



NIFA



United States Department of Agriculture

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

<https://nifa.usda.gov/program/4-h-positive-youth-development>

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

EXPEDITIONARY SKILLS FOR LIFE

A FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP FOR STEM EDUCATION

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITY 3.5 LET'S SHAKE ON IT

### LESSON DETAILS

#### AGE/GRADE LEVEL

High School

#### LEARNER OUTCOMES

You will gain an understanding of how different cultures use non-verbal language when greeting each other..

#### SUCCESS INDICATORS

Youth will respond appropriately to various cultural greetings and create their own cultural greeting.

#### LIFE SKILLS

Communication, cultural awareness, recognizing diversity, social skills

#### NATIONAL STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

21st Century: Life and Career Skills/  
SOCIAL AND CROSS CULTURAL SKILLS/Interact Effectively with Others/Respect cultural differences and work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds

#### PREP TIME

15 minutes

#### ACTIVITY TIME

1 hour 15 minutes

#### MATERIALS LIST

- Flip chart tablet
- World map (display on screen or wall)
- Markers

#### HANDOUTS

- Culture Cards
- Learner Assessment Questions

#### SUGGESTED SPACE

Open area

#### SUGGESTED GROUP SIZE

Any size, more than 32 will require additional Culture Cards

#### REFERENCES

World Map  
[www.mapsofworld.com/world-map-image.html](http://www.mapsofworld.com/world-map-image.html)

Making a Good First Impression  
[www.youthsuccessnyc.org/jobs/pdf/jobs\\_lesson4-good\\_first\\_impression.pdf](http://www.youthsuccessnyc.org/jobs/pdf/jobs_lesson4-good_first_impression.pdf)

First Impressions  
[www.cteonline.org/curriculum/lessonplan/first-impression/ne5s2J](http://www.cteonline.org/curriculum/lessonplan/first-impression/ne5s2J)

The World's Different Cultures  
<http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2010/08/11/the-best-sites-for-learning-about-the-worlds-different-cultures/>

### INTRODUCTION

Certain forms of nonverbal communication have different meanings in different cultures. For example, a gesture or motion that means one thing to people in the United States may mean something entirely different in Japan. Whereas an American is likely to point with an index finger, a Japanese person will more likely gesture with a hand, as pointing with an index finger is considered to be rude in many Asian cultures.

Eye contact is another aspect of nonverbal communication that differs across cultures. In the United States, direct eye contact is generally considered to be a sign of trustworthiness and interest in an individual's words. However, in some instances, a prolonged gaze may be considered by some to be a sign of sexual interest or attraction. In countries such as Africa and Japan, eye contact is generally avoided, as direct eye contact may be considered to be disrespectful. Yet in Arabic cultures, the opposite is true: eye contact is believed to show interest and honesty.

Forms of nonverbal communication are many and varied and can provide extensive insight into a person's thoughts and/or feelings as well as their cultural background. Even something as simple - and important - as how you greet someone is part of non-verbal communication. Forms of nonverbal communication can be categorized to better understand their place in everyday interactions:

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NIFA



EXPEDITIONARY SKILLS FOR LIFE

## LET'S SHAKE ON IT, CONTINUED

>> *continued from previous page*

- **Gestures** include motion of the head or limbs.
- **Posture** refers to both the position of the body by itself and in relation to others.
- **Body movements** may include any motion of the body.
- **Eye contact** and movements are the direction and focus of a person's eyes.
- **Tone of voice** is the range of pitch in the voice that may communicate something other than the words being spoken. For example, sarcasm may give an individual's words an entirely different meaning.
- **Facial expressions** refer to any movement and changes of the facial composition.

Nonverbal communication is often used in conjunction with verbal communication to repeat, emphasize, support, or contradict a verbal message, or to serve in the place of a verbal message.

Developing cultural competence is a dynamic and complex process requiring ongoing self-assessment and continuous expansion of one's cultural knowledge. It evolves over time, beginning with an understanding of one's own culture, continuing through interactions with individuals from various cultures, and extending through one's own expansion of knowledge. Communication is a critical element to cultural competence.

### ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

#### ACTIVITY 1: CULTURAL GREETINGS (45 MINUTES)

Explain:

When you are meeting someone for the first time, greetings can provide a great first impression but can also take you by surprise. If you reach out your hand and the other person leans in to kiss you on the cheek, you may be thinking, "What planet are they from?"

