



SESSION # 1
WELCOME &
ADJUSTMENT CURVE
PARENTS

Orientation	Midyear
Session Overview	This session will welcome host parents and will help them understand, reflect, discuss, and share where they and their students are in the adjustment process at this point in time.
Participants	<input type="checkbox"/> Students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Host Siblings
Format	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Active / Interactive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Activity / Interactivity <input type="checkbox"/> Independent
Duration	50 minutes
Group Size	Any size
Minimum Staffing	2-3 facilitators
Materials Needed	Parent Survey handout Adjustment curve handout- one per person Flipcharts or white board (to record HIGHS & LOWS and display adjustment curve) Markers or white board markers
Preparation	Email Parent Survey to the host parents prior to the event; ask them to complete it, print it and bring it with them to discuss in Session # 2. Slide or flipchart of adjustment curve Slide or flipchart of the agenda Print all handouts

PREPARATION (10-15 MINUTES before start)

1. Have parents sign attendance sheet and get name-tags.
2. As host parents arrive, if Parent Survey had not been emailed previously for completion, distribute Parent Survey and ask them to complete it.
3. Share housekeeping details with host parents when they arrive, such as making sure they have signed in and where the bathrooms are.

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

1. Welcome and thank host parents for coming to the orientation.
2. Review the YFU theme [“From Visiting to Belonging”](#)

- Remember that you are in the middle of a journey to help your exchange student go from visiting to belonging. The first level of understanding was the
 - **Y** –You, them understanding themselves.
 - At the post arrival we introduced the **F** – representing Family. During the fall students have been on this journey, from Y (you) to F (family), and should be well on their way a full-fledged member of the family.”
 - And now we are at the final stage of the journey which is **U** – understanding. This is a journey toward belonging not only in a new family, but in a global society. Their American experience will be shaped by their own willingness to understand and engage in new experiences.
3. Summarize the purpose of the orientation.
- ✓ YFU orientations are timed to help students, families and Area Reps discuss important issues and learn from each other.
 - ✓ The exchange experience is half over, so let’s contemplate what has been learned and discuss goals for the second half of the experience.
 - ✓ If the student-host family adjustment was difficult earlier in the year, some of the same issues may resurface even if they appear to have been resolved.
 - ✓ Today, let’s talk about how your experience has been so far. Everyone’s year is unique with its own set of highs and lows.
 - ✓ Let’s remember our 3-5-8 choice chart and keep it in mind while we are discussing our experiences today.
4. Show, and explain the agenda for the day (should be on a slide or flipchart). Explain that during the orientation, they will do many of the same sessions that the students are doing.

ACTIVITY # 1: TIME TRAVEL DISCUSSION (5- 10 minutes)

The next activity is designed to help the host parents take some time for self-reflection on how the experience has been thus far for them and their family members. Hopefully they will become more in tune with their feelings and memories of this exchange experience so far.

