

BRIT BLOG



Editor's note: Following is the second segment of Katie Coleborn's blog as she and fellow students of The Ridings High School in Bristol, United Kingdom, spend six days experiencing Virginia.

Our expectations of an American breakfast were fulfilled with pancakes this morning, kindly made by our hosts. After a late start, we took the Metro into Washington to have a guided tour around the Capitol building, where we were asked to apologize for burning all the government buildings. It gave me a real insight into the development of American democracy, a better understanding of the American political system.

For me, the intention of a lot of the architecture in Washington was to impress and inspire awe. It reminded me in some ways of architecture from the Roman Empire and the connotations of power it has.

Our day consisted of absorbing the culture with a mixture of sightseeing, eating and shopping. Having been challenged to eat a whole Chipotle burrito, I think a lot of the British students would agree that the size of food portions at home

pale in comparison to the food we have experienced so far. Being a vegetarian, I was surprised at the lack of vegetarian options available in the restaurants we have visited so far.

The novelty of having a British accent has started to wear off, especially after not being understood when ordering a bottle of water in a restaurant. I think that others in the group would agree, as they appear to have picked up an American intonation during our stay so far.

Although this subject would not normally interest me, it was really interesting talking to the American students about cars and the amount spent on fuel each week. They seemed surprised by the average size of the car in Britain for young people, which is normally about 1.4 litre engine, and horrified by the extortionate prices of petrol and diesel. On the other hand we were surprised by the frequency they used their cars and the desire for size and high quality.

To summarize the general feeling among the group, I would have to agree with something an American student said to me: whether cars, food or buildings, size really does seem to matter.