



## Amy's Gap Year In Malaysia

When people ask me how long I have been in Malaysia and I realise it has already been three months I am shocked at just how quickly my year away is flying by!



### Where I am based....

Seremban, is a very urbanised town and is the capital state of the Negri Sembilan district (District of Nine States). It is fairly large with a rough population size of 419,536. The population is made up of mostly Malay, Chinese and Indians and you rarely see tourists here. It is situated around an hour South of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's bustling capital, it is also very close to Melaka, a historic trading port, which was once over thrown by the Dutch, Portuguese and British! Also very close, around a 20 minute drive to the coast, is the seaside town of Port Dickson where many city people flee at the weekend.

### My Work...



SMK Tunku Ampuan Najihah (STAN) is the all girls high school where I carry out my volunteer work. My work in the school is now well under way and my official title is an English Speaking Assistant. This involves me being in English classes with the teacher and interacting with the pupils, assisting with conversational English, playing games and correcting work. I also help in P.E where I take the warm up and the pupils have recently asked me to teach them to play hockey. The students have just finished their end of year exams and the school is just about to break for six weeks holidays. In the New Year the school will resume with its extra curricular day; when different groups gather and take part in their activities in the afternoon, the groups range from the Girl guides to the Islamic society. As well as helping in class I have also been lucky enough to accompany the students on many school outings. On the first of October the school competed in a traditional dance competition, which was lovely to see!



The girls performing the traditional Malay dance.

### The People...

One thing which is prominent about Malaysian people is how hospitable they are, sometimes it is scary, within minutes of meeting



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someone they invite you to stay with them, or to stay with their sister in Johor who you have never even met. In Seremban we belong to only a handful of white people or 'orang putih' (white people) and so we have had to get used to being stared at. The people in the town are slowly getting used to us, but still in restaurants people watch in anticipation at what we will order to eat and how we will eat it and no-one expects us to eat spicy food. True Malay hospitality was shown to us recently when we were invited to a Malay wedding even though we had never met the bride and groom, pictured below, we were warmly welcomed and had a truly amazing experience.



### Out of work...

The opportunity to travel in Malaysia is vast and I really hope I have time to explore more of Malaysia. We have already been lucky enough to travel to Singapore. We are making the most of the end of term holidays and setting of backpacking in Vietnam and Thailand in



December. In January we plan to climb Mount Kinabalu the tallest peak in Southeast Asia! And I can't wait to explore Malaysia's beautiful East coast next year where hopefully I can volunteer at a turtle sanctuary!

### Keeping in touch...

If you have any questions about my year out with Project Trust then please do not hesitate to contact me by email or post

In the new year I will try to make short regular posts with updates!

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### And finally...

Many thanks once again to everyone who has supported me and helped me on my way to a life changing experience and I hope you enjoy reading about my year out.

*Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy new year! :-)*