



COUNTRY TALKS

- ✓ Students give talks about their countries (individually or as a team).
- ✓ After all the countries have been presented, a summary discussion focuses on cultural relativity (simplified to *each culture has its own view of what is "real"*).
- ✓ The goal is to increase knowledge and awareness of the specific cultures of learning.
- ✓ Teacher puts up a large piece of paper for each country represented in the class on the walls. The name of the country is written at the top of the paper.
- ✓ Students move around the room and write questions they might have on each of the countries.
- ✓ Teacher should explain this exercise to students a day or two before. They should be thinking of potential questions they might have for each country. If the teacher is American, a sheet for the U.S. should be added too.
- ✓ Teacher should also help students formulate questions. They will likely vary considerably. Some examples are:
 - Do you have tv in Brazil?
 - Why are Japanese people so quiet?
 - What is the structure of the government in Mexico?
 - How do people in your country feel about nuclear weapons?

- ✓ Once the questions are written, students have the chance to read through them. Some time for clarification should be assigned too.
- ✓ Students should be encouraged to use visuals in their presentations.
- ✓ If there is more than one person representing a country, they should be encouraged to meet as a group to plan their presentation. However, this might prove not an easy task because the students will soon find out that even though they are from the same country, their perspectives on their country differ. Teacher should meet with them briefly ahead of time to help solve any differences and work together.
- ✓ For the actual presentation, teacher should make it clear that writing down a speech and reading it out loud is not an option. They can bring notes, but they must speak spontaneously.
- ✓ If it's a language class: Teacher might want to write down some specific errors and discuss them further with a given student. It might also help to record their speeches and refer to them later for the purpose of language assessment.
- ✓ Synthesis: when all presentations have been made, students are asked the following questions either as a discussion or written reflection:
 - What did you learn about other countries represented in the class?
 - Have you changed any of your opinions or impressions of the countries? Why/ why not?
 - What did you learn about your country from the questions of others?
 - What was the purpose of this exercise?