



Multicultural Miscommunication

Oregon Family and Community Educators (FCE)
Teacher Guide

Lesson Objectives:

Participants will:

- Gain understanding of what “culture” is.
- Develop an awareness that differences exist between cultures.
- Recognize the increased likelihood of encountering a variety of cultures in our own communities.
- Learn how easily multicultural miscommunication can happen.

Materials needed:

- **For Teachers:**
 - Teacher Guide
 - Global Bingle game, 1 copy per every 4-6 participants
 - Multicultural Scavenger Hunt, 1 copy per 4-6 participants
 - Flipchart paper, or large sheets of paper (next page shows what to write on paper)
 - 2 sets of global pictures to be used as markers on Tic-Tac-Toe grid
 - World map or globe for use with Multicultural Miscommunication game
 - Tape or tacks to hold flipchart paper on wall and markers in place on the game
- **For participants:**
 - Member handout, 1 copy for each member
 - Evaluation and Consent letter, 1 copy for each member

Before the lesson:

- Copy needed number of Global Bingle games, Multicultural Miscommunication Scavenger Hunt and Participant Evaluation and Consent letter.
- Read Teacher’s Guide and Participant materials.
- Write text on flipchart paper (see next page for what to write).
- Copy and cut apart global pictures to be used as markers on game.
- Plan your presentation. The following timing for activities and discussion is suggested for a one hour lesson:

Welcome and Global Bingle game	10 minutes
Introduction to multicultural changes in America	10 minutes
Multicultural Scavenger Hunt	10 minutes
Multicultural Miscommunication Game	20 minutes
Evaluation and Closing	10 minutes

Flipchart preparation: Write the text below on the four flipchart pages.

<p>Flipchart #1</p> <p>Multicultural interactions and experiences of youth today:</p>	<p>Flipchart #2</p> <p>U.S. Census Report 2000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Residents born outside the USA○ Immigration○ People of Hispanic origin○ Fertility rates									
<p>Flipchart #3</p> <p>Culture:</p> <p>The learned and shared values, beliefs, behaviors of a group.</p> <p>Transmitted from one generation to another</p> <p>A way of life</p>	<p>Flipchart #4</p> <p>Multicultural Miscommunication</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="805 793 1448 1348"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p>(Tic-Tac-Toe grid)</p>									

Lesson guide:

Information to share with your group:	Teaching instructions:
<p>The purpose of Global Bingle is to mingle and compare intercultural experiences with others in the room. Try to fill in as many squares as you can among your group members.</p>	<p><i>As members arrive, divide them into small groups of 4-6 members. Give each group a copy of Global Bingle. Ask them to have group members sign their names in the squares that describe them. Try to fill in as many squares as possible. Allow 5 minutes for this activity. Have groups talk about what they learned about each other.</i></p>
<p>Talk about it.... Did any group have a name in every box of the Bingle Game? What did you learn about other members on your team?</p>	<p><i>Lead discussion, limit time to 5 minutes.</i></p>
<p>Intercultural communication, the contact and interaction between individuals of significantly different cultures, is becoming increasingly common as the world we live in sees incredible advances in technology, increased travel and migration, economies and politics that are becoming increasingly intertwined and a growing population living closer together.</p> <p>It is our hope that this lesson will result in increased understanding, comfort and acceptance of other cultures that you encounter.</p>	
<p>Youth are leading the way in gaining intercultural experience. How is this happening for young people? How are they interacting with the world in a way that is different than when you were a child?</p>	<p><i>*Flipchart #1. Write responses on flipchart. Answers might include: internet contact with others around the world, music in different languages, ethnic clothing, ethnic restaurants, travel, language class requirements in school, students from many other countries at school, families moving to neighborhoods from other countries, etc.</i></p>
<p>The United States of America has experienced momentous change reflected in the demographics, or the population statistics, of our communities. The data from the 2000 census shows some dramatic differences from previous census reports. We have a higher percentage of residents born outside the USA, more immigrants and a larger percentage of the population identifying themselves as of Hispanic origin, than at any other time in our history.</p> <p>Where do you see the trends indicated in the census data in your own communities and lives?</p>	<p><i>Flipchart #2. Show flipchart with findings from 2000 census.</i></p> <p><i>Distribute member handout. Refer to the handout. It will have more details about each of the headings on Flipchart #2.</i></p> <p><i>Answers might include: sections of the grocery store are dedicated to</i></p>

