



Orientation	Pre-Arrival
Session Overview	This session is designed to help host families understand the definition of culture, the iceberg analogy and the colored glasses analogy.
Session Objectives	By the end of this session, families will be able to: 1. Define culture and use the iceberg analogy and the colored glasses analogy to describe culture
Participants	<input type="checkbox"/> Students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Host Siblings
Format	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Active / Interactive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Activity / Interactivity <input type="checkbox"/> Independent
Duration	25 minutes
Group Size	Any size
Minimum Staffing	1 facilitator
Materials Needed	Slide, flipchart or whiteboard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Slide displaying quote for Introduction ○ Activity # 2 –Iceberg diagram
Preparation	Read lesson Create flipchart - Draw your own Iceberg or use copies of graphics provided

INTRODUCTION (0-2 MINUTES)

1. Share this L. Robert Kohls quote:

“Living in the foreign culture is like playing a game you’ve never played before when the rules haven’t been explained very well. The challenge is to enjoy the game without missing too many plays, learning the rules and developing skills as you go along.”

2. Ask participants the following **conversation starters** (or use your own) to facilitate dialogue about this quote.
 - Has anyone ever lived in a foreign country before? Does this quote resonate with you, why?

- Why might living in another culture be like playing a game but not knowing the rules?
- What kinds of skills does one learn when being challenged by living in another culture?

ACTIVITY # 1 – DEFINING CULTURE, ICEBERG ANALOGY & COLORED GLASSES (20 MINUTES)

1. **Think-pair-share:** Ask the host families to work in a small group to come up with a definition of culture. Give them five minutes to talk about their experiences with other cultures and a definition of culture.
2. After five minutes, ask for groups to quickly **share highlights of their conversations**. As they share, point out similarities and differences in their responses.
3. Share YFU's definition of culture:

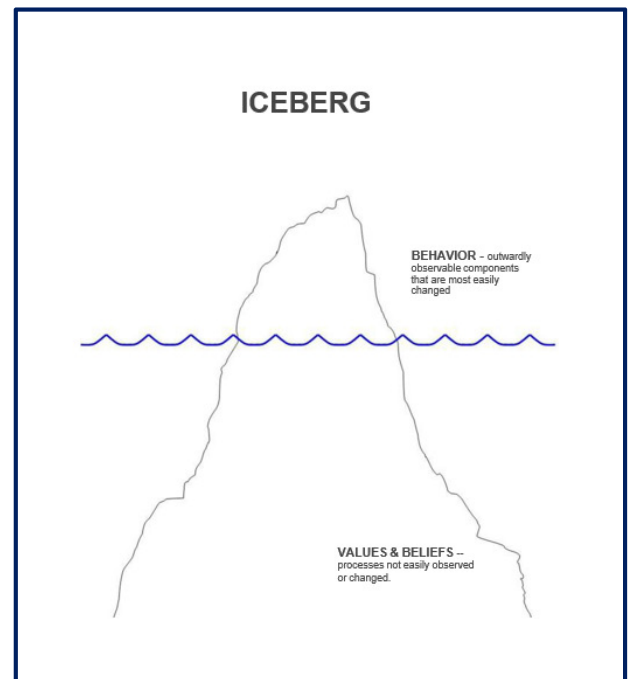
Culture is the beliefs, attitudes, values and ideas that a group of people hold in common.

4. Ask host families: How is culture evident in our everyday lives?

Possible responses: Determines the way we do things; affects attitudes, beliefs, world view; BEHAVIOR - outwardly observable components that are most easily changed is absorbed, unconsciously over time, starting at birth; provides a set of implied social rules that a group of people has in common.

5. Explain that YFU uses two analogies to talk about culture.
6. **Display the YFU iceberg visual** or draw one on a blank flipchart so that 10% is above the waterline and the rest is below the waterline. State: YFU thinks about culture as an iceberg.
7. **Ask the participants how an iceberg might represent culture.** If participants are not sure, point out that some of the iceberg can be seen, but most of it cannot be seen. If they still are not sure explain the idea:

- The visible elements of culture are ones that can be seen and understood quickly. They are objects and routine behaviors – the 10% of the iceberg that is visible, like food, clothing, and activities. Below the surface are beliefs, attitudes, and values. These are the things that drive a group's behaviors.



8. Lead a **brainstorming discussion**. Share the topic: **elements of culture**. Ask participants to share various ways culture can be expressed (for example, food, clothing, religion, language,

Facilitator Note: Be sure these words are mentioned and written in the proper place on the blank iceberg, either drawn on the flipchart or on the slide being projected, by a facilitator or from the conversation with the host parents.

Expressions of Culture

Above the waterline dress, language, word choice, body language, architecture, celebrations, holidays, food, salutations, transportation, literature

Below the waterline

Fairness, degrees of modesty, approaches to problem solving, gender roles, honoring the elderly or the young, independence

social rules around gender, family, and relationships, etc.). On the flipchart, create a comprehensive list of all the different ways culture can be expressed.

