



Orientation	Midyear
Session Overview	Take the students through a brief “time travel” journey to help them reflect, discuss and share where they are in their adjustment process in the exchange experience. Have students fill out their own adjustment curve from the start of their exchange until today.
Participants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Parents <input 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	35 minutes
Group Size	Any size
Minimum Staffing	All volunteers present
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handouts: Adjustment curve for all students</li> <li>• Flipchart to record anonymous HIGHS &amp; LOWS of students’ adjustment curves to share with parents</li> <li>• Flipchart with blank curve drawn and to plot several students curves to show how the curves can vary</li> </ul> Visuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Example of adjustment curve</li> <li>• Flipchart or slide of <i>Charles Swindoll attitude quote</i> written at end of session</li> </ul>
Preparation	Make copies of adjustment curve handout for all students Prepare High & Lows flipcharts Create Example Adjustment curve on White board, flip chart or slide. Create flipchart or slide of quote.

## **INTRODUCTION** (2 minutes)

Share objectives written below with students:

In this session, we will:

- Share how the experience has been so far,
- Realize that everyone’s year is unique with its’ own set of highs and lows,
- Discuss how everyone’s reaction to experiences is different and seen through their own cultural perspective.

## ACTIVITY # 1- TIME TRAVEL (5 MINUTES)

This next activity is a visualization activity, created to help the students take time for self-reflection and hopefully become more in tune with their feelings and memories of their exchange experience so far. As the facilitator, you will set the tone and then read through the questions below and encourage students to re-experience some of the moments they have had in their exchange thus far.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Some students could become emotional or cry during this activity if they are having a difficult time.

### Directions to tell the students (word for word)

1. Get comfortable in your seats.
2. Close your eyes and take a deep breath.
3. Listen to the questions I am reading without responding.
4. For the next few minutes, try and think about how you feel or connect to each question. Visualize this and try to put yourself back in time to the moment described.

### Slowly, read the questions below to the students:

- *Think about when you first met your host family...*  
What was it like to see your family for the first time?  
Did they look like their pictures?
- *Think about your first day of school...*  
Did somebody show you around the school?  
Did you get lost a lot?
- *Think about your first weekend...*  
How was it different from your home country?  
Did you go out and experience some new things?
- *Think about your first time you felt sad...*  
Do you still have a lot of contact with your home country?
- *And now let's think about all the holidays....Halloween, Thanksgiving, December holidays.....*

*And now you are here at the Midyear Orientation. Come back to the present and open your eyes!*

5. Explain to the students: We hope this activity has helped sharpen your memories about the first part of your exchange. We will do a bit more work thinking about the first part of our exchange and then we will talk about what has been particularly great or difficult.

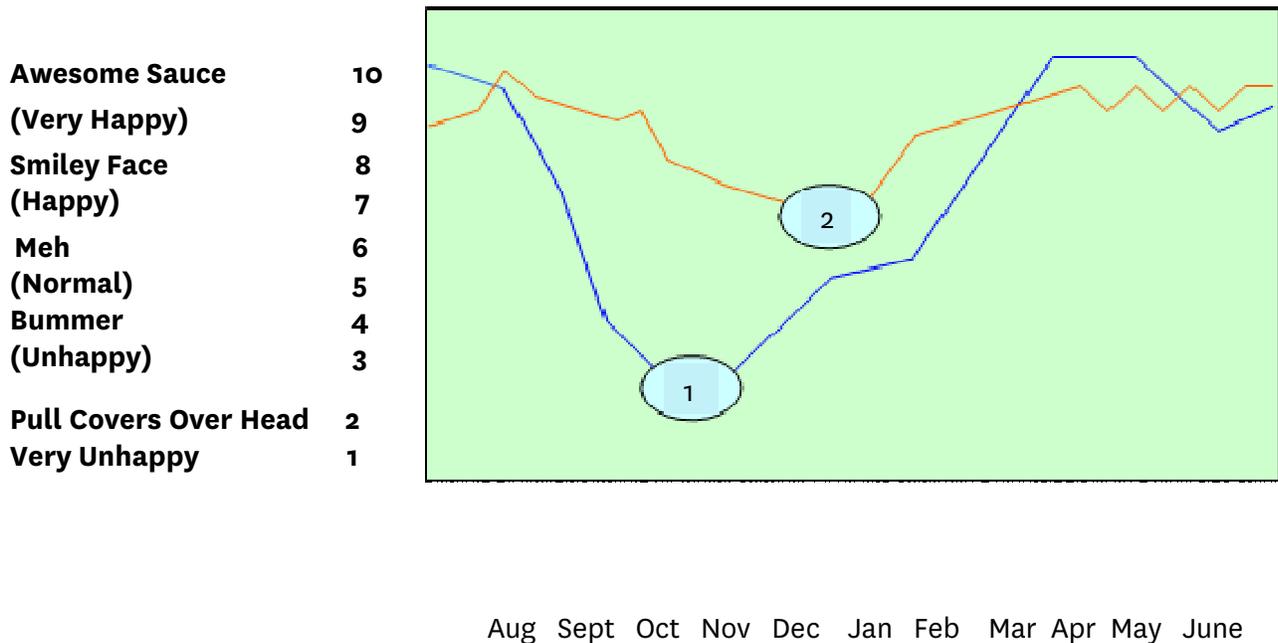
## **ACTIVITY # 2 - FROM VISITING TO BELONGING: ADJUSTMENT CURVE** (20 minutes)

