



Orientation	Mid-Year
Session Overview	This session looks at stereotypes, the dangers of stereotypes and how NOT to stereotype. Students will also think more about their home culture and will understand that their home culture impacts how they understand a new culture.
Participants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students <input 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, pending the number of cultural presentations.
Group Size	Any size
Minimum Staffing	1 leader
Materials Needed	Flip chart Poster supplies for cultural presentation activity
Preparation	Flip charts: 1- prepared T-chart to make comparisons: <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-left: 40px;"> <div style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px; text-align: center;"><u>My Home Culture</u></div> <div style="padding-left: 10px; text-align: center;"><u>American Culture</u></div> </div> 2- During the session discussion on culture, note students responses' to share later with host parents.

The introduction activity needs to be well thought out and **debriefed with purpose**. The stereotypes below are offensive and the facilitator must make sure that students understand the dangers in making generalizations and using stereotypes. Stereotypes can lead to xenophobia, racism, sexism, and behavior that is disrespectful to others. It is important to include in the debrief WHY and HOW stereotypes and generalizations do **not** promote cultural understanding and peace building. Make connections to why students went on exchange and YFU's mission statement:

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

## **INTRODUCTION:** Stereotypes (10 MINUTES)

1. Shock the students by starting this session stating some common and possibly offensive stereotypes.

- Germans are so rude.
- Japanese people are so shy.
- Mexicans are lazy and get into America illegally.
- Arabs and Muslims are terrorists.
- Italians and the French are the best lovers.
- Asians are good at math, like to eat rice and drive badly.
- Americans are fat, lazy, and stupid.

2. Discussion- Ask the students for their reaction to the statements that were just made (*possible answers are in parenthesis; do not read answers to students*). Please review the box above about the importance of this discussion.

- What do you think of these statements? (shocking, offensive, untrue)
- Are any of these statements correct? (No, these are stereotypes and generalizations and do not represent all people or a culture.)
- Have you ever felt “stereotyped”, tell us about that, what happened and how did you feel?
- 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.)
- Have you ever felt “stereotyped”, tell us about that, what happened and how did you feel? (answers will vary)
- Why are stereotypes and generalizations dangerous? (They prevent one from really learning and understanding a person; stereotypes are not always true and they can lead to misconceptions about a group; etc.)
- How do stereotypes prevent people from understanding different cultures? What are the bigger, global impacts of stereotyping? (Answers will vary)
- What can you do to prevent stereotyping? (Answers will vary, but encourage students to “claim and individualize” their experiences in the US.

3. Close the discussion by highlighting the importance of individualizing their experiences when talking about their home country and when talking about the US. Remind the students that their experience is their own and it does not define the USA as a whole, or their home country as a whole. When talking about culture, always start with “in my experience”. Provide key terms such as: In my experiences; In my school; In my community; etc.

## ACTIVITY – Culture Presentations (20- 30 MINUTES depending on group size)

1. Tell the students that: “Now that we have talked about stereotypes, let’s look a little deeper into culture.” Instruct the students that they are going to have five minutes to create a short presentation (no more than 2 minutes) that represents the culture of **their home country** and educates everyone about their home culture.

### Instructions

- Divide the students into country groups (ideally 2-3 students per country group), with no more than 4 students per group.\*
- Tell the students they can create a poster, do a skit, write a song, do a mock news report, or use whatever method they want to prepare their presentation. Everyone in the group must contribute to the presentation. **The presentation should highlight important aspects of their home culture in addition to cultural observations about their home country that they have learned since they arrived in America.**

\*For counties with more than four students, ask a second or third group to form. Ask these groups to create a skit or presentation that summarizes American culture. Tell them to be careful of stereotypes and to develop the presentation based on their unique experiences in their specific community in the US.

- Tell the students they have five minutes to create their presentation. Then say: “Go!” Make sure you have markers and poster board available if people want to be artistic.
2. After five minutes bring all the students back together and begin the short presentations. Keep a close eye on time and limit the presentations to 2-3 minutes per group.

## DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

3. After all groups have presented, thank them for their presentations. Then, have a discussion using these questions. Write responses using the T-chart to compare American culture and other cultures to share with parents in the Wrap Up, for example-

<u>My Home Culture</u>	<u>American Culture</u>
Ex. Warm meal is middle of the day Everyone uses public transportation	Warm meal is in the evening Most people get around by driving

- What have you learned about your home culture that has surprised you?
- What is your favorite thing about your home culture?
- What are some characteristics of American culture that have surprised you?
  - Or is the US everything that you expected, how so?
- What part of American culture has challenged you since you arrived?

- What part of American culture have you enjoyed since you arrived?
- How does your culture affect how you see American culture?

## **WRAP UP** (2-3 MINUTES)

Use the bullet points below to wrap up the session:

- When talking about American culture, always start with “in my experience”.
- Be careful of the image you present to family and friends here and also back home when sharing your culture and America’s culture.
- Remember that your cultural “lens” affects your exchange experience.
- If you haven’t yet shared your culture, hopefully you now have some ideas on how to do this.