VOCABULARY PRACTICE – WORLD CULTURES

Touchstone 4 – Second Edition | Unit 3

This university-level worksheet reviews vocabulary and communication themes related to world cultures, traditions, customs, manners, celebrations, and proverbs. It is designed for practice and classroom use and does not reproduce specific textbook exercises.

Student name	_____
Class / section	_____
Date	_____

Learning focus

- Use vocabulary for describing traditions, customs, and cultural behavior.
- Discuss appropriate manners in different cultural situations.
- Understand and apply familiar English proverbs.
- Respond respectfully when comparing cultural practices.

How to use this worksheet

Read the vocabulary review first. Then complete the activities individually or with a partner. When an answer is personal or open-ended, support your ideas with a clear example and respectful language.

- ☐ Complete every activity in English.
- ☐ Use the vocabulary from Section 1 whenever possible.
- ☐ Compare cultural practices without judging them as simply right or wrong.

SECTION 1 – CULTURAL VOCABULARY

Study the terms below. Read each definition and example sentence carefully. The vocabulary focuses on cultural traditions, customs, manners, celebrations, and ways of showing respect.

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Term	Student-friendly definition	Contextual example
custom	A usual way of behaving in a particular culture or community.	Removing your shoes before entering a home is a custom in some cultures.
tradition	A belief, activity, or practice passed from one generation to another.	Our family tradition is to share a special meal during the new year.
etiquette	The rules of polite behavior in a social or cultural situation.	Learning dining etiquette can help visitors feel more comfortable.
gesture	A movement that communicates an idea, feeling, or greeting.	A small bow can be a respectful greeting in some situations.
appropriate	Suitable or acceptable for a particular person, place, or situation.	It is important to wear appropriate clothing for a formal ceremony.
hospitality	Friendly and generous treatment of guests or visitors.	The host showed hospitality by offering every guest something to eat.
ceremony	A formal event held for a special purpose or celebration.	The graduation ceremony included speeches, music, and family photographs.
celebration	An event or activity that honors a special day, person, or achievement.	The community organized a celebration to mark the beginning of spring.
observe	To watch carefully or follow a practice or rule.	Visitors should observe local customs when they attend a cultural event.
respect	Careful consideration for other people, their beliefs, and their practices.	Listening without interrupting is one way to show respect.
proverb	A short, familiar saying that expresses advice or a general truth.	The proverb “Actions speak louder than words” values behavior over promises.

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personal space	The physical distance a person prefers to keep from others.	Ideas about personal space can be different from one culture to another.

Study tip: When you learn a cultural word, connect it to a situation. Ask yourself: What would a visitor need to know, notice, or do in this situation?

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SECTION 2 – MATCHING

Match each vocabulary word in the word bank with the correct definition. Write the letter of the word on the line. Use each word once.

A. etiquette	**F. hospitality**
B. custom	**G. ceremony**
C. tradition	**H. observe**
D. gesture	**I. proverb**
E. appropriate	**J. respect**

1. 1. _____ A usual practice or way of behaving in a particular culture.
2. 2. _____ Rules for polite behavior in a social situation.
3. 3. _____ A practice or belief passed from one generation to another.
4. 4. _____ A movement that communicates an idea or feeling.
5. 5. _____ Suitable for a particular situation.
6. 6. _____ Friendly and generous treatment of guests.
7. 7. _____ A formal event held for a special purpose.
8. 8. _____ To watch carefully or follow a practice or rule.
9. 9. _____ A short saying that expresses advice or a general truth.
10. 10. _____ Careful consideration for other people and their beliefs.

SECTION 3 – COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

Complete each sentence with a word or expression from the box. Use each answer once.

Word bank: custom • etiquette • appropriate • gesture • observe • hospitality • tradition • ceremony • proverb • respect

1. 1. In some homes, it is a _____ to greet every person before sitting down.
2. 2. Basic dining _____ can help visitors avoid uncomfortable situations.
3. 3. Students should wear _____ clothing when they attend a formal cultural event.
4. 4. A smile, wave, or bow can be a friendly _____.
5. 5. Visitors should _____ local practices before participating in a ceremony.
6. 6. The family showed warm _____ by inviting their guests to share a meal.
7. 7. Preparing a special meal every holiday is an important family _____.
8. 8. The community held a colorful _____ to welcome the new season.
9. 9. “Actions speak louder than words” is a familiar English _____.
10. 10. Listening carefully when someone explains a belief is a way to show _____.

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SECTION 4 – USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Use these expressions when discussing cultural practices:

To be honest	Of course
Use this expression to introduce a sincere opinion or admission.	Use this expression to agree, give permission, or respond positively.

Activity 4A — Choose the correct expression.

Choose **To be honest** or **Of course** for each situation.

1. 1. “Is it acceptable to remove my shoes before entering?” “_____. In this home, guests usually remove them.”
2. 2. “_____, I was nervous because I did not know the local custom.”
3. 3. “Could you explain why people bow during this greeting?” “_____. I would be happy to explain.”
4. 4. “_____, I am not sure whether this gesture is appropriate here.”

Activity 4B — Complete the responses.

Complete each response with **To be honest** or **Of course**. Use each expression more than once.

1. 5. “_____, I had never attended a ceremony like this before.”
2. 6. “May I ask a question about the celebration?” “_____.”
3. 7. “_____, the event was more formal than I expected.”
4. 8. “Can visitors take photographs?” “_____, but please ask the host first.”

