

# Building Bonds

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Diplomatic relations may be changed by the young. At present, the number of students who study abroad is increasing along with globalization. In addition, these young people know foreign trends through SNS and take an interest in other countries. I think such situations will change our perceptions of other countries and will be able to improve diplomatic relations.

My hobby is listening to K-POP. Now K-POP is popular worldwide. One day, I had the opportunity to interact with American people, and when I told them about my hobby, they replied that K-POP is also popular in America. I think the secrets of K-POP's popularity are its attractive dance moves, the simple, memorable phrases and the beats. I have become interested in South Korean fashion, makeup, food, and the Hangul language as I became more and more hooked on K-POP.

There are Japanese people who are interested in the South Korean lifestyle like me, so they copy South Korean fashion, and travel there. There are also South Korean people who like anime, music, Japanese fashion, and travel to Japan, or study abroad.

Because of this, it would seem that Japanese and South Korean relations are good, but actually they're not. Japan-South Korea disputes are often reported in the news. However, the opinions of young people aren't reported on much, so Japanese people take South Korean people as anti-Japanese. As a result Japanese people have anti-South Korean feelings. I have only known South Korea as I have seen it on the news, so I too had a bad impression before I became interested in K-POP.

In these circumstances, the phenomenon of Japanese entering the K-POP world has occurred. Lately, a K-POP group called "TWICE" is popular in both Japan and South Korea. Three out of the nine members are Japanese. Before TWICE, there had never been a group with a mix of Japanese and South Korean nationals. South Korean people who had never had a good impression of Japan, now cheer for TWICE and join online boards written in Japanese. Some people from both countries have even become friends due to their interest in TWICE. In addition, in Japan there is a K-POP idol training school which is popular among young people due to the interest in TWICE. They

are captivated by the high quality dance moves, and the different atmosphere from idols in Japan. They take lessons in singing, dancing, and Korean there. Recently, Japanese people are given attention in auditions because their success in K-POP.

From these changes in feelings between young people, we know that Japanese and South Koreans can naturally continue to interact.

Granted, the two countries have territorial and historical issues, but it would be great for people who have the same goals to meet and grow together. Do we really need to stop interacting with other countries just because we cannot solve our conflicts? Cultural interaction is sure to give a sense of closeness and we can discover a new side to the world around us. This interaction can change the impressions we have of other countries and we can become the bridge between our own country and others..

