



# The Bamboo Shoots

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We do hope The Bamboo Shoots born out of the soil of Yamato-Takada will grow up and act as a go-between for the citizens in Lismore and in Yamato-Takada



## Questionnaire to Australian Exchange Students, 2018

### Q1) What were your first impressions of Yamatotakada?

It was much more of a city than what I thought it would be. Also not many western foreigners at all. Beautiful scenery.

Beautiful, surrounded by mountains and full of culture.

I loved the look of all the houses and the streets were very busy and narrow, a little scary. I was surprised about all of the rice fields and how close they were to the houses.

My first impressions of Yamatotakada were very good. People were very nice welcoming and most people spoke a little English well. The food in Yamatotakada was different from Australia but still very good. Yamatotakada has a lot of culture and history that I enjoyed learning about.

I was initially amazed at the difference in infrastructure, and the beauty of the city at night. It felt surreal.

A town full of history and beautiful places.

### Q2) What differences were you surprised at in terms of culture/manners and customs?

Taking shoes / changing shoes at school, eating rice with

the bowl in your hand, saying “いただきます” and “ごちそうさまでした” before and after meals. Workers greeting you as soon as you entered the stores.

Different ways of everyday life like bathing, eating and shoes inside.

Everyone was so polite and wanted to do anything to help. All the different shoes/slippers and no shoes in different parts of the house and I was especially surprised by the school and how the students clean it and change shoes.

Before coming to Japan I didn't know that you're supposed to say 'itadakimasu' before eating. It took awhile for me to get into the habit of saying it all even longer for me to learn to say it properly. This custom was surprising because we don't really have a custom like that in Australia.

I knew beforehand about taking my shoes off before entering a house but I was surprised at how often I would have to take them off.

As I have been to Japan before I wasn't surprised by the differences in our cultures. That's one of the things I love about Japan.





**Q3) What impressed you most with regard to your host family?**

How they treated me like family, put in lots of effort to talk to me even with a language barrier.

How happy and accepting they have been with me, also their patience with the language barrier.

So kind and polite. They were so excited to learn more English and about Australia's cultures/customs. The food they made was really good as well.

Everyone in my host family was very enthusiastic, there was never a boring moment. We were always doing something, weather that be, go in to shrines and riding our bikes late at night or looking after surprise the early hours of the morning. I really enjoyed spending time with my host family May, Harute and the 3 friends I lived with.

The hospitality of my host family and how welcoming they were, very one was so energetic, these was always something happy, weather it be, bike riding late at night, meeting surprise guests early in the morning or spontaneously visiting the city, there was never a dull moment in the house.

How kind and welcoming they were.

**Q4) What was your impression about Hiroshima?**

I really enjoyed Hiroshima. It is a thriving yet still healing city. The atmosphere was a lot more different compared to Yamatotakada. Hiroshima was beautiful in all aspects.

Hiroshima was a very special and deep experience that I really enjoyed.

Hiroshima was an amazing experience. I was nervous because I get very sad when I look at Hiroshima history. Some of the things there were amazing and really eye opening. In the museum I was sad and had to look away because of some of the pictures.

I enjoyed my visit to Hiroshima, learning about the history and sorrow of the city was very eyeopening. My first impression was very impressed in how the people of Japan managed to completely rebuild the city.



Yes I did, it was a fantastic city with a beautiful skyline, I also enjoyed learning about history and making paper cranes in the peace park. My first impression was of amazement to see such a big city, and experience its history and culture.

The trip to Hiroshima was wonderful. Miyajima was a great place to visit. I also think it is important that we visited the peace park and A bomb dome to help remember and spread the message of peace.



## Questionnaires to Host Families in 2018

### Q1) Some puzzlements while welcoming students from Australia:

We made a reservation for a hot spring trip, but she said she didn't want to go. Later on I found why she said "No." That was because she had no idea about how to take a bath in a Japanese hot spring. Finally she said she would like to go with us, because she learned how to do that from an American friend of hers. In addition she had a chance to see some foreigners taking a bath, so she decided to go to a hot spring with us. We were very happy when she said "Yes, I'd like to." But to be honest, we were very puzzled about what to do at first.

We had a big puzzlement about doing the washing for our two boy-students.

We had a language barrier between us. We couldn't make sense out of what she said at first. We asked her, "What is your favorite food? What's your idea on the places where you do want to go?" She said, "I'll leave it to you. I have no idea particular about that." We were very much puzzled about how to treat her during her stay with us. Shortly afterwards we realized that it was natural that she couldn't answer our questions, because she didn't know about Japanese food and famous sightseeing places of interest in detail.

We were very happy to know that she was a gentle and sensible girl and that she was willing to talk with us always with a smile. We were able to treat her just like one of the family.

