

BRIT BLOG



Editor' note: Following is the fourth 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.

Today we went to Garfield school but instead of going to lessons with our hosts we held seminars for other students where we discussed topics such as the environment, politics, religion and language differences. We learnt a lot about not only American culture but also

our own. The pledge of allegiance once again caused confusion among the British students as there is no comparable aspect in British tradition, making us realize how unpatriotic we really are.

The role of religion in politics differs between the two countries. In the U.S., religion is used to inspire policy and is often seen as a positive trait of a politician whereas in Britain politics and religion are largely kept separate. I was impressed by the American students' knowledge of the British political system and I



Katie Coleborn

think they showed our students to be lacking a lot of the time during our discussion when it came to this topic.

I feel my opinions of America have changed during my visit. Before I had

expectations based of films, TV and celebrities but now that I have lived with an American family, visited historical sites and gone to an American school I feel like I have an insider perspective. As we are so exposed to the U.S. through the media it is easy to make assumptions and generalizations about the culture and the way people live. I think that this visit has given me experience and knowledge that I would not have gained visiting the country otherwise. I hope that our American hosts have also gained a better understanding and appreciation of British culture and that our trip has broken down, or perhaps proved to be true, some of the stereotypes and preconceptions they had about us.