

## WORLD CHALLENGE

You wouldn't exactly call it your average holiday. Helping to build a school and teaching English in a remote village in Cambodia; visiting the Killing Fields; trekking the Burmese/Thai border; climbing mountains; rafting the rivers, riding elephants and ox carts, relaxing in Chiang Mai and spending 28 days in 2 countries very different to ours.

This is the adventure faced by the 14 intrepid Year 10 and 12 students who travelled to Cambodia and Thailand as part of the World Challenge program over the Christmas holidays. Departing on 27<sup>th</sup> December the expedition combines four phases.

They arrived in Phnom Penh and had 3 days to look at the history of Cambodia. They visited the Killing Fields and S21 where many hundreds of Cambodians were tortured and killed. They also visited the beautiful Royal Palace. In Siem Riep they visited Angkor Wat and Angkor Tom and 'Tomb Raider' Temples. An amazing experience

The **project** phase involves spending time working on a sustainable community project at grassroots level. The students spent 7 days helping to build and maintain a school in the Makak Village in Cambodia. The students also taught English lessons to the gorgeous children who were always so willing to learn! Whilst on the project the team stayed in a traditional 'long house' and live among the local community. The students had raised over \$2000 in fundraising activities which was invested in the project and injected into the local economy.

The **trek** phase involved a 6 day physical challenge: The students trekked through the hills of Thai/Burma called Um Phang. They spent 6 hours in a truck getting in to the jungle and then a day on the river on boats reaching the start point- a tent on a riverbank. They visited the second largest waterfall in Asia, slept in hammocks and some rode elephants through the Jungle.

The **journey** phase encompasses the entire learning experience as students work together and make decisions for the duration of the expedition. The students worked in leadership groups to make all decisions relating to where they stayed, what they ate, how they got from one place to another and how to manage the team's budget.

They finally spent a couple of days in Chiang Mai before returning by sleeper train overnight to Bangkok to fly home.

The students were all amazing through a lot of adversity. They have matured and experienced a huge amount. They were an absolute credit to the school.

Jenny Wilson

PDHPE teacher