We were puzzled about English conversation at first. So we didn't necessarily talk much to each other. As time rolled on, we got used to speaking English. And we could talk much enough to understand each other, such as what she wanted to do and what she wanted to eat and so on.

### Q2) What you realized about differences in culture and manners and customs:

She didn't care about leaving some food on the table, while Japanese are very sensitive about that.

We always told our exchange students (two boy-students) that they didn't have to mind about our English, because we didn't think we were very good at it, saying that our English was too straight and too direct.

She walked into the house with her shoes on and also she walked barefooted outside on the streets. She went to bed earlier than we had expected. Difference in 'Perceived temperature': She wore light clothing even on pretty cold days. It could be said that it was because Australians felt perceived temperature differently from us Japanese.

Different culture in favorite food or dish: We Japanese like eating fish, but it is said that they like eating meat in Lismore. We've heard that fish is higher than meat in price there. To our surprise, soon after she got up in the morning,

she sat down at table to have breakfast without washing her face. She was good at using chopsticks at the table. She said that she often ate out in Japanese restaurants in Lismore.

We did not realize a big difference in a daily life. She knew very well about a Japanese way of living, so she was able to take a bath and have meals without any problems. She seemed to spend all her life through her stay with us enjoying herself.

### Q3) Delight and trouble during his or her stay with you:

She told us what we hadn't known about Australia and she taught us English. So we had a happy time with her.

We were very happy to know that they were friendly and bright.

We were very happy to see her enjoying herself at USJ in Osaka. We went to Neko-cafe and some other places where she wanted to go with us. She did enjoy making Gyoza dumplings together with us and we had a good time playing 'jenga' and fireworks along with her. About troubles, we sometimes annoyed or irritated her when we couldn't understand what she was saying and we couldn't make ourselves understood in English by her.

She was very glad when she had her hair tied back upwards and she had a kimono worn. She took an active part in calligraphy. She was willing to try India-ink drawings. She also showed keen interest in other typical Japanese cultural things, such as a Japanese-style room with a hanging scroll on the wall of tokonoma, or the alcove, fusuma, or papered sliding door, shoji, or paper screen door, shelves with difference level and framed paintings. This kind of spacious Japanese-style room was her favourite one, where she often played card and some other games with all our family laughing out loud almost every night. She didn't know how to play go, so we took her to a 'go-club' and we told her how to play go and explained to her how to put and arrange go-stones on the go-board. We went on a trip with her to Horyu-ji Temple, Osaka Castle, and walked around Shinsai-bashi Street and Nihon-bashi Street. We ate okonomiyaki in Osaka and then we went back to Yamato Koriyama city, where we enjoyed doing some goldfish scooping. She spent a happy day in USJ with us. She said that she was getting to love Japan, so now we believe she will be visiting us again someday.

It was happy that we had a lot in common to talk about. So she enjoyed talking about topics interesting to us until late at night. She liked cooking dinner, which was yummy

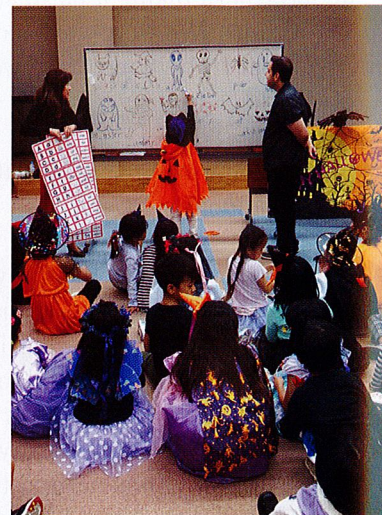
### Q4) Would you like to positively admit an Australian exchange student, if you have an opportunity?

Yes, I'd love to.

We'll manage to admit a student, if possible.

# The Bamboo English Class Happy Days with Claudio!!

The Bamboo English classes started as one of the international exchange programs conducted by The Yamato Takada Lismore Sister City Association. The English classes, one for kindergarteners and the other for elementary schools, are practiced twice a month for 4 to 12 year-old children living in Yamato Takada city. Using the so-called human five senses, children are expected to enjoy singing in English and dancing with Mr. Claudio Lopez, a native speaker of English, and some of the members of the association as well. What is more, in the programs they will be able to enjoy easy everyday English conversation through familiar topics of their daily life.



Claudio Lopez  
English Teacher

## How happy I am!

This is my 3rd year doing bamboo english and i am very proud of the students who attend bamboo english. They are learning and advancing their basic english skills. At the same time, they get to enjoy many interesting lessons from me and tell them stories from my country in the united states. This is why i like teaching kids from bamboo english so that they can learn as much english as possible and also make it fun. My goal for the students is to become fluent in english so that they can expand their mind and speak another language and travel the world by using the english language.