



We started out the day by saying goodbye to our nation's Capitol. We boarded the buses after a hearty breakfast and headed for the City of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia. We enjoyed a calm, peaceful bus ride that included catching up on some much needed shut-eye, a little healthy DS competition, and watching some classic feature films.

In Philadelphia, we spent some time at the Constitution Center where we learned about one of the most important documents in our nation's history. We watched a rousing presentation of "The Rise of Freedom" in a circular theater. Since the Constitution starts with the phrase "We the people", the presentation examined who these people are. After the presentation we went upstairs and saw exhibits of famous events from the signing of the Declaration of Independence to the swearing in of President Obama. One of the most popular exhibits with the students (and parents) was a place where people could stand behind the presidential podium and take the Oath of Office. As they did this, everyone could see them and the chief justice on a big screen. Students also enjoyed taking their pictures next to life size bronze statues of our forefathers.

From there we went to see the greatest symbol of freedom throughout the world: the Liberty Bell. Right next door was Independence Hall where the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights were signed. It was interesting to see how small these buildings were compared to the Capitol Building we visited Monday. The handcrafted ceilings and columns were beautiful, although some of us did not like the ugly green color covering the walls and ceilings.

From Independence Hall we loaded back onto the bus, heading for The Big Apple. We unloaded into the busiest corner of Times Square and were immediately "baptized by fire" into the more quickly-paced city. The streets were crowded with green-adorned St. Patrick's Day observers, so it was a crazier than usual. It was great, though, for the kids to see the great New Year's Eve ball drop location.

The Top of the Rock (Rockefeller Center) was our last stop. At sixty-seven stories, The Rock stands just a little lower than the Empire State Building (which in the pictures you see was shining green because of St. Patrick's Day).

After a busy day of travel, each of our tourists are now (hopefully) tucked nicely into bed and we teachers are about to follow. We are all looking forward to a great day of shopping and Broadway tomorrow—our final full day in New York City.

Quotable Quotes

"Dude! This is embarrassing!" Said by student in reaction to having just poured coffee all over his entire breakfast, thinking it was syrup.

"Holy Buckets!" Said by parent as he saw the New York skyline for the first time.

"All of the kids are great...and most of the parents." Said by one of the tour guides.

"St. Patty's Day in New York City is definitely busier than Redlands market night." Observant student.

"Why is everyone wearing green???" Concerned student on the blue bus.

"I like Chevy's, but I'd rather eat at Ford's." Hilarious student, commenting on the restaurant where we ate dinner.