1. Review the [YFU: From Visiting to Belonging](#) tool with students by asking them about the visual and what it signifies.
  - “As you may remember from the Post Arrival orientation, we introduced a concept to you called “From Visiting to belonging”.
2. Ask the student “What do the letters Y – F – U mean to you? (they will probably say Youth For Understanding)
  - **Y** = YOU: The first level of understanding is You - Yourself. This whole experience started because YOU wanted to challenge yourself.
  - **F** = FAMILY: Within the larger journey encompassing from visiting to belonging, lies a smaller journey, from Y (you) to F (family), of immersing yourself into your host family and school.
  - **U** = UNDERSTANDING: By now, the midpoint of your exchange experience, you should be well on your way to being a full-fledged member of your host family, with all of the benefits and responsibilities. You are now ready to move toward U (understanding). This is a journey toward belonging not only in a new family, but in a global society. Your American experience will be shaped by your own willingness to understand and engage in new experiences.
3. Ask the students to remember the 3-5-8 chart from the Post-Arrival Orientation and from Session 1, (review if you did not use the session in Post-Arrival). Explain that this will help them with the next activity: creating their own adjustment curve.
4. Tell the students to think about the times they remembered as highs and lows during the time travel exercise.

### **Instructions for Adjustment Curve**

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that they will use the tools discussed (From Visiting to Belonging and 3-5-8 Choice) to develop their own Adjustment Curve. Tell the students to think about their YFU journey thus far.
2. Distribute the adjustment curve handout and ask students to write their name on the handout. Then provide the following instructions:
  - We would like you to create your own adjustment curve now.
  - Describe your own experience, by plotting a line on the chart to display your own adjustment from the time of your arrival in the U.S. to today.
  - Plot 5-10 points in your curve and label them with how you were feeling at the time.
  - You will have 10 minutes to complete your curve.

3. Give the students an example by sharing the example on next page to illustrate typical highs and lows so far.



### Example of an Adjustment Curve

- ✓ 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 (10 MINUTES)

1. After giving the students about 10 minutes to create their own adjustment curve, ask them to share their adjustment curves and a few of the high and low points. Encourage 3 or 4 students to volunteer to plot their curve on a common flip chart page to show how they can vary. Have a volunteer record examples of highs and lows on a flip chart (without names attached) to share with the parents.
2. Start up the discussion by saying:
  - Every exchange experience is unique and equally valuable.

- “Highs and lows are a normal part of life and are experiences by everyone; this is especially true for exchange students who are living in a new place and experiencing so many new things—both good and bad.”
3. Ask a few students to give an example of highs and lows that they have experienced. Use these questions below to help spark the discussion:
    - Can someone tell me the most exciting thing that they have done so far?
    - What is the moment that you were the happiest?
    - How about a moment that was really low?
    - What about an experience that was especially difficult?
  4. Finish the discussion up by asking the students: “What can you do to make your ‘3’ day a ‘5’ day and improve your experience?” (Best answer: *Change your attitude!*)

**Facilitator Note:** Collect adjustment curves and save them for Re-Entry orientation when they will be returned to students.

## WRAP UP (5 minutes)

1. Wrap up the discussion by making sure to hit these three points:
  - ✓ Each exchange experience is unique and equally valuable.
  - ✓ Students need to understand where they fit emotionally in the adjustment process at this point.
  - ✓ Students should understand the importance of their own attitudes towards the exchange experience.

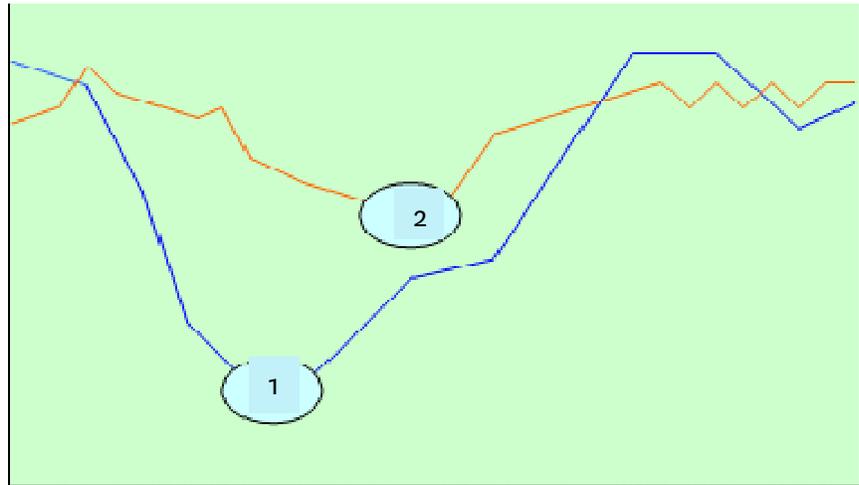
2. Finish the session by reading the quote below:

