

SINGAPORE DEBATE TRIP

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1. Introduction

In the summer holidays, where most students were enjoying either their holidays abroad or having fun in Hong Kong, we were given the chance to participate in a very unique trip to a South East Asian country---Singapore. Most of us who were on the trip have previous experience in debating while others are keen on learning about this activity. The trip not only requires a passion for debating, but also a solid foundation in the English language.

The main idea of the trip is to promote students' understanding and interest in debating, and through debating with and against other schoolmates, students can learn about the importance of teamwork and are trained in critical thinking. Because this is an English debate tour, students need to communicate with each other and speak in front of an audience in English. Through this, students can also hone their English speaking and listening skills. Speaking in front of an audience also helps to boost a student's confidence and presentation skills.

The trip was set on the 25th of July and it was a four days three nights trip to Singapore. The first and the third day of the trip would be the debate workshops, while the second and the fourth day would mostly be sightseeing around the country. Our students will be having debate workshops with Raffles Girls School or RGS in short, which is one of the most prestigious secondary schools in Singapore. The goals of RGS were similar to Pui Ching, to help students become all-rounded with fine characters.

During the debate workshops, some students would be debating against RGS on a prepared motion on the first day of the trip, while others were given an impromptu debate to work on. Students working on the impromptu debate were mixed with the RGS girls to prepare for their debates. The motion for the prepared debate was "Organ transplants for people with healthy lifestyles should be prioritized" and the motions for the impromptu debates were "Soft drugs should be legalized" and "Beauty pageants should be banned". The debate was set in a parliamentary format*

Through the trip, students have learnt more about the art of debating, and how to present their ideas in a clear and logical manner. These will be invaluable skills that are useful for them in all aspects. Also, our students have learnt more about another culture and came back with a broadened horizon. The trip itself was not only educational, but also an enjoyable one.

***Parliamentary Debate**

In the parliamentary format, two teams debate against each other over a government policy, with the proposition team playing as the government. In a parliamentary debate, the first, second and third speaker of each team will speak alternately for six minutes, followed by the three-minute reply speech of the opposition side. The debate will be ended by the reply speech of the proposition team. During the speech of the first three speakers, members of the opposite team are allowed to raise points of information or POI in short to the speaker. The speaker can choose to accept or deny the POI, and the speaker must answer the question raised by the member of the opposite team if he or she accepts the POI.

2. About RGS

The focus of our trip to Singapore was debating with the RGS students. RGS, namely Raffles Girls' School, is generally accepted as the best school in Singapore. During our four days in Singapore, we did two debates with them. The two debates included a prepare debate and an impromptu debate which were scheduled on the first and the third day of our trip respectively. In the impromptu debate, RGS and PCMS students mixed up and formed a team to work together.



I still remembered vividly how nervous I was when I approached Raffles Girls School. How would the students there treat us? Would they, being the best students in Singapore, look down on us? But my worries soon vanished completely. The teacher and student representatives were awaiting us at the school entrance with a friendly smile on their faces. They greeted us warmly and showed us the way to the proper classroom.

The first debate then began. I enjoyed myself very much as I watched both the PCMS and RGS students doing their best to argue the case. The way in which the RGS students delivered their speech impressed me prodigiously. It was extremely confident and persuasive. Compared with the PCMS student, the RGS students inclined to make a lot more gestures and eye-contact with the audience. They also spook extraordinarily fast, and to most of us it was quite a shock. When all the speakers finished speaking, two of the RGS students came out and commented on both the performances of the PCMS and RGS students. They did not judge who had won and who had lost, but pointed out various things that each speaker should beware of. I was deeply impressed by their analysis ability.

On the third day was the impromptu debate. I was very excited by the idea of working together with the RGS students. Before the debate started, we were given one more hour to prepare. Our team seized the time to re-form our strategy. During the discussion period, I found out that generally, the RGS students were more initiative than PCMS students and they obviously talked more. They also thought in a more logical way and came up with lots of good ideas to argue our case.

