

Exercise 4.7. – The tourists

Educational objectives	<p>This role-play simulates a clash of cultures and allows the students to observe the stereotypes they bring into the role-play. It will help students to become aware of possible conflicts in such situations. The exercise makes the students vary their perspectives, by “putting themselves in other people’s shoes”.</p> <p>The students develop their communicative skills.</p>
Resources	<p>A piece of paper or cardboard, coloured markers; if possible, some tourist equipment, e.g. a camera.</p>

Procedure

Note on method

An ideal arrangement would be to work with two different classes, each with a teacher as their leader. The role of the two teachers is to remind the students of the instructions and characteristics of their respective groups: the “tourists” and the “Xs”.

1. The two groups meet in their respective classrooms. They have 15 minutes to create the context in which the action will take place and to prepare their roles.

The tourists write up information about their country, develop their expectations for the journey and prepare the equipment they will have during their journey, e.g. camera, portable telephone, foreign currency. If the real objects are not at hand, they may be symbolised by drawings.

The “Xs” define their culture: family structure, economy, type of crafts, clothing, and housing. The “Xs” must be as “primitive” as possible. They give themselves a name.

The cultural elements must be homogeneous. They can also be symbolised by drawings.
2. This activity may be done in the following class period.

Two tourists, while shopping for souvenirs and taking pictures, meet members of the “Xs”. They go back to their group and recount their experience. They describe what they have noticed about the strange culture of the “Xs”.

The “Xs” share their impressions of the first meeting with the tourists, giving their opinion of the tourists’ attitude.
3. The tourists invade the land of the “Xs”, who do not wish to change their ways.
4. The two groups meet for feedback:
 - How do the tourists feel?
 - How do the “Xs” feel?
 - What do the tourists think of the “Xs”?
 - What do the “Xs” think of the tourists?
 - The tourists explain what they found difficult about the behaviour of the “Xs”.
 - The “Xs” explain what they found difficult about the tourists’ behaviour.
 - According to the tourists, what could the “Xs” have done to make contact easier?
 - According to the “Xs”, what could the tourists have done to be less disturbing?
 - If you had to go back to the “Xs” country, what should you know or do in order to behave appropriately?

Extension

The students interview members of their community who have visited other countries or invite them to spend a lesson in class in order to share their experience of meeting people with a different cultural background.

Variation

The students imagine an ideal society and indicate the significant changes compared with their own culture.