

Bringing the World Into the Classroom

Kumamoto JET Programme ALT Skill Development Conference 2012

Divorcing the role of learning a foreign language from the context of a foreign culture not only hampers the learning process but also wastes a unique opportunity to foster internationalization in ways that other classroom activities like mathematics or moral education usually lack. As foreign language instructors, we all have unique experiences (some more obvious than others) that we can use to share our world and the world outside of Japan for the benefit of our students and the communities around us!

While we will discuss these ideas at greater length during the course of our workshop, here is a very brief summary of many of the major activities we will discuss. Feel free to use this as a guide for your memory as you consider these or other ways to implement your own personal spin on internationalization in your classrooms!

Pen Pal

Use your connections and acquaintances in your home country to start a pen pal program – either just once or repeatedly during the year!

- + easy to set up
- + good opportunity for students to interact with other children their age
- + lots of time to think and prepare

Notes:

TV Phone

Through the use of Skype or some other setup, make your students directly talk with someone from a foreign country.

- + great for learning about life in foreign countries
- + good practice for conversation
- + feels very immediate for students

Notes:

Foreign Music

Sharing foreign songs and spending time interacting with them is a great way to spur interest in foreign countries and cultures.

- + easy to set up
- + good opportunity to include your experiences
- + easy to interact with

Notes:

TV Shows

While it may be difficult finding a show that is subtitled in Japanese (if you don't want to try yourself), presenting and discussing foreign TV shows is a great way to explore cultural settings.

- + great tool for discussion of foreign views and opinions
- + great tool for improving media literacy about other cultures

Notes:

Playground Games

Kids are naturally interested in play, and engaging them in games they've never experienced before is both interesting and makes a lasting impression.

- + easy to set up
- + immediately rewarding
- + easy to participate in

Notes:

Cooking

Experiencing foreign cultures through foreign foods not only gives them something immediate to compare with but also leaves a lasting impression.

- + great point of discussion about foreign cultures
- + engaging
- + great opportunity to include your experiences

Notes:

Issue Debate

Forcing your students to examine both ways of thinking about foreign issues (whether or not they are related to Japan) is a fantastic way to make them to delve deeper in themselves and their English ability.

- + great way to encounter new ideas
- + good opportunity to include your experiences
- + fantastic for communication skills

Notes:

Art Exchange

Foreign exchange doesn't have to only be in English! Using art as a tangible point of exchange can be very effective and leave lasting examples of internationalism in your schools.

- + great tool for discussion of foreign views and opinions
- + great way to engage students who otherwise have difficulty with expression in English
- + facilitates two-way international exchange

Notes:

Keep in mind a clear goal for what sort of interaction you want to foster and try not to worry about some efforts feeling superficial. Focusing not only on the differences but the similarities helps make these activities more meaningful. Inspiring interest and concern about the world around your students is not something that will come immediately but instead is an attitude that must be fostered over time.

You've got an great advantage – various thoughts, experiences, and skills that your students likely don't know about! Share yourself as much as you share your skill with English, and you will send your students away with a curiosity that will only foster better opportunities not only in their future education but also in their lives!

**Bringing the world into the classroom is not something that happens by accident!
Make it happen!**

Bringing the World to the Classroom Sheet 1

What is internationalization?

What does internationalization mean to you?

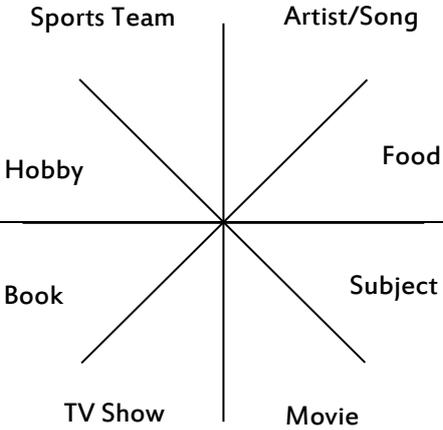
Who am I?

What do you bring to the table personally?

What can I do?

What are some activities or projects you can do?

Favorite



Bringing the World to the Classroom Sheet 2 – Activity Discussion

What do you want to do?		
What is the objective?		
Who is the target audience?	What do you need?	How long is the activity?
Describe the activity's steps at a high level:	Draw a picture of one of the steps.	
What unique skills or talents do you have that can make this activity better?		
What do you want to give the audience from it?	How international is this activity? Fill in the map.	
What do you think the audience wants from it?	How does this activity cause your students to interact with the world?	
Finally, why do you want to do this?		