

How studying abroad in high school gives your student a head start

By Madeline Ames

Living in another country is an eye-opening experience. When moving to a new place, there are infinite chances to learn – a new culture, a new language, a new way of life. One can discover new things about the world, and about themselves, as they explore a new place and try things they never imagined doing. Because of all these benefits to traveling, studying abroad has become a very popular choice for students.

While it may sound cliché, studying abroad is one of the best learning opportunities out there. It allows students to try new things while still pursuing steps toward achieving their goals. Many students choose to study abroad during college or university, taking a semester or a year to take courses at a different school. What people often don't realize is that studying abroad in high school is an option, too!

Studying abroad in high school has a plethora of benefits that will help your child achieve their long-term goals. Being able to experience the world and get a glimpse of life in another place will open your child's eyes to the endless possibilities available to them after high school. Having the opportunity to study in a different country during high school will not only enrich your child's learning, but will better prepare them for life at a college or university. Read on to find out more about why studying abroad in high school can really set your child apart.

Learning in a new way

The consistency and predictability of studying in the same location or in the same types of schools can be comforting. You always know exactly what you and your child are getting out of the educational system. Sometimes, however, switching things up can be an extremely beneficial move for students. Studying abroad gives students an opportunity to learn similar curricula, but in ways that they've never seen before. Learning in a different environment will help your child to engage different parts of their brain as they apprehend new ways of thinking and new approaches to solving tasks. Especially in today's world, where ideas and norms are constantly changing, changing your child's education and teaching them a new way of problem-solving will better prepare them for an unknown future.

Opening their mind to new perspectives

Living and studying in a different country allows students to get to know an entirely new way of life. The cultural immersion that goes hand-in-hand with the study abroad experience is unparalleled. Students who choose to study in a new place often live with a host family, or with other students who are also studying abroad. In either situation, students are tossed into a cultural learning experience that will shape their lives in their new home. Not only will they be able to experience first-hand what life is like in another country, but they will likely also learn the customs, traditions, and even language of the new place.

The novelty of living abroad will encourage students to broaden their worldviews and consider different approaches to life. Having the ability to look at issues from multiple perspectives is an invaluable skill for students as they enter post-secondary education. Studying abroad and having a better understanding of different perspectives will positively impact your child for the rest of their lives.

Becoming more independent

Of course, sending your child to study abroad when they are only a teenager is a difficult choice. Furthermore, knowing that their experience abroad will shape them in new ways (that are often out of your control), can be frightening. While it can be challenging to loosen the parental grip on your child, giving them the freedom to explore a new place and live on their own is such a valuable opportunity, especially for children considering post-secondary education. By allowing your child to study abroad, you are not only giving them the culturally immersive experience of a lifetime, you are also allowing them to spread their wings. Students who study abroad during high school are often a step ahead of their peers when they begin university, as they already know what it's like to live in a new environment away from home.

Sending your child to study abroad during high school will give them experiences that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. Whether it's a new language, new friends, or a new perspective about the world, your student will be grateful for the lifelong lessons they learn when moving to a new place. They will be more mature, more independent, more confident in their choices and their goals. They will be global citizens – and what better thing to be in this international, interconnected world?