

October 15, 2009

Dear parents,

For the last several school years, many of my senior British literature students and I have the same thought: “We should *go* to some of these places!”

And that thought is an appropriate one. Most of us realize that what we learn from a book is only the first step in education; ***experiences are the glue that makes the lessons stick, the lenses that pull all the information into focus, and the puzzle pieces that complete the big picture.***

But my students and I usually have this thought about traveling in late January, and all of my British literature students are seniors. Therefore, it’s too late, or too expensive, to plan a trip before they graduate. That’s why I started early this year planning a trip to London for spring break of 2010.

**London is the perfect place for British literature students to visit.** For perhaps the first time in their lives, students understand that literature is not something that teachers and parents created to torture them! Students see that writing comes from people who *really* lived, who walked streets that *still exist*, and who experienced life in the context of a different culture and landscape.

**But London is ideal for other reasons, as well, and therefore a fitting place for any student to visit.** All students in Tennessee study British literature during their senior year, and will benefit from experiencing London *before* the study. Also, the language barrier that usually accompanies international travel is not a factor. And as one travel writer proclaims in the first lines of his book:

*London is not, and never has been, an English city. London is, and always has been, an international city, living by trade, thronged with visitors, home to a never-ending stream of migrants from every region of the British Isles, of Europe and of the continents beyond.*

London, therefore, is the perfect gateway to the world outside our borders. **A truly European city with a storied history and international significance. The capital of America’s “mother country.” And a prime example of another contemporary culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

**As a teacher, my goal is for students to be changed by their education.** And I believe travel, such as this trip to London, is the strongest catalyst for change. I experienced this change when I traveled to London as a high school student. My parents and grandparents put me on an airplane to Europe as the first member in my family to have a passport or to have ever flown!

**And it has made a difference in my life.** I have continued to travel—in the United States (Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Denver, Dallas, Chicago, Boston, New York, Washington D.C., Atlanta, Miami, . . . ) and to other countries, as well (the Dominican Republic, India, and Italy, to name a few)—and I attribute much of my self-confidence and worldview to the experiences of travel. I also believe that I am more appreciative, sensitive, and effective in my roles as American citizen, woman, wife, mother, teacher, and student because of those experiences.

For all of these reasons, I invite you to consider sending your student to London with me in the spring. Contact me at school or by email for more information, or visit the Education First website ([eftours.com](http://eftours.com)) and view my tour—#802321—for the basic itinerary, prices, and fundraising ideas. The November 24 deadline is quickly approaching, so to ensure a spot for your student, I encourage you to visit soon.

Sincerely,

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