Non-verbal communication can say more than words, so it is important to be aware of our gestures, rituals and customs when meeting new people. Our activity today will test your ability to interact with people from diverse

cultures. Establish the following ground rules for this activity.

- Listen actively and attentively
- Ask for clarification if you are confused
- Show respect
- Do not interrupt when others are sharing
- Have an open mind

Directions:

1. Hand out one culture card to each youth.
2. Allow youth a few minutes to read over the description and understand how to act out that culture's greeting.
3. Allow youth 20 minutes to move around, introduce themselves using the cultural greeting from their card and talking about the culture they represent.
4. Following this social time, bring the group back together and have each youth share the culture they represent and challenge them to find the country on the world map (see link in resources).

Discuss:

1. Define cultural competency and record responses on a flip chart for everyone to see. Cultural competence involves understanding and appropriately responding to the unique combination of cultural variables—including ability, age, beliefs, ethnicity, experience, gender, gender identity, linguistic background, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.
2. What are the typical areas in which there may be cross-cultural differences?
3. How do our own belief system and values play a part in your perception of cultures that are different than your own?
4. Why does cultural competency matter?

The purpose of this activity was to provide you an opportunity to explore your perception of other cultures and helps you to look outside your individual corner of the world.

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**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**BANGLADESH**

Make a relaxed salute with your right hand.

Bangladesh, to the east of India on the Bay of Bengal, is a South Asian country marked by lush greenery and many waterways. Its Padma (Ganges), Meghna and Jamuna rivers create fertile plains, and travel by boat is common. On the southern coast, the Sundarbans, an enormous mangrove forest shared with Eastern India, is home to the royal Bengal tiger.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**BENIN**

Young men often snap their fingers when shaking hands.

Benin, a French-speaking West African nation, is a birthplace of the vodun (or “voodoo”) religion and home to the former Dahomey Kingdom from circa 1600-1900. In Abomey, Dahomey’s former capital, the Historical Museum occupies two royal palaces with bas-reliefs recounting the kingdom’s past and a throne mounted on human skulls. To the north, Pendjari National Park offers safaris with elephants, hippos and lions.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**BOTSWANA**

People touch hands, like a handshake that doesn’t include a grip, just lightly grazing palms and fingers. They also ask each other: “How did you wake?”

Botswana, a landlocked country in Southern Africa, has a landscape defined by the Kalahari Desert and the Okavango Delta, which becomes a lush animal habitat during the seasonal floods. The massive Central Kalahari Game Reserve, with its fossilized river valleys and undulating grasslands, is home to numerous animals including giraffes, cheetahs, hyenas and wild dogs.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**CAMBODIA**

People would put their hands together like “praying hands” holding them against their chest. The higher you hold your hands, the more respect you show.

Cambodia is a Southeast Asian nation whose landscape spans low-lying plains, the Mekong Delta, mountains and Gulf of Thailand coastline. Phnom Penh, its capital, is home to the art deco Central Market, glittering Royal Palace and the National Museum’s historical and archaeological exhibits. In the country’s northwest are the ruins of Angkor Wat, a massive stone temple complex built during the Khmer Empire.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**BHUTAN**

You would ask, "Is your body well?"

Bhutan, a Buddhist kingdom on the Himalayas' eastern edge, is known for its monasteries, fortresses (or dzongs) and dramatic landscapes that range from subtropical plains to steep mountains and valleys. In the High Himalayas, peaks such as 7,326m Jomolhari are popular trekking destinations. Paro Taktsang monastery (also known as Tiger's Nest) clings to cliffs above the forested Paro Valley.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

Good friends slap right hands, then grab each other's middle fingers using a thumb and middle finger, then "snap" the other person's finger.

The Central African Republic is a landlocked country in Central Africa. It is bordered by Chad to the north, Sudan to the northeast, South Sudan to the east, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo to the south and Cameroon to the west. The CAR covers a land area of about 620,000 square kilometres (240,000 sq mi) and had an estimated population of around 4.7 million as of 2014.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**GABON**

Show respect by shaking a person's hand with both hands.

Gabon, a country along the Atlantic coast of Central Africa, has significant areas of protected parkland. The forested coastal terrain of its famed Loango National Park shelters a diversity of wildlife, from gorillas and hippos to whales. Lopé National Park consists of mostly rainforest. Akanda National Park is known for its mangroves and tidal beaches



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**GREECE**

Back-slapping (gently) takes the place of shaking hands in many greetings.

