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21-29



# JOURNEY IN THAILAND

**ETOILE STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM**

at **REGENT'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BANGKOK**

**AUG 24 - SEP 13**

# INTRODUCTION



At the end of August 2025, I had the chance to participate in a three-week exchange program at Regent's International School Bangkok, Thailand. From August 24th to September 13th, I lived in the boarding house, attended classes, joined extracurriculars, and experienced daily life in one of Southeast Asia's most diverse international schools.

Before leaving Japan, my feelings were a mix of excitement and nervousness. I was excited to step into a completely new environment, to improve my English, and to see what life was like in a truly international community. At the same time, I was anxious as this was my first time living away from home for so long, and I didn't know how easily I would adapt to boarding life or whether I would fit in with students who came from all over the world.

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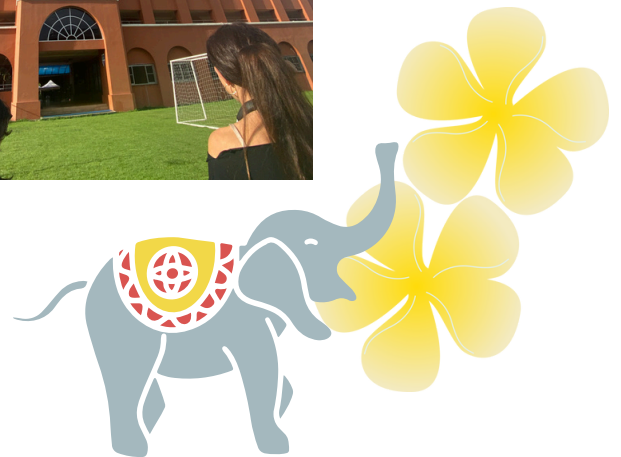
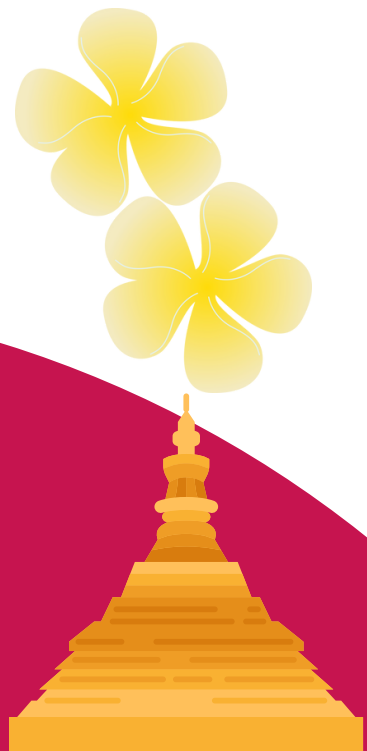


# ARRIVAL IN THAILAND

Landing in Bangkok was a moment I will never forget. As soon as I walked out of the airport, I was greeted by the principal and his wife. Their warm welcome immediately gave me a sense of relief and made me feel that I was not alone in this new journey.

The first thing I noticed about Thailand was the atmosphere. Despite the air being humid which was similar to Japan, the city seemed so alive with sound, color, and energy. Even before reaching Bangkok, I could already sense how different life here would be.

When I finally arrived at the boarding house, I was nervous about meeting the other students. But the staff and my new friends had welcomed us warmly and helped me settle in. Wandering around the campus, seeing new faces, and laughing with people I had just met broke down my nervousness. From that moment, I felt that this was going to be an unforgettable three weeks.



# BOARDING LIFE

Living in the dormitory was a completely new experience for me. Each day followed a routine: we had prep time to focus on studying, dinner together in the dining hall, and different evening activities planned by the staff. Some evenings were fun and creative, like making slime or trying out baking. Other nights were more active, such as capture the flag or cooking Thai dishes. There were also relaxed nights where we simply played board games together.

What stood out to me was not just the activities themselves but the way they brought people together. I bonded with my roommates during these times, and we quickly became close despite our different backgrounds.

Compared to my life in Japan, boarding life required more independence. I had to manage my own time, balance study and social activities, and adjust to living with people who had different habits from mine. At the same time, there was a strong sense of family in the dorm. We looked after each other, shared stories from our home countries, and supported one another whenever someone felt homesick.

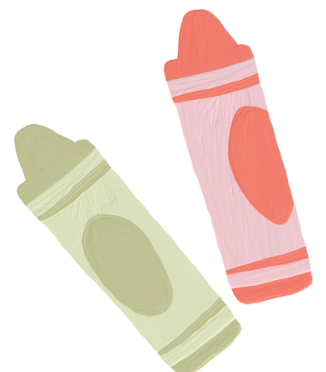




# SCHOOL LIFE

Regent's had a very different atmosphere compared to Japanese schools. Each morning began with an assembly where the whole school gathered. The atmosphere was warm and community-focused, with students and teachers interacting more openly than I was used to.

