



1. PRE-READING

Compare gestures in your native country with gestures in other countries. Your teacher will ask you the questions below. Answer the questions using only your hands. Do not speak! As you answer each question, look at your classmates. Which gestures are the same? Which gestures are different?

In your native country how do you say . . . ?

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Come here. | 7. Who, me? | 13. He/She's intelligent. |
| 2. Go away. | 8. Yes. | 14. Money |
| 3. Stop. | 9. No. | 15. A long time ago. |
| 4. Please be quiet. | 10. I don't know. | 16. This is good. |
| 5. I can't hear you. | 11. Wait a minute. | 17. This is bad. |
| 6. You have a phone call. | 12. He/She's crazy. | 18. This is delicious. |

More Alike Than Different

Everyone listened attentively as the woman spoke.

"If you want to say 'OK,' don't make a circle with your thumb and first finger," the woman began. "That means OK here in the United States, but in Russia it's an obscene gesture."

The audience of 300 Americans chuckled; a few people took notes.

"It's all right to admire something," the woman continued, "but don't be too enthusiastic. Don't say, 'I really like your tablecloth.' Your Russian friend will offer you the tablecloth and will be offended if you don't take it."

"Remember that, in general, life in Russia is not as comfortable as life in the United States. You might not have hot running water, or you might have to share a bathroom with five or six people."

The woman was preparing the Americans for their trip to Russia. In Russia, the language, customs, and food would be different. Even simple things, like making a phone call, would be different. The Americans wanted to learn about these differences before their trip. They didn't want to experience culture shock.

When they arrived in Russia, the Americans were glad that they had prepared for their trip. Most of them experienced only a little culture shock. They enjoyed their visit and made a lot of Russian friends.

Making friends was, in fact, the purpose of the trip. The trip was planned by The Friendship Force, an international organization that promotes world peace. The Friendship Force believes that people who are friends will not fight wars. So, to help people from all over the world become friends, it organizes exchanges of people. The U.S.-Russian exchange was one of the largest exchanges it has ever organized. The Friendship Force sent 300 Americans to Russia and 300 Russians to the United States.

The Russians, like the Americans, prepared for their visit by learning about life in the other

country. Still, they, too, experienced a little culture shock.

The Russians knew that Americans were fond of pets, but they were shocked to see pets inside homes. They couldn't believe their eyes when they saw dogs eating in the kitchen and sleeping on people's beds.

They were surprised at the difference between everyday life in Russia and in the United States. The Americans' lives, they said, were much easier. A Russian woman gasped when she saw an American pour rice directly from a box into a pan of boiling water. "You didn't wash the rice?" she asked. She explained that at home she had to wash the rice carefully and pick out all the stones. "Are you kidding?" the American said. "If people here had to do that, nobody would buy rice."

The Russians knew that Americans liked to eat fast food in restaurants, but they were disappointed to see that Americans ate fast meals at home, too. In Russia, the evening meal often lasts an hour or two because families sit at the table and talk. When American families eat together—if they eat together—they often eat quickly and don't take time for long conversations. The Russians thought that was a shame.

In spite of their differences in language and culture, the Russians and Americans became friends. The two women in the picture became friends, even though the Russian woman couldn't speak a word of English and the American woman couldn't speak a word of Russian. For two weeks they communicated through sign language and dictionaries.

Some of the Americans who traveled to Russia were schoolchildren from a sixth-grade class. When they returned to the United States, their teacher asked them to write about their trip. One 11-year-old girl wrote, "I have learned a lot from this experience. I learned to adapt to a different culture. And I learned that people all over the world are more alike than they are different."

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2. VOCABULARY

LOOKING AT THE STORY

Read the following sentences. Then complete the statements. Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Everyone listened *attentively* as the woman spoke.

1. To listen attentively is to listen

a. carefully.

b. nervously.

"Don't make a circle with your thumb and first finger," the woman said. "That's an *obscene* gesture in Russia." The *audience* of 300 Americans *chuckled*.

2. An obscene gesture is

a. not polite.

b. polite.

3. An audience

a. listens or watches.

b. sings, dances, or speaks.

4. To chuckle is to

a. sing loudly.

b. laugh quietly.

"It's all right to *admire* something," the woman said, "but don't be too *enthusiastic*. Don't say, 'I *really* like your tablecloth.' Your Russian friend will offer you the tablecloth and will be *offended* if you don't take it."

5. If you admire something, you

a. don't like it.

b. like it.

6. If you are enthusiastic, you are

a. interested and excited.

b. bored and tired.

7. People who are offended are

a. a little angry because their feelings are hurt.

b. a little nervous because they don't know what to do.

The Russians knew that Americans were *fond* of pets.

8. People who are fond of pets

a. don't like pets.

b. like pets.