Then it was time to debate. My fellow RGS students impressed me yet again with their talents. They spook in a very fluent and convincing manner with just point-form notes on their notebooks, whereas most of the Pui Ching students would have to write down their entire speech beforehand. They were also quick to pick up flaws in the opponent team and pointed them out. On the whole, the debate was brilliant. The two girls then came out and summed up the debate.

After that it was time to say goodbye. We took a lot of photos together and exchanged our e mail addresses. The RGS girls were very nice and I really hoped to keep in touch with them!

3. Itinerary

In an afternoon with a light shower, our team arrived at the Singapore Changi Airport. Our first stop was the Raffle's Girls Secondary School (RGSS), one of the most famous schools in Singapore. The RGS campus was about twice of Pui Ching's, the large posters drawn by their girls gave us an energetic and creative impression. After a warm and decent welcome by their teacher and students, we had a friendly prepared debate with their girls. As we had guessed, all their girls were eloquent debaters. They spoke with an unexpectedly fast pace and they presented their speeches in a clear and logical order. We also formed teams with their debaters and prepared for the mixed group debates two days later.

The next day we headed towards the Quay (harbour) and had a Bumboat ride along the Singapore River. All our teammates took out their cameras and captured Singapore's skyscrapers and heritage - the essence of this city-state's economy and history. After the boat ride we visited the famous Merlion. Although it had been raining, we still jokingly took photos with funny poses, pretending to be swallowing water spilling from the Merlion's mouth.

When sunlight dispersed the cloud, we spent a day at Santosa – a resort island located on the south of Singapore. The island had a size of the Ocean Park but a lot greener. When we were standing on the roof of the Santosa Merlion, all we could see was a panoramic view of Singapore and a view of Santosa Island surrounded by trees with the ocean as the outer rim. In the evening we also watched a laser magic fountain show at the amphitheatre.

The attraction we went on the following day was Jurong Bird Park. We visited penguins which flew under water; friendly lorries which tended to stand on people's shoulders waiting to be fed; and some intelligent parrots which held human talk shows in the All Star Bird Show. After waving goodbye to the parrots, flamingos and hornbills, we left the park and headed towards our next stop.

Our next stop was RGS again. After two days of preparation, our debaters cooperated well with the RGS students. The two mixed debates turned out to be excellent performances, whereas the friendship of the students from both schools was enriched. When we left the school, it was already quite late. However, a great adventure still laid ahead – the Night Safari. With a forty-minute tram ride, we could take a close look at the natural hunters like lions and grizzlies, or seldom seen animals like giraffes and anteaters.

On the last day of our trip, we had an extra tour to a water recycling plant – NEWater. The water they processed was mainly from the sewage of Singapore, but the water was potable. That gave us a funny feeling when we drank the factory's product. Apart from sightseeing and exchange activities, we also visited the Orchard Road and the China Town to buy gifts and souvenirs.

The sad thing was that we could not stay in Singapore for a bit longer due to the limited time. Overall, the exchange tour has been a success. We have gained experience, debating skills, and more importantly, the precious friendship with the Singaporean students. We hope they can enjoy the same happiness if they are paying a visit to us in the coming years.

4. Reflections

4.1 Miss Bonnie Tam

The tour was a manifesto of one of my life mottos: Work hard, play hard. In this 4-day, 3-night trip, every muscle and brain cell was exhausted, but it was a rewarding experience for the students and myself.

The fourteen bright and energetic students stepped out of their comfort zones to speak a different language, debate in a different format and worked with people with very different personalities. I was utterly amazed by their obedience and willingness to learn. As a teacher, I cannot ask for more. Fourteen little angels put their heads and hearts together to perform something that was alien to them. The experience has helped them see, it has made them grow, and most of all, it transformed them into a family.

On the other shore, twenty high-fliers from RGS awaited our coming. We witnessed flexibility, hospitality and a yearning for improvement as a whole. Those fledging young minds were able to grasp the meaning of true victory: a win-win attitude. The debate was not about winning and losing, it was about co-operation and sharing of wisdom. In this aspect we have lots to learn.