Quick communication check: Read your answers aloud with a partner. Notice how the expression changes the speaker’s attitude and tone.

SECTION 5 – PROVERBS

Proverbs are short sayings that express advice or a general truth. Read each proverb carefully and think about how its message can apply to cultural communication.

Activity 5A — Match the proverbs with their meanings.

Proverbs

- A. “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.”
- B. “Actions speak louder than words.”
- C. “You can’t judge a book by its cover.”
- D. “The more, the merrier.”

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- E. “Treat others as you would like to be treated.”

Meanings

1. 1. _____ What people do can communicate more strongly than what they say.
2. 2. _____ Show other people the same kindness and respect that you want to receive.
3. 3. _____ A group activity can be more enjoyable when more people participate.
4. 4. _____ Adapt respectfully to the customs of the place you are visiting.
5. 5. _____ Do not decide what someone or something is like only from its appearance.

Activity 5B — Interpret a proverb.

Explain the message of “When in Rome, do as the Romans do” in your own words. Give one example involving a visitor and a local custom.

Answer: _____

_____

_____

Activity 5C — Complete a short explanation.

Complete the explanation of “Actions speak louder than words.”

The proverb means that a person’s _____ can show their real intentions more clearly than their _____.

Activity 5D — Connect a proverb with a cultural situation.

A student is invited to a family celebration. During a discussion, the student disagrees with an older guest but wants to express the disagreement politely. Which proverb gives the best advice?

Choose one: “Treat others as you would like to be treated.” / “The more, the merrier.”

Explain how the proverb applies to the situation.

_____

_____

Activity 5E — Apply a proverb.

Choose one proverb from Activity 5A. Describe a cultural situation in which its message would be useful. Write two or three sentences.

Proverb: _____

_____

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SECTION 6 – CULTURAL REFLECTION

Answer the questions in complete sentences. Give specific examples when possible. There is no single correct personal response, but your answer should be respectful and connected to the topic.

1. 1. Describe one tradition that is important to a family or community you know. What does it celebrate or communicate?

_____

_____

1. 2. What should a visitor do if they are unsure about an unfamiliar custom or manner?

_____

_____

1. 3. Why can gestures, greetings, or ideas about personal space be different across cultures?

_____

_____

1. 4. Describe one way to show respect when participating in another culture's celebration or ceremony.

_____

_____

1. 5. How can a person compare two cultural practices without making an unfair judgment?

_____

_____

Reminder: Cultural differences are opportunities to ask questions, listen carefully, and learn. Avoid generalizations about entire groups of people.

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SECTION 7 – ANSWER KEY

Use this key for self-checking or classroom feedback. Open-ended responses may vary when they are clear, grammatically accurate, and respectful.

Section 1 — Cultural Vocabulary

Section 1 is a reference review. Students should be able to connect each term with its definition and contextual example. The terms are: custom, tradition, etiquette, gesture, appropriate, hospitality, ceremony, celebration, observe, respect, proverb, and personal space.

Section 2 — Matching

1. 1. B — custom
2. 2. A — etiquette
3. 3. C — tradition
4. 4. D — gesture
5. 5. E — appropriate
6. 6. F — hospitality
7. 7. G — ceremony
8. 8. H — observe
9. 9. I — proverb
10. 10. J — respect

Section 3 — Complete the Sentences

1. 1. custom
2. 2. etiquette
3. 3. appropriate
4. 4. gesture
5. 5. observe
6. 6. hospitality
7. 7. tradition
8. 8. ceremony
9. 9. proverb
10. 10. respect

Section 4 — Useful Expressions

1. 1. Of course
2. 2. To be honest
3. 3. Of course
4. 4. To be honest
5. 5. To be honest
6. 6. Of course
7. 7. To be honest
8. 8. Of course

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Section 5 — Proverbs

Activity 5A

1. 1. B — “Actions speak louder than words.”
2. 2. E — “Treat others as you would like to be treated.”
3. 3. D — “The more, the merrier.”
4. 4. A — “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.”
5. 5. C — “You can’t judge a book by its cover.”

Activity 5B — Acceptable sample answer

The proverb means that visitors should pay attention to local customs and behave respectfully in the place they are visiting. For example, a visitor might observe how people greet one another and follow that practice rather than assuming that their own greeting is expected.

Activity 5C

The proverb means that a person’s **actions** can show their real intentions more clearly than their **words**.

Activity 5D — Acceptable sample answer

“Treat others as you would like to be treated.” The student should express disagreement politely because they would also want other people to listen respectfully to their ideas. The student could ask a question or use a calm explanation instead of interrupting or criticizing the older guest.

Activity 5E — Acceptable sample answer

Proverb: “You can’t judge a book by its cover.”

This proverb is useful when a visitor meets a person whose clothing, accent, or greeting seems unfamiliar. The visitor should learn more about the person instead of making a quick judgment based only on appearance.

Section 6 — Cultural Reflection

1. 1. Acceptable answer: One example is a family meal held during a holiday. It can celebrate the occasion and bring relatives together.
2. 2. Acceptable answer: The visitor should observe what others do, ask a polite question, and follow the host’s guidance.
3. 3. Acceptable answer: Cultures can develop different ways to communicate respect, friendliness, and comfort. A gesture