

Appendix C: Cultural Comparisons Worksheet

The purpose of this activity is to prompt a discussion of cultural norms and to identify those that seem most challenging for participants. Though developed for an immigrant audience, any group will have things to say about these statements. Please note that the statements are generalizations about the dominant culture. They may not adequately describe the values of the many diverse subcultures within the country or every individual within the dominant culture.

Work

In the United States:

- Work is the priority.
- You do not have a right to a job.

In my country:

- Work is the priority.
- You do not have a right to a job.

Fate and destiny

In the United States:

- You control your own destiny.
- You can achieve whatever you want if you work hard.

In my country:

- You control your own destiny.
- You can achieve whatever you want if you work hard.

Parents and children

In the United States:

- Adults go out (to dinner, meetings, parties) without their children.
- Children have their own dreams for their futures.

In my country:

- Adults go out (to dinner, meetings, parties) without their children.
- Children have their own dreams for their futures.

Police and the law

In the United States:

- You are not supposed to offer the police money.
- Police are supposed to respect your civil rights.

In my country:

- You are not supposed to offer the police money.
- Police are supposed to respect your civil rights.

Courtship

In the United States:

- Young people choose their own partners.
- Young couples spend time alone.

In my country:

- Young people choose their own partners.
- Young couples spend time alone.

The role of the patient

In the United States:

- Patients ask the doctor questions.
- Patients make choices and decisions about their care.

In my country:

- Patients ask the doctor questions.
- Patients make choices and decisions about their care.

Attitude toward using your time

In the United States:

- Doing things is better than talking.
- Time is money.

In my country:

- Doing things is better than talking.
- Time is money.

Gender roles

In the United States:

- Women are expected to work outside the home and inside the home.
- Men are expected to share equally in child care and housekeeping.

In my country:

- Women are expected to work outside the home and inside the home.
- Men are expected to share equally in child care and housekeeping.

Individualism

In the United States:

- Each family needs to earn its own money and take care of its own needs.
- Each individual should follow his or her own dream.

In my country:

- Each family needs to earn its own money and take care of its own needs.
- Each individual should follow his or her own dream.

Family

In the United States:

- A family is parents and children.
- Children are expected to move out of the home at age 18.

In my country:

- A family is parents and children.
- Children are expected to move out of the home at age 18.

Appendix C was adapted from an exercise entitled *Cultural Categories*, Cultural Orientation Resource Center, Center for Applied Linguistics. www.culturorientation.net

Appendix D: Experience Charts

Charts are an effective way for language learners to note and compare experiences without having to generate complete sentences or full texts. They protect the privacy of individuals who would rather not speak about their personal experiences because they frame discussions generally or in the third person. Experience charts are a common tool in ESOL classrooms, but they can be used in any setting where a group wants to generate a list of ideas for discussion. Chart topics might include these.

Good things about my life in the United States

Not-so-good things about my life in the United States

Work in my country...

Work in the United States...

In my country, the police...

In the United States, the police...

In my country, men...

In the United States, men...

In my country, women...

In the United States, women...
