Lesson Plan Template

• **Title**
  Culture Shock

• **Author**
  Walton Burns

• **Proficiency level**
  
  _____ Beginning ___X__ Intermediate _____ Advanced

• **Skills**
  
  ___X_ Speaking Related subskills discussion, giving opinions

• **Content area**
  
  Comparative culture, life skills

• **Objectives**
  
  This lesson is planned as an introduction to a longer unit on cultural differences and understanding what culture is for a discussion club.
  Main objectives:
  – to introduce the idea of culture as it affects behavior
  – to give students practice in fluent discussion
  – to give students practice in expressing opinions

• **Duration**
  
  60 minutes

• **Materials and technology**
  
  “In my culture it's normal…” attached below

• **Procedure**
  
  1. **Warm Up**
     Write the proverb, “When in Rome, do as the Romans do”
Ask students what they think it means. Take suggestions until students start to slow down or have guessed the meaning. Confirm that it means when you live in another country or culture, you should follow the rules of that country or culture. Ask a few students if they agree or disagree and why.

Now introduce the discussion questions by asking students about how they greet people in their culture. Encourage them to be specific about what behaviors they use. Do they shake hands? Kiss on the cheek? Bow?
If students don’t introduce the idea themselves, ask them in what situations they might greet people differently. How do they greet a friend? A family member? A boss? An old person?

2. Pair Work
Now break the students into small groups and hand out the discussion questions. This lesson works best if the groups are multicultural so students are learning from each other. Ask them to discuss in their group these behaviors and whether they think they are normal, rude, polite, impolite or strange (i.e. they rarely happen). Remind them to think about context. Are their situations where they always do these things or never do them?

3. Wrap Up
Once the groups have discussed the questions, ask the class as a whole what the most interesting things they have learned from each other are. Ask if there are any points that they disagreed on strongly and why that might be. Are there regional differences perhaps?

- Extension or Follow up
As a follow-up, you can use lessons from the Peace Corps workbook, Building Bridges
Students can also do a survey of their friends and family to find out what kind of behavior they view as marking someone as a rude or impolite person and what kinds of behavior they find shows that someone is a polite person.

- References
Building Bridges: http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/publications/bridges/

- Useful links
Building Bridges: http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/publications/bridges/
In My Culture It's Normal

In my country it is normal/polite/impolite/rude/strange:

1. To shake hands when we meet someone for the first time.
2. To kiss on both cheeks when we greet or say goodbye to a friend
3. To take someone out to dinner (pay for dinner) for his birthday or when he gets a promotion
4. To be a little late to meet friends
5. To be a little minutes late to work or to business meetings
6. To spit in public
7. To call most people by their first names
8. To ask people their ethnicity or nationality when you meet them for the first time
9. To sing in public
10. For women in the family to make important decisions like which school to send children to, how to spend money, etc…
11. For men to cook, clean or do other household work
12. To interrupt people when talking
13. To give gifts to teachers, doctors, government officials, bosses for students to wear suits or dresses or formal clothing
14. To invite people to your home
15. To ask guests to leave when it gets late or if you are busy
16. To serve guests only drinks and chips or small snacks
17. To disagree with older people or people who are more powerful than you
18. To give up your seat for older people or women
19. To get promoted to a much higher position than your family or friends