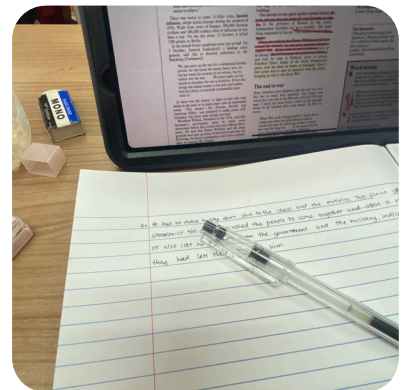
The classes were another major difference. In Japan, lessons often focus heavily on memorization, exams, and homeworks. At Regent's, I was encouraged to share my ideas, discuss with others, and interpret topics in my own way. Teachers did not simply lecture. Instead, they encouraged us to ask questions, to debate, and to think critically. This style was sometimes challenging, but it pushed me to think more critically and to use English more confidently.



# CLASSES



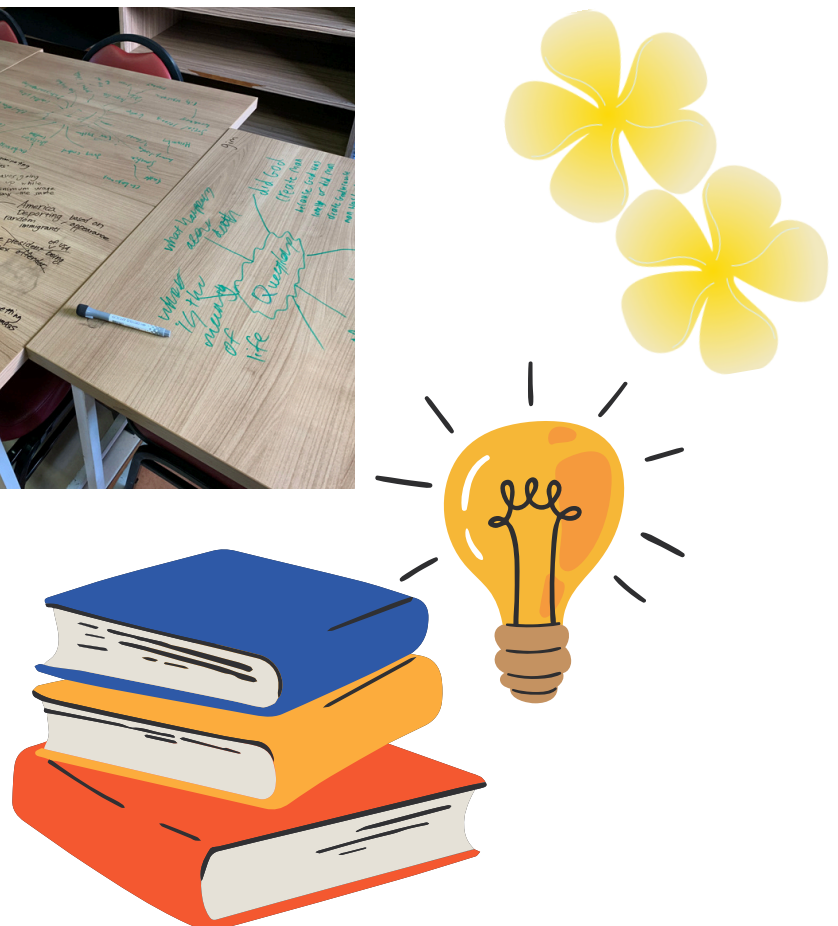
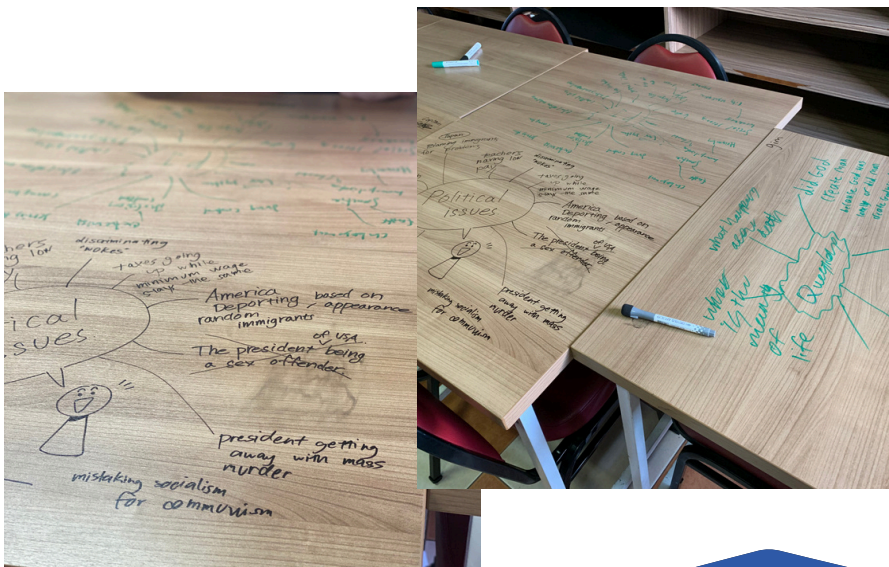
- **Business:** In Business, I joined a group project where students were preparing advertisements for different products. I worked with a small group to brainstorm ideas, design the concept, and plan how we would present it. I realized that this subject is not just about numbers but also about creativity, teamwork, and communication. This class taught me how to cooperate in English while contributing my own ideas.
- **English:** English quickly became one of my favorite classes. We were reading *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, and the discussions were deeper than I expected. We didn't just read the story. Instead, we analyzed the meaning of characters' actions and connected them to historical and social contexts. For example, we discussed how the Great Depression influenced the characters' dreams and struggles. This made me realize how literature can teach us about human nature and history at the same time.
- **History:** In History, we studied Hitler's Germany and the Holocaust. Instead of memorizing facts, we focused on why these events happened and their impact on society. We learned how propaganda supported Hitler's rise and how the Holocaust became one of history's darkest tragedies. I even tried to take a test on the topic. The class overall showed me that history is about understanding and reflecting, not just remembering.
- **Math and Science:** These subjects were easier than in Japan, but I still learned a lot. Studying them in English gave me new vocabulary and a fresh perspective on subjects I thought I already knew well.
- **Global Perspectives:** This class was unique. We researched global issues and learned how to evaluate different viewpoints. It trained me to build logical arguments and think about solutions to real-world problems.