9. Next, **ask the participants to look at the list and decide how each idea connects to the iceberg**. (*Aspects of culture that are visible should be on top and aspects of culture that drive the behaviors should be below the waterline*). 10. Take the **conversation** deeper and talk in more detail about those values, beliefs and attitudes that are under the water-line. Use these **conversation starters**, or develop your own:

- Why is it important to look closely at the bottom part of the iceberg?
- When you think about your own culture, what are some of the common beliefs, attitudes, and values that direct your behavior?
- Does your family have a specific culture? How might your family have different beliefs attitudes, and values than other families in your community?
- How might your culture be different from your exchange student's culture? Are there any values or attitudes that will be difficult for you to understand? For example, some cultures have very different views on gender roles.
- How might you handle your male exchange student coming from a culture where cooking and cleaning is done only by females?

Include the following idea in your conversation if the participants do not bring this up:

- You cannot see beliefs and attitudes, you can only see them as expressed in behaviors. It is critical to be concerned with the underlying values and beliefs that lay underneath the behavior, in order to evaluate one's behavior. (See the detailed iceberg attached at the end of this session for more details).

11. **Colored Glasses fable (if there is time)**- To help families better understand culture ask someone to read the following fable by Michael C. Mercil:

*Imagine that in the USA everyone is born with two eyes, two arms, two legs, a nose, a mouth and a pair of **YELLOW** sunglasses. No one has thought them strange, because everyone has*

them. Thousands of miles away in another country, everyone is born with two eyes, two arms, two legs, a nose, a mouth and a pair of BLUE sunglasses. No one has thought them strange because everyone has them. In both countries, everything the people see is filtered through their yellow or blue lenses. Now, suppose you travel to this other country, and when you arrive, you want to see what the people there see, so you get yourself a pair of blue sunglasses. You put them on and believe you are really learning about the other country. When you go home, you tell everyone you have learned all about the other culture, and that everything over there is GREEN.

2. **Have a conversation** about the meaning of the fable and how it relates to exchange. All answers are in parenthesis. If the group does not bring these up, explain these responses.

- What happened? (The yellow sunglasses were not removed first.)
- What do the colored glasses represent? (Each individual culture-values, attitudes, beliefs and assumptions in that culture.)
- Why did the traveler say that this culture is green? (You can never remove your own culture.)
- What is the moral of the fable? (Before we are open to learn about another culture, we need to begin to understand our own.)

12. Close this discussion with the following points:

- As we just discussed with the iceberg analogy- we now know values and beliefs drive behavior. We also know that behavior is interpreted through our own cultural lenses. When we observe other's behavior, we interpret it through our own cultural lenses.
- It is completely impossible, to remove our own colored glasses in order to understand the world as seen from another cultural perspective; but one should consider colored glasses and one's own cultural bias when learning more about other cultures.

ACTIVITY #2: JIM AND NAOKI'S DINNER OUT (10 minutes)

1. Share this scenario to help participants bring the iceberg and colored glasses together.
2. Ask the participants to think of themselves as observers of this meal between Jim and Naoki and consider the ideas represented by the iceberg analogy and colored glasses.

Values drive behavior and behavior is interpreted through a cultural lens.

Jim has decided to go out for an authentic Japanese dinner with Naoki, a Japanese exchange student at his college. Jim notices that Naoki slurps his soup loudly, despite Jim's disapproving glances. During the meal Jim wants to avoid the embarrassment of having his hashi (chopsticks) roll off the edge of his plate or bowl so he decides to use the glutinous rice as a base and jabs them into the rice between bites. Soon Jim catches a surprised glance from Naoki. When the sake (rice wine) is brought to the table, Naoki quickly pours some only in Jim's sake cup, leaving his own empty. Jim waits for Naoki to join him in drinking but it is quite some time before Naoki finally pours his own sake. At the end of the meal Naoki burps loudly and Jim seems quite distressed.

3. Use these **conversation starters** to have a discussion:

- What behaviors do we see **above** the waterline? What values can we deduce are **below** the waterline?
 - BEHAVIORS-Slurping soup, Jim's glances, chopsticks in rice, Naoki's surprised glance, pouring the sake, Naoki's burp.
 - VALUES & BELIEFS - Slurping = enjoyment of food in Japan, chopsticks in rice = only done at funerals in Japan, pouring the sake = never fill your own sake, Naoki's burp = compliments to the cook!
- What examples do we see of both Jim and Naoki perceiving behavior through their own cultural lenses? (See box for answers.)

Japanese and American cultural perspectives of different behaviors

Naoki slurps his soup loudly

- Japanese culture - slurping food is considered evidence of one's enjoyment of a meal.
- American culture - slurping or making other noises with one's food is considered extremely impolite.

Jim jabs his chopsticks into his rice

- Japanese culture - sticking chopsticks into rice is only done at funerals with rice that is left on an altar for the deceased.

