Reading the Pause

How learned expectations shape a first impression

S.3.3 "Analyze how culture influences individuals, including the mechanisms of ethnocentrism, cultural relativity, and culture shock."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In paragraphs 2 and 3, underline a detail showing confusion from unfamiliar cues, circle a judgment that treats one club's habit as the standard, and number two steps Lina takes to understand the new practice in its setting. Label the underlined detail S for culture shock, the circled judgment E for ethnocentrism, and the numbered steps R for cultural relativity.

A Different Way to Debate

(1) Culture shapes what people notice, expect, and call polite. These patterns are learned in families, schools, and communities, so no single habit represents everyone in a country. Ethnocentrism happens when someone uses their own culture's rules as the standard for judging others. Cultural relativity means trying to understand a practice in its local setting before judging it; understanding does not require agreeing with every practice. Culture shock is the confusion or stress people may feel when familiar social cues no longer work. These three processes can change both a person's first reaction and what that person does next.

(2) At a student exchange workshop, Lina joins a debate club at a new school. In her old club, members jump in as soon as someone finishes a point. Here, members pause for several seconds before responding. During the first meeting, Lina keeps interrupting the pauses and feels embarrassed when others look surprised. She cannot tell when it is her turn, so she grows tense and stops sharing ideas. Later, she tells a friend, 'These students must not care about the debate. At my club, interested people answer right away.' Her friend explains that this club uses pauses to show they are considering a speaker's point.

(3) At the next meeting, Lina asks two members why they wait and listens to their explanations. She notices that the pause gives speakers time to finish and listeners time to think; it does not signal boredom in this club. She still prefers quick exchanges in some debates, but she waits before entering this discussion and invites a quieter member to speak. Soon she feels less anxious because she can read the club's cues. The club also learns from Lina: members agree to say when they want a faster round of questions. Their shared routine changes without either side having to declare its usual style wrong.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the club's unfamiliar pauses lead to culture shock for Lina? Use two details from the passage.

2. Why is Lina's first judgment about the club ethnocentric?

3. How does Lina use cultural relativity at the next meeting, and what does she learn?

4. How does understanding the pause change Lina's behavior and the club's shared routine?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a situation at a school event involving an unfamiliar way to greet someone or share food, not a debate. In 4 or 5 sentences, show a person's culture shock, an ethnocentric judgment, and a culturally relative response that changes what the person does.

ANSWER KEY

Reading the Pause

HIGH SCHOOL · S.3.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In paragraphs 2 and 3, underline a detail showing confusion from unfamiliar cues, circle a judgment that treats one club's habit as the standard, and number two steps Lina takes to understand the new practice in its setting. Label the underlined detail S for culture shock, the circled judgment E for ethnocentrism, and the numbered steps R for cultural relativity. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the club's unfamiliar pauses lead to culture shock for Lina? Use two details from the passage.	**Lina cannot tell when to speak and interrupts the pauses. Others look surprised, and she becomes tense and stops sharing ideas.**
2	Why is Lina's first judgment about the club ethnocentric?	**She assumes interested people must respond quickly, as they do in her old club, and uses that habit to judge the new club.**
3	How does Lina use cultural relativity at the next meeting, and what does she learn?	**She asks members why they wait and listens to them. She learns that the pauses allow time to finish speaking and think, rather than signaling boredom.**
4	How does understanding the pause change Lina's behavior and the club's shared routine?	**Lina waits before speaking and feels less anxious. The club agrees to say when members want a faster round of questions.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At a school welcome fair, Noor expects visitors to shake hands, but one booth's volunteers greet guests with a small wave instead, leaving her confused and uneasy. She thinks their greeting is rude because people at her old school always shook hands. Noor asks a volunteer what the wave means and learns that the booth's team chose a no-touch greeting so visitors can choose their own level of contact. She waves back, introduces herself, and feels more at ease.

For the annotations, accept Lina's uncertainty, tension, or embarrassment as culture shock; her claim that interested people answer right away as ethnocentrism; and her questions and reconsideration of the pause as cultural relativity. For the open task, accept any coherent 4- or 5-sentence situation that distinguishes confusion, judgment by a familiar norm, and a response based on learning the local meaning.