

## Internship Report: Anna Brockmann

My name is Anna Brockmann, I am 18 years old and I just graduated from high school. I applied to this project in March, because I didn't want to study immediately after school, the continent Africa has always fascinated me and I wanted to invest my time in a project where I could really help.

This project from UNCSO seemed ideal for the time after school and after these three months I am now sure that I could not have invested my time any better.



On the 30th of August, our Finnish girl Ansku and I arrived as the first ones in the small town Usakos. First, both of us didn't really know how to survive for three months in the rather uninteresting little town. But already on the next day we both were more motivated and confident: This term would be something special for all of us.

On our first Center day, we were really nicely welcomed by all of the kids. They surprised us with their openminded way and asked many questions. You could see that the kids need much attention and affection but that was the reason why I came here: to give them as much attention and love as possible.

Two days later, all of us seven girls had arrived and everyone got along very well. Already in the beginning of the term, we worked as a team and supported each other as well as possible.

In the first month we first had to get to know the everyday life of the Center. After several weeks we also knew all the kids' names. That made it much easier to speak to them. Now they really took us seriously.

The first contact with my study group, the 7 Fourthgraders, could have been better: They had homework in their subject Khoekhoegowab and I couldn't help them with it. Of course they knew and first they didn't take me seriously and didn't work properly. But in the following days and weeks they accepted me as their teacher and most of the time we had much fun together. In the last month, Shaun from Grade 1, and Michelle from Grade 3 worked with us in Study Time and they made our study time more varied and more interesting.

At the end, I knew how to deal with each of these so different kids and they knew how I would react on certain things. Sometimes I really was at my limits, but I achieved the goal to teach all the students at least some helpful things.

I would separate our term in three stages. The first month was a Getting-to-know stage. We had to get used to the new home, the Center and the new culture. After we had managed that, we had to prepare the kids for the DNG-visit (Deutsch-Namibische Gesellschaft). Here, we had the possibility to get to know the different tribes and cultures properly. Especially for us Europeans it was interesting to see how different and unique the cultures are.

The last stage in this term was the preparation of the Christmas Party. This was the most stressful part. We had to teach the kids the Christmas Play, the songs and much more. Here in Namibia, everything is a bit more spontaneous and improvised than in Germany. So we all had to prepare for a different kind of Christmas Play. During our preparation, I kept this in my mind. That took a lot of pressure away and I had more fun practicing with the kids.

All in all, we managed everything really well and we were proud of ourselves when the Christmas Party was over. This event was definitely one of the term's highlights. All of us had much fun together and it was a unique Christmas we spent together. When we gave the food packages out, the families were receiving them with bright eyes and a big smile. That made me feel proud and happy. Our work and the stress of the last weeks definitely had been worth it.

All in all, the handling with the kids also changed in the three months. After the house-visits you could really retrace some behavior of the kids and you knew the relationship between certain Centerkids much better.

In these three months, I definitely became more self-confident in the way of dealing with kids. I didn't accept every behavior anymore and knew how to deal with the really naughty Centerkids. We as a group also grew with every challenge. At the



end, we had different rituals we would do when the Kids wouldn't be silent. One nice ritual was playing the game "Freeze" to get total silence. It worked really well most of the time and one reason for that is that we as a team worked so well together.

At the end, I really took all the children to my heart and it will be incredibly hard for all of us to say goodbye next week. But these kids have filled me up with their warmhearted way and their energy. These memories, I will always try to keep in my heart.

The time with Marianne, with our great group and with the Centerkids has been one of the nicest times in my life. It was full of experiences which will help me to find my way in the future. Thank you Marianne for welcoming us to your home. We felt very comfortable and had a wonderful time together. I would also like to thank this beautiful country Namibia. The diversity of the landscapes, the wideness of this country and the friendly Namibian lifestyle is just impressive and I will definitely miss all of it in Germany. But at least I know that It has not been my last time in Namibia.



I say bye for now and wish Marianne, UNCSO and the Centerkids all the best for the future!