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This summer I worked as a volunteer teacher at Nautilus Primary School in Luderitz, Namibia. Luderitz is located on the southern coast of Namibia and is one of the country's major urban areas even though it only has a population of about 30,000 people. The program that I interned with, World Teach, is based at the Center for International Development at Harvard University. The World Teach program in Namibia works closely with the country's Ministry of Education to place volunteers at primary and secondary schools to run computer literacy classes for teachers.

Although the goal of the program is to place volunteers at sites where teachers need to be trained, my principal told me that instead of training teachers I would be teaching Basic Information Science (BIS), with computer lessons serving as a component of that class. While this caught me by surprise since I had spent my orientation week preparing myself to lead a classroom of teachers, I quickly realized that the situation was out of my control and accepted the new assignment. The head of department (HOD) also told me that the Social Studies teacher had been hospitalized and that those classes were falling behind schedule. After conferring with my HOD, we decided that in addition to teaching BIS to Grades 5-7, I would teach Grade 6 Social Studies. In addition to these responsibilities, I had the computer lab open after school so that learners could further familiarize themselves with computers, I helped coach the girls' soccer team, and I assisted the school secretary.

I believe I was successful during my time spent in Luderitz, although there were a few obstacles. While I had a functioning computer lab, which some volunteers at other sites lacked, my school was not a recipient of the new Ministry of Education computers. Instead, all of the

computers were about fifteen years old and only seven or eight of them were functioning. Since my classes in the computer lab had about thirty-five to forty learners, there were about four children per computer, which significantly decreased the amount of time each child spent learning and practicing. In regards to my Social Studies class, only about ten percent of the kids had textbooks even though every learner was supposed to receive one. I quickly noticed that at least a fifth of the class could not read and many had already failed a grade level in the past.

Even with this lack of resources, I feel as though I still helped further the program's goal because most of the learners loved being in the computer lab. The Peace Corp volunteer who set up the lab programmed Encyclopedia Britannica, Microsoft Word, and typing games so that the learners had access to educational software. So many children wanted to come after school that I had to create a schedule so that everyone had a turn. When I had the lab open after school, I limited the amount of students so that each computer had only two learners at most. This increased the learners' opportunity to become more knowledgeable about computers. When learners had class canceled, I allowed them to come into the lab during that time as well. In regards to the Social Studies class, I tried to engage my students in discussions and group activities, thereby stimulating critical thinking instead of solely copying notes from the board, which is a common teaching method of many teachers.

I really enjoyed my time at Nautlius Primary School and I think WorldTeach benefited from my work in numerous ways. Before I arrived at my site, the computer lab had only been open to teachers. During my last day of teaching, I discussed with my HOD how beneficial it would be to have teachers supervise the computer lab after school so the students do not forget what they have learned. Additionally, teachers would approach me about their questions with computers and I was able to assist them. When I would work with the secretary, I was able to

show her different tools on Microsoft Word that would make her completion of assignments faster and more efficient. Most importantly, I was able to expose children to computers at a young age. Most children of Luderitz usually do not have the opportunity to take a computer class until high school, and even the fifth graders were fast and eager learners. I was also able to communicate with World Teach about how effective my teaching strategies were in the computer lab and classroom, as well as how the learners and teachers responded to my help.

I greatly benefited from my time in Namibia because of the cross-cultural experiences I was able to enjoy. Since I lived with a female teacher at my school, I became very close to her family and other members of the community. My host and I would talk about the problems of the educational system in Namibia, and in turn, I told her some of the advantages and disadvantages of the American system. I learned so much from her, including how Namibians view Americans and Western culture. Although tourists frequent the area, only a small portion of the population benefits from the business. Very few of the children enroll in a university; instead, many remain in town working as fishermen or as shopkeepers. Additionally, since many of the activities are geared toward rich tourists, the children find the town very boring and thus begin drinking and smoking at a young age. Since pregnancy is very high among young girls, when a girl turns twenty-one, she receives a key if she has remained childless.

In addition to the time I spent with my host, talking with my learners also provided invaluable information about the attitudes of the youth. Many of the learners believed that all Americans know celebrities such as Beyonce and Jay-Z. While at first these assumptions seemed funny to me, they became more understandable once I learned that due to Namibia's smaller population of two million, many of them know the president or local artists. The learners were so interested in learning more about me, and I enjoyed becoming friends with many of them. This

entire experience made me realize that the people of Namibia are so diverse and culturally different that it is impossible to stereotype what a Namibian person is like. I have become more self-sufficient and will never forget the lessons I learned or what the people there helped me to discover about myself.