

How The Other Classmate Lives: A Field Trip

Description



The Field Trip



Show and Tell

I got an email a few months ago from my son's Room Parent at The Willows School telling me the kids would be taking a field trip to a classmate's house on the Westside to see their horse ranch. This classmate is the child of a board member. I was speechless. There was little information provided except that the trip tied into the novels about horses they were reading in class. Really?

Those of you with kids at L.A. private schools know there are some very wealthy families at these schools. It comes with the territory and if your kid become friends with theirs, you might glimpse a life that's very different than your own (or maybe not). But, most school field trips are to museums, Watts Towers, the beach, The Aquarium and other historic and/or meaningful, educational venues. Most of the school's previous field trips were excellent. Never had I questioned the purpose of any of them.

I wondered if this field trip would offer any learning opportunities like having a vet discuss the anatomy of a horse or something like that. Or, would it simply be a show-off trip to see how another well-off classmate lives?

Thinking about some of the kids who live in apartments or normal size homes, I thought about the message this trip would send to them. What useful purpose would it serve? A few moms of girls worried about the “Queen Bees and Wannabes” mean girl syndrome a trip like this could perpetuate.

I thought about scheduling a dentist appointment for my son the morning of the trip. I considered calling the school to inquire about whether there would be any learning opportunities beyond petting a horse on the trip. My better judgement prevailed. Calling the school would only cause me problems. I™d never get a real answer. Besides, I knew the real reason.

My son went on the field trip. When I asked him how it was, he told me it was “dumb.” “We petted horses and watched the board member/homeowner’s daughter ride her horse,” he told me. Lunch, he explained laughing, consisted of bacon, hardboiled eggs and fruit, served by a private chef. My guess is that *somebody* at the house was on a high protein diet and thought the kids should be too.

What my son learned from the trip isn’t something I could have told him. He learned an important life lesson by going on the field trip. I™m so glad he went.

Category

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Tags

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