	<i>Latino or Asian foods, stores have signs in another language, street signs in two languages, bilingual employees in public agencies, churches with services in a language other than English.</i>
<p>All of these things increase the likelihood that you are coming into contact with other cultures, right in your neighborhood or town. You no longer have to travel to experience cross-cultural interactions.</p> <p>Take a look at some of the global interconnections you may have in your daily life. The cultural origin of what you are wearing, what you have with you, and what is in your purse may surprise you. Work together as a group to determine who has the experiences, knowledge or belongings to fill in the blanks on this Scavenger Hunt.</p>	<p><i>Distribute a copy of Multicultural Scavenger Hunt to each of the groups.</i></p> <p><i>Allow 10 minutes for this activity.</i></p>
<p>What is culture? What makes up someone's culture?</p>	<p><i>Give participants time to respond. Responses might include: traditions, dress, food, language, rules, folklore, lifestyle, arts, morals, values, ethics, laws, crimes, standard of beauty, tools, toys, education, power structure, government structure, educational system, shared experiences.</i></p>
<p>Here are some definitions:</p>	<p><i>Point out the headings on Flipchart #3. Refer to the handout. It will have more details about each of the headings on Flipchart #3.</i></p>
<p>Multicultural Miscommunication is a game show of international encounters. We communicate with both words and actions. The meaning we place on our words and actions is culturally based. We interpret others' words and actions from the basis of our understanding of our own culture. In this multi-cultural world we now live in, that can be a problem.</p> <p>Intercultural misunderstanding happens between members of the opposite sex, members of different age groups, socio-economic groups, racial and ethnic backgrounds, countries of origin, religions and sexual orientation.</p> <p>This activity will give you a chance to experience and interpret a variety of situations to learn just how easily multicultural miscommunication can happen.</p>	<p><i>Divide entire group into 2 teams.</i></p>
<p>Your team will be able to gather points by correctly answering the question or responding to the instructions read to you. These questions might be about what someone says or does. You might be given instructions to do something or</p>	<p><i>Put Flipchart #4 on the wall.</i></p> <p><i>Give team #1, one set of the pictures to use as their markers on the game.</i></p> <p><i>Give team #2 the other set.</i></p>

<p>find a location on a map. If you respond correctly, your team can place your marker in the box of your choice. If you don't respond correctly, the other team will have a chance to respond and earn a point. You can discuss your response with your teammates before giving your final answer.</p> <p>The other team then gets first chance to correctly answer the next question. If they answer correctly, they get to select a spot on the board to place their marker to work toward a tic-tac-toe. If they do not answer correctly, you will get a chance to try.</p> <p>The team with the member who has lived in one house the longest will get to go first.</p> <p>The first team to complete a tic-tac-toe will be declared winner of that round.</p>	<p><i>Using the sheet of 45 questions, read the first question to team #1. If they answer correctly, have one of their team members select a spot on the tic-tac-toe grid to tape or tack their marker. Continue until one team "wins" the round by having 3 markers in a row (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally). Repeat the rounds, continuing through the list of questions, as time permits.</i></p>
<p>The game, Multicultural Miscommunication, shows how gestures and behaviors have different meanings in different cultures. It is impossible to know all these differences. We are most comfortable with the ways we have been taught, and what our culture tells us to do. However, sometimes mistakes happen. Everyone makes them. If you take the wrong flowers to a new neighbor, they will know your intent and will appreciate your effort. Pay attention to the cues from another person and if you find out you made a cultural error, admit it and apologize. Then talk about it. It is a great way to build friendships.</p>	
<p>Thank you for participating in the activities today. We would like to know how you felt about this lesson. (Read Informed Consent Statement aloud to the group.)</p>	<p><i>Distribute the Informed Consent Statement and evaluation. Collect evaluations forms that are completed and return them to your county Extension office. Thank you!</i></p>

Multicultural Miscommunication

References and Resources

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Prepared by:

Jeanne Brandt, OSU Extension Service, Family and Community Development Program

Lillian Larwood, OSU Extension Service Youth Program, 4-H Youth Programs

Special thanks to Ann C. Schauber, OSU Director Interdisciplinary Studies, Graduate School, for consultation and review.

