



Exchange isn't a year in your life. Its a life in a year.

I think this little phrase describes pretty well what it's like to go a year abroad.

I have been attending fourth year in Kinsale Community School, also called Transition Year. This is an amazing year without academic pressure (no assesments) where you can try out a lot of new things. It's a year packed with cool projects, trips and opportunities to gain valuable experience.

My year started with the annual Transition Year trip to Ballyhass Lakes Activity Centre, an outdoor activity centre in West Cork, where all TY students could get a taste of kayacking, absailing, raft building and many other outdoor activities. On our first evening we had a very nice culture evening with dancing, singing, some stories and games. The second night we continued a long kept tradition called Ms Ballyhass: All the boys dressed up as girls to perform in a fashion show. The one with the best costume would be honored the title, Ms Ballyhass and win a bag of sweets.

Until Christmas the school musical kept me really busy with a lot of singing and dancing rehearsals. It was really great taking part in the progress from the very beginning with the auditions and first rehearsals over seeing it all coming together to the final five performance nights. I really enjoyed the atmosphere during the rehearsals: relaxed, enthusiastic and productive.

My favorite part of Transition Year was Vex Robotics, a competition to design, build and program a robot for a specific game. When my team qualified for the World Championship in the United States, I was allowed to accompany them to Kentucky as their programmer. We really had a great time at Vex Worlds! Thank you to the school for giving me this amazing opportunity.

As my exchange year is nearly over right now, I'm about to face one of the hardest parts of this great experience: saying goodbye to everybody. The good part about saying goodbye is the chance to say thank you. I would like to thank my friends, teachers, host families and my organisation for giving me such a great experience.

Gioia,16, from Munich, Germany

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