



# A Day in the Life of Kenya

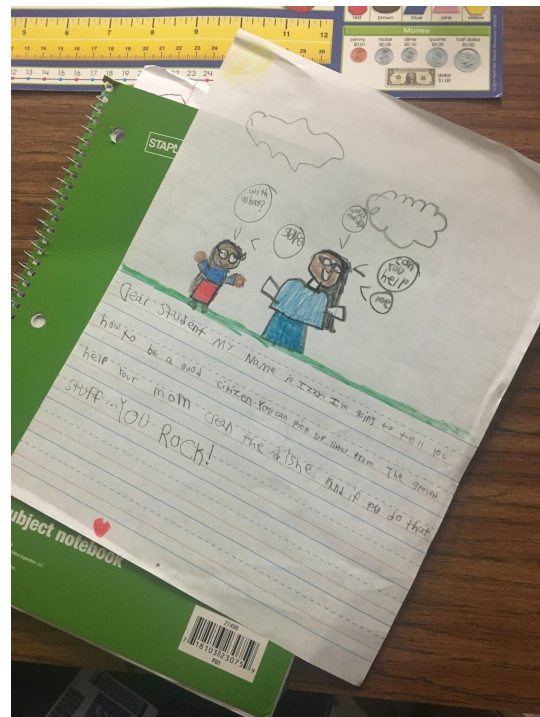
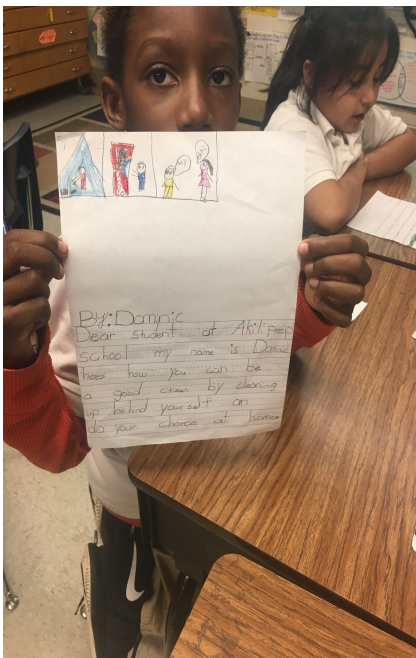
*Life Changing trip to Kisumu, Kenya*

*Nicole Beverly*

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## Before Kenya

Before my trip to Kenya, I thought it would be a great idea to have our 2nd grade students write letters about the topic they were learning in social studies, citizenship. Our students wrote personalized letters teaching the students in Kenya how to be a good citizen in their homes, communities and schools. In addition to their letters some of the 2nd grade classes decided to write kindness notes to our students and each class wrote a letter about what they've learned about Kenya thus far. Many of our students were very excited about my upcoming trip and their opportunity to google chat with the girls in Kenya.



## Arriving in Kenya

My first day in Kisumu, I hit the floor running ! After dropping my suitcase off at the Riley Orton Foundation director's house I headed straight to the school. Due to a last minute calendar schedule with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, my first day at our Kenya partner school Akili Preparatory was the last day for Rama Road students before spring break so, I had little time to organize our google chat session with our school Rama Road Elementary School. After arriving to the school I firsthand witnessed a major difference between our schools and technology vs Kenya schools. The school lost power since the day before due to a technical issue through the power lines in the town. Little did I know after a couple hours their internet capabilities had no connection with their power. We successfully google chatted with my students at Rama Road, both schools had the opportunity to ask questions and share what they've learned about each other's countries. Our students hard work and globalization efforts came ALIVE at that moment, and it was just the kickoff of my trip!



## U.S. Education vs Kenya Education



After spending time and speaking with the teachers at Akili Preparatory School I noticed many differences and similarities with education in Kenya and the U.S. Many of I was not aware of and didn't realize still existed. When you think of elementary or primary schools in both the United States you don't think of boarding schools, however that's very different from Africa. Many of the schools in Africa could possibly be a boarding school especially in high school. The students from AKili Preparatory, half of them actually stay at the school for majority of the year except for holidays and long school breaks. Meeting with the staff I met the Ms. Nancy the school's "Matron". Her job responsibilities included watching the girls through the night, which meant her and her children lived in the school. After sitting in some of the classrooms the manners and organization of the classrooms were very different from U.S schools.