Prepared by Jeanne Brandt Oregon State University, Extension Family and Community Development, Washington County.

Reviewed by Carolyn Raab, Oregon State University, Extension Family and Community Development, State Office.

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Global Bingle

Have group members sign the squares that describe them. Try to fill as many squares as possible.

Celebrate a holiday that is not recognized by most others in the USA	Born in a country other than the USA	Have been swimming in the Caribbean	Own a foreign car	Speak a language other than English
Seen a movie originally made for audiences in another country lately	Seen a movie with multi-cultural conflict in it lately	Have used metric measurements	Write or email people who live abroad	Eaten in an ethnic restaurant lately
Own a piece of clothing made in another country	Belong to an international organization	Contribute (or have contributed) to an international organization	Ridden a train in another country	Have imported food or beverage in your kitchen
Own a record, tape or CD of music from an artist outside the USA	Worked or went to school abroad	Have hiked or skied someplace other than North America	Have been fishing in an ocean other than the Pacific	Have hosted a foreign exchange student
Were an IFYE or foreign exchange program participant	Have arts or crafts from another country decorating your home	Have visited or lived in Africa or the Middle East	Have visited or lived in Asia	Have a flag from another country in your home

Prepared by Jeanne Brandt, OSU Extension Service, Washington County

Multicultural Miscommunication Scavenger Hunt

1. Find someone that keeps in contact with someone in another country. Have them sign this paper and the location of the friend or relative they correspond with.

2. Find a product with a bilingual label. _____

3. Find a product not made in the United States. _____

4. Find headlines from a newspaper or magazine that refers to another country.

5. Locate a coin from a country other than the United States. _____

6. Find a member who has traveled to another country. Have them list 2 differences they noticed between that country and the USA.

7. List what the most popular ethnic food is among your group members.

8. Find someone who is wearing a garment produced in India.

9. Name foreign cars from 5 countries.

10. As a group, learn to say “hello” in another language. Be prepared to greet the other group members.

Prepared by Jeanne Brandt Oregon State University, Extension Family and Community Development, Washington County.

Reviewed by Carolyn Raab, Oregon State University, Extension Family and Community Development, State Office.

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Multicultural Miscommunication Game

QUESTIONS

1. You are conducting a 4-H club meeting for a group of children that includes several Native Americans. You tell everyone to listen but one member will not look up at you. You don't think he is paying attention. Is he? Why or why not?

A. Native Americans and some Asian and Latin American groups show their respect for an older person or someone in a position of authority by not making direct eye contact with them.

2. Driving in Texas, you pass a group of young people who raise their arms and aim "horns," their fist with pointer finger and pinkie finger, raised at you. What are they trying to tell you?

A. They are Texas Longhorns fans.

3. In Italy, when one man gestures to another with a "horns" sign, a fist with pointer and pinkie fingers raised, why does it make the second man angry?

A. He is being told his spouse is cheating on him. This is also true in Romania.

4. You are invited to dinner at a coworker's home. You cut a dozen calla lilies from your garden to take along as a gift. How will your hostess respond if she is British, and why?

A. Calla lilies are reserved for funerals in England. Your hostess may feel you do not wish her well by bringing funeral flowers to her. The same is true for Norwegians.

5. You are invited to dinner at a coworker's home. You cut a dozen calla lilies from your garden to take along as a gift. How will your hostess respond if she is Romanian or Italian, and why?

A. An even number of flowers is unlucky in Romania and Italy. Your hostess may feel you wish her bad luck.

6. Your college roommate from a big, traditional Chinese family invites you to attend a family dinner. The food is plentiful and delicious. You compliment the mother on her cooking and she responds by saying, the soup was a little bland. You tell her, “oh, just a little salt and it would be perfect.” Suddenly there is silence. Why?

A. You have just been very rude and disrespectful. Chinese people, particularly women, are very humble and embarrassed by compliments, although they appreciate them. A more appropriate response would have been to tell her that it was already perfect.

7. In England, a “sleeping policeman” is:

A. An officer on night surveillance duty.

B. A speed bump in the road.

C. A retired officer.

B. Speed bump.

8. In England, a “Bobby” is:

A. A short haircut.

B. A police officer.

C. A younger brother.

B. Police officer.

9. A 4-H'er struggles with her dog through a showmanship class. At the end, her younger brother, who is hard of hearing, in the audience raises his hands to shoulder height and wiggles his fingers. Is he taunting or making fun of his sibling?

