They are adapting to new language and surroundings.

Each year of high school you advance in class, workload, and expectations.

You may be taught by new teachers, sit in new classrooms and even walk to a different locker between classes.

Can you imagine doing that in a country you've never been too?

Those are the challenges faced by Sara Picci and Jiraput Chatissaranuvat, also known as Peak, at Gothenburg High School.

Picci is a 17-year-old senior from Ferrara, Italy.

Her desire to come to the United States was fed by learning English and seeing from where music, movies and books came.

"I wanted to see the country where all of those things were made," Sara said.

Peak is a 15-year-old sophomore from Khonkaen, Thailand, who decided last year while in England that he would come to the United States.

“I like to travel and learn about different places,” Peak said. “It’s exciting when you get somewhere you’ve never been.”

Both Sara and Peak went through a company that sends students to other countries for educational opportunities.

Sara had to take a psychology and language test before she qualified to make the trip.

Peak’s requirements were less stressful. He decided he wanted to travel to the United States and was on his way.

Both students have had to overcome language barriers in their new environment, struggling to use proper grammar or ask for what they want.

Sara said the biggest challenge has been knowing how to use words differently that sound the same.

She added that she sometimes still gets lost on where to go.

“I ask a lot of questions so I know exactly what to do,” Sara said. “Back home, I know what to do all the time. I miss that.”

Peak said the language barrier is the toughest part of the transition at Gothenburg High School.

He said the problem is both the communication and using the right words.

The easiest part of the new student experience was fewer people in school, Sara and Peak said.

Along with that, the students aren't in one room all day as they are in Italy and Thailand.

There, the students stay in a classroom all day and teachers come in to teach and then leave to teach somewhere else, they said.

Between classes, both students experienced lockers for the first time, that were tough to get in to, Peak said.

Other than minor difficulties during the day, both students have managed to make friends and get involved outside of school.

"Meeting new people keeps you busy," Sara said. "I've been doing new things with friends that I've made that makes it easier to be away from home."

Sara went to the Harvest Festival that she enjoyed.

She sometimes gets picked up by friends with a car and goes where they go, she said.

Peak said he does similar things with friends here that he did in Thailand.

Going to a friend's house or hanging out somewhere is a hobby of his, he said, as is attending Gothenburg sporting events.

Coming to a new town, country and school wasn't the only transition the exchange students were forced to make. They joined a household they knew nothing about.

Sara lives with Brad and Lisa Jorgensen.

In Italy, Picci has one sibling, but is joined by four children in the Jorgensen home.

"It was tough going from growing and thinking that my family is the right way, then learning that other families do things differently," Sara said. "I've learned that it is important to know that families are different and that doesn't make them better or worse."

Sara and the Jorgensen family took a vacation to Yellowstone National Park last summer where she experienced "unusual animals" like buffalo.

Peak is the oldest of two in his home in Thailand.

He said that not being the oldest is a big difference and took getting used to in a home he shares with a sophomore boy.

His host family, Devin and Jamie Brundage took him to Colorado to watch a soccer game.

Both Sara and Peak are taking this experience as an opportunity to try activities they haven't tried before in their home country.

Sara tried out for the one-act play, is in art club and plans to tryout for the speech team.

Peak plays soccer in Cozad and says it’s fun getting to know more people and play a sport with them.

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