A Russian woman *gasped* when she saw an American pour rice directly from a box into a pan of boiling water. "You didn't wash the rice?" she asked.

9. People gasp when they are

a. tired.

b. surprised.

The Russians knew that Americans liked to eat fast food in restaurants, but they were *disappointed* to see that Americans ate fast meals at home, too.

10. People who are disappointed are

a. not happy.

b. happy.

An 11-year-old girl wrote, "I learned to *adapt* to a new culture. And I learned that people all over the world are more *alike* than they are different."

11. People who adapt
 - a. don't change.
 - b. change.
12. "Alike" means
 - a. the same.
 - b. strange.

LOOKING AT A NEW CONTEXT

Complete the sentences to show that you understand the meanings of the new words. In small groups, take turns reading your sentences aloud. Ask your classmates questions about their sentences.

1. Someone I really admire is _____.
2. Someone or something that makes me chuckle is _____.
3. People who immigrate to the United States probably find it difficult to adapt to _____.
4. People who immigrate to the United States probably find it easy to adapt to _____.
5. I would listen attentively if someone were talking about _____.
6. I would be disappointed if someone gave me _____ for my birthday.
7. I would be enthusiastic if someone invited me to _____.
8. I would gasp with surprise if I heard that _____.

3. COMPREHENSION/READING SKILLS

UNDERSTANDING THE MAIN IDEAS

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. "More Alike Than Different" is about
 - a. the language, customs, and food in Russia.
 - ☒ b. the U.S.-Russian exchange of people that was organized by The Friendship Force.
 - c. communicating through sign language and dictionaries.
2. The Friendship Force is
 - a. an international organization that promotes world peace.
 - b. an organization that prepares Americans for visiting Russia.
 - c. an international organization of children who visit other countries.
3. The Friendship Force believes that
 - a. people who live in Russia do not have comfortable lives.
 - b. people who are friends will not fight wars.
 - c. people who do not speak English will experience culture shock in the United States.

4. To help people become friends, The Friendship Force
 - a. sends language teachers all over the world.
 - b. mails letters all over the world.
 - c. organizes exchanges of people.
5. The Americans prepared for their visit by
 - a. experiencing culture shock.
 - b. writing essays.
 - c. learning about Russian life.
6. The Russians who visited the United States were shocked to see
 - a. Americans eating rice.
 - b. pets in people's homes.
 - c. fast-food restaurants.
7. Although their languages and cultures were different, the Russians and the Americans
 - a. ate the same food.
 - b. became friends.
 - c. had the same everyday lives.

UNDERSTANDING SUPPORTING DETAILS

Find the best way to complete each sentence. Write the letter of your answer on the line.

1. "It's all right to admire something, but don't be too enthusiastic. For example, _____
 - a. they couldn't believe their eyes when they saw dogs eating in the kitchen.
 - b. the two women in the picture became friends, even though the Russian woman couldn't speak English and the American woman couldn't speak Russian.
 - c. don't say, 'I *really* like your tablecloth.'
 - d. Russians have to wash their rice carefully, but Americans don't.
 - e. The Friendship Force sent 300 Americans to Russia and 300 Russians to the United States.
2. The Friendship Force organizes exchanges of people. For example, _____
3. The Russians were shocked to see pets inside homes. For example, _____
4. The Russians said that the Americans' lives were much easier than theirs. For example, _____
5. In spite of their differences in language and culture, the Russians and Americans became friends. For example, _____

DISCUSSION

- A. Are you and your classmates more alike than different? Find out. Sit in groups of three. Continue asking one another questions until you discover five things you have in common. (For example: "We all like cats. We all have birthdays in August.") Then report back to the class.
- B. When people move to a new country, they often go through three stages. These are the stages of culture shock:

Stage 1: Arrival

- Everything is new and different
- Happy, excited

①

Stage 3: One to two years after arrival

- Can speak new language, understand customs, laugh at mistakes
- Adapted, feel "at home"

③

②

Stage 2: Six weeks to six months after arrival

- Everything in native country is better
- Sad, want to go home

Are you in a new country? If so, where are you—at stage 1, stage 2, stage 3, or somewhere in between? Put an X to show where you are. Then show a classmate where you put your X. Tell your classmate why you put your X where you did.

WRITING

Imagine that The Friendship Force is sending a group of people to your native country. What might surprise the visitors? Write about your native country. Prepare the visitors so that they don't experience culture shock. Here is what one student wrote.

Be careful when you shop in Syria. The prices you see in store windows are sometimes not the actual prices. For example, you might see a pair of shoes in a store window. Next to the shoes is the price. But when you go into the store, you find out that the real price of the shoes is more than the price in the window. So, Syrians don't always believe the prices they see in store windows. If people from other countries believe those prices, they will have a bad surprise.