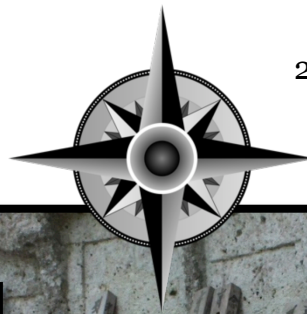


Expedition Nihon 2014: Journey to the Land of Wa

2/28/14 (MG)



February 28, 2014
Expedition Japan

Dear Parents,

You might recall that I wrote my first letter to you from our “camp” location in Northern California way back in early September. In that dispatch, my first *Head’s Logbook* website posting, I introduced a few ideas about Odyssey School’s bright future while also communicating the annual theme for the year.

It’s Happening Right Now: Climb On!

I am penning this note to Odyssey parents to convey my extreme excitement for the educational opportunities that will unfold during our upcoming journey to Japan. I am equally enthusiastic to use our annual theme, as a teaching tool, to help motivate our students navigate in the direction of expanded personal success. You might be aware that I have led well over 100 major middle school expeditions to many venues across our beautiful country and, with that depth of experience in mind, I fully expect our current expedition to be nothing short of spectacular.

A rich inventory of expeditionary learning goals, if achieved, can often have positive, life-long impacts on students and, therefore, can be critical “difference makers” in the educational trajectories of adolescent participants. The philosophical objectives for *Expedition Japan* fall all into 7 broad content domains:

Commitment
Leadership
Teamwork
Cultural Sensitivity
Foreign Language Immersion
Academic Forensic Analyses: History, Philosophy, Religion, and More
Critical Thinking: The Big Idea

Additionally, it should be noted that mini-seminars will be offered, both before and during the expedition, to expose our students to specific content areas that can be plugged into the aforementioned overarching philosophical phyla. We hope to extrapolate the topics of:

The Hero’s and Heroine’s Journey: An Old Blueprint for New Challenges
Needs Verses Wants: A Traveler’s Guide to “Less is More”
The Role of Student Ambassadors in an International Sister School Project
Expeditionary Behavior: Those Actions That Improve the Day
Odyssey Zen: A Field Guide for Personal Navigation on the Inner and Outer Pathways in Life
The Culture of Buddhist Temple Life
Traditional Japanese Crafts
Japanese Cultural Research Project: Research, Critical Thinking, and Synthesis
Hiroshima Peace Museum: Thoughts and Perspectives

The Japanese Educational System: Middle Schools and High Schools
The Holy Island of Miyajima
Journey to the Sacred Mountain: The Mt. Fuji Ascent
The Return to Home and Reintegration into Ordinary Life
The Rite of Passage

Notwithstanding all of the above, we have plans for other activities to optimize our **Journey to the Land of Wa**. Doug and Madeleine have contributed countless hours in the design of the robust curriculum elements that will serve to enhance our educational experience in Japan. They have also greatly improved this information packet. Please review all of the carefully crafted information and, by all means, drop by the Odyssey Campus at 7 PM on March 11th to attend the special parent information meeting that is planned for your benefit. Last, but not least, all parents are required to complete 1 reading assignment for homework. I will quiz you all very soon so read for deep understanding! The article can be found at:

http://www.nols.edu/nolspro/pdf/HBR_Article.pdf

Whereas this article is about wilderness travel, it is directly applicable to expeditions of international scope. If you have any questions or concerns – call or email the Odyssey gang at anytime.