This is a trip that will definitely leave footprints in my heart. A big thank you to the wonderful students from Pui Ching and Raffles Girls School for making it happen.



4.2 Mr Tak Kei Chan

In the morning of July 24, 2005, a group of Pui Ching students and teachers, including myself, arrived at the Chek Lap Kok Airport and were ready to embark on a four day trip in Singapore. All of the students were smartly dressed in their school uniforms.

Notwithstanding the hard work they had done prior to the trip, they showed no complacency and started to refine their speeches on the plane and the teachers gave them final briefing and advice.

After a three hour flight we arrived at Changi Airport. Then we went straight to Raffles Girls Secondary School (RGS), one of the top schools in Singapore. We were all impressed by the physical appearance of the school. It was huge, beautiful and very well-equipped. We were greeted by their English teacher, Joseph and the students who were in charge of the event. We were led to their Multi-Media Learning Centre, which was like a lecture theatre, to begin our debate. It was obvious that the RGS girls were well prepared. They were aggressive in their arguments and they spoke very fluent English, after all, it was their mother tongue. Our students felt a bit nervous at first but soon regained their composure. Sharp

arguments were exchanged between the Pui Ching students and the RGS girls. As it was a friendly debate and there was no winner. But I think both teams are winners because it has been a very valuable experience for both of them.

We had one more debate with the RGS girls and this time we had mixed teams - Pui Ching students teaming up with the RGS girls. Our students had the opportunity to work with foreign students and they were able to learn from each other. Again, the experience proved to be both valuable and rewarding.

For the rest of the trip, we visited various famous places in Singapore. Not only it was sightseeing trip, we actually learned a lot about the country and their culture. The population of Singapore consists of Chinese, Malays, Indians and some foreigners. Singapore-Chinese speak Mandarin or English when talking to each other and most Singaporeans speak good to fluent English. Things work in Singapore, people are generally polite, law-abiding, and care about doing things the right way.

Throughout the four days, the students had the opportunity to use English at all times. Friendships were developed among themselves and between them and the RGS girls. Overall, we found the trip to Singapore both educational and enjoyable.

4.3 Andy Lau



Although this is not my first trip to Singapore, this is my first time to debate there and it had been the most educational and rewarding trip I have been to.

The deepest impression given to me was the huge difference between our cultures. Most people think that Singapore and Hong Kong are very similar to each other, but after this trip I would think otherwise. Because of the huge diversity of race in the population, Singapore students mostly communicate with each other in English and that may be the reason for Singapore students to excel in English and use the language better than Hong Kong students. I think Hong Kong lacks this environment though Hong Kong is also an international city; there is little interaction between the different races that live in Hong Kong. However, I do notice that Hong Kong students do better in terms of pronunciation. Singapore English has a very different accent from Hong Kong and most of the schoolmates on the trip found it hard to follow. However, I believe that this trains our skills in listening because almost every country has a different accent.

What I learnt in this trip is how to think more critically. Unlike Singapore, Hong Kong students are only trained in critical thinking at form 4, where students have the chance to take Integrated Humanities; Singapore students are trained at a much earlier age, so they are better developed at thinking critically. Hong Kong students have to learn to think and find problems faster because I believe that critical thinking is a very useful skill in both work and studies. It is quite useless to memorize tons of information when we do not know how to use them well.

4.4 Calvin Lo

This four-day trip to Singapore was something I had been waiting for. Since it was the last trip I would have in my secondary school life, I had great expectation to this journey. And at last this trip didn't disappoint me and I can say that the whole trip was a great success.

In terms of an exchange tour, I have learnt a lot in this trip. I got more used to the parliamentary debate; I learnt how to use flowcharts and points to keep the flow of my speeches; and I experienced more about the Singaporean: their culture, their people and their students. Before the trip, I thought I would be very nervous in front of the RGSS girls, but it turned out to be fine, and that makes me feel impressed. The mock debate at PCMS was also extremely helpful. Since I hadn't debated for about two months, plus I had just finished my examination, 'debate' was at the darkest corner of my brain. The mock debate really helped me refresh my memory, and I strongly suggest that we should have more mock debates with lower form debaters. (If we have time of course.)