Greece is a country in southeastern Europe with thousands of islands throughout the Aegean and Ionian seas. Influential in ancient times, it's often called the cradle of Western civilization. Athens, its capital, retains landmarks including the 5th-century B.C. Acropolis citadel with the Parthenon temple. Greece is also known for its beaches, from the black sands of Santorini to the party resorts of Mykonos.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**JAMAICA**

“Waapun,” one might say. It’s a simplified version of, “What’s Happening?”

Jamaica, a Caribbean island nation, has a lush topography of mountains, rainforests and reef-lined beaches. Many of its all-inclusive resorts are clustered in Montego Bay, with its British-colonial architecture, and Negril, known for its diving and snorkeling sites. Jamaica is famed as the birthplace of reggae music, and its capital Kingston is home to the Bob Marley Museum, dedicated to the famous singer.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**MOZAMBIQUE**

Northern people clap hands three times before saying hello.

Mozambique is a southern African nation whose long Indian Ocean coastline is dotted with popular beaches like Tofo, as well as offshore marine parks. In the Quirimbas Archipelago, a 250km stretch of coral islands, mangrove-covered Ibo Island has colonial-era ruins surviving from a period of Portuguese rule. The Bazaruto Archipelago farther south has reefs which protect rare marine life including dugongs.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**NIGER**

The Kanouri people shake a fist at head level and call, “Wooshay! Wooshay!” (“Hello! Hello!”)

Republic of Niger is a landlocked country in Western Africa, named after the Niger River. Niger covers a land area of almost 1,270,000 km, making it the largest country in West Africa, with over 80 percent of its land area covered by the Sahara Desert. The country’s predominantly Islamic population of 17,138,707 is mostly clustered in the far south and west of the country. The capital city is Niamey, located in the far-southwest corner of Niger.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**NIUE**

They have a very simple greeting, “Love be with you.”

Niue is a small island nation in the South Pacific Ocean. It’s known for its limestone cliffs and coral-reef dive sites. Migrating whales swim in Niue’s waters between July and October. In the southeast is the Huvalu Forest Conservation Area, where trails through fossilized coral forests lead to the Togo and Vaikona chasms. The northwest is home to the rock pools of Avaiki Cave and the naturally formed Talava Arches.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**OMAN**

After a handshake, men might add a kiss on the nose. (We will not be practicing the kiss today.)

Oman, a nation on the Arabian Peninsula, has terrain encompassing desert, riverbed oases and long coastlines on the Persian (Arabian) Gulf, Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman. Wahiba Sands is a region of dunes inhabited by Bedouins. The port capital, Muscat, is home to the massive, contemporary Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, and the old waterfront Muttrah quarter, with a labyrinthine souk and busy fish market.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**SINGAPORE**

Greeters slide their palms together back toward their own chests, then end with the hand over the heart.

Singapore, an island city-state off southern Malaysia, is a global financial center with a tropical climate and multicultural population. Its colonial core centers on the Padang, a cricket field since the 1830s and now flanked by grand buildings such as City Hall, with its 18 Corinthian columns. In Singapore's circa-1820 Chinatown stands the red-and-gold Buddha Tooth Relic Temple, said to house one of Buddha's teeth.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**SOUTH AFRICA**

Some use a shortened greeting, "Howzit." Others have a more complicated handshake; step one: interlock pinkies. Step two: clasp fists. Step three: back to pinkies.

South Africa is a country on the southernmost tip of the African continent, marked by several distinct ecosystems. Inland safari destination Kruger National Park is populated by big game. The Western Cape offers beaches, lush winelands around Stellenbosch and Paarl, craggy cliffs at the Cape of Good Hope, forest and lagoons along the Garden Route, and the city of Cape Town, beneath flat-topped Table Mountain.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**SWAZILAND**

They say, "I see you!"

Swaziland, a small, landlocked monarchy in southern Africa, is known for its wilderness reserves and festivals showcasing traditional Swazi culture. Marking its northeastern border with Mozambique and stretching down to South Africa, the Lebombo Mountains are a backdrop for Mlawula Nature Reserve's many hiking trails. Nearby Hlane Royal National Park is home to diverse wildlife including lions, hippos and elephants.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**SYRIA**

Children often kiss the back of the hands of their parents or grandparents.