**“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**

# Adjustment Curve Visual

**Awesome Sauce** 10  
**(Very Happy)** 9  
**Smiley Face** 8  
**(Happy)** 7  
**Meh** 6  
**(Normal)** 5  
**Bummer** 4  
**(Unhappy)** 3  
**Pull Covers Over Head** 2  
**Very Unhappy** 1



Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May June

## **Example of an Adjustment Curve**

- 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.

# ADJUSTMENT CURVE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

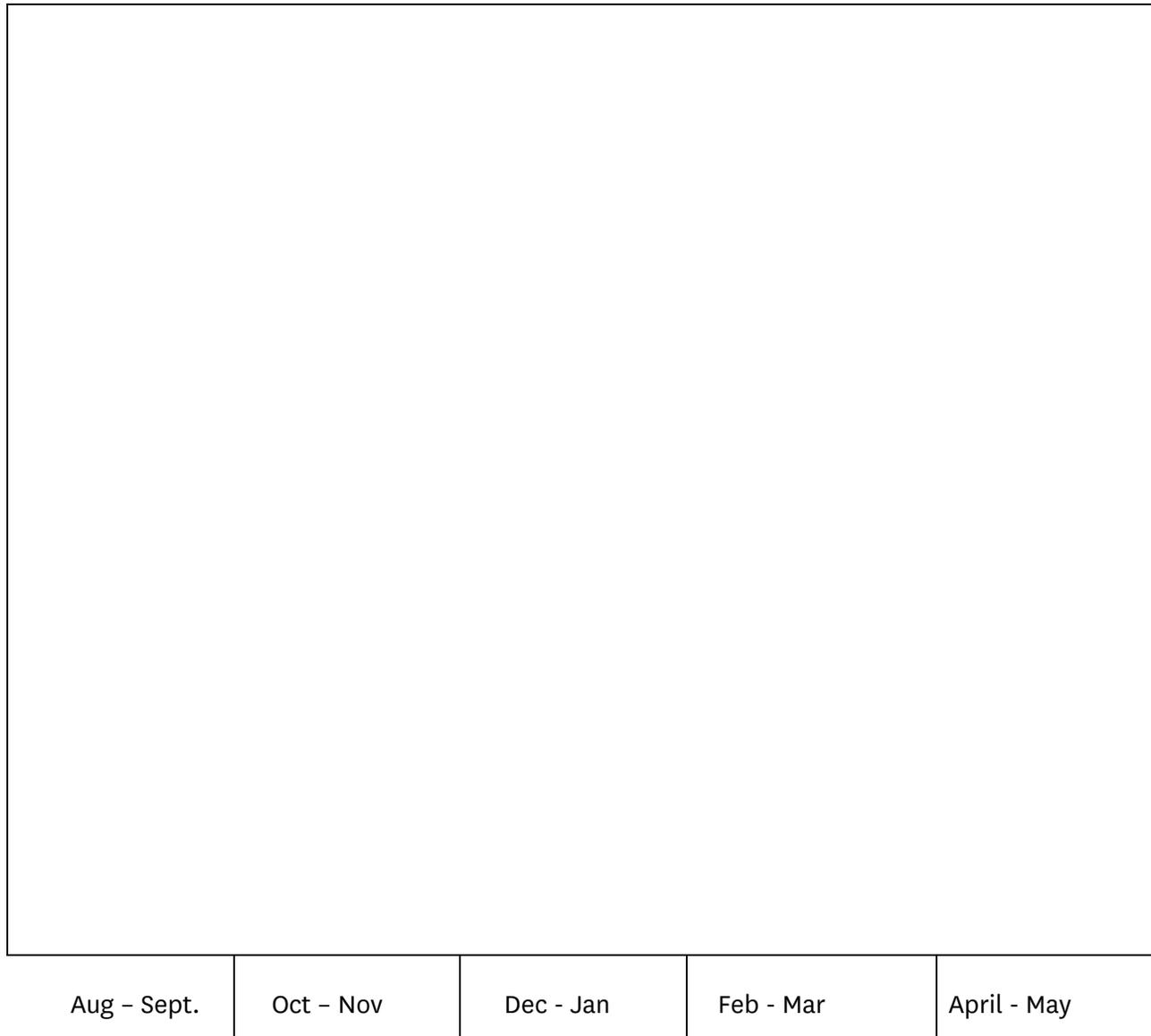
**Awesome Sauce**  
(Very Happy)

**Smiley Face**  
(Happy)

**Meh**  
(Normal)

**Bummer**  
(Unhappy)

**Pull Covers Over Head**  
Very Unhappy



## 2- Adjustment Process quote

***“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***