In terms of a vacation, honestly it wasn't really relaxing. The schedule was quite tense, and often we would stay awake until three in the morning playing mahjong. However, the trip was fun and the relationship of the debating team got closer. I hope this kind of tour would be held once a year. (If the school would sponsor us.)



4.5 Jasper Wong

Having a debate trip to Singapore was really a fantastic experience. There are plenty of things I have learnt during this trip.

To begin with, it was my first time to participate in a formal debate. I found it an extremely valuable experience to debate with foreign students whose first language is English. Even though our debate formats were tremendously different, am sure that both my schoolmates and I learnt plenty. We improved in leaps and bounds not only in our presentation skills, abilities to speak and listen to English, but also our understanding of some social issues that was debated.

Furthermore, besides the English language, we learnt a lesson from the RGS students. They treated us very nicely. They brought snacks and drinks for us. However, their teachers never told them to do so. Those were planned by themselves. In addition, they prepared some note sheets for us and explained thoroughly and patiently to us the format of their debate. There were plenty we should learn from them.

On the other hand, there is no denying that the schoolmates engaged in the trip became much closer. It is always a marvelous idea to have some tour to enhance the friendship between schoolmates.

All in all, I think that the work, time and money I spent on the debate trip is more than its worth.



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4.6 Henry Wong

I'm sure that I had learnt a lot from the trip to Singapore. Although I have never been to Singapore, what impressed me the most are the RGS girls.

We went to the RGS right after we arrived in Singapore, and immediately we had a debate with the RGS girls. I was surprised that they were so aggressive during the debate. Although the result was not announced, we all knew that we lost. The first impression that they gave me was that they are so bright.

Two days after we went to the RGS again and had the second debate, what we realized was that the style of debate of the RGS girls had changed in order to make us feel familiar with it. We had a good debate this time. After the debate, the RGS girls gave us a brief summary, telling us what we could improve. I was impressed that they were doing this for us since they do not have to do so. In addition, they had been doing a lot of things for us such as printing notes and preparing food for us, which were what we didn't expect.

The RGS girls had show us how generous, organized and friendly they are. I not only learned a lot of debating skills, but also how to cooperate with foreigners and how to be a good organizer.

4.7 Esther Chan

PCMS Debate Tour 2005 is not the first “school-organized” trip I joined. However, in this trip I learned the most.

My first lesson started in the bus. Jasmine, the tour guide, was told to speak in English throughout the trip. In the first ride on the bus, I felt very tired listening to her introductions. When we arrived at Raffle’s Girls Secondary School (RGS), the situation got even worse. I was known as a very talkative girl, but in our first day at RGS, I was so quiet. I have lost my confidence in speaking English. I thought my English was terrible. I refused to speak in English. That night, Miss Tam told us it was because of the “Cultural Shock” and we only needed a couple days to get used to the language.



The second night in Singapore, everybody was working so hard because we were going to have a mixed-team debate on the third day! I had never seen teenagers working so hard together in such a trip. My teammate and I went to use the internet to do research. It was the first time I see other people doing research. That night, I learned to jot down different useful notes from as much sites as I could. I also learned what kind of information was really useful.

As the reply speaker, I have to summarize the points of my team. That was why I could not prepare my speech the night before. I have to use the one-hour preparation session to compose the whole three-minute speech. I think I have maximized the hour. Honestly, that was the first time I could work with such efficiency.

When the opposition reply speaker was delivering her speech, I tried to go though my speech again. I found that I could not finish it in three minutes! I was so afraid that when my turn came. I spoke in the fastest speed in my life. The result was- I have finished my speech within two minutes. After that, I realized no marks would be deducted even if I went over time! I think I have to learn to take my time whenever I speak English. Do not speak too fast again.

After the four days, I realize I really did get used to the language. I tried to give myself more confidence during the second visit at RGS and I found out that even other people started to respect me more and have more confidence in me.

Attitude changes everything.

4.8 Benedict Yuen

This is my first time going on a vacation without my parents. I grabbed my chances in learning English during the trip.