Syria, officially the Syrian Arab Republic, is a country in Western Asia, bordering Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Turkey to the north, Iraq to the east, Jordan to the south, and Israel to the southwest.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**TAIWAN**

People greet others by saying, "NiHao!" The other person should respond in the same way.

Taiwan is a small island nation 180km east of China with modern cities, traditional Chinese temples, hot springs resorts and dramatic mountainous terrain. Taipei, the country's capital in the north, is known for its busy night markets, Chinese Imperial art at the National Palace Museum and Taipei 101, a 509m-tall, bamboo-shaped skyscraper with an observation deck.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**TUVALU**

Relatives press their face to the cheek of the other person and sniff deeply. (You can pretend to do this.)

Tuvalu, in the South Pacific, is an independent island nation within the British Commonwealth. Its 9 islands comprise small, sparsely populated atolls and reef islands with palm-fringed beaches and WWII sites. Off Funafuti atoll, the capital, the Funafuti Conservation Area offers calm waters for diving and snorkeling among sea turtles and tropical fish. The marine area includes several uninhabited islets sheltering sea birds.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**ZAMBIA**

Some greet each other by gently squeezing a thumb.

Zambia, in southern Africa, is a landlocked country of rugged terrain and diverse wildlife, with many parks and safari areas. On its border with Zimbabwe is famed Victoria Falls - indigenously called Mosi-oa-Tunya, or "Smoke That Thunders" - plunging a misty 108m into narrow Batoka Gorge. Spanning the Zambezi River just below the falls is Victoria Falls Bridge, a spectacular viewpoint.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**ZIMBABWE**

The Shona people often show respect by doing a series of slow, rhythmic handclasps.

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in southern Africa known for its dramatic landscape and diverse wild-life, much of it within parks, reserves and safari areas. On the Zambezi River, Victoria Falls make a thundering 108m drop into narrow Batoka Gorge, where there's white-water rafting and bungee-jumping. Downstream are Matusadona and Mana Pools national parks, home to hippos, rhinos and birdlife.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**IRAN**

Having a downward gaze when meeting someone is a sign of respect with eye contact being reserved as a sign of affection and intimacy. Family members usually greet each other with a hug and three kisses.

Iran is an Islamic republic on the Persian Gulf with historical sites dating to the Persian Empire. Extensive marble ruins mark Persepolis, the empire's capital founded by Darius I in the 6th century B.C. The modern capital, Tehran, is home to opulent Golestan Palace, seat of the Qajar Dynasty (1794-1925), plus modern landmarks such as the 435m-high Milad Tower.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**INUIT**

Native people do not have formal greetings; instead they rely on body language. Smiling is a good way to start, followed by eye contact if the person is having a good day. A simple handshake is also acceptable.

Inuit are a group of culturally similar indigenous peoples inhabiting the Arctic regions of Greenland, Canada and Alaska. In the United States and Canada the term "Eskimo" was commonly used to describe the Inuit, and Alaska's Yupik and Inupiat. and "Inuit" has become more common.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**GERMANY**

A simple handshake is best but be aware to apply the right pressure. If you shake the hand too softly, you might come off as very weak and timid. If you squeeze too hard, that's not good either.

Germany is a Western European country with a landscape of forests, rivers, mountain ranges and North Sea beaches. It has over 2 millennia of history. Berlin, its capital, is home to art and nightlife scenes, the Brandenburg Gate and many sites relating to WWII.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**SPAIN**

Always greet the oldest person first with a handshake as a sign of respect. Remember to shake everyone's hand when you greet them and also when you leave.

Spain, a country on Europe's Iberian Peninsula, includes 17 autonomous regions with diverse geography and cultures. Capital city Madrid is home to the Royal Palace and Prado museum, housing works by European masters. Segovia has a medieval castle (the Alcázar) and an intact Roman aqueduct. Catalonia's capital, Barcelona, is defined by Antoni Gaudí's whimsical modernist landmarks like the Sagrada Família church.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**FRANCE**

Greet someone with, "Bonjour," followed by a handshake (for strangers), or a kiss (for family or close friends). (No kissing for today.)

