



## Building Global Competency in the Classroom

### Overview

The purpose of this activity is to introduce U.S. students to the world beyond their classroom borders through the bounty of hosting international students. An introductory exploration of culture will also be used to frame the intercultural dialogue. Students will further explore the notion of culture and distinguish between the visible and invisible parts of culture. Students will also be able to examine specific, cultural factors in their own backgrounds and compare them with their peers, namely short-term international students and young people who are from a different background.

### Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Recognize the importance of international students as a step towards fostering global awareness and competence
- Define the notion of culture
- Recognize the differences between visible and invisible parts of culture
- Compare cultural characteristics of their peers

### Time:

60-75 minutes (One class period with suggested extension activity as homework)

### Materials:

- [\*“Expand Your World”\*](#)
  - o <http://exchanges.state.gov/us/spotlight/expand-your-world>;
- [\*“Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs: What is Culture?”\*](#)
  - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57KW6RO8Rcs>
- [\*“What is culture?”\*](#)
  - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Me2HITQPS40>

### Common Core Standards:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.6](#): Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7](#): Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem

## AFS Educational Goals

### Personal Realm

- To become more aware of their own culture and recognize its influence on their behavior and attitude

### Cultural Realm

- To understand the concept of “culture” and intercultural adaptation

### Global Realm

- Global concern: interest in and concern about world affairs and awareness of one’s choices on others

## Activities:

1. Introduce students to the importance of hosting an international student as an integral step towards global citizenship by watching a short video called “[Expanding Your World](#).”
2. Engage in a brief discussion about why hosting international students helps their classroom to go global by having intercultural learning experiences. Write action verbs on the board.
3. Next, explain to the students that they are going to explore what culture is. Write the definition of **culture** on the board: **“Culture is a set of behaviors, values, and beliefs shared by a group of people that gives them a sense of community and purpose.”**
4. Then show the short, complementary videos with the same title, [“What is Culture?”](#) and [“what is culture.”](#)
5. Next, explain how culture can be compared to a tree with **visible** and **invisible** parts:
  - a. The visible parts of the tree that can be seen, such as the branches, leaves, etc. can be compared to things we can find in all cultures, such as types of art, food, music, dress, etc.
  - b. The invisible parts of the tree, such as the roots, determine how the tree will grow and look, which can be compared to how people view the world, such as their personal values and beliefs, religion, etc.
6. Break students into four groups.
  - a. Using the following prompts, ask students to define culture:

- i. Group 1: In their family
    - ii. Group 2: In their school
    - iii. Group 3: In their community
    - iv. Group 4: In the United States
  - b. Ask students to distinguish between visible and invisible parts of culture in these four aspects of life.
  - c. Also ask the students in small groups to share an experience where they came across a visible or an invisible part of culture that they were unaware of. How did they deal with it?
7. Come back as a large group to discuss
8. Write a brief journal reflection about culture

### **Extension Activities:**

1. Create a digital presentation determining specific visible/invisible parts of the Igbo culture.
2. Ask all students in the class to do a short presentation about their culture during International Education Week, or other important international days
3. Do one of these activities with an international student: [http://www.afsusa.org/afs-blog/host-family/article/?article\\_id=8176](http://www.afsusa.org/afs-blog/host-family/article/?article_id=8176)