Introduction:
This lesson prepares participants for scenarios where they might have to work closely with someone who holds different or opposing values to them by asking them to create a “third culture space” with someone culturally different from them. In this activity, they will first brainstorm some of their cultural norms, beliefs, and values related to a common topic. Then, they will negotiate to generate a set of expectations that they both are comfortable with.

Note: To pair up participants, use an activity such as Intercultural People Bingo, Similarities and Differences, and Six Differences. These activities are meant to help participants discover differences between them.

Objectives:
As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Identify their cultural norms, beliefs, and values related to a particular topic.
2. Compare their norms, beliefs, and values with someone who is culturally different from them.
3. Generate rules and norms for a “third culture space” that you and someone culturally different from you could both be comfortable in.

Time:
1 hour

Group Size:
Pairs

Materials:
Access to Zoom or other similar video conferencing platform, Third Culture Space Jamboard

Note: This activity can be done either synchronously or asynchronously. If done asynchronously, the facilitator should ensure that participants have a copy of the Third Culture Space Asynchronous Participant Instructions (in Downloads).

Note 2: These instructions assume a remote environment. This activity could be done in person with participants each using a writing utensil and having one large sheet of paper taped to the wall or lying a table/desk. The facilitator would have to make other adjustments accordingly.

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:
Cultural Self-Awareness:
• To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Openness:

• To initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others.
• To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

Curiosity:

• To ask complex questions about other cultures.
• To seek out and articulate answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.

Other Skills:

Teamwork

Synchronous Jamboard Activity Instructions:

1. Begin by preparing the Third Culture Space Jamboard. The version available in Links is view only, so the facilitator will first need to make their own editable copy. In the top right corner, there is an icon with three vertical dots. Click that icon and then select “Make a copy.” Rename the copied document to whatever is appropriate for the context. Click OK.

2. You will then be directed to the new document. To ensure that anyone with the link to this new Jamboard copy has editing privileges, select “Share” in the top-right corner. Click “Change to anyone with the link.” A new window will pop up with a drop-down menu that says “Viewer.” Click that menu and select “Editor.”

3. For this activity, you will divide participants into pairs (see note above) place them into breakout rooms. Before meeting with participants, determine the number of partners and ensure that each pair has its own frame to work with on the Jamboard. To duplicate the current frame, first select the square icon in the top middle of the page. Then click the icon with the three vertical dots and select “Duplicate.” Repeat this step until there are the correct number of frames.

   Note: You may want to label each frame with a breakout room number so that it’s clear which frame each pair is assigned to.

4. On this Jamboard participants will see a Venn diagram. One person in the pair will take one circle and their partner will take the other. Before they get started, each pair should decide on a context that is meaningful to them, or that they both have experience with (for example: a team working on a project together, how a friendship should operate, how a family should function, etc.).

   Note: For reasons of time or power differential between partners, you may want to assign the context.
5. Once they have decided on their context, they should individually use the text box function (the seventh icon down in the left-hand toolbar) to list out some of their cultural norms, beliefs, values, and customs related to their common topic. They should be as specific and descriptive as possible in the space that they have. For example, instead of listing abstract things like family or hard work, they might write phrases or complete sentences: “I think it’s important to eat dinner with your family every night” or “In a teamwork situation, I believe every member should put forth their best effort and contribute equally to a project” or “I believe that close friends should be open and honest with each other about disagreements.”

6. Once they have finished, they should compare what they have written and briefly discuss the following questions:
   - Why are the norms, beliefs, customs, and values you have identified so important to you culturally?
   - What are the primary differences that you see between you and your partner’s cultural norms, beliefs, customs, and values?
   - Are there any similarities (or things that are close to similar) that you can identify?

7. Once they have discussed their differences, they should begin creating a third “culture space” in the middle of the Venn diagram where they would both feel comfortable within the context that they have chosen. For example, if one person said “I believe that close friends should be open and honest with each other about disagreements” while the other said, “I prefer avoiding topics that my close friends and I disagree about,” they might, in their third culture space, include a statement like, “Close friends should address disagreements if they are negatively impacting the friendship.”

   Note: Creating this third culture space will most likely involve a lot of compromise and negotiation. They will want to aim for a space where they both will truly feel comfortable being their cultural selves. This might mean that they have to think outside of the box and come up with an alternative solution that they can both live with.

8. Once they are finished, they should answer the following questions and be prepared to discuss with the entire group in the main video conferencing room:
   - What were some of the most significant or consequential choices that you made about your third culture space?
   - What is the rationale behind the choices that you made?
   - What did your process of compromise and negotiation look like? What was challenging about this process?
   - What strategies did you use to identify the qualities of your third space that would satisfy the both of you?
   - Was there a belief or value or norm that you had trouble negotiating?
   - How might power differences come into play in negotiating a third space?
   - In what other contexts would this approach be useful? What are the pros and cons of trying to find a third culture space?

Activity created by Dr. Kris Acheson-Clair, CILMAR.
Related Tools:

- [Intercultural People Bingo](#)
- [Similarities and Differences](#)
- [Six Differences](#)