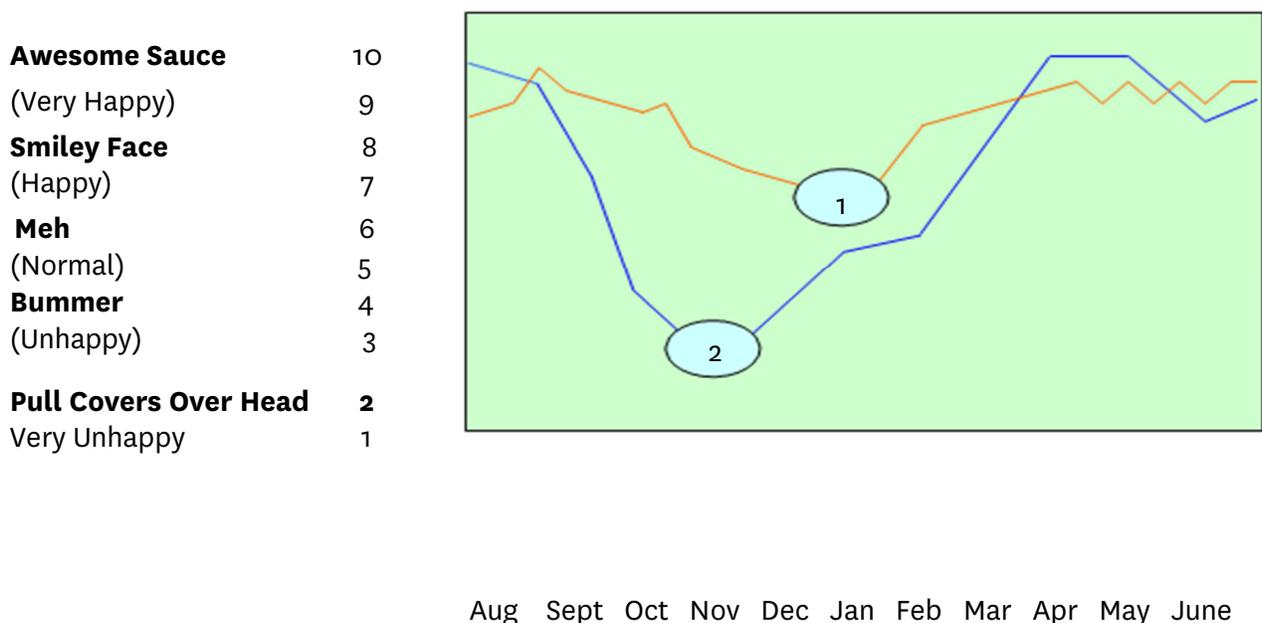
- 1. Facilitator reads the questions below to the host families, and encourages discussion about how the exchange has gone so far.**
- What was it like to see your new son or daughter for the first time?
 - Try to remember the first time you brought them home. What was that like? What happened?
 - Do you remember your new son or daughter’s first day of school? How did they react to school in the beginning? What were their challenges? Did your family experience any challenges related to your student starting school?

- What about their English – remember the first days and what methods did your family use to communicate to one another early on? Have you seen improvements in your student’s language abilities? What has helped him/her improve
- When was the first moment you started to feel like your new son or daughter was becoming a part of the family?
- How was that first family dispute with your new son or daughter? How did you resolve it?
- How did you and your family celebrate the holidays?
- Your student will be with you for five more months. Have you done everything you wanted to do with them so far?

ACTIVITY # 2 – ADJUSTMENT CURVE (20 minutes)

1. Distribute the adjustment curve handout.
2. Introduce the activity using the bullet points below:
 - YFU uses the adjustment curve to help students think about their adjustment process. There are five stages to adjustment. We would like you to think about how your family has adjusted to having a new family member.
 - Describe your family’s experience, by plotting a dots on the chart to display your own adjustment from the time of your students’ arrival in the U.S. to today.
 - Label and connect the dots in your curve that mark how you were feeling at the time.
 - Then explain your reasoning for how you shaped your curve.
 - You will have 5 minutes to complete your curve.

Example of an Adjustment Curve see explanation on next page)



For line 1, the student arrives and is excited to be in the US. Everything is new and fun, but then the student begins to miss friends and family. Mastering English seems like an impossible task, school is harder than the student thought and making friends isn't easy. But then things begin to turn around as the student feels more comfortable with English and makes friends. The student is sad to leave and has a drop at the end.

For line 2, the student has a similar experience but experiences a midwinter drop as it gets cold and the student can't go outside. Near the end of the exchange, the student is excited to return home, but sad to leave at the same time.

Discussion (15 minutes)

During this discussion, a volunteer will record host families' highs and lows of the adjustment process on a flipchart (without names attached). Later this will be shared with students to show how all members of the family are going through the adjustment process.

