

August 29, 2010

Hello!

This week, two other volunteers and I sat down and reorganized the materials available for the children at the orphanage. We separated story books, coloring books and activity workbooks and organized them in the orphanage book shelf. Our efforts definitely made this week's lessons easier to plan. Our most interesting lesson this week covered adjectives — I had each of the kids choose an adjective that described him or her and draw something depicting that adjective. For example, several of the boys are very talented soccer players, so many of them chose the adjective "athletic" (which I had taught them that day) and drew a picture of themselves playing soccer.

There is also a television at the orphanage, but unfortunately it is usually being watched by a member of the orphanage staff, and they rarely watch shows appropriate for children. Remembering this while I was in Kotofridua one day this week, I bought a pack of several children's movies, and I surprised the kids after lunch one day

with a showing of The Lion King. I am hoping we can continue to watch more children's movies with the kids and fewer inappropriate Ghanaian soap operas (which is unfortunately what the staff often insists on watching).

I am also realizing how incredibly inventive the kids at the orphanage are. They have shown me how to play several card games that they came up with themselves, and I often see the younger kids playing a game that involves throwing a flip-flop at a pile of bottle caps, though I have yet to figure out how one actually wins that game. It is amazing how the kids have learned to entertain themselves — I am consistently impressed with their creativity.

This weekend, a group of volunteers and I traveled to Cape Coast, a city about seven hours southwest of Kwamoso by tr. We spent ~~the~~ Saturday morning at Kakum National Park, where we crossed the very popular canopy walk, a 350 meter long rope and wood bridge suspended between ~~several~~ seven trees. The bridges were quite shaky,

but the view of the jungle was gorgeous. Later that afternoon, we toured two slave forts, the most famous being the fort in Elmina. The Ghanaian guides showed us where the slaves were kept and where they boarded ships that took them to Europe and the Americas. It was a chilling but fascinating experience, and it was an odd paradox to tour a place that was so beautiful architecturally but so horrifying because of what took place within its walls. I will definitely recommend Cape Coast as a travel destination for other volunteers, if only for the historical slave forts.

All the Best,

Abby