



Introduction to Intercultural Studies: Defining the Concept of Culture

Understand intercultural communication by learning about the concepts of culture and interculturality.

If your students are completing the whole of this course online and are not participating in the teacher-led lessons based on it, then they can complete useful and engaging activities based on the content covered. You can choose for your students to complete individual tasks by themselves or encourage group work. Though you may have your own ideas about what your students can do with the course content, we've made things easy for you by suggesting some activities that you can submit to your students below. Instructions for the students can be found later in this document.

Individual student tasks taken from the course

Reflection: Students write a 500 word reflection on what they learned from the course, including anything they might do differently now as a result of their learning, and anything additional they found out from their own reading around the topic. They will submit this reflection as a written essay, podcast or video.

Activity 1: Students research and write definitions of the term 'floating signifier', giving examples.

Activity 2: Students write a brief reflection on the following questions:

- In what ways can the term 'culture' be problematic?
- In what ways can an understanding of the term 'culture' be positive?

Students submit their reflections to the teacher.

Research task: Students perform research on the burkini ban in France and produce a report which outlines some of the arguments on each side of the debate. Students should use the information and video available in Step 2.14 as part of their research, as well as any other sources they identify.

At the end of the report, students should include a short reflection which answers the following questions:

- How do you think the ban affected the relationship between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations?
- Why do you think the French local government decided to initiate the ban?
- Do you think the ban has promoted Islamophobia as Fozia argues in the video?

Group tasks based on the course

Research task: Groups watch the video in Step 1.4 (Culture as a loaded term) and takes. Each group should research one of the following terms:

- Essentialism
- Ethnocentrism
- Orientalism
- Othering

Students can use the material and links in Step 1.7, 1.16, as well as any other sources they wish. Each group should create a large mind map on flipchart paper to communicate the key ideas. The mind maps should also include a definition and examples of the term.

Groups should share presentations with each other and take notes on each term.

Discussion task: Groups work on the exercise from Step 2.3 (What do you think about interculturality?), and together discuss their answers to each of the three questions. Then, each group can compare their discussions with the answers provided.

Collaborative task: Students watch the video in Step 2.5 (Transcultural flows and practices) and takes notes. In their groups, discuss and research answers to the following questions:

- What is 'transcultural flow'?
- What is 'cosmopolitanism'?
- Can you give any other examples of transcultural flows that you have seen or experienced?

Each group should submit their answers to the teacher.

Additional support

You can use the [How to use FutureLearn guide](#) with your students to get them started. There is also a school-facing [Guide to safeguarding and security on FutureLearn](#) if you need it.

Test

You can use the test questions listed in the student instructions below as a short assessment to enable your students to demonstrate what they have learned on the course. The assessment has 15 marks in total.

The questions have been designed to be flexible and open. The questions indicate which steps the answers can be found on. The marks available reflect the likely length and complexity of the answer expected, and how many points they are likely to make. For example, a 5-mark question might reflect a longer, more complex question, or one where they have asked to describe or explain a number of elements. Depending on the level and ability of your students, you can decide how you wish to award the marks so they are appropriate for your class.

Each question suggests which steps the students may wish to return to answer the questions. **You can decide if you want to include this information when you share the assessment with your students.**

Student instructions

Reflection

Write a 500 word reflection of what you have learned from the course. It should include anything you might do differently now because of what you learned, and anything additional you found out in your reading around the topic. Submit this reflection to your teacher as a written essay, podcast or video.

Activity 1

Research and write definitions of the term 'floating signifier', giving examples. Submit your assignment to your teacher.

Activity 2

Write a brief reflection on the following questions:

- In what ways can the term 'culture' be problematic?
- In what ways can an understanding of the term 'culture' be positive?

Submit your reflections to your teacher.

Research task

Research the burkini ban in France and produce a report which outlines some of the arguments on each side of the debate. You should use the information and video available in Step 2.14 as part of your research, as well as any other sources you identify.

At the end of the report, include a short reflection which answers the following questions:

- How do you think the ban affected the relationship between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations?
- Why do you think the French local government decided to initiate the ban?
- Do you think the ban has promoted Islamophobia as Fozia argues in the video?

Submit your report to your teacher.

Group discussion

Look at the exercise from Step 2.3 (What do you think about interculturality?), and in your group discuss your answers to each of the three questions. Then, compare your discussions with the answers provided.

Group research task

Watch the video in Step 1.4 (Culture as a loaded term) and takes. Your group should research one of the following terms:

- Essentialism
- Ethnocentrism
- Orientalism
- Othering

You can use the material and links in Step 1.7, 1.16, as well as any other sources you wish. Each group should create a large mind map on flipchart paper to communicate the key ideas. The mind map should also include a definition and examples of the term.

Groups will share their presentations with each other, taking notes of all presentations.

Group collaborative task

Watch the video in Step 2.5 (Transcultural flows and practices). In your group, discuss and research answers to the following questions:

- What is 'transcultural flow'?
- What is 'cosmopolitanism'?
- Can you give any other examples of transcultural flows that you have seen or experienced?

Submit your group's answers to the teacher.

Test

Complete the assessment questions below to demonstrate your understanding of the course. You can refer back to the course to find the answers or more detail as you need to. You should not however share your answers with other students.

Your answers should be written in full sentences and be appropriately detailed. Make sure you read the questions carefully before starting to answer. Each question shows how many marks are available – use this to guide how much detail or how many points you need to include.

[The questions also indicate where you can start to look to find the answer. You can also include information from other steps if that is relevant.]

1. Give two different ways to define culture. (2 marks) [Step 1.3]
2. What does the term 'floating signifier' mean? (2 marks) [Step 1.3]
3. Define these terms:
 - Essentialism
 - Ethnocentrism
 - Orientalism
 - Othering

Give an example for each definition. (8 marks) [Steps 1.7, 1.15, 1.16]

4. Give three different examples of transcultural flow. (3 marks) [Step 2.5]