With amplified passion and zeal,

Steveo

***Postscript:** I just realized that approximately 1 year ago, Jan Pickering and Ben Brown, Head Search Committee Co-Chairs, wrote the Odyssey Community to inform everyone that “Steveo” was appointed as the future Head of School. I hope that announcement hasn’t disappointed too many folks. If so, worry less as I only plan to improve and climb to the higher heights - the same expectations that I have for my students. I have to run – the phone is ringing – no doubt another potential Odyssey Applicant and new climber – I have no idea where I will put all of these kids next year!*

Important Dates

- Friday, February 28th: Expedition Nihon Packet distributed.
- Tuesday, March 11th: Parent Meeting at Odyssey on Expedition Nihon, 7pm.
- Monday, March 24th – Friday, March 28th: Japan Immersion Week; Japan Journal purchased.
- Monday, March 31st – Friday, April 4th: Spring Break; get luggage, daypack, shop for clothing, toiletries, and personal items; make address labels for postcards, purchase or make homestay gifts, go to the bank and get money for the trip.
- Friday, April 25th: Luggage Tryout: Odyssey Hike; review packing list and bring backpack to school, pack luggage and walk around the block, parents begin writing and sending mail to Japan.
- Friday, May 2nd: Final Luggage Day; deliver luggage to school, bring daypack home to finalize.
- Wednesday, May 7th: **Climb on!** Arrive at San Francisco Airport, Terminal 3: United Airlines. Meet at the check-in counter at 5:30 am
- Wednesday, May 28th: **Triumphant Return**; meet at SFO Terminal 3: United Airlines, security screening at 4pm.
- Tuesday, June 3rd – Thursday, June 5th: Socratics
- Friday, June 6th: Graduation Practice
- Sunday, June 8th: Graduation

Broad Parameters

1. 21 Days in Japan:
 - 7 days in Kansai
 - 4 days in Chuugoku,
 - 7 days in Touhoku,
 - 2 days in Chuubu
2. Participants: 8th grade students; three Odyssey teachers: Steveo, Doug, and Madeleine
3. Travel: United Airlines/All Nippon Airways, Shinkansen (bullet train), Japan Railway (JR) and private railways, local buses
4. Rough Schedule (see subsequent pages for a more detailed schedule.)
 - Days 0 – 6: Explore Kyoto and the greater Kansai area, stay at temples, meditation class, scavenger hunt, temple and site exploration, art classes, stage combat class, interview locals for research project, meet with Hiroshi Imase, Atsumi Himeno's family.
 - Days 6 – 9: Hiroshima; Experience Japanese school life, participate in community forum, Shinonome homestays, Peace Park, hear survivor stories, baseball game.
 - Days 9 – 10: Island of Miyajima; stay at Daishou'in (temple), explore island
 - Days 11 – 17: Sendai; Tokiwagi homestays, experience Japanese school life. Visit elementary school. Possible community service opportunity.
 - Days 18 – 19: Mount Fuji, debrief, final banquet.
 - Day 20: Travel to Narita, return to the US

Detailed Schedule

A Map of Japan: Japan is slightly smaller than the state of Montana. Odyssey's Route mapped out in blue.



Day 0 – Wednesday/Thursday May 7 th /8 th		
Activity	Description	Duration
Meet at Airport at 5:30AM	Check-in, board plane	
SFO -> LAX	First expedition meeting, Begin readings, journal.	1 hr 20 min
LAX -> NRT		~11 hrs
Arrive in Japan at 4PM		
Narita -> Kyoto		~4.5 hrs
Travel to Hotel		
Day 1 – Friday May 9 th		
Breakfast		
Morning meeting	Discuss schedule, plans	~10 min
Small group temple visits TBD	Discuss Shinto, Buddhism, Japanese Gardens ; groups lead by Steveo, Madeleine, and Doug	Morning

