

Ten Ways to Build on a Light Fellowship After Returning to Yale

1. **Attend weekly language table.** A great, casual way to catch up with old friends and teachers over lunch, as well as an opportunity to make new friends. In addition, you can hear about other Fellows' unique experiences in East Asia (and maybe inspiration for another Light!)
2. **Seek out news sources in the language** you're learning or from the country you were in. For instance, the [Wall Street Journal](#) and the [New York Times](#) have Chinese editions. If those sources are hard to find/not at the right level, reading broadly about current events (particularly from Asian news sources, some of which have English editions) can continue to expand one's worldview.
3. **Participate in [Tandem Language Cafe](#) or apply to the [Fields Program](#) at Yale.** Tandem Language Cafe pairs you with someone who speaks your target language, and the two of you meet every week to practice both English and Chinese, Japanese, or Korean. Since you at one time may have felt lost and confused in a new country, it can feel especially rewarding to help others adjust to the oddities of English and America as well. Fields allows students to pursue advanced-level, discipline-specific language study. Many returning Light Fellows have taken advantage of this opportunity to continue language study within the context of their academic area of focus.
4. **Pick a book of short stories relevant to the city you were in.** Maybe the city was the author's hometown, or the setting of the short stories, but sometimes a personal connection to the story can make a big difference in reading in a foreign language. Longer fiction is great too, though short stories that can be fit in during meals or between classes may be more digestible for time-pressed Yalies.
5. **Build on the Fellowship with your classes.** In addition to continuing your language education, you can also gain new perspectives about the country you were in by taking history, economics, political science, or a plethora of other classes relevant to East Asia. The opportunities are endless!
6. **[Attend events that the Council on East Asian Studies sponsors](#).** These are very interesting and can provide a more theoretical framework to understand your experience in Asia.
7. **Continue using whatever social media platform** you were using during the fellowship. Keep up with the friends you made, from roommates to teachers to strangers you met on the street!
8. **Expand your culinary palate.** Explore Asian restaurants in New Haven— make a plan with other Yalies who went to your program or grab some other friends, and visit one of the many restaurants that serve East Asian food in the area. You can try ordering in that language too! Additionally, you can buy some groceries and cook up a dish that you really enjoyed in your time abroad—bonus points if you can celebrate cultural holidays with authentic traditional food.
9. **Look for new ways to go back to East Asia.** Continue language studies with another [Light Fellowship](#) or research [other fellowship opportunities](#).
10. **Join the Light Fellowship Student Advisory Committee.** We visit language classes, encourage people to apply, and give advice to applicants and recipients of the Light Fellowship. It's a great way to give back and ensure that the next cycle of Fellows has as good of an experience as you did.