of the party members, fifty years later, she was overcome with all the memories of the time they had spent together. It wasn't until this moment that Frieren realized in regret and sorrow how much she had valued Himmel as a friend. Despite knowing that the life of a human was fleeting compared to her own, she hadn't tried to get to know him better, and no amount of tears she cried would bring him back. This poignant moment highlights how we often take loved ones for granted, and leaves a lasting impression on the audience.

In summary, Frieren: Beyond the Journey's End is both entertaining and inspirational. Its refreshing premise, unpredictable storytelling and emotional depth make it, in my opinion, worth all the attention and compliments it has received. It's my favorite anime of all time.