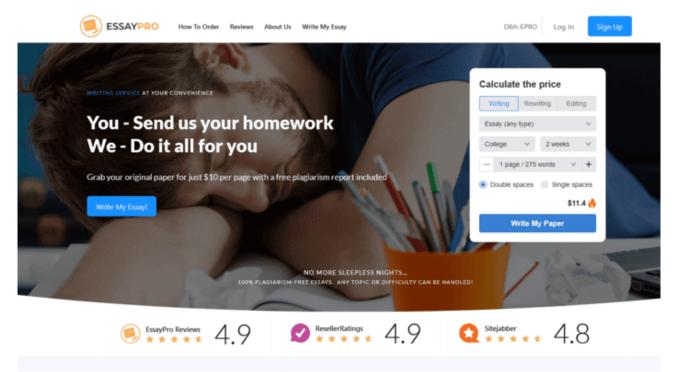
Sojourn to Singapore



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Sojourn to Singapore

"Eat the durians...eat it!" Although a jumbled cacophony of encouraging voices seemed to levitate the humid night air, all hesitancy was not dispersed as I carefully probed the pulpy tropical fruit with an expectant tongue. Proudly, (and much to the glee of my Asian companions who enjoyed the various facial contortions), I swallowed the remainder, washed down with three full bottles of water. Before the initial incision into the durian, I was engulfed by the painfully distinctive odor that only three days and half a bottle of Listerine could remedy. With my experiences in <u>Singapore</u> as a United States representative to the Asian-Pacific Youth Science Festival, however, I also was engulfed by the myriad of Asian cultures, whose unique <u>facets</u> of language, tradition, and daily life broadened my spectrum of global understanding.

All delegates from each of the fourteen economies were combined into groups and assigned a topic of concern facing the scientific community-diseases, genetic engineering, globalization, and global warming. Although my fellow group members resided in China, Indonesia, South Korea, Singapore, and Malaysia, we all share...

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...and possibly the world. We composed papers, visually presented our conclusions, and became brothers and sisters in striving to accomplish our task. Of course, our interaction provided inestimable amounts of enjoyment for everyone-the Asian delegates were thrilled by my 'American humor.' On the final night, Group 24 assembled under a shelter and everyone exchanged teary-eyed good-byes with low voices. Little did I expect the torrent of ice and freezing water that crashed over my head and shoulders merely seconds later, wrecking the silent awkwardness. We laughed, and then we were friends again.

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