Activity	Description	Duration
Lunch	Small groups; reimbursed	
Research Questions	Continue site exploration. In pairs. Readings from course pack.	Afternoon and Evening
Dinner together		
Change for Sento with Atsumi	Near Shunko'in	
Evening meeting	Unpack the day, review/discuss readings, plan for next day	~30 min
Day 2 – Saturday May 10th		
Zazen, breakfast		
Check into Daishin'in		
Small group activities and exploration.	Lunch in groups	Morning, afternoon
Rent Kimono at 2pm	View Shrines in Kimono	~2.5 hrs
Scavenger hunt and research question, readings at 4:30pm	In pairs/Small groups	Afternoon, evening
Dinner and Sento in small groups		
Evening meeting	At Daishin'in	~30 min
Day 3 – Sunday May 11th		
Zazen, breakfast at temple		
Small groups exploration and activities.	Lunch in groups	Morning, afternoon
	Dinner and sento in groups	Afternoon, evening
Evening meeting	At Daishin'in	
Day 4 – Monday May 12th		
Zazen, breakfast at temple		
Art classes	Art classes in pairs, Lunch in pairs	Morning, Afternoon
Meet at Kenninji at 3pm		
Head to Gion for Geisha performance at 4:10		Evening
Dinner together		
Sento in small groups		
Evening meeting	At Daishin'in	
Day 5 – Tuesday May 13th		
Zazen, breakfast at temple		
Kansai day	Small group travel around Kyoto or Kansai area, TBD – Return before 9pm	Day
Evening meeting		
Pack for Hiroshima		
Day 6 – Wednesday, May 14th		
Zazen, breakfast		
Kyoto -> Osaka		~30 min

Activity	Description	Duration
Osaka stage combat class at 10AM		
Daily Meeting	In place of evening meeting	
Quick tour of Osaka		
Osaka -> Hiroshima		~1 hr 45 min
Meet Shinonome reps, travel to Shinonome school		
Students go home with homestays		
Day 7 – Thursday, May 15th		
Meet at Shinonome school	Shinonome schedule TBD, Possible professional Baseball game.	
Day 8 – Friday, May 16th		
Meet at Shinonome school		
Take taxi to World Friendship Center at 9:15		~15 min
Tour Peace Park and Explore Hiroshima Peace Museum. Hear survivor story in small. Q & A.	Lunch at park	Morning, Afternoon, Evening
Return taxi to Shinonome at 5pm		
Return with homestays		
Day 9 – Saturday, May 17th		
Meet at Shinonome	Bring all luggage	
Community Forum	Topic TBD	Morning
Hiroshima ->Miyajima	Via local train with homestay families	
Check into Daishou'in		
Evening meeting		
Day 10 – Sunday, May 18th		
Wake up, breakfast	No wake up time, breakfast in pairs	
Independent time	Explore Miyajima	Morning
Lunch together		
Check tidal chart and visit Torii		
Hike island, dinner together		Afternoon, Evening
Evening meeting		
Pack for Sendai		
Day 11 – Monday, May 19th		
Wake up, quick breakfast		
Hiroshima -> Sendai		~7 hrs
Meet Tokiwagi Reps at Station, travel to Tokiwagi		
Students go with homestays		

Day 12 – Tuesday, May 20th through Day 17 – Sunday, May 25th		
Activity	Description	Duration
(Tokiwagi Schedule)	Tokiwagi Schedule TBD Elementary school visit, after school club participation, possible community service option.	6 days
Day 18 – Monday, May 26th		
Meet at Sendai train station at 8am Sendai -> Fuji	Bring all luggage	~3 hrs
Day 19 – Tuesday, May 27th		
Mt. Fuji	Climbing Mt. Fuji, Debrief, Final Banquet.	Day
Pack for home		
Day 20 – Wednesday, May 28th		
Wake up		
Travel to Narita, board plane		~3 hrs
NRT -> LAX	Arrives 11am	~11 hrs
LAX -> SFO	Arrives 3:55pm	~1 hr 20 min
Welcome back	Meet at SFO, Terminal 3 security screening	
REST!		

Communication

- We will update Millie periodically as well as when we arrive at each of our new destinations.
- We may also occasionally use e-mail directly from Japan.
- Students are asked not to initiate any contact home.
- Please do not place your child in a moral dilemma by asking them to contact home against the rules.
- Keep in touch with mail, they love getting letters, so please write to the two addresses provided.
- Staff will have local cell phones. Students will have SOS calling cards for their safety.

