WELCOME TO THE WORLD AT BLIS

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**Abstract**

This article stated that the word at Bilkent Laboratory & International School and my experiences in this world. I generally mentioned about my observations about the staff , rules, schedule, curriculum, teachers and the students at this school. Additionally, I talked about how I and my student-teacher friends were welcomed. And then, I described the classes managed by different mathematics teachers. Moreover, I explained the classroom management techniques that teachers used and attitudes of students to the teachers and lessons. Besides, I compared and contrasted BLIS with the OBO and OBI. And finally, I expressed my feelings about the first day at BLIS.

*Key words:* BLIS, welcome, experiences at BLIS

**Introduction**

The purpose of this article was to express my observation about the first day at Bilkent Laboratory and International School (BLIS). It was an extraordinary day for me and the other student-teachers. The teachers welcomed all of us very sincerely, first. And then, I met the first class and mathematics teacher, Bill. Next, I observed a 8th grade mathematics class monitored by Muna Kaya and my mentor Paola San Martini in a 9th grade class. I observed the students, schedule, curriculum and so indeed BLIS in general. In brief, it was an amazing experience for me.

**A LABRATORY AND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, BLIS**

Bilkent Laboratory & International School is an international school for foreign students and a university laboratory school for Turkish nationals. BLIS provides a rigorous academic program to students from kindergarten to grade 12. At the end of the program, students can qualify the IB Diploma.

The first day at BLIS started by a very pleasant welcome. The IGCSE coordinator Ms. Anne Akay welcomed I and the other student-teachers. She showed round us and we had a short trip at BLIS before the first meeting with the administrative staff. We saw most of the departments at the school, such as classes, the teachers’ room**,** and cafeteria. Then, Mr.Green, the director general, welcomed us. He mentioned about the main purpose of the BLIS. He added that they were so happy to see the student-teachers at there. After, International High School Principle, Mr. Michael Saffarewich introduced himself. He was a mathematician, too, and knew several languages. They were all very kind and hospitable people. I was very pleased with their attitude.

I and my mathematics student-teacher friends met three different mathematics classes. From the arrangements of student desks to the management techniques in all were also different from each other. For example, in one, clusters of 6 desks were used, and in another, the desks were arranged as semicircles. In first class which was managed by Mr. Bill, the subject was the mathematics language and symbols with operations in decimals. Although, students in this class behaved highly free while they were doing the exercises individually and while they were asking questions to the teacher, teacher was withitness.

In the second class, teacher was Muna Kaya. It was 8th grade class and the topic was the surds and operations in them. Throughout the lesson, Ms. Kaya did drill exercises. She used some management strategies too much, namely, questioning and hands-on. Also, the teacher helped the students to inquiry the meaning the expressions in surds. She usually did this by questioning. That is to say, instead of explaining the statement directly, for example, *this was something and this one came from bla bla*; she taught by asking so many questions to make them find the answer. To illustrate, she asked as *if we added this to that what we obtained?* or *how did I combine these two?* Against, the wrong answers, teacher insistently asked question *“why?”* by the time any student said the right answer. In this class, there were a couple things that attracted my attention. For example, teacher wrote x as x in order to prevent the misconceptions. Moreover, 0 was accepted as a natural number in IGCSE. And also, students queried even the smallest details, such as, why was the square root called as root and why the cube root was not called as root. In this manner, I understood how important to explain the statement as clearly as possible for avoiding the misunderstanding.

In the last session, my mentor, Ms. Paola San Martini welcomed us in the 9th grade class. The topic was correlation. In this class, there were group work and accountability. Each student in the groups was responsible for active involvement. They plotted their data in the scatter plot graph papers. The interesting was that I studied this topic when I was undergraduate student; these students studied in the high school even 9th grade.

To compare and contrast BLIS with the OBO-OBI, I thought that the teachers and my mentors in both schools were hospitable and kind people. The students were educated by more flexible rules at BLIS than at OBO and OBI. Therefore, the students at BLIS could focus on the subjects easily, I thought. Furthermore, whereas in 8th grade class at BLIS, teacher let the students listen to music when they were doing practices and class homework; in the OBO and OBI, this did not allowed before. On the other hand, it was not allowed to practice the MONE curriculum at BLIS; instead, the IGCSE and IB curriculum were preferred.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this article was to express my first day experiences at Bilkent Laboratory and International School. The administrator staff and teachers welcomed I and other student-teachers very sincerely. Then, I observed the schedule, the rules, the teachers and the students as well as the curriculum. I had a chance to compare and test my academic knowledge with the form which was applied in this school. I was very pleased with this experience in the world at BLIS.

"A Bilkent student does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do. On my honor, as a Bilkent student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work."

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