

Rikkyou Shijyuku

Activity Name	International Understanding Seminar for Kids in Tengger			
Dates	July 11, 2009 to August 8, 2009			
Location	Rikkyou Shijyuku (Shirakawa city, Fukushima Prefecture), Mongolian Village Tengger, Nasu, Tochigi Prefecture)			
Participants	International Students	Local Residents, Corporations, etc.	Other	Total
	20	30	0	50

International Understanding Seminar for Kids in Tengger is a seminar that promotes international understanding among international students and Japanese elementary and junior high school students through cultural and international exchange in a 3-day 2-night stay at a Mongolian village.



Groupe photo in front of a ger

<Activity Details>

International students from Asia, and Japanese elementary and junior high school students participated in many activities including a lecture about Mongolia, made a Mongolian moveable tent called a ger, cooked Mongolian cuisine, enjoyed Mongolian music, experienced Mongolian wrestling and plays, tried Mongolian-style orienteering, painted picture letters and wrote travel journals, read analects, and partook in an inspiring poetry class. Twenty participants were international students from the University of Tokyo, Tokyo Institute of Technology, colleges in Tochigi Prefecture, and international students from Japanese-language schools (Mongolia, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand, Nepal). In addition, 20 participants were from Japanese elementary and junior high schools from around Shirakawa City, and 10 participants were from the Nippon Mongol Association and Rikkyou Shijyuku.

Mongolian Village Tengger is a private facility located in the town of Nasu, where visitors can stay in gers that were actually used in Mongolia. It is an important facility because users can experience life in the grasslands while still in Japan. The children from Shirakawa City, Fukushima Prefecture were able to deepen their international understanding through varied and unique cultural experiences together with the international students. As both Japanese and other nationals spent the nights under one roof, and competed on the same teams, we feel that the participants' mental borders were removed.

<Comments from the participants>

Participating in a Mongolian camp

Sachin (Nepal)

“My name is Sachin, and I'm from Nepal. I've never been to Mongolia, but both Mongolia and Nepal have temples. The Nepalese follow Hinduism and Lamaism. Hinduism was brought from India, whereas Lamaism came from the mountains. I suppose the mountain religion went to Mongolia through Tibet and China. When I think that Mongolians have the same ancestors as the Nepalese, I feel like we are friends already.

I think Japanese children are lucky, because they get to know so much about other countries. If they know that there are many countries, and each country has different people, you can make so many friends all over the world. Wars can be eliminated this way. Japanese children can be the bridge to attaining that goal.”

Going to a Mongolian house with Japanese children

Lalida (Thailand)

"I'm Lalida, from Thailand. I am studying Japanese. I spent a couple of nights in a Mongolian house with Japanese children. You would never see this kind of house in Thailand. Because Thailand is hot all year round, we don't have tents like Mongolian gers. If we had gers in Thailand, snakes and bugs would come into the tents. There are cows and sheep in Mogolia, but Thailand has water buffalo and elephants. I think it would be interesting for Japanese children to go to jungles in Thailand to play Thai games, and eat Thai food. Children would sweat and feel good, because Thai food is spicy. Please come to Thailand. Thailand is a country of smiles."



Cooking Mongolian food



Experiencing Mongolian wrestling



Drawing picture letters together