



1 • Culture Shock

PRE-READING 1 Answer the questions.

- 1 In which country do people eat with a fork in the left hand?
 - a America
 - b Britain
 - c They both use a fork in the left hand.
- 2 Are some American accents very different from British accents?
 - a Yes, very different.
 - b Yes, but only in a couple of places in the States.
 - c No, not different at all.
- 3 Do you think that American universities have a lot of clubs you can join?
 - a Yes, they have a lot.
 - b No, they only have a few.
 - c No, they don't have any.

PRE-READING 2 Complete the paragraph about a student magazine with the words or phrases in the box.

advice culture shock ~~magazine~~ settling-in social life

ABC is a student (1) magazine. Every month there is news and information to help students with both their (2) _____ and studies. The magazine also gives help and (3) _____ to new students to make (4) _____ easier. This month there are suggestions on how to deal with (5) _____.

Read about foreign students living and studying in the USA.



Cultural differences

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Studying in a foreign country can be exciting. It can be difficult too, especially if the culture is very different from your own. However, there are often surprises, even if the culture is very similar. When Megan, a British student, first arrived here in the United States she knew that Americans ate their food with a knife and fork. 'But they don't use the knife and fork like we do,' says Megan. 'In Britain we eat with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right hand. Whereas Americans often just use a fork in the right hand.'

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Megan is also surprised that Americans tip a lot more than the British do. 'We never tip a waiter just for a cup of coffee, but Americans tip 15 per cent. The accents can be so different, too! I'm slowly getting used to everything.'

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For students who come here from more different backgrounds, settling in can take longer. Kit-ken, a student who came from Taiwan only a few months ago, told us 'When I first arrived everything was new and exciting. I really liked the differences between here and home. I was happy to be in a new country. Now, though, I miss my family and friends and feel a bit lonely. Sometimes I'm confused about what to do. There are still lots of things that I like, but now there are more things I dislike. I feel really homesick!'

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For advice we turned to some students who now have few problems about being a student here. Seydou arrived from Senegal two years ago. He told us 'Kit-ken shouldn't worry, this is perfectly normal. I felt exactly the same as she did. I didn't understand the culture and my English wasn't improving, either.'

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Seydou realised this was because all his friends were from his own country. 'So I decided to get to know some North American students, and other international students. I went to the student union where there are a lot of different clubs. There are sports clubs, dance clubs, clubs for people who have the same religion, clubs for people who want to find out more about something – there are loads! I saw there was a club for students interested in music and so I joined that. It made all the difference! I made friends quite quickly, and I was able to understand the culture a bit better. The students were interested in me, too. We talked about the differences, and I began to feel a lot happier. We now get on well and often hang out together.'

- 40 Miguel from Mexico added, 'My main problem was the food. I really missed eating my favourite dishes! Cooking for myself was also hard and I ate too much fast food, which was not good for me. Then I found a Mexican restaurant nearby. Now I go there quite a lot, and I often take other students to give it a try. Also my mum sends me packages with Mexican food in them, and that really helps, too.'
- 45 Understanding a new culture is important, but it's good to have things from home, too.'

Seydou sums up the advice for us, '...'

COMPREHENSION 1 How does Seydou sum up the advice? Choose the best comment.

- 1 Things will get better if you stop talking to people from your own country and eat only North American food.
- 2 Culture shock is normal. Meeting people from other cultures is a good idea, but having things that you know and like also helps.
- 3 Culture shock is not normal. There are doctors at the student union who can help.

COMPREHENSION 2 Answer the questions.

- 1 Which sentence is correct about line 1?
 - a Being a student in your own country is easy.
 - b There are always problems being a student in another country.
 - c There are good and bad things about being a student in another country.
- 2 In line 12, another way of saying *I'm becoming more familiar with the differences* is _____.
- 3 In line 18, what does Kit-ken say about her family and friends?
 - a She tries not to see them.
 - b She doesn't want them to know she feels alone.
 - c She feels sad because she isn't with them.
- 4 In line 20, how does Kit-ken feel?
 - a She feels ill because she's far from home.
 - b She feels sad because she's far from home.
 - c She feels ill because she doesn't like her new home.
- 5 In line 22, what is another way of saying *to go to someone for help*?

- 6 In line 24, what does *this* refer to?
- He didn't understand the culture and his English wasn't improving.
 - feeling homesick
 - His friends were from his own country.
- 7 In line 34, which phrase means *that changed things for the better*?
- 8 In lines 39 to 43, which of these sentences about Miguel are true?
- He has a problem with Mexican food.
 - He didn't cook in Mexico.
 - He ate a lot of fast food because it's his favourite type of food.
 - He sometimes goes to a Mexican restaurant on his own.
 - He sometimes goes to a Mexican restaurant with other Mexican students.

COMPREHENSION 3 Friends are very important! Complete the sentences with the verbs in the box. Use each verb only once.

miss turn to make get to know get on with hang out

- I think I _____ Sam because we both like the same things.
- It's difficult for me to _____ new friends because I'm very shy.
- Joining a club is a good way to _____ other students.
- We mostly _____ with the other people in our music club.
- When I'm away from home I really _____ my friends.
- If I have a problem I know I can _____ my friends; they're always ready to help.



get to know



hang out

Grammar**Articles**

Indefinite article (*a / an*): to talk about something for the first time; to talk about jobs

*You can eat food with **a** knife and fork.*

*Megan is **a** student.*

Definite article (*the*): to talk about something again, or when there is only one

*British people eat with **the** fork in **the** left hand*

No article (\emptyset): to talk about things in general

We don't tip waiters for coffee but Americans do.