# EXTRACURRICULARS

Joining extracurricular activities was one of the highlights of my trip. The most inspiring club I joined was the **Politics and Philosophy** ECA. In this club, students freely expressed their opinions and shared ideas. What amazed me was the open-mindedness: even when students disagreed, they listened respectfully and debated thoughtfully. It was the first time I had seen such an environment where differences in opinion were not something to avoid but something to value.



# EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Every Friday afternoon, Regent's held the Round Square inter-house competitions, where students from the four houses: Red Dragons, Blue Sharks, Green Crocodiles, and Yellow Tigers competed in fun challenges.

Another highlight of my time in Thailand was experiencing the **Wai Kru Ceremony**. This is a traditional Thai event where students honor and show respect to their teachers. I was deeply moved by how meaningful and sincere it was. Students brought offerings of flowers and the ceremony was filled with respect, gratitude, and symbolism. Even as a visitor, I could feel the strong bond between teachers and students, and it reminded me of the importance of gratitude in education. In Japan, we do not have such a formal ceremony, so seeing this made me reflect on how teachers shape not only our learning but also our character.

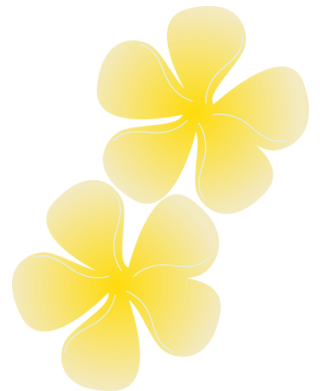




# LIFE IN THAILAND

Outside of school, I also experienced Thailand itself. The food was bold and full of flavor. Spicy, sweet, sour, and unlike anything I usually eat in Japan. The people I met were incredibly warm and welcoming.

Visiting temples in Thailand was unforgettable. There were many temples, from small local ones to big golden ones in the city. Inside, it felt calm and peaceful. The buildings and Buddha statues showed how important religion is in the country. Being there taught me to appreciate the importance of faith.



# WHAT I LEARNED

**Personal Growth:** Living in a boarding house far from home helped me become more independent. I had to manage my own time, take care of my belongings, and make decisions on my own. At the same time, I learned how to build relationships with people from different backgrounds. Sharing meals, studying together, and joining activities with students from many countries helped me become more confident and open in social situations. I realized that stepping out of my comfort zone can lead to meaningful experiences and new friendships.

**Academic Growth:** Studying at Regent's showed me a different approach to learning. Classes focused on discussion, interpretation, and critical thinking rather than memorization. I learned how to express my ideas clearly in English, think deeply about topics, and work collaboratively with others. Subjects like History and Global Perspectives taught me to analyze problems, consider different perspectives, and form my own opinions.

**Social and Emotional Growth:** I also learned the importance of open-mindedness. At Regent's, students from different countries, religions, and cultures lived and learned together. They shared ideas freely and respected each other's opinions, even when they were very different. Being part of this environment showed me how diversity can be a strength, and it inspired me to approach new situations and people with curiosity rather than judgment.

