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Activities Report

A journey of discovery and exploration to Hertford college of Oxford university — we came, we saw, we learnt

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Nursing / 2



Picnic with ducks in Blenheim Palace--Eat Hurry!



People and seagulls shared the same beach in Brighton.

When the sun rises again from the horizon, our 12-hour flight finally reached its destination, Heathrow Airport. With excitement and nervousness, a journey was waiting for our discovery on this 8-hour different land in the coming three weeks.

After a well-rested night in Abingdon, our exploration to Oxford officially started. What could be a better way than a City Hunt to get to know a city by marking the city with our own footprints? Starting from the Bodleian Library, one of the oldest libraries in the world, which began with around two thousand books to now with about nine million items (You had to swear that you would never damage or steal any items in the library). The hall inside was the filming site of the clinic of Harry Potter. Outside the Schools Quadrangle was the distinctive Radcliffe Camera with its recognisable circular dome and drum structure. Right opposite was the University Church, the largest parish church located at

the centre of University of Oxford. Down cattle Street until High Street, Carfax Tower was located at the junction of four streets, just as its name indicated--'crossroads', an ordinary cross at the junction of the road between Broad Street and Balliol College, which was the location of the vanished city wall and the execution site of three martyrs under Queen Mary's rule(Bloody Mary). Another circular building was just few-steps forward, the Sheldonian Theatre designed by the famous architect Christopher Wren, who in-charge of the re-construction of St. Paul's Cathedral after the London Great Fire. Right in front of it was Hertford College Bridge, which is also known as 'Bridge of Sighs' and linked the two parts of College.

Oxford, the name of a city, also represented one of the oldest universities around the world, the Oxford University. As we arrived at this academic palace, there was no reason not to sit ourselves into various lectures by professors



Surprise: Accidental group union in Bath

on diverse topics. As expected, this would be a very condensed journey. We were offered the chance to have lessons on Britain government structure, entrepreneurship in UK (Dragon's Den), economic issues related to Brexit, social anthropology (research on social change related to education in India), the evolution of English with the influence of immigrations, and the norms of British English. In addition to lectures, Oxford was full of museums that could not be missed, like the Natural History Museum and Ashmolean Museum. Due to administrative policy of museums, visits were self-organised and undergone in person, but none of them was a lonely journey, because you could 'communicate' with items inside at your own pace.

In addition, we had a trial on University's famous tutorial system with John Donne's poetry. Unlike us, students in Oxford did not have schedules filled with lectures. One-to-one or one-to-two tutorials were their main way of learning. A topic was given about two weeks ago and students were free to prepare themselves for the upcoming discussion that could last for hours. Students were encouraged to be self-organised, self-motivated and self-responsible. They could share opinions, discuss issues and ask questions during the tutorial. Students learnt the same subject followed unique paths

according to their own interests and abilities.

Arrived in the UK with us was the treasurable sunny and unusual warm weather (what melted the British was what chilled us). There was no point for us to waste this gift by simply sitting in the classroom but not went for field trips. Picturesque Arlington Row cottages showed the lives of British that came from a low social class in rural areas six hundred years ago. Yellow-mud colour houses made by bricks, which were closely packed together, became a shiny masterpiece under the sunlight. Burford Church, a large 'wool church' that had witnessed the development of the town over the five centuries. Escaped from the sun temporarily, Hufkins tea room located on the High Street of Burford provided space for people to have a cup of tea. Together, they formed the Cotswolds. Opposite Cotswolds, Blenheim Palace was the best interpretation of 'poverty limits my imagination'. It was originally a gift to John Churchill by Queen Anne for celebration of England's victory over France in the War of Spanish Succession (a private palace almost three hundred years ago!) It was the only non-royal country house in UK that held the title of Palace and the home of the Duke of Marlborough. There was a huge contradiction between Cotswolds and Blenheim Palace, so as the lives between the low class



Punting --- Wait for us!



Let's celebrate and have fun, Rainbows

and the upper class.

Extended our footprint from Oxford to London, the capital of UK. London was a melting pot of traditions and fashion. Historical constructions like London Tower and Westminster Abbey co-existed with modern constructions such as London Eye and The Shard. You could devote yourself into the world of art, historical and cultural heritages in National Gallery and British Museum. Meanwhile, you could join the parade led by the rainbow flag that represented the LGBT community to support the equality and freedom of different sexual orientations.

As suggested by the University, we should have the right to organise our own time according to our own interests, so we kept ourselves 'moving' even in weekends. First, a group trip to Bath. Immersed in history and discovered how Bath's former residents (Roman ancestors) relaxed all those centuries ago in the Roman Baths. The Royal Crescent stood out from the rest of the architecture in the city □ a crescent of Georgian townhouses made from honey-coloured stone and fronted by expansive green lawns located in the heart of the city. The Pulteney Bridge brought us to Italy, and it was one of the only four constructions in the world. Second, we had an individual adventure to the

south coast of England, Brighton. It showed another side of British landscape. The moment you came out from the train station, a long slope directed to the beach was waiting. As we walked towards the beach, the brays and silhouettes of seagulls appeared much more frequently, and the Brighton Palace Pier was surrounded by seagulls. Looking closer to the beach, you would find it was not composed of sand, but different sizes of cobblestones and gravel which made Brighton Beach an unusual, brick-red brown beach.

Not only the environment in UK was great, but also the British people. The most amazing thing of them was their complexity, they could be both very conservative and very open. It was not unusual to find someone who was wearing a formal suit while drinking in a pub or bar. It was incredible to see people who were dressing fancily, walking through historical buildings on streets in London. British people never seemed to be in a hurry. There were bike-riders all over streets of Oxford, but rarely a clinking or tinkling sound could be heard.

As the bell rang, our journey reached its end-point. It was time to say Goodbye to Hertford College, Oxford and UK. We were back, New Asia College and Hong Kong, with what we harvested. 🌈