Writing to Odyssey in Japan

Please use standard mail and allow about one week for mail to arrive. Mail is a key element to keeping up high spirits in Japan, so please keep your mail topics light and the tone positive. Here are our two longer-term addresses:

Kyoto - May 8 - 13

[Child's Name]
Odyssey Group
Daishin-in
57 Myushinji-cho
Hanazono, Ukyo-ku
Kyoto-shi, 611 Japan

Sendai - May 20 - 25

[Child's Name]
Odyssey School
Tokiwagi Gakuen
3-20 Odawara 4-Chome
Sendai 983
Japan

Discussion of Packing List

This is a complement to the attached packing list, with advice on packing and what kind of equipment to buy.

When gathering supplies, please be mindful of the following:

There are several graduates who would be willing to lend equipment for this trip. If you need something specific that you are unwilling to purchase, make sure to contact your friendly sempai families!

Less is better. All students are going to be carrying their own bags for considerable distances, sometimes through crowded areas and at great speeds. We don't want to miss a train connection because a students' luggage is unnecessarily heavy or unwieldy!

Use Ziploc bags in order to compartmentalize different items such as underwear, socks, and shirts. This will keep bags organized and protect items from water or other damage. Students will be unpacking and repacking their bags often, so the idea of organization cannot be overstressed.

Label everything, even and especially your socks. We will be doing some laundry in Japan. There will be no opportunity to reclaim any lost items that are unlabeled.

Bags:

- **Main Bag:** All students need one soft-sided (nylon) backpack with shoulder straps and suitcase-style handles. Staff and students who have gone on the Japan trip before have highly recommended the backpack style bag sold by L.L. Bean, REI, and Redwood Trading Post. We are often running through train or subway stations. **NO HARD-SIDED SUITCASES, NO LUGGAGE CARRIERS, NO WHEELS.**
- **Day Pack:** You do not need to buy a new or expensive daypack for this trip. If you do not already have a suitable bag (like a backpack for school), see if you can borrow one from friends or family. The daypack should be comfortable. Criteria include: adjustable straps, big enough to hold all the items but not so big that it is cumbersome, outside pockets to allow quick access to a change purse or water.

Clothing:

- **Under-clothing:** should be easily washed and hung to dry. Irons and dryers will likely be unavailable. The weather will range from cool and rainy to hot and humid/rainy.
- **Uniform clothes/Other clothes notes:** Odyssey will provide Odyssey collared shirts, an Odyssey windbreaker, and Odyssey fleece. Students will be asked to bring your own Odyssey "movement clothes." Students will be wearing khaki pants as part of their uniform – these pants must not be low-rise as students need to be able to tuck in their shirts. One pair of the Khaki pants can be shorts with at least a 6-inch inseam, or a knee-length skirt.

- Cultural appropriateness: Japanese people tend to cover their shoulders, so we ask students to not wear tank tops, as they will seem immodest. Likewise, we ask that students not wear make-up as it is inappropriate for their age group on a school trip.

Gifts:

- For homestay families: It is customary to bring a gift with you when visiting a home in Japan. Since Japanese houses are small and tend to get cluttered easily, it's best to give something consumable. Goods that you can only find in America are the best ideas. Do not give a gift with an even number of items (like a set of 4 postcards) – keep your numbers odd! Gifts should always be wrapped as nicely as possible. Keep your gift nice, but do not shame your homestay family with an overly expensive gift.
- Special gift for your homestay: Shinonome host students are around the same age as an Odyssey student, and Tokiwagi students are significantly older (16/17 years old), but both will be interested and excited in anything very culturally American. Small memorabilia with English phrases or sports team logos, cute American stationary, a mix CD with music you like – these are thoughtful gifts that reflect your personality without being too over-the-top or culturally insensitive in any way.
- Small Travel Gifts: Students will want to give something small to the many people who will have helped them. Things like your calling cards, stickers, bookmarks, or even candy are easy to carry around.

Other Items:

- Camera: A disposable camera works, as well as a digital camera. Make sure to bring a charger with a two-pronged wall plug.
- Pack Towel: This is a small camping towel you can find at REI.

