

## Nationaal Congres Engels 2011

### Activities to help learners communicate more effectively across cultures

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#### Activity 1: Hello Activity

1. What are some of the positive aspects of communicating with people from other cultures?
2. What are some of the challenges of this kind of communication?
3. Think of some situations and contexts in which people need to communicate across cultures?

#### Activity 2: What is culture?

- Language, non-verbal communication, behaviour
- Food, dress, buildings, material things
- Traditions, history, customs, religion
- Attitudes, norms, beliefs, values, assumptions

#### Activity 3: What do you see?

Different images. Source: [www.coolopticalillusions.com](http://www.coolopticalillusions.com)

#### Activity 4: What is normal?

- What are some examples of 'normal' behaviour in Dutch culture?
- What examples have you found of 'normal' behaviour in other cultures, but which you considered strange or very different?

#### Activity 5: Describing behaviour

Describe to each other a typical kind of behaviour in Dutch culture or in a different culture where you have lived or which you know well. Explain why this behaviour is important, and what the reaction would be if a foreigner behaves differently, e.g. ways of greeting (shake hands, kiss, hug, etc.), ways of requesting things

#### Activity 6: Cultural artefacts

Think of an artefact from Dutch or another culture that you know well – an everyday object, big or small. Say how it illustrates some aspect of the culture of the country – its values, traditions, beliefs, customs, etc.

#### Activity 7: Sayings and proverbs

Think of some common sayings or proverbs which tell us something about the culture (values, attitudes, expected behaviour) of a country.



### Activity 8: Stereotypes

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about stereotypes?

- *National stereotypes are dangerous because they may provoke prejudice*
- *Stereotypes contain a certain amount of truth and are therefore useful*
- *There is no such thing as national character so the idea of national stereotypes is wrong*
- *Stereotypes are simply harmless sorts of jokes we tell about other nationalities*

### Cooks, engineers, lovers, organisers, police

Heaven is a place where the \_\_\_\_\_ are British, the \_\_\_\_\_ French, the \_\_\_\_\_ are German, the \_\_\_\_\_ are Swiss and the \_\_\_\_\_ are Italian.

And Hell is where the \_\_\_\_\_ are British, the \_\_\_\_\_ are French, the \_\_\_\_\_ are German, the \_\_\_\_\_ are Swiss and the \_\_\_\_\_ are Italian.

### Activity 8: Stereotypes

Work in pairs or threes. Tell each other how you travelled to Ede, what you did yesterday evening, what you will do this weekend, etc. Each time you use a verb, you have to use a second verb or verb phrase immediately afterwards, with a similar meaning.

e.g. *Yesterday I drove/went by car to the airport, then I took a plane/flew to Schiphol*

### Market Leader: Working across cultures (Pearson Longman 2010)

Examples of discussion activities from *Working Across Cultures*

1. What are some of the problems that might arise when marketing and advertising products in different countries?
2. Can you think of some examples of brands and products that have not transferred well to overseas markets?
3. What personal skills and qualities are important if you want to work successfully with people from other cultures?
4. The Dutch are described as being good managers to use to help make an international merger successful. What cultural characteristics of the Dutch do you think make them particularly suitable for this role?

### To find out more

See [www.dialogin.com](http://www.dialogin.com) and [www.sietar.nl](http://www.sietar.nl)

Attend the 5-day trainers' course *Developing intercultural training skills* at LTS in Bath, with possible funding by Grundtvig or Comenius. See [www.lts-training.com/ICTTcourse.htm](http://www.lts-training.com/ICTTcourse.htm)

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