France, in Western Europe, encompasses medieval cities, alpine villages and Mediterranean beaches. Paris, its capital, is famed for its fashion houses, classical art museums including the Louvre and monuments like the Eiffel Tower. The country is also renowned for its wines and sophisticated cuisine. Lascaux's ancient cave drawings, Lyon's Roman theater and the vast Palace of Versailles attest to its rich history.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**EGYPT**

Handshakes are the customary greeting among individuals of the same sex. They can be somewhat limp and prolonged, although they are always given with a hearty smile and direct eye contact. In a greeting between men and women, the women must extend her hand first. If she does not, a man should bow his head in greeting.

Egypt, a country linking northeast Africa with the Middle East, dates to the time of the pharaohs. Millennia-old monuments sit along the fertile Nile River Valley, including Giza's colossal Pyramids and Great Sphinx as well as Luxor's hieroglyph-lined Karnak Temple and Valley of the Kings tombs. The capital, Cairo, is home to Ottoman landmarks like Muhammad Ali Mosque and the Egyptian Museum, a trove of antiquities.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**MEXICO**

Shake hands or give a slight bow when introduced. Bow when greeting a Mexican woman. Shake hands only if she extends her hand first.

Mexico is a country between the U.S. and Central America that's known for its Pacific and Gulf of Mexico beaches and its diverse landscape of mountains, deserts and jungles. Ancient ruins such as Teotihuacán and the Mayan city of Chichén Itzá are scattered throughout the country, as are Spanish colonial-era towns. In capital Mexico City, upscale shops, renowned museums and gourmet restaurants cater to modern life.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**BRAZIL**

Brazilians will often greet with a kiss or a hug, and both men and women will frequently touch you when speaking, either patting your shoulder or placing their hand on your hand or arm to make a point. (no kissing today)

Brazil, a vast South American country, stretches from the Amazon Basin in the north to vineyards and massive Iguacu Falls in the south. Rio de Janeiro, symbolized by its 38m Christ the Redeemer statue atop Mount Corcovado, is famed for its busy Copacabana and Ipanema beaches as well as its enormous, raucous Carnaval festival, featuring parade floats, flamboyant costumes and samba music and dance.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**NAME**

Oki Ni-Kso-Ko-Wa (Hello All my relatives). This is the traditional greeting in Native American Culture. It is an acknowledgement that says that no matter who you are or where you are from, I recognize that you are my relative, a part of my DNA deserving of respect and kindness.

In the United States, Native Americans are considered to be people whose pre-Columbian ancestors were indigenous to the lands within the nation's modern boundaries. These peoples were composed of numerous distinct tribes, bands, and ethnic groups, and many of these groups survive intact today as sovereign nations.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**NAME**

A Scottish person will often greet you with "Hello, how are you?" In a more formal situation, it is usual to shake the right hand of the person you are meeting.

Scotland, the U.K.'s northernmost country, is a land of mountain wildernesses such as the Cairngorms and Northwest Highlands, interspersed with glacial glens (valleys) and lochs (lakes). Its major cities are Edinburgh, the capital, with its iconic hilltop castle, and Glasgow, famed for its vibrant cultural scene. Scotland is also famous for golf, the game first played at the Old Course at St Andrews in the 1400s



**ACTIVITY 3.5: CULTURE CARD**  
**NAME**

Tibetans say welcome by sticking out their tongues. This tradition has been practiced since the 9th century during the time of Lang Darma, a Tibetan king known to have a black tongue. The people were scared that he'll be reincarnated, so they start sticking out their tongues when meeting someone to prove that they aren't evil. This greeting is often accompanied by placing their palms down in front of their chest.

Tibet, on the lofty Tibetan Plateau on the northern side of the Himalayas, is an autonomous region of China. It's nicknamed the "Roof of the World" for its towering peaks. It shares Mt. Everest with Nepal. Its capital, Lhasa, is site of hilltop Potala Palace, once the Dalai Lama's winter home, and Jokhang Temple, Tibet's spiritual heart, revered for its golden statue of the young Buddha.



**ACTIVITY 3.5: LEARNER ASSESSMENT**

These questions are about things you learned during this activity. Please check the circle that best describes you.

**Q1** I understand what it means to be culturally competent.

- Not at all like me
- A little like me
- Somewhat like me
- A lot like me

**Q2** I understand how non-verbal communication relates to cultural competence.

- Not at all like me
- A little like me
- Somewhat like me
- A lot like me

**Q3** I understand how to teach others about my own culture.

- Not at all like me
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- Somewhat like me
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