GRAMMAR 1 Complete the sentences about the second part of the text with *a, an, the* or \emptyset .

For example:

Seydou is a student at an American university.

- 1 He went to _____ student union at his university.
- 2 He saw there was _____ club for _____ students interested in _____ music.
- 3 It helped him to understand _____ culture better.
- 4 Miguel found _____ Mexican restaurant near the campus.
- 5 His mum sends him _____ packages.

GRAMMAR 2 Are the articles in these sentences about Kit-ken correct?

- 1 Kit-ken thought an advice from Seydou was very good.
- 2 She likes acting and \emptyset films so she joined an film club.
- 3 She got the main part in a film about \emptyset student life.
- 4 Now she wants to be the actress in Hollywood!

SPEAKING Talk to a partner and answer the questions.

- 1 What problems might foreign students from your country have when living in the USA?
- 2 What problems might students from the USA have when living in your country?
- 3 Can you give some examples of problems foreign students might have with the culture or customs of your country?

Effective Skills

ACTIVATING VOCABULARY

Match the verbs (1–6) and nouns (a–f).

- | | |
|---------|-------------------|
| 1 have | a into tears |
| 2 blow | b in a pub |
| 3 give | c in coloured ink |
| 4 drink | d lunch |
| 5 burst | e a present |
| 6 write | f a whistle |

Six foreign students had cultural problems when they studied abroad. Can you guess which countries the students were in?



Doing things differently

- A** I was a student in _____. One day, I was invited to a local student's home for dinner. I wanted to take something special for his parents so I took an expensive bottle of wine from my country. However, when I gave them the present my friend was quiet, and looked embarrassed. When I asked him why, he explained, and I felt embarrassed, too.
- B** Well, I was a student in _____ and one day I crossed the road. Just that! Suddenly I heard a whistle blowing and a police officer came running after me. He said, 'You must wait at a crosswalk and only cross if the 'walk' light is on.' He was very angry with me and I burst into tears!
- C** When I was a student in _____, a local friend invited me to have Sunday lunch at her home. During the meal, my friend said to me, 'Put your hands on the table.' When I looked, I saw that all her family had their hands on the table, except me. I had no idea why!

- 15 **D** One sunny day, when I was a student in _____, I went to a pub with two local friends. We all had a drink but, because I was so thirsty, I drank mine very quickly. My friends still had half-full glasses so I bought another drink, just for myself. My friends said, 'Hey, you can't do that!' and then I felt cheap.
- 20 **E** I spent a year studying in _____. I was shocked the first time I went to a lecture. At the end of the lecture I stood up to leave, but sat down again when all the students started knocking on their desks. I asked another student, 'Why are you knocking?' It seemed a strange thing to do.
- 25 **F** I love making my own birthday cards. One day, when I was a student in _____, I decided to make a card for a local friend. It was in different colours and I thought it looked lovely, but when I gave it to her she cried, 'Oh no! My name is written in red ink!' When she explained why, I felt terrible.

**GENERAL
UNDERSTANDING**

Match the problems above to one of the explanations below. Complete the text with the correct country.

- 1 In France, it's polite to eat with your hands on, not under, the table.
- 2 In Jordan, where most of the people are Muslim, many families don't have alcohol in the home.
- 3 In Korea, a name written in red ink means that the person has died.
- 4 In the USA, crossing the road in the wrong place is called *jaywalking* and in some cities it's illegal.
- 5 In Germany, students don't clap their hands to show they like something, they knock on their desks instead.
- 6 In the UK, when you are in a pub, you buy drinks in *rounds* – for you and your friends, not individually.

**READING
FOR DETAIL**

Which student had one of the following reactions?

For example:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Which student started to cry? | <u>The student in the USA.</u> |
| 1 Which student didn't understand the problem? | _____ |
| 2 Which student was very surprised? | _____ |
| 3 Which student felt really bad? | _____ |
| 4 Which student was uncomfortable with what his friend thought? | _____ |
| 5 Which student felt bad about not buying something? | _____ |

SPEAKING Talk to a partner and answer the questions.

- 1 Which foreign student do you think had the biggest problem?
- 2 Can you think of a time when you did something wrong in a social situation?
- 3 When was the last time you were embarrassed? What happened?

PRONUNCIATION Find the 11 words in the text. Decide in which words the underlined -ed ending is pronounced like:

1 /t/ watched	2 /c/ smiled	3 /ɪd/ wanted
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For example

invited 3

- | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|
| 1 wanted | ___ | 5 cried | ___ | 9 decided | ___ |
| 2 explained | ___ | 6 shocked | ___ | 10 looked | ___ |
| 3 embarrassed | ___ | 7 started | ___ | | |
| 4 crossed | ___ | 8 seemed | ___ | | |

WRITING Look at the following sentences:

Do: In the USA, cross the road at a crosswalk.

Don't: In France, don't eat with your hands under the table.

A foreign student is coming to your university. Write some dos and don'ts about your culture.

Dos and Don'ts in my country:

	Do	Don't
1		
2		
3		