1. After giving the host families about 5 minutes to create their own adjustment curve, ask for a few to share their experiences.
2. Start up the discussion by saying
 - “Highs and lows are a normal part of life and are experiences by everyone; this is especially true for exchange students and host family members who are adapting to new situations and experiencing many new things—both good and bad.”
3. Ask host parents give an example or two of highs and lows that they have experienced. Use these questions below to help spark the discussion (These should be recorded on the flipchart to share with students in the last session):
 - Can someone tell me the most exciting thing that they have done so far with their new son or daughter?
 - What is the moment that your family was the happiest, including your new son or daughter?
 - How about a low moment?
 - What about an experience that was especially difficult for your family to adjust to?
4. Finish the discussion up by reminding families about the 3-5-8 Choice tool that YFU uses with students. Ask them to share ideas on how to make days that are a 3 into days that are a 5.

WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)

1. Wrap up the discussion by making sure to hit these two points:
 - ✓ Each exchange experience is different and equally valuable.
 - ✓ Understand the importance of their own attitudes towards the exchange experience.



2. Finish the session by reading the quote below:

“The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day (show 3-5-8 visual). We cannot change the past... we cannot change the fact that people act a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...”

Charles Swindoll

MIDYEAR ORIENTATION HOST PARENT SURVEY

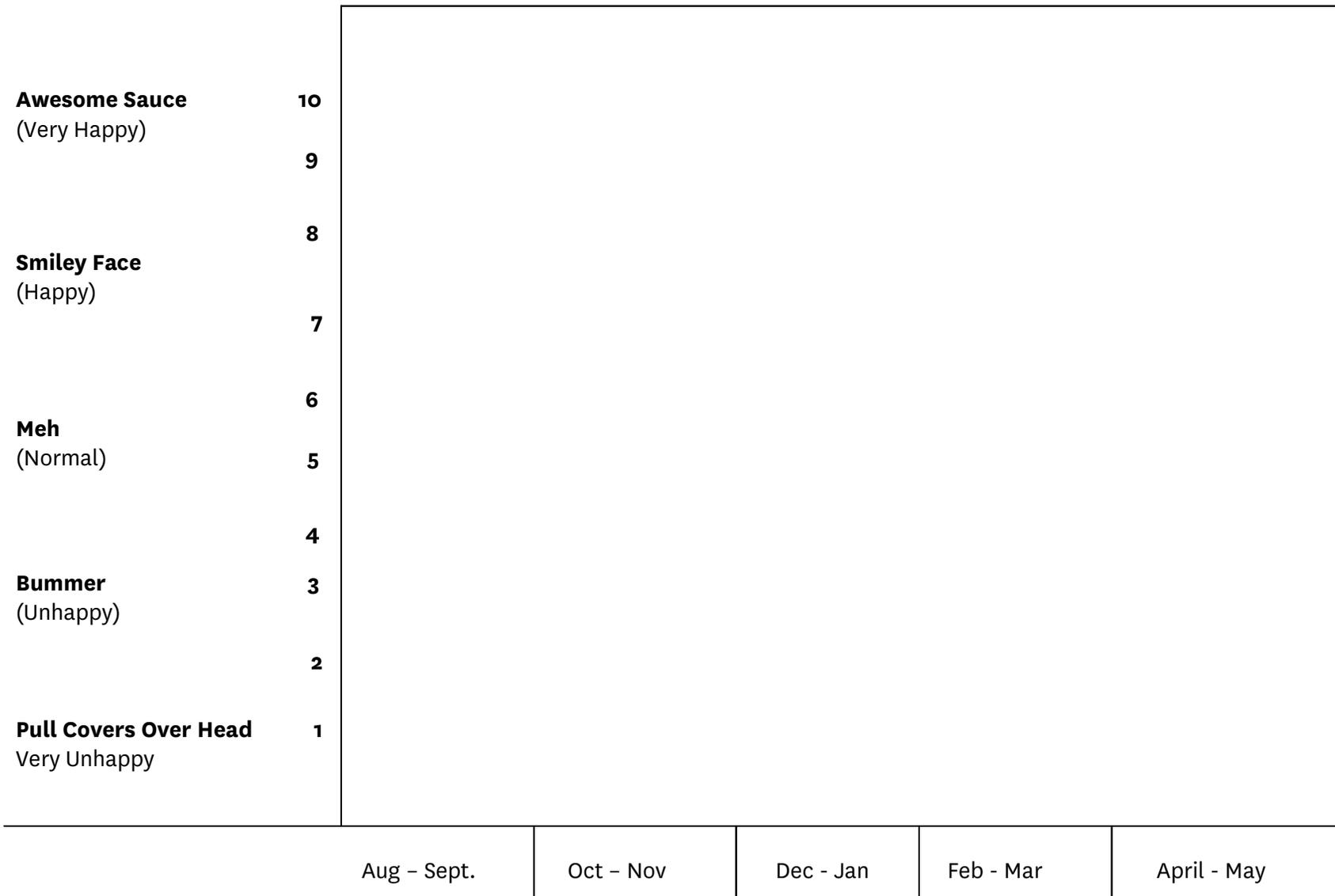
Name _____

Please help us by answering some questions about how you're doing so far this year. We will use this information as a part of our discussion.

1. Have you had a discussion about tech use with your student? If so, can you share that information in a general way? (Ex: no cellphones while eating, etc.)
2. Since your student has arrived, how often have **you** had contact with their natural parents?
___daily ____once a week ____once a month ____have not contacted
3. Do you allow your student to have a cellphone or tech devices in the room at night?
Yes__ No____ If no, where do they leave their devices at night?
4. Does your student's tech use ever interfere with doing things with real people (host family, friends, school)? Can you give an example?
5. How has technology made it easier for your student to adjust to the US and your family? Can you explain?
6. Have you ever asked your student to stop using the technology while you are doing things or having a conversation with them?
7. Have you had a discussion with your student about anyone (natural parents, friends, boy or girls friends) visiting from the home country?
8. Has your student made decisions you are comfortable with about dating and hanging out with friends? Do you have any concerns about this?
9. Do you have any questions about return travel, extending your students' stay or other travel related questions?