From the trip, there are areas that I need to improve in. For instance, I think we did not do enough preparation so we had some misunderstanding on the motion. First, we could not find any useful statistics to support ourselves. Moreover, we did not practice at all.

What impressed me the most was that the opposition could speak with confidence although they were not prepared as well. When observed them during the debates, I jotted down some notes to remind myself of their abilities. They could speak fluently, not only because English is their first language, they could speak with confidence and they truly understood the motion. This allowed them to think of some POIs that we have never thought of.

As time is running short before my HKCEE begins, I have written a schedule for myself. I would like to improve on my listening and writing skills in this month.

I would definitely like to join more debates and gain more experience.



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4.9 Daisy To



In this trip, I found that Hong Kong and Singaporean students have their own uniqueness, here are two of the main differences between RGS students and Pui Ching students.

First of all, the RGS students took more initiative during the debate discussion period. Unlike Pui Ching students, they were usually the ones who started the discussion and they were all confident when they expressed their points of view. It was also the RGS students who talked more during the discussions.

I think the reasons were that the RGS students were probably encouraged to engage in a group discussion and speak up since they were very young (perhaps since primary school). Therefore, they were not afraid to take initiative during the discussions and could exchange ideas with others effectively. Besides, they were very bright students so they could come up with a lot of brilliant ideas. Consequently they would have more to say and have confidence in doing so.

Secondly, most of the RGS students could speak in a very fluent and convincing manner with just point-form notes on their notebooks, whereas most of the Pui Ching students would have to write down their entire speech. The way the RGS students gave their speeches would have more interaction (e.g. eye-contact and gesture) with the audience.

I think the reasons were as follow. Firstly, they used English in their daily lives, so their command of English was way better than ours. Hence, they could express their thoughts in English easily. Secondly, they were clever and quick-witted, so they could think fast enough to form their speech while speaking. Their cleverness also helped them to pick up flaws in the opponent team and

pointed them out promptly. Thirdly, they were well trained in giving speech so they were confident not to rely on a thoroughly-prepared note.

There are many things I think I have to learn after this trip. Here are three of them.

Firstly, I have to speak up and speak more during a group discussion. I should not be too afraid to tell the others what I think and join in the discussion naturally.

Secondly, I should be more confident when I am giving a speech. After this trip, I fully appreciate that having confidence can make your speech sound better than it really is.

Thirdly, I should learn to be more friendly and hospitable to classmates I am not familiar with. The RGS girls were all extremely friendly towards us. For me, the way they treated us was impressive. Therefore, I hope I can be as welcoming and warm to others.

4.10 William Ma

Almost every one of my schoolmates says RGS's students speaking speed was the most impressive. Some of them may think RGS girls' debating skills or the marvelous campus is unforgettable too. However, I think there is something else that impressed me most.

When we arrived at RGS, I was shocked that the girls were standing in the rain waiting for us. They even had no umbrellas with them. Perhaps it was because they did not mind getting wet, but I think the main reason was they were so glad and anxious to see us. Since meeting us was their only concern, they did not care about other businesses at all.

When we were preparing for our debates on the first day, I could feel that the RGS's students were willing to help us. Firstly, they told us about Debatatabase, a website which is very useful to debates. Secondly, they walked around while we were preparing to solve our problems. These are some things that we may not do.

In the two days in RGS, we were provided with drinks and snacks. I remember there was a girl asking all of us if we wanted water or coke like a waitress. I was really surprised by her awareness of our preferences.

Besides learning debating skills, the most precious thing I can learn in this trip is RGS students' hospitality. If RGS was good at academic, but lacks sincerity, it will not be called "a great school". On the contrary, people can just feel their arrogance. From my experiences in RGS, I have a strong feeling that it will never be an "arrogant" school. I believe that RGS should keep this splendid attitude towards others. I wish to go to RGS again.





