



Being a Minority in Japan: JETs of African Descent

Pre-Departure Seminar June 24, 2017

1. **Introductions**
2. **Your concerns/expectations as a person of color living in a predominantly Asian society**
3. **My experience in Japan as a former JET of African descent**
4. **What might you experience as a person of African descent in Japan?**
 - a. They will look, they may stare, they will probably touch (especially your hair).
 - i. They are just curious about you
 - ii. You may feel like a celebrity at first, but it can be very overwhelming. Practice self-care.
 - iii. It's okay to do ~~it~~ address behavior that ~~is~~ uncomfortable.
 - b. Stereotypes - Some Japanese people may assume your interests are heavily into hip-hop, rap, and reggae music. Also some will think you are good at singing, dancing, playing sports, etc...
 - i. If you are, great! Share those things ~~but~~ tell them what they don't know
 - ii. If you aren't, great! Share your personal talents and interests
 1. It's all about them getting to know you as an individual
 - c. Finding skin care, makeup, hair products, and stylists will probably be difficult, especially in more rural or suburban areas
5. **Tips and Takeaways**
 - a. Don't be afraid to share your experiences as a person of color living in Japan
 - b. Find teachable moments
 - c. Always be polite
 - d. You're going to stand out anyway, might as well be yourself
(while still adhering to rules and societal norms, of course)
6. **Questions**
7. **Resources**
 - a. **Education**
 - i. www.teachervision.fen.com/black-history-month/teacher-resources/6602.html Provides Black history lesson plans, videos, literature, biographies, quizzes, etc...
 - b. **Online Resources**
 - i. <http://jetsad.tumblr.com/>
 - ii. <http://www.blacktokyo.com/>
 - iii. <http://www.locoinyokohama.com/>
 - iv. <https://gaijinchronicles.com/> (archived)
 - v. <http://blackexpat.com/new/magazine/> (archived)
 - c. **Hair and Skin Products**
 - i. <https://www.nappturality.com/>
 - ii. <http://www.curlynikki.com/>
 - iii. www.ebonyline.com
 - iv. www.hairsisters.com
 - v. www.oyinhandmade.com