School-related items:

- Japan Journal: This is a new journal you will purchase specifically for the trip and write in regularly. Details to be provided on a separate sheet during Japan Immersion Week.
- Japanese Notebook: This will be created and explained in Japanese Class with Madeleine-sensei.
- Kyoto Guidebook: This will be created and explained in Humanities Class with Doug-sensei.
- Course Pack: This is reading material for the trip – a collection of short stories and thoughtful essays on Japanese culture to add breadth to your experience in Japan. Students will receive this at the Airport.
- Money: Odyssey covers all trip expenses. Students should bring \$300 in yen for: snacks, drinks, art classes, independent activities, sento, and treating host families to dinner.

Detailed Packing List

Packing List			
Category	Quantity	Item	Note
General			
	1	Day Pack	Day Pack
	1	Main Bag	-
	1	1-litre Durable Water Bottle (Empty)	Day Pack
Jackets/Layers			
	1	Odyssey Windbreaker	Main Bag
	1	Odyssey Jacket	Wear to Airport
	1	Odyssey Fleece	Main Bag
	1	Pair of fleece gloves	Main Bag
	1	Hat for sun protection (baseball cap/other)	Main Bag
Shirts			
	5	Odyssey collared uniform shirts	Main Bag (wear one to Airport)
	1	Odyssey t-shirt - your best one	Main Bag
	1	Long-sleeved shirt for hiking	Main Bag
	1	Shirt of your choice	Main Bag
Pants			
	1	Brown or black plain belt	Main Bag
	3	Pairs of Khaki pants	Main Bag
	1	Odyssey movement shorts	Main Bag
	1	Pair of Jeans or Travel Pants	Wear to Airport
Underwear			
	1	Set of Pajamas	Main Bag
	7	Pairs of Underwear	Main Bag
	7	Pairs of Socks	Main Bag
Footwear			
	1	Pair of Walking/Athletic Shoes	Wear to Airport
	1	Teva/Keen style Rain Sandal	Main Bag
	1	Pair of Slippers (if size > or = 10)	Main Bag
Reflection/Documentation Items			
	1	Pair of small scissors	Main Bag
	1	Glue Stick	Day Pack
	1	Soft case of pens, pencils, etc	Day Pack
	-	Address labels	Day Pack
	1	Japan Journal	Day Pack
	1	Camera	Day Pack
	1	Japanese notebook	Day Pack
	1	Kyoto guidebook	Given at Airport

	1	Copy of <i>Hiroshima</i>	Given at Airport	
	1	Course Pack	Given at Airport	
Gifts				
	1	Gift for Shinonome household	Main Bag	
	1	Gift for Shinonome homestay student	Main Bag	
	1	Gift for Tokiwagi household	Main Bag	
	1	Gift for Tokiwagi homestay student	Main Bag	
	50	Personal calling cards	Main Bag	
	100	"Travel Gifts"	Main Bag	
	-	Wrapping Paper	Main Bag	
	1	Small roll of Tape	Main Bag	
	1	Small roll of Ribbon	Main Bag	
Toiletry Kit				
	1	Travel-size Bottle of Shampoo	Main Bag (t. kit)	
	1	Travel-size Soap	Main Bag (t. kit)	
	1	Travel-size Toothpaste	Day Pack (later in t. kit)	
	1	Travel Toothbrush	Day Pack (later in t. kit)	
	-	Feminine Supplies*	Day Pack (later in t. kit)	
	1	Deodorant	Day Pack (later in t. kit)	
Other Personal Items				
	1	Mesh Bag (for laundry)	Main Bag	
	5	Large Ziploc bags (for organization)	Main Bag	
	1	Container of Sunscreen	Main Bag	
	1	Container of Lip Balm	Main Bag	
	1	Washcloth	Main Bag	
	1	Pack towel (camping)	Main Bag	
	1	Headlamp	Day Pack	
	-	Snack food (power bars, dried fruit)	Main Bag	
	1	Album of Family Photos	Main Bag	
	1	Small Umbrella	Day Pack	
	1	Watch	Wear to Airport	
	1	Small First Aid Kit	Day Pack	
	1	Hearty Snack for the Airplane	Day Pack	
	-	Prescription Eyewear*	Main Bag	
	-	Prescription Medication*	Main Bag	