10. Do you have any other issues/concerns you would like to discuss at the meeting?

ADJUSTMENT CURVE

NAME: _____





Orientation	Midyear
Overview	Parents will express questions and concerns and discuss solutions to these problems with the entire group.
Participants	<input type="checkbox"/> Students <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Parents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Host Siblings
Format	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Active / Interactive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Activity / Interactivity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Independent
Duration	30 minutes
Group Size	Any size
Minimum Staffing	One volunteer
Materials Needed	Completed Host Parent Midyear Survey Flipchart or PowerPoint slide with questions
Preparation	Display YFU Communication structure handout Write questions listed below on flipchart/slide to use in discussion.

This session is similar to the Dear Area Rep session that was conducted with the students and focuses on problem solving. Try to set a tone of sharing and problem solving, not of simply venting. Keep it positive. Remind the host parents that we all are learning from this experience through adapting.

INTRODUCTION (5 Minutes)

1. Start the session with this question:

- *If you or your new son/daughter are experiencing a low in your exchange experience, who do you go to for help?*

(Possible Answers: Area Rep, Area Coordinator or Support Services Manager)

ACTIVITY PROBLEM SOLVING (20 minutes)

Introduce the session using the following bullet points as a guide.

- Learning to speak a language fluently involves more than just remembering words.
- How each culture uses their words, gestures and tone of voice conveys many different meanings.

- Certain words and sayings have historical and cultural meanings that a new speaker may not understand.
- Now we will take a look at how our own cultural background and stereotypes affect our relationships. We will use this time to problem solve together and get advice from one another on any challenges we are facing as our families and our students adjust.

There are many ways to facilitate a problem solving discussion. Some facilitators prefer open forum and host families can speak freely sharing challenges and offering up advice. If you use this approach, please be careful of participants who dominate the conversation and do not let others speak. Make sure that all participants are able to share their views. There are two options below. Option A provides some questions for an open discussion about concerns and solutions. Option B provides more structure for a conversation.

OPTION A

1. Ask the parents to share responses from survey questions and brainstorm solutions using the following questions.
2. Write questions below or use slide at end of session to focus/stimulate discussion and facilitate problem solving
 - What are some ways to improve this situation/issue?
 - Who is someone that you could talk to in this situation?
 - Has anyone experienced this problem and figured out a solution?
 - What are some things that you wouldn't want to do in this situation?

