

UNIT 2

Unit 2, Cultural Studies, The Q Classroom

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- Teacher:** Here we are at **Unit 2**. The Unit Question is “Why do we study other cultures?”
Marcus, why do you think we study other cultures?
- Marcus:** Well, people everywhere are so different. Different food, different customs, different beliefs.
- Teacher:** Yes, that’s true. Yuna, do you like to study other cultures?
- Yuna:** Yes. It’s very interesting.
- Teacher:** So other cultures are definitely interesting, but that’s not the only reason we study them. Why else do we study other cultures, Felix?
- Felix:** We can learn from other cultures. We learn new ways to do things. And we also learn about new kinds of food. That’s very important!
- Teacher:** I agree with you there! We learn new ways to do things. What do you think, Sophy? Why else do we study other cultures?
- Sophy:** Well, we don’t just learn about our differences. We also learn about what makes us all the same. That helps us understand and accept each other. This helps us live together peacefully.

Unit 2, Note-taking Skill, Activity A

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- M:** It takes time to feel comfortable in a new culture. In fact, some students say they only begin to really relax at the end of their first year. Culture shock is normal and very common. Almost all international students say they have some culture shock. In this presentation, we will share some ideas to help you feel better if you experience culture shock. First, try to learn about your host country’s history, culture, and people. The third floor of the campus library has many books about culture. Next, try to meet people who share your interests. The university has many clubs, sports, and activities for students to join. These are a great way for you to make new friends.

Unit 2, Listening 1, Activity A, B

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- Professor:** Good afternoon, class. Our topic today is **international** advertising—how companies sell products in different countries. I’ll talk about the **difficulties** of advertising in different cultures. These days, many companies are international. Most large companies sell their products around the world, and

many small companies sell their products on websites. But companies can have problems when they advertise products in other countries.

Sometimes the problem is a language **mistake**. A product name or an advertisement can have a funny or strange meaning in another language. For example, a few years ago, a large international computer company named its new product Vista. Later, the company learned that the word “vista” means chicken in some eastern European languages. The company didn’t change the name of its product. But the example shows that it’s important to think about language in international advertising.

Another problem is color. Colors have different meanings in different cultures. For example, the color red means good luck in many countries, so it’s usually good to use red in advertisements. The color blue usually has a **positive** meaning also. But white means **death** in some parts of Asia, and black means death in North America. As you can see, it’s important for companies to know the meaning of colors in the country where they are selling their products.

International **customs** are another difficulty in advertising. As you know, different cultures sometimes have very different ideas about things. Companies should learn the customs of the countries where they sell their products. Then they can **avoid** mistakes like this one by an international telephone company. The company made a TV advertisement for the Middle East. It showed a businessman talking on the phone with his feet up on his desk. The problem was, in the Middle East, it’s not polite to show the **bottom** of your shoes. The company lost a lot of money and had to make a new advertisement.

Unit 2, Listening Skill, Activity A

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M: International companies should also learn about numbers in different cultures. Some numbers can be good in one culture and bad in another culture. In some languages in Asia, the number four sounds like the word for “death,” so it’s not a good number for advertising. For example, a sports company wanted to sell golf balls in Korea, but the company made a mistake. It put four balls in each package, and no one in Korea bought them.

Unit 2, Listening Skill, Activity B

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M: Companies often use famous people, like sports or TV stars, in their advertising. Companies think this will give people a positive feeling about their

products and their company. Sometimes it does, but companies have to be careful about which famous person they choose. A few years ago, an Italian carmaker used an American star in one ad, but many people in one Asian country do not like the star. When the ad appeared, some people there became angry and stopped buying the maker's cars.

Unit 2, Listening 2, Activity A, C

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1. Joao from Brazil

Joao: When I came to the United States to study, a lot of things were different. The language, my classes at the university . . . I knew about those cultural differences. But one day, I went to the university bookstore to buy books for my history class. There was another student standing in front of the shelf. I stood next to him and started to look for my book. Then he looked very **upset** and said, "Excuse me!" and moved away. I didn't know what was wrong. I was **confused**. I learned later that you shouldn't stand very close to other people in the U.S. It's **rude** to stand too close.

2. Tanya from Russia

Tanya: Last summer, my company sent me to work for two months at our head office in Toronto. It was a great experience. My Canadian coworkers were really friendly, and I learned a lot. There was one funny thing that happened. When it was time for me to leave, my coworkers gave me some very nice gifts . . . and they gave me flowers—six flowers. In Russia, it's OK to give an odd number of flowers, for example, one, three, five. . . . But you shouldn't give two, four, or six flowers. We only do that when a person **dies**. I wasn't really **offended**. My coworkers didn't know our custom, but some other Russians may feel angry or upset at this.

3. Rick from the United States

Rick: My friend Hiro got married last summer in Japan, and he **invited** me to the **wedding**. It was a great trip. I really enjoyed meeting Hiro's family and the other guests at the wedding. Many people gave me business cards. I was a little surprised. In the U.S., we only use cards for business, so I didn't bring mine. I just took the Japanese people's business cards and put them in my pocket. After the wedding, I learned that it's not polite to do that. You should always take the cards with two hands and read them **carefully**. I only used one hand, and I didn't read them at all!

Unit 2, Vocabulary Skill, Activity A, B

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1. Last summer, I stayed in Australia. It was my first time away from home for such a long time. In the beginning, I felt really depressed. I didn't know I would miss my family so much.

2. The first few weeks were tough. I often felt lonely, and I wanted to go home.
3. But the family I lived with was great. They were very kind and considerate.
4. They taught me about Australian culture and customs. And they treated me like a member of the family. That really helped me feel better.
5. After a few weeks, I didn't miss home so much. I felt happy and optimistic again. In fact, I didn't want to come home at the end of the summer!

Unit 2, Grammar, Part 1, Activity A

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1. In India, you shouldn't use your left hand to eat.
2. In Vietnam, you shouldn't touch a person on the head.
3. In the U.S., you should look at people's eyes when you speak to them.
4. In France, when you visit someone's home, you should bring a gift.
5. In Saudi Arabia, you shouldn't say no when someone offers you something to eat or drink.
6. In Colombia, you should avoid giving marigolds—a yellow flower—as a gift.

Unit 2, Grammar, Part 2, Activity A

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1. There was another student standing in front of the shelf. I stood next to him and started to look for my book. Then he looked very upset and said, "Excuse me!" and moved away. I didn't know what was wrong. I was confused. I learned later that you shouldn't stand very close to other people in the U.S. It's rude to stand too close.
2. They gave me some very nice girls... and they gave me flowers—six flowers. In Russia, it's OK to give an odd number of flowers, for example, one, three, five. . . . But you shouldn't give two, four, or six flowers. We only do that when a person dies.
3. I was a little surprised. In the U.S., we only use cards for business, so I didn't bring mine. I just took the Japanese people's business cards and put them in my pocket. After the wedding, I learned that it's not polite to do that. You should always take the cards with two hands and read them carefully. I only used one hand, and I didn't read them at all!

Unit 2, Pronunciation, Examples

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avoid cultural custom international problem

Unit 2, Pronunciation, Activity A

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Q2e Listening & Speaking 1: Audio Script

1. avoid
2. bottom
3. considerate
4. offended
5. personality
6. positive
7. similar
8. telephone