Leggi e ascolta.

I’ve done that!

Every week one of our readers tells us about an exciting experience that they’ve had. This week Holly Barton (15) describes how she got her Duke of Edinburgh’s Award (DofE) and talks about what she has learnt from the experience.

What is The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award?

Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, started The DofE Award programme in Britain in 1956. It’s a programme of activities for young people between the ages of 14 and 25. There are three levels in the programme: Bronze, Silver and Gold. At each level you have to complete a variety of activities and you get an award when you have finished them.
**DofE is very popular in the UK.** More than two million young people have participated in the programme and have received a DofE award. A lot of students start the programme at school. They do it because they want to try new activities and learn new skills. A DofE award also helps students impress universities and potential employers and it’s a great thing to include on a curriculum vitae!

**I’ve never had so much fun!**

‘**The Duke of Edinburgh Award is one of the best things that I’ve ever done.** Thanks to The DofE, I’ve learnt new skills, I’ve started a new sport, I’ve travelled around the UK and I’ve made a lot of friends.

**I did the Bronze Award at school last year.** There are four different sections to the award. They are Volunteering, Skills, Physical and finally Expedition. You have to choose activities for the first three sections and then practise them once a week for at least three months. After that you have to go on a two-day expedition without any adults and you have to sleep in a tent for the night – that’s definitely the best part!

- **For the Volunteering Section, my friend Hannah and I helped at a Silver Surfers’ Club.** It’s a computer club for retired people. We went to the club every Thursday afternoon and we showed the members how to use a computer and how to go online. It was really cool!
• **For the Skills Section, I did a Circus Skills course after school.** I learned how to ride a unicycle and how to juggle. I still practise juggling every day and I’ve learned to juggle with five balls! It’s my party trick!

• **I joined the girls’ football team at school for the Physical Section of the award.** I didn’t like it at first because we had to train outside in the cold, but now I love football.
Finally, I went on a two-day Expedition with three friends from school. It was incredible! We walked along part of Hadrian’s Wall. The wall goes from west to east across the north of England and it’s the most important Roman monument in the UK. The Roman Emperor Hadrian ordered its construction in AD 122 to protect the Romans in England from Scottish tribes. We took photographs of the Roman sites and we kept a video diary of our journey. It was brilliant!

Now I’ve started the Silver Award and I’d like to do the Gold Award next year, too. I’ve never had so much fun!’

Holly Barton