

Walking through time – our London experience

(Article written by Irene Villalta and her classmates of 3A)

The students of classes 3A and 3E were given the opportunity to visit London for eight days during the second week of April, from the 5th to the 12th. The school trip we went on consisted of a homestay-like program in Wimbledon. For eight days, we were hosted by local welcoming English families in their homes. Fortunately, all the days of our stay were marked by beautiful weather, which gave us the perfect chance to explore the city without any inconvenience or the need for umbrellas. The first two days, we wandered around London; for the other four, we had school in the morning divided in three groups, according to our English knowledge, and went to the Capital in the afternoon. Ms Germano, Ms Ricci, and Mr Hope, our English teachers, were responsible for the wonderful experience we had and were the ones who took us on the journey. This experience not only improved our English skills, but also helped us become more independent and confident living in a foreign country.

On the 5th of April, at 2 a.m., we all met up in the parking lot of the school. There, we caught the bus to the Trieste airport, where we took our flight to London, around 6:30 a.m. The moment we landed at London Stansted Airport was when our trip officially began. From the airport, we took a bus to the Centre of English Studies in Wimbledon, London, where our host families came to pick us up. Unfortunately, while driving, the bus's boot malfunctioned, and a dozen of our bags were thrown on the highway and were damaged. After this unfortunate moment, we met our host families and then visited the renowned Science Museum, which turned out to be extremely fascinating. The interactive parts and the objects and machines on display allowed us to retrace the history of the Industrial Revolution in England, from the late 18th century to today, and explore many topics that are often overlooked.

On the second day, we took the train to Camden Town, where we spent two amazing hours. We experienced multi ethnic cuisines and craft shops, selling from the most common souvenirs to the most bizarre knick-knacks we had ever seen. Afterwards, we went to the British Library (one of the world's largest libraries!), where we saw Shakespeare's First Folio (the collection of his works, published posthumously), one of the four remaining copies of the Magna Charta Libertatum, and the Anglo-Saxon Gospels. From there, we reached the Nation Gallery, where we fully immersed ourselves in a world made of paintings from the Renaissance to the early 20th century. We saw works such as "Sunflowers" by Vincent Van Gogh, "Supper at Emmaus" by Caravaggio and "Ballet Dancers" by Edgar Degas. It was a sensational experience, leaving us speechless in each room we passed through.

On the third day, we took the train to Westminster Bridge, passing in front of the beautiful London Eye. After crossing the bridge, we saw the breathtaking Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. From there, we wandered around, glimpsing at the Imperial War Museum of Churchill War Rooms and Downing Street, arriving at the Household Cavalry Museum, where we saw the royal guards. Then we went to Buckingham Palace, where we witnessed the Horse Guards Parade taking place, which was an amazing performance.

On the fourth day, we went to Leicester Square, Soho and Chinatown, three charming tourist destinations; we then visited Oxford Street, known for its hundreds of shops, open 24/7. On the fifth day, we briefly visited the British Museum, which was a shame, since we were only

able to focus on the main rooms, the Greek one and the Egyptian one, and not on the hidden gems of the museum. Soon after, we took the underground and spent some time at Harrods, the most lavish place the human mind can conjure up.

On the sixth day, we roamed around the newer London, seeing Blackfriars Bridge, Tate Modern (one of the most important galleries of modern and contemporary art), the Globe (the theatre where Shakespeare enacted his plays) and Borough Market, a place where differences are put aside to create a magical experience. We then covered Thames Walk and Queen's Walk, reaching Tower Bridge and the Tower of London, two iconic buildings of London.

On the last day, we went to Mayfair and Oxford Street again and the morning of the 12th of April was interrupted by the 2:00 a.m. alarm, telling us to wake up and get ready to go back to Italy. We arrived at London Stansted Airport at 3:00 a.m. and landed at Trieste Airport at 11:00. We then took a bus to go back to school, where our families came to pick us up and bring us home.

Ultimately, the trip we went on was one of the most formative, eye-opening and instructive experiences we have ever been on. This trip didn't just help us to improve our English, it helped us to grow and mature. We learnt to manage our time, money and even ourselves in the heart of one of the biggest metropolises of the world; we immersed ourselves in a culture that appears so similar to ours, when in reality it is much richer and unique.

*"London is a city that is both ancient and modern,
where the past is always part of the present."*

DAVID CANNADINE

*"London is too full of fogs and serious people.
Whether it is the fogs that produce serious people
or whether serious people produce the fogs I cannot say."*

OSCAR WILDE

*"When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life;
for there is in London all that life can afford."*

SAMUEL JOHNSON



Students of 3A and 3E on the stoop of the British Museum