A. No. Not if the child is hard of hearing. Deaf people clap this way. Young hearing children taunt each other this way. They usually accompany their actions with “naa-naa-na-na-na.”

10. While guiding visiting foreign exchange students through the airport on your arrival in Japan you try out the Japanese you have practiced, asking an attendant where the bathrooms are. He doesn't look at your face, but puts out his hand, palm open. Should you put a tip in his hand?

A. No. He is pointing the way, not asking for a tip. Pointing with a single finger is considered disrespectful in Japan. He does not make eye contact because Japanese do not consider direct eye contact to be respectful.

11. Former President Clinton punctuated his words in a speech to an audience in Central America by punching his fist in the air. Showing between his fingers was the tip of his thumb. His speech, meant to be supportive and encouraging, stirred great anger in his audience. Why?

A. The gesture is very insulting in Central America, most often used by one man to another to question their masculinity.

12. Give two meanings or uses of raising your pointer and middle fingers.

A. From the 1970's: Peace, or opposition to war.

World War II, Winston Churchill became famous for his "Victory" gesture.

Richard Nixon departing his presidency: his signature gesture to stir the crowd that started with his victory in the presidential election.

Basketball referee: indicating a goal worth two points.

Rabbit ears: A joke for youth today, a gesture of disrespect, most often seen in photos.

13. When a Japanese businessman hands you a business card how should you respond?

A. Receive it in both hands, read the card carefully immediately, put it away carefully and respectfully in your wallet, pocket or briefcase.

14. List three or more ways people point to items around the world and identify where that gesture is used.

Peru, Ecuador: purse lips and motion in desired direction with chin.

United States: use single first finger.

Japan: use open hand, palm up.

Germans: use their little finger.

Greek: tip their head.

Peru: they purse their lips and motion in the desired direction.

Malaysians: use their thumb.

15. In Bolivia and Ecuador, what does holding out your hand and twisting it back and forth mean?

A. No

16. In Brazil, purple is the color of:

- A. Death.**
- B. Weddings.**
- C. Baby daughters.**

A. Death. Purple flowers are reserved for funerals.

17. Which of these things is not true about Brazil:

- A. It has the largest population of Japanese residents outside of Japan. (true)**
- B. It is home to more Lebanese than Lebanon. (true)**
- C. It is home to more Italians than Venice, Italy. (true)**
- D. It is home to more Indians, from the country of India, than England. (false)**

18. SARS, Severe Acute Respiratory Disease, swept through much of Asia in 2003. On a map, find one of the hardest hit locations, Hong Kong, in seven seconds.

19. Oregon 4-H hosted an IFYE (International 4-H Youth Exchange) student from Tasmania in 2004. Find his home country on a map in seven seconds. (South of Australia)

20. Sing a song in another language. You must be able to sing at least 3 lines.

21. Where is Iraq? Find it on the map in 10 seconds.

22. Where is Afghanistan? Find it on the map in 10 seconds.

23. After a long day of sightseeing, you and your Saudi Arabian travel partner finally get a chance to sit down across the coffee table from each other and you put your feet up. Suddenly he is angry with you. Why?

A. By aiming the bottoms of your feet at him, you have insulted him. This indicates that he is no better than the sand beneath your feet.

24. In Ecuador, when people go out, they have a saying “doing as the North Americans,” what does it mean? In the USA we call it by another nationality. What is it?

A. Going Dutch. Each person paying their own way.

25. Has the Congress of the United States of America designated an official language for this country? If so, what is it?

A. There is no designated language.

26. When you wave at a taxi driver in Bolivia he rocks his flat hand from side to side and drives by. He is indicating:

A. He already has passengers or assignments.

B. He is off duty.

C. He is being friendly and waving back at you because waving at a taxi is not how to get their service.

A. He already has passengers or assignments.

27. The traditional practice of Feng Shui says that leaving your garage door open will:

A. Allows your wealth to leak away.

B. Show family they are welcome and need not approach the formal front door to request admittance.

C. Shows that you trust your neighbors.

A. Allows your wealth to leak away.

28. In China, if you would like more tea, how do you indicate this to the waiter?

A. Turn your teacup upside down.

29. Will “sticking your thumb out” when walking down a road in Australia get a driver to stop and pick you up?

A. No. More likely to stop and beat you up for the insulting “up yours” gesture.

30. Taiwanese children are very friendly and curious. When they gather around you, should you touch their heads as a sign of greeting and bonding? Why or why not?

