

“We who teach, will be judged more strictly...”

I’ve heard it said, that a good learner would make a good teacher. This is one truth fact about the teachers we trained in Malipo. These hard-working individuals not only gave us, as trainers, many things to look forward to, but they also helped us enjoy being with them in the classroom. We had the privilege of seeing them each day, for ten days, and even on the orientation and closing ceremony days they were eager to be considerate and understanding as to all that was going on.

The prospect of learning English, and even growing in the skills necessary for being a teacher, can be tumultuous and difficult. There are phrases to remember in certain situations, grades to be concerned about, and many social aspects of putting into practice something that is unusual and perhaps far from natural. Our teachers, however, did not allow this to keep them from coming to give their best effort at being trained.

Some evenings after dinner, we would get to walk with them by the river, visit a local store, or enjoy an interesting delicacy of the mt. town we were in. Getting to play basketball was a great surprise, as one of the head teachers from a local school made the choice to buy a ball for the group. Other teachers joined together in renting an electronic ‘Madjong’ playing table, and one kind-hearted trainee decided to welcome us into her home for rest and the enjoyment of fruit and drinks.

There were times of diversity throughout the training period. The rain would come, and at one point it did not stop coming for a few days. Some trainees felt sick for a day or two, and there were even a number of women enduring pregnancy during the time we shared together. Each afternoon we tried a new game for the purpose of introducing helpful teaching methods with English curriculum, and nothing kept the training from having a purposeful affect on both our teaching styles and friendships.

We hope for many more opportunities with the people of Malipo, and the Yunnan province. China is an extraordinary place, with talented, admirable, and hard-working citizens. We return to our respective countries of origin with a grateful heart for having been there.

-geoff hughes