## When Our American History Meets Kenyan History



Easter Sunday, I experienced a moment that I didn't think would ever happen. The director of the foundation told me Obama's rural home was near Kisumu however I didn't know how close. Easter Sunday I had the opportunity to learn more about Kenya's history and simultaneously learn more about our U.S history. I had the opportunity to meet our 44th president and learn about his childhood through his grandmother. We visited his rural home and had the chance to sit and talk with his grandmother. Driving and walking through his childhood village and town was amazing. The opportunity to see what Mr. Barack Obama

The picture below shows Mr. Barack Obama's childhood home his grandmother's house for decades. Speaking with one of the workers I learned more about Barack Obama's family and history. In 2012 during Barack Obama's presidency he built his



grandmother a new home with the same materials used in most Kenyan permanent homes to keep the culture. He also funded and built a police station next to her homes to ensure her safety and protection. Before he was president, like most of the villages in Kenya the roads are unbearable and hard to drive on. He hired people to build clear roads for his village and the roads to Obama's house for individuals for accessibility and safety. On her property is where the tombstone and her husband and

stepson are laid to rest. Below you will see the next new home Barack Obama built for his grandmother.



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## The Adventures of Kit Mikayi







I had the opportunity to visit a historic and religious place called “Kit Mikaya.” Kit Mikayi is named and meaning came from the first wife in Luo language.

Mama Grace Akoth Waga, married in 1968 to a descendant of Ngeso, the legend behind the rock, has been bestowed by the clan the duty to narrate to any tourist the tales about *Kit Mikayi*. Many Kenyans tell a story and their belief about “Kit Mikayi” as a world spirit and holy place. It

is a holy place. During times of catastrophe like hunger and famine, the Luo elders would conduct sacrifices there and the rain and bounty harvest would follow. Stories are also told that the rock would send visions to people as far as Alego Usonga in Siaya on the need to conduct sacrifices to avert calamities. When walking through the tunnel in Kit Mikayi there were people and priests that were praying to the Gods as well as sleeping. Walking through the rocks and tunnel it can be very dangerous however it is a beautiful sight to see and amazing that the peculiar rocks have not moved or fell through the decades after earthquakes and other natural disasters.

## Days as an Akili Preparatory Student



Lunch at Akili Preparatory School is different from lunch at Rama Road Elementary School. In the pictures above you will see the school's kitchen where Nancy cooks their breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Each day the girls take turns and help serve lunch to the girls at the school. Students get into one line and wait to get served, after students sit outside in their cafeteria to eat with each other. After all students are served they are allowed to get second plates of food. Students are given one option of food they are fed and provided purified water that is treated. After students are finished students are to wash their own bowls and cups.



**WASH DAY - Ordinary Day in Kenya**



## Letters to Our Dear Friends



The girls from Akili Preparatory School read the letters the students from Rama Road Elementary wrote about citizenship. Each girl was given a letter giving them tips on how to be a good citizen in their homes, school, and community. Students were also given kindness notes the students at Rama Road wrote. After reading the letters I taught a lesson reviewing how to be a good citizen and what they learned from my students. ( video attached) After teaching the lesson the girls from Akili Preparatory wrote back to my students and thanked them for the letter and what they've learned about the United States. The Akili girls were very excited to write back to our students and really appreciated their kindness notes. Students from the Akili school also described how they learn in their schools and the differences from our schools.



## Kenya's Geography

I had the opportunity to visit one of Kenya's amazing geographic sites, Lake Nakuru National Park Safari. Lake Nakuru was developed in 1961 in the town of Nakuru. Traveling through the park I had a chance to see many of the different animals that live in Africa. I also had the chance to see how the other animals live together and the areas around them. Some of the animals in the park was eastern black rhinos and white rhinos, zebras, baboons, birds, warthogs, lions, monkeys, and many other animals.





