

Joylife Yusuhara : 3. My first experience of the “Welcome Concert”

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Before coming to Japan I should have expected that I would have amazing opportunities to experience the Japanese culture just through different school events. The “Welcome Concert” held on 4th of November was one of such events. The day of the “Welcome Concert” was very special because it was a chance for parents, students and teachers to come together and enjoy various traditional Japanese art forms which were performed by students. I thought it was inspiring to see so many young students take an interest in their culture and heritage. In a way, it felt like the future was connecting with the past.



Experiencing the traditional Japanese *Kagura* dance for the first time. A truly special experience!

The lead up to the cultural day was filled with preparation from both the students and the teachers. The students practiced their choir singing tirelessly as well as also perfected their chosen cultural performances. The teachers on the other hand were busy with organizing the logistics of this special cultural day.

The day itself went by without a hitch. Amongst all of the beautiful and inspiring performances, the one that stood out the most for me was the Koto performance by students of 7th, 8th and 9th Grades. I have always enjoyed the peaceful and harmonious changes in melodies that the Koto produces, the sound is very much distinctly Japanese. Hearing the students play the Koto in person for me was very special. I was also fortunate enough to be included in some of the Koto practice lesson. This added to my appreciation of the Koto performance. What's more, the singing competition between each junior high school year was also enjoyable. All of the students sang wonderfully and it was moving to listen to all of the songs. The cultural day was a great way to showcase the talents of the students of Yusuhara Gakuen and to bring the community together!