OPTION B

1. In advance prepare four flip charts labeled: Home; School; Relationships; and Other. Show the families the four flipcharts around the room.
2. Pass out post it notes to the families. Give the families ten minutes to write down any Concerns/Challenges/Questions or Tips as they relate to the topic and their student and then post it to the topic.
2. After the ten minutes allow the families a few minutes to walk around the room and see that there are similar concerns and challenges. While this is happening, the facilitator needs to look review the concerns and group similar challenges together.
3. Go through each topic (School, Relationships, Home and Other) with the group, share the concerns and encourage the participants to provide solutions and share their experiences. Be sure to take note of any challenges that would require YFU interventions.

WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)

To end this session, post the YFU Lines of Communication sheet and discuss the points below with host families:

- ✓ Remind host families that if they have a problem, they should talk to someone at YFU about it – while also making sure to talk directly with their student.
- ✓ Issues or frustrations should go to your YFU Area Representative.
- ✓ It is very important to communicate that if the student or host family is unhappy for some reason, that there is someone who can help.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

- What are some ways to improve this situation/issue?
- Who is someone that you could talk to in this situation?
- Has anyone experienced this problem and figured out a solution?
- What are some things that you wouldn't want to do in this situation?

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Introduce the session using the following bullet points as a guide:

- During an exchange experience, it is very likely that both students and host families have begun to change their communication style.
- How each culture uses their words, gestures and tone of voice conveys many different meanings.
- Students have continuously or subconsciously been observing what is culturally acceptable and understood in American's style of communication.
- Let's take a look at how our own cultural background and stereotypes affect our relationships.

ACTIVITY COMMUNICATION SURVEY (15 MINUTES)

1. Tell parents we polled students about their communication styles.
2. Student were asked to respond with Yes or No to several questions (see below). Discuss where there may be differences between their style and their students' style and encourage parents to problem solve with each other.
 - Do you always say please and thank you? Y/N
 - Do you always make eye contact when speaking with someone? Y/N
 - Do you talk loudly when discussing issues to make a point? Y/N
 - Do you avoid conversation with someone who is angry? Y/N
 - Can you think of a time that you had a disagreement caused by a miscommunication? Y/N
 - Did your stereotypes about Americans affect how you talked to people in the beginning of your exchange? Y/N
 - Are you careful with what you share on social media? Y/N
 - Do you feel comfortable hanging out and talking with American teens? Y/N
5. Remind parents to be aware that miscommunications can happen but are not deliberate.

DISCUSSION BUILDING STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS (10 MINUTES)

1. Getting your student to reach out and be involved in the community can be an area of difficulty.
2. The students interviewed each other using the questions below and practiced American mannerisms to brainstorm ideas about how to become more connected and involved with their friends, families, schools and communities.
3. Share the questions with parents and brainstorm possible answers.

Questions:

- Is your student in any after school activities?
- Does your student feel like they fit in at school?
- What has your student done so far with American friends?
- How does your student get rides or get to activities?
- How does your student get American friends to commit to hang out?
- How often are you on social media with friends or family back home?
- What type of chores does your student do around the house?
- What nice things does the student do for your host family?
- How is your students' English?

DISCUSSION SOCIAL MEDIA (5 MINUTES)

1. What rules does the family have about social media?
2. Has the family adjusted their social media rules since our last orientation?
3. How has social media affected your relationships? (Both the positive and the negative)
4. How has the use of social media impacted the exchange experience?

WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)

Take a few minutes to wrap up the discussion using the following points as a guide:

- ✓ ***Be aware of the non-verbal messages you and your student may be sending.***
- ✓ ***Families can help students build relationships by encouraging them to become more outgoing and independent.***
- ✓ ***Social media can be a very useful communication tool but make sure you are using it wisely and spending more time in the real world than the virtual world.***
- ✓ ***Effective communication is a crucial part of building strong relationships while on exchange.***



Orientation	Mid-Year
Session Overview	This session explores how students' own culture affects how they see American culture.
Participants	<input type="checkbox"/> Students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Host Siblings
Format	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Active / Interactive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Activity / Interactivity <input type="checkbox"/> Independent
Duration	20 Minutes
Group Size	All parents
Minimum Staffing	1 leader
Materials Needed	None
Preparation	None

INTRODUCTION Culture (5 MINUTES)

(Possible answers are in parenthesis; do not read answers to parents.)

