

International Languages Week

Ashburton College

At Ashburton College, International Languages Week is all about raising the profile of international languages; rewarding those students who are currently studying Japanese or German (the two international languages we offer); and encouraging other students to consider learning a language.

For Year 10-13 students studying Japanese and German, the highlight of the week was a trip to see a foreign language movie at the local theatre. Students of Japanese saw *Gake no ue no Ponyo (Ponyo on the Cliff)*, the latest offering from acclaimed director Hayao Miyazaki. Students of German watched *Lola Rennt (Run Lola Run)*. Coming out of the theatre, students chatted excitedly about the words they had managed to pick up.

On the final day of the week we held an International-Theme Mufti Day. Students and staff were encouraged to dress up in something international and come to the central chessboard area at lunchtime for a prize. There were saris, grass skirts and leis, Japanese yukata, German lederhosen, Scottish kilts, English soccer uniforms...a myriad of nationalities. Also adding to the festival atmosphere, on the same day food stalls were held at lunchtime. Foods which featured were sushi, German frankfurters with sauerkraut, onion bhajee, and a Māori boil-up, all on sale for \$1-\$2. Students were able to buy several different foods to try. Some students had never tasted these foods before, the local Indian and Japanese restaurants who supplied the bhajee and sushi may find they acquire a few new customers!



This was not the only opportunity that students had to try new international foods. The school canteen got involved and had a daily international food special. There was Chinese egg fried rice, Japanese curry, and Indian Butter Chicken.

On the Thursday of International Languages Week, Year 8 students from Ashburton College's contributing schools were invited to attend a Variety Show. There were two shows, which were attended by about 120 students. The aim was to promote Japanese and German as interesting subjects to study at the College. Students sang Japanese and German songs; made origami cups then tested them for water-tightness (Year 10 students of Japanese demonstrated how to make the cup using Giant origami paper on stage); watched a short play presented by Year 11 students of German; participated in a mass *Paper, Rock, Scissors* competition; and took part in a quiz testing their knowledge of Japanese and German culture.

All these activities were given good coverage in the Ashburton Guardian. During the week, articles and photos appeared almost daily showcasing the activities that were happening at the College.

Finally, there were three competitions during the week where staff had the chance to win a bottle of foreign wine or beer. Staff were asked, "What is the first language of these Ashburton College students?", "In what language were these books originally written?" and "What are these people talking about?", where three staff members gave a short speech in a foreign language and staff were asked to work out/guess the topic of their speech.

The activities that took place during International Languages Week were so enjoyable, we almost wish every week was International Languages Week! It certainly makes you proud to be a Language teacher; we really do have the best job in the world.

Thank you to the Sasakawa Fellowship Fund for the grant which made this week possible. We are very grateful for your support.

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