Naoki quickly pours some sake in Jim's cup, leaving his own empty

- Japanese culture - When drinking with a Japanese person, one must fill the other's glass. Never pour your own drink and always pour your companion's.
- American culture - you pour others' drinks first and then your own. Further, you don't drink alone, but rather wait for everyone to share the first drink together.

At the end of the meal, Naoki burps loudly

- Japanese culture - it is considered highly complementary to the cook to burp loudly at the end of a meal.

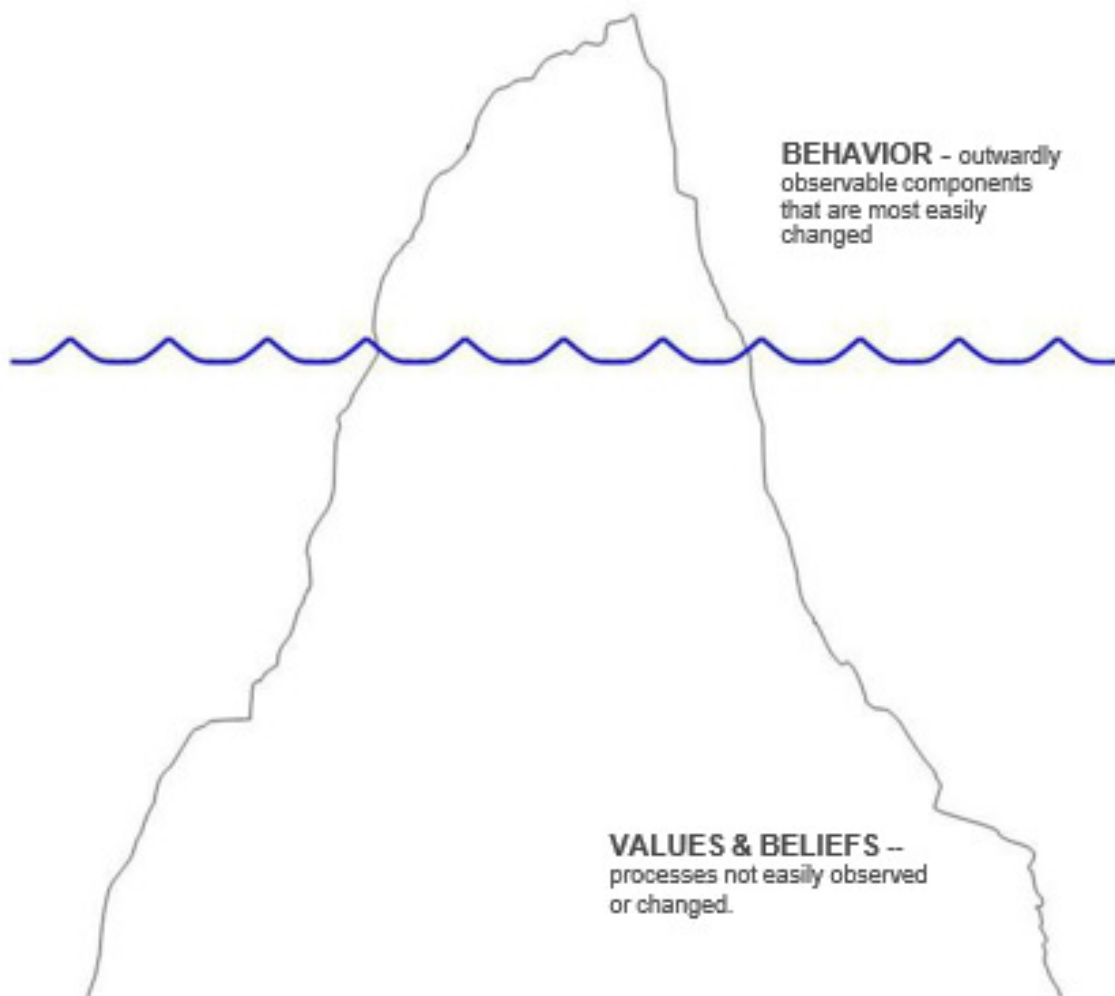
- American culture – burping is widely considered rude. Often Americans attempt to stifle a burp, particularly during a meal.

- Can we deduce, based on what we know, that Jim and Naoki have different value systems? Was one brought up to respect and honor others while the other wasn't? Does one believe that table manners are important and appropriate when sharing a meal, while the other doesn't?
- How would you have perceived and reacted to Jim or Naoki? Why?

WRAP UP (2-3 minutes)

1. Close the session by asking for any other thoughts or ideas about the iceberg, the colored glasses, or the story about Naoki and Jim.
2. Highlight what was accomplished during this session:
 - We've defined culture.
 - We've considered how culture influences our perceptions.
 - We've considered a real scenario, wherein our initial perceptions and assumptions of intent may not have been accurate. (Jim & Naoki's Dinner Out activity)
3. Remind families that the YFU exchange journey allows you to share American culture as well as your family's culture. You'll also take away an appreciation for your student's culture and how they do things differently.
4. Explain that the next session will build on these ideas as you look at adolescence and challenges in cross-cultural settings.

ICEBERG



ICEBERG 2

