

The first few seconds...

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Did you know that the first impression you give when meeting someone is very important?

Did you know that this impression is given during the first few seconds of meeting someone?

Your body language also plays an important role in giving a good impression during a first greeting with someone!

Get ready to learn how to make a great impression on someone, even if you are unfamiliar with the context in which the meeting occurs!

Reflect on how you usually greet others especially when the context or person is new to you and you do not share the same language.

What do you do? How do you greet this person?

Brainstorm different possible greetings together with your buddy.

On a piece of paper, list all the words and ways of greeting which come to mind. Feel free to also add drawings if you like!

Evaluate your answers and see if you have listed the following examples of greetings:

Shalom Aleichem (שָׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם) and/or As-salamu alaykum (السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ)?

Did you know that the first greeting is in Hebrew and the second greeting is in Arabic? They may sound very similar however they mean the same thing, which is 'Peace be upon you!'



Go back to the list of different greetings which you created.

Say the words out loud and try to be mindful of the sounds the word creates, how long the word is, its pronunciation, and the body language you may portray when you say the word.

Would you like to learn more?

Here you may find different versions of the word “Hello” in different languages. You can even listen to how these words are pronounced!

Download the File

Done?

Now let's go on a short trip around the world...

Download the File

All countries around the world may be different, but there are certain expectations of etiquette which are the same wherever you go. These may vary according to the context in which the greeting is taking place. For example, consider the different greetings you and your friends share in comparison to that between people who are older than you.

Think of the different ways you greet different people you meet day to day. For example at school (teachers, school head, school mates), at the shop (cashiers), at home (parents, tutors, siblings). Do you make sure to have eye-contact with the person you are meeting? Does any physical contact occur? What facial expression do you use?

Discuss this with your buddy.

Done?

Now, from all that you have discussed with your buddy, think of main differences between encounters which are

- formal (teacher, school-head, cashier) and
- informal (friends, family)



Think of situations in which people from very different contexts meet.

Some examples to consider:

A rich business woman who needs assistance and the only person who can help her is a punk playing an instrument on the street to acquire donations.

Two persons who are travelling for the first time out of their different countries and end up being booked in the same hostel-room.

Now create your own situation. Once you have decided on who your protagonists are, create a sketch which you can role play in front of the other buddy-teams. If you want you can also write a dialogue. What is important is that your creation portrays people from different cultural codes and contexts coming together.

Make sure to include a detailed description of the protagonists, the meeting place and the purpose of their encounter.

Here some inspirational hints to help you start off:

What happens during the first few seconds of meeting someone new? What do you think are the initial thoughts they are thinking during this first meeting. This refers to the stereotypes and prejudices we may have about others, because we may have our own assumptions of others before we get to know them.

1. Describe the actual meeting.

You can describe how this meeting was affected by different cultural codes.

2. Describe how they will succeed in achieving an effective greeting within an intercultural context.

This refers to a greeting which allows both of them to feel comfortable even if they are using different culture codes.

3. How can this allow their communication to start on the right foot?

In situations like this it would be ideal that both persons are already aware of the different cultural codes involved, even though this is not necessarily essential as the communication can still flow in a natural way!

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What are the essential factors to consider to achieve a first positive meeting with someone who does not share your cultural codes?

Discuss this with your buddy and create a postcard to present your answer.

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Allowed file types: **gif jpg jpeg png**.