1. Explain to the parents that the students will be talking about stereotypes and the dangers of generalizing. Use the following questions to have a short introduction conversation about stereotypes and how generalizing hinders cross-cultural learning.
2. Have you shared your culture with your student?
3. Ask the host families about their experiences with stereotypes.
4. Ask parents for examples of stereotypes of Americans (*Americans are fat, lazy, and stupid.*)
5. Ask parents to share some stereotypes about other cultures. (*Germans are rude, Japanese slurp their soup, etc.*)

ACTIVITY (10 MINUTES)

1. Discuss culture with parents

- Are any of these statements correct? (*No, these are stereotypes and generalizations and do not represent all people or a culture.*)
- How could you react to statements like these? (*Be reasonable, separate yourself personally, don't argue, ask clarifying questions.*)
- What do these statements tell us about culture? (*It's easy to generalize, make incorrect assumptions.*)
- Do you think misunderstandings you have had with your student(s) were more a result of cultural differences or personality differences?

2. Remind parents that their cultural experience is their own and that it does not define the USA as a whole.

3. Review the YFU mission statement with the host families.

YFU ADVANCES INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING, MUTUAL RESPECT AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES FOR YOUTH, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

- Ask the host families why dispelling stereotypes and really understanding other cultures is so vital to program success?

4. Wrap up the discussion by telling the host families that today we asked the students to compare and discuss the differences between their culture and American culture. We then asked them the questions below:

- a. What they learned about their home culture that surprised them.
- b. What are some characteristics of American culture that have surprised them.
- c. What part of American culture has challenged them since they arrived?
- d. What part of American culture have they enjoyed since they arrived?

Tell the families to continue to have these conversations at home.

WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)

Use the bullet points below to wrap up the session:

In conclusion:

- Be aware of the difference between a cultural issue and a personality/teenage issue.
- Ask your student to share their culture discussions with your family or even their school or community.
- We asked the students to be careful of the image they present of their culture and American culture to their family and community this year.



Orientation	Mid-year
Session Overview	The purpose of this session is to get parents to think forward and create some goals for what they would like to accomplish by the end of this exchange experience.
Participants	<input type="checkbox"/> Students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Host Siblings
Format	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Active / Interactive <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Activity / Interactivity <input type="checkbox"/> Independent
Duration	20 Minutes
Group Size	Any size
Minimum Staffing	1 volunteer
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal envelopes if parents filled one out at Post Arrival Orientation. • 3x5 cards or paper for goals & one envelope for each parent • Large envelope to collect goal envelopes.
Preparation	None

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

- Now, it's time to look forward.
- You and your student are half-way through the exchange year.
- Let's set some personal goals for your family for the remainder of the exchange experience.

ACTIVITY - GOAL SETTING (10 MINUTES)

- Encourage parents to think about what they personally want to share with their student during the remaining months of the exchange experience.
1. If available, distribute goal cards that parents filled out during the Post-Arrival wrap-up. Ask these parents to review their goals and think about new ones they may want to create.
 2. Ask all parents to share some of their goals for the remainder of the year and discuss with group.

3. Give each parent a 3x5 card or a piece of paper and a pen and explain that the goals they write today will be returned to them at the Re-Entry Orientation.
4. Give parents 5 minutes to write their goals.
5. Parents put their goals in the envelope provided, seal it, and write their name on the outside.
6. When parents read the letters in May they will be able to see how much they have accomplished.

WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)

- Everyone has made such giant strides since your students arrived and will continue to do so in the coming months.
- We hope by setting goals today everyone will return home motivated to achieve their goals.
- We look forward to seeing everyone in the spring!