4.11 Malvin Li

It was my first time to Singapore. I have learnt many things in this trip. Firstly, I discovered that a debate needs preparation and cooperation between teammates. No matter how good you wrote your speech, without communication between teammates, you are still a bad debaor. Any member of the debate team should not think his or her idea is the best but respects each other's idea and listen to the others. A debate needs good preparation too. Without examples, your speech will be meaningless. And examples come from research. Therefore, a good preparation is the way to win a debate.

Secondly, I learned to speak English with my true feelings and emotions. In the past, I can not express my true feelings in English. And I noticed that I should have intonation in my English because it shows what I feel. More vocabularies are needed because without vocabularies I cannot speak good English.

Thirdly, I learned the difference between Hong Kong and Singapore. There are many differences between Hong Kong and Singapore. Most of the Hong Kong people are Chinese but many of the people in Singapore are not. There are Indians, Indonesians and many other races in Singapore. Therefore, English is the only way to let all the Singaporeans communicate with each other. Yet there might be a bad impact because of this. The Chinese in Singapore might have fewer chances to learn Chinese, their own language. As we all know, China is going to be a super economy and the only one that might have continuous economic developments for the next fifty years. There is no other way to get a job but to go to China and if you cannot speak Chinese, then it is impossible to get a job in China.

There are also similarities between Hong Kong and Singapore too. Firstly, Hong Kong has not got enough water and the same applies to Singapore. However, the way they solve this problem is different. Hong Kong buys water from China. Yet Singapore gets its water from the ocean and recycling. Secondly, because of the opening markets in China, many factories are drawn away from Singapore and Hong Kong. However, the impact to Singapore is much bigger than Hong Kong because Singapore's economy depends on industry. Therefore, many Singaporeans will lose their job because of this. *(editor: Singapore is a knowledge based economy so China's opening markets have relatively little impact on Singapore. Also, many countries set up their factories in Singapore.)*

This is what I learn from this exchange tour.

4.12 Wincy Lam

I had an unforgettable experience in Singapore. It was my first time I went on a trip like this, and I had to take care of myself (& my roommate, Phyllissa, sometimes). Also, I have learned how to spend money prudently.

This was my first time debating, I had no experience so I was a little bit scared. After this trip, I thought debate was not so difficult but I still had



to improve my abilities , logical thinking and listening skills because these were the reasons why I was very weak in debating.

Although I didn't have any debating experience, I had to thank the R.G.S. girls.

They were very nice, and they were so hardworking and well-prepared in debates. The most important thing I had learned was their learning attitudes. They were expecting to learn some new and good things from us, and prepared to share their experience with us. They did not laugh or tease us when we were not doing well. They also wanted to help us to improve our debate skills. I will never forget their kindness and I really miss them a lot.

To sum up, this trip was not only an unforgettable but also a good experience for me. I have learned a lot in Singapore. Also, I realised that there were still many things that I had to improve. Lastly, I thank God for giving me a chance to go to Singapore and learn a lot of things.



4.13 Christina Li

In this trip to Singapore, the deepest impression that I had was about the Singaporean students. They were kind to us, as though we have found favor with them. They prepared food and drinks for us, and treated us well. Although sometimes they do not comprehend our points, or do not accept our arguments due to the lack of understanding, I can feel their friendliness and generosity.

Not only are they kind and generous, their tolerance to different cultures and habits amazed me too. Maybe it is because they are in a multi-cultured environment that they have to be tolerant of different views and cultures.

We Hong Kong people always think we are one of the best races, and have low tolerance for others. We often only care for ourselves but seldom think of others. In comparison to the Singaporeans, I feel ashamed. I truly think that these are the lessons we Hong Kong people must learn.

From this trip, I found out that it is not as easy as I thought to stand and speak on stage in another language other than my mother language. At first I thought that it would be the same as speaking in Chinese, as English was the first language that I learnt. So I did the preparation work as usual, nice and calmly, thinking that it would work if I tried to speak like the locals. But on that day, by the time I notice it is not that easy, it was too late. I felt afraid, and spoke too softly that I was almost murmuring to myself. I felt ashamed.

Thinking back, I think I should watch more TV and movies without looking at the subtitles.

