

## **My CTY Summer Program Impressions**

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While still at Princeton I was asked to put my experiences, thoughts, and feelings about the whole program on paper, to be more specific this very paper. And let me tell you, it is not an easy thing to do. The problem is not that I would have nothing to write about, in fact the very opposite is true. In the last two and half weeks so many interesting things happened that they would fill many pages, certainly more than anyone would be willing to read. And because of that I'll write just about a few things that I personally consider essential.

First off, when the first day of CTY started I honestly didn't know what to expect. I knew that there would be some class and free time filled with activities but other than that I didn't know anything. And thinking about it now, I must say it was good that way because otherwise I would not have been so pleasantly surprised when it all actually happened. It turned out that in addition to classes and (not necessarily active) activities there was going to be a lot of time for social interaction, unstructured time and special events such as casino night or Friday dances as well.

But CTY isn't just about filling an empty day with various types of activities. It has been, especially for me as for an international student, also about meeting people from all around the world, getting to know their cultural background, practising English, and generally learning new things both in and outside of the class.

As a non-native English speaker I would like to stress out specifically the language element. Even though I was quite unsecure about my speaking skills at first I haven't had any problems with someone not understanding me or the other way around so far. Surely, there were numerous moments when I misheard something or when I constructed such incorrect sentence that someone didn't know I wanted to say at first but it's never caused me any trouble nor has anyone ever used it against me.

Speaking of social interactions I must say that I haven't met such open, nice, and generally interesting people before. And the best thing is that almost everyone is willing to share their story and listen to yours which makes both getting to know new cultures and practising English even easier.

At last I must not forget to mention the class I've been attending and which has filled essential part of every weekday. I was fortunate enough to be assigned my first choice class – the mathematics of competitive behaviour. And I must say that it was a very good choice.

By no means do I want to say that other classes wouldn't be interesting, from what I've heard the very opposite is true. MOCB as we call it, has been, however, exceptionally enjoyable for me. And that is true not only because of the topic which is – as a to mathematics related one – close to my heart but also thanks to an amazing teacher Tom, his assistant Dillan, and of course all my classmates.

Having said all that, there were some parts of the program that I haven't particularly enjoyed as well. I could imagine less supervision, better schedule during weekends, and generally more freedom. Luckily all of those problems have been just small inconveniences that haven't spoiled an otherwise amazing experience.