A. No. Touching a Taiwanese child’s head may be considered damaging to them, especially by a stranger. People from many Asian countries believe the head is where the soul of a person resides. Being touched by a stranger in particular may be harmful to their well-being.

31. Is an embroidered handkerchief an appropriate gift for a Chinese woman's wedding? Why or why not?

A. No. Handkerchiefs symbolize sadness and weeping—more associated with funerals.

32. You offer special refreshments to a Chinese student visiting you and they refuse them. Why?

A. Chinese people traditionally refuse something offered to them repeatedly so as not to look greedy. You are expected to repeat the offer and then thank them for accepting.

33. When visiting your neighbor from Iran in the hospital you see his family has rearranged the hospital room and now his bed no longer has a view of the window. Why would they do this?

A. This man is a Muslim, and must face the East to say his prayers five times a day, even while hospitalized.

34. The local first grade teacher has a "Student of the Week," award. She writes the name of the deserving student in big red letters on the bulletin board. When a Korean family sees their child's name in red letters on the board they are horrified. Why?

A. In Korea, only the names of the dead are written in red.

35. You invite your new neighbors from Hong Kong to dinner. They slurp and smack while they eat. Are they being rude?

A. No. They are showing their great appreciation of the food.

36. You have dinner with a co-worker from Thailand and notice she slurps and smacks her food while eating. Is she being rude?

A. Yes, in Thailand, it is not customary to show appreciation for a meal with noises while eating.

37. What is Juneteenth?

A. June 19, 1865, over two years and six months after President Abraham Lincoln declared it illegal to hold slaves in the United States of America, word reached African American slaves in Texas. The day is commemorated as Emancipation Day or Jubilation Day.

38. In Jamaica, when a student in a classroom snaps their fingers, what are they telling the teacher?

A. They know the answer.

39. As a guest in a home in Egypt, where many families do not have abundant food for their families, should you eat everything you are served, so you do not waste anything?

A. No. Leaving some food on your plate shows you have had plenty and your host has been generous.

40. In Indonesia, where many families do not have abundant food for their families, should you eat everything you are served, so you do not waste anything?

A. Yes. Leaving food behind is considered impolite.

41. A new family from Mexico moves next door to you. Your yellow dahlias are blooming beautifully so you take them a large bouquet to welcome them to the neighborhood. Does the family respond with happiness or reservations?

A. They are probably reserved because yellow flowers are associated with funerals and Day of the Dead celebrations in Mexico.

42. A Chinese family is seeking a new home. Their realtor helps them find a house that fits the requirements they have listed. It also has a lovely view from the front of the house of the sunsets over the hills to the West. The family says this house just won't do. Why not?

A. Many Chinese people follow the rules of Feng Shui, related to the principles of yin and yang. If the entry of their house is facing West, where the sun sets, and the day ends, it will bring them bad luck.

43. At the Lunar New Year, celebrated by many Asians, you receive a red envelope with a small amount of money in it from a friend who you have helped earlier. Are they paying you for your help?

A. No. The red envelope with money in it signifies wishes for good luck and prosperity for you in the coming year.

44. It is spring and you see your Persian neighbors are preparing a small fire in their back yard and then letting their children jump over it. The parents even help the smaller children jump the fire. What are they doing?

A. If this is the vernal equinox, which falls in March, this family is participating in Nouruz, the Persian New Year. By jumping the fire they are leaving evil spirits and bad luck behind as they start the New Year.

45. You notice that there is a pair of worn shoes tied to an apple tree in your neighbor's yard where everyone can see. Thinking that one of the East Indian children is playing a joke on his parents, you untie the shoes and take them to the father. He says he tied them there and puts them back. Why are they there?

A. To ward off an evil eye that might be keeping the tree from bearing fruit.

Prepared by Jeanne Brandt Oregon State University, Extension Family and Community Development, Washington County.

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