On the other hand, I am quite proud of myself when I found it quite easy to understand their English, although they were speaking a little too fast at times and had some different pronunciations.

Overall, this is no doubt a great trip.

4.14 Fernande Wong

After this Singapore tour, I gained a lot of precious experience. The girls in RGS really impressed me a lot, especially their ways of debating. It was quite different from the way we debated in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, we often wrote down a proper speech on cue cards, it was what we would read during the debate. Contrary to us, the Singapore girls did not have a real speech. They usually wrote down the main points on a note book or a big sketch book.



During the debate, they would recall from their memories and shared what they thought of the motions and explained why they had this kind of idea. This impressed me very much. It showed us that they were nicely prepared and also they had a very clear idea of the motion.

Why could we not do this in Hong Kong? The main point was in Singapore --Their mother tongue was English. They used English to communicate and learn. They could easily explain what they thought in English.

It was the same in Hong Kong, we could express our feelings without difficulty. If we want to debate like the Singaporean girls, I think we should practice more in English and also try to think in English. It would take us a long time and more effort as well.

What is more, I learnt a lot of things during this tour. I felt the importance of team work. During the debate, we had to work together, it was not a time to show off our own abilities. We had to allot work to every teammate, some of them jotted notes for rebuttals, the rest of them prepared for the point of information. This would give us a better result of the debate. Listening was also an area I had to work on. I should pay full attention during the debate instead of complaining how they spoke too quickly. At last, I hope that the things I had learnt in this tour could be used in the future.



4.15 Olga Chung

When I arrived in Singapore, I thought everything would be the same as Hong Kong, but it turns out that I was wrong. Singapore is a city full of attractions. It's a smaller and cleaner city. Not only this, the country has a lot of things that impressed me.

In this trip, I knew that there is still a lot of room for improvement, especially my listening skills. When I was doing my first debate in Singapore, I found that I did not understand what they were talking about. It was pretty strange because we both spoke English, but there were lots of differences between English in Hong Kong and English in Singapore. I was sad when I discovered that I did not understand their fluent and fast English at all. I realize my listening skills are not good enough; I need to listen more, speak more, practice more to improve my listening skills until I can hear every type of English, and of course, I have to learn more.

Also, I felt that the students in RGS wished to do their best in everything. That was what I needed. I was not used to taking everything seriously. I always thought nothing and nobody was perfect, so I did not have to take things so seriously, or I could even be lazy. After I went on this trip, I understood that we have to do our best in everything although we know we could not be perfect. Just like the students in RGS, they worked hard in everything though they did not know whether they would succeed or not, they just tried. I have so many things to learn from them. In this trip, I had a very good experience. I enjoyed it very much. Besides, I learnt how to learn.

4.16 Phyllissa Chan

Visiting Singapore was a really good experience for me. Since we have to speak English during the tour, I am sure my spoken English has improved. I realized that pronunciation is not the most important thing when you are speaking. If I have confidence in speaking English, people will miraculously understand what I am talking about.



On the first day of the tour, we visited RGS. The girls there were friendly they had done a lot of preparation before the debate. Although it was only a friendly match, they took it seriously. I told them my difficulties, and they solved them for me. In this tour, I learned a lot from them. I learned from their comments after the debates, and the process of the debate. From their comments, I know I was a bit nervous when I delivered my speech. I should have practised more and be more confident in speaking and I should not have read the speech during the debate.

Besides, I made a lot of friends in this tour. The girls in RGS helped me a lot in the debate. Also, they were so friendly that they always chatted with me and never treated me as a stranger. And, of course, all of my schoolmates treated me very well. I enjoyed staying with them very much. They were very caring. They taught me some vocabulary and useful phrases. I am sure that I can learn much more from them if I stayed with them every day.

To sum up, I got a lot from this tour. I learned some debating skills and made some new friends. Since this is only my second time to debate against another school and my first time to be a reply speaker and debate without preparing any speeches in advance, my performance is not as good as expected. However, I am sure I will do better next time.

5. Pictures



In China Town



In bird park



In Sentosa



In front of Merlion