

EURO BIZ JAPAN

DECEMBER 2017

TOSHIYUKI SHIMEGI,
REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTOR
AND PRESIDENT

KAORI YAMAZAKI,
MARKETING DIRECTOR

POLE POSITION

*Porsche Japan dreams of bringing
sports cars to a new audience*



INQUIRY IN THE “WILD”

Linking our school residential programme to our curriculum

At Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS), we made a conscious decision to focus on using our out-of-classroom experiences to enhance the inquiries inside our classrooms.

INQUIRY-BASED

At A-JIS, we focus and develop our learners through a clear, articulated inquiry process.

This includes checking their “readiness” to learn; “engaging” them in learning; “digging deeper”; and using what they learn in a meaningful way, or as a “demonstration of their understanding”.

Knowing our students well allows us to judge their readiness for learning. Their inquiry is based around a “Big Question”. Students are asked to engage in the question and develop further inquiry questions that will help them gather information and understand the concepts needed for answering the “Big Question”. Some of these questions can be teacher-directed. But, as learners become more skilled, many inquiries are developed by the students.

FOCUS OF THE LEARNING

As an IB MYP school, we organise our courses in units, the first of which includes the residential trip as a key component. All our first units share a common global context, a way of narrowing the focus of an inquiry to ensure depth of learning, as well as a common key concept. Concepts are ideas that are universal, and can be applied to any area of learning.

TRIPS FOR 2017

Grade 6 spent five days in Nikko, and many of the Big Questions they worked with included ideas about the obvious cultural links at this historic



location. Students then wrote stories about the impact of big events on who they are.

Grade 7 explored Hiroshima, asking such questions as, “How do wars of the past shape our future?”, with the obvious link to the prefecture’s history. They also looked at how landscape painting can be used to represent the interconnectedness of various parts of landscape and cultural constructs.

Grade 8 went to Ise Shima, learning about the science behind the influences of the environment; and using the lens of cultural symbols found on Ise Shima to discover how they have affected the development of cultures.

Our Grades 9 and 10 travelled to Hokkaido, investigating the science behind local methods of making a living and surviving; and gathering information about the Ainu people and how they maintain their cultural identity.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Once back at A-JIS, students sorted through the information they had gathered and planned their demonstration of understanding. This included artwork, presentations in the form of posters and electronic presentations, as well as making short movies and writing stories answering their questions. By linking the trips to the “Big Questions,” we leverage learning experiences — both in and out of school — to increase the students’ learning and make it real. This process makes our residential trips an integral part of the learning cycle at Aoba-Japan International School, creating ‘classes without walls’.

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FROM EUROBIJ JAPAN

TEXT BY ANDREW HOWITT

Making changes that will last

On 31 October, 1517 — almost exactly 500 years ago — Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of All Saints’ Church in Wittenberg, Germany, starting the Reformation.

“He put individual responsibility into the centre of his theology,” German Ambassador to Japan Dr Hans Carl von Werthern told me when I met him for our interview. “We’re deeply convinced that it has had repercussions that have continued until today.”

Unfortunately, I wasn’t able to include our conversation about Luther — and how his act transformed Europe and the Western world — in the final article. But you can find out more about how Ambassador von

Werthern himself is taking a stand for diversity and societal change in Japan (page 22), actions that are sure to have meaningful repercussions.

Germany features quite prominently in this month’s issue. Our December EBC Personality article on Marcus Schürmann (page 32), the Business Spotlight feature on Boehringer Ingelheim (page 38) and David Umeda’s *Working Magic* (page 26) all put Germans and German businesses — and the changes they are

effecting — front and centre.

On this month’s cover are Toshiyuki Shimegi and Kaori Yamazaki of Porsche Japan, a branch of the renowned German sports car manufacturer. The firm is increasing its marketing efforts to help the brand establish deeper roots in Japan, which will ensure Porsche’s long-term future here. Read more in Tim Hornyak’s *Pole Position* on page 12.

As we come to the end of another year, it’s a good time to remember our individual responsibility in setting goals, fixing problems and making meaningful changes that will benefit others and have a lasting, positive impact. ●

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