**Transcript: Kurnai 2015**

**Student:**

This year a group of us went to China for six weeks as part of the Victorian Young Leaders to China Program. We’ve put together this video about our trip and what we’ve learned.

**Nathan:** (In Mandarin) Hello. My name is Nathan.

(In English) After learning Chinese for three months I’ve been given the opportunity to come to China. I chose to study Chinese because there’s a vast amount of people speaking the Chinese dialect of Mandarin. Chinese, I have found, has many more opportunities available than what first meets the eye. It was really difficult to learn at first due to the fact that the dialect and scripts at first didn’t make any sense to me. I heard sounds but couldn’t find a link to how they related to the characters. As you would guess, it was really tough for me due to the lack of connections. For example, when our teacher would start to teach us characters, it appeared to just be random lines and shapes placed with no order. But after time, I began to recognise characters as well as their characteristics, such as the character for exit. I recognised this due to its resemblance to a doorway. It wasn’t much, but as soon as your mind makes that first connection, the rest is simple.

**Emily:** My name is Emily Lugton. Most people know me as Luggo. I am currently a Year 9 student at Kurnai Secondary College and have been learning Chinese for just over two and a half years now. Learning Chinese for me gave me my first opportunity to go overseas. Before March, I had never really travelled outside of Australian borders. So, as you can imagine I was very nervous and didn’t really know what to expect when leaving my country. Before I left for China, I hoped that travelling with my friends would help me being away from my home, and this is pretty much what happened. Being with my mates, old and new, Australian and Chinese, helped me leave everything behind. They were like the one piece of Australia I could take with me. I also gained a greater sense of who they are as well as greater sense about myself and the amount of independence and confidence I could be capable of.

I guess that all the activities we took part in also helped me keep my mind off missing home, such as ceramics, painting, martial arts, aerobics and many more. I found that going overseas wasn’t as difficult as I had originally thought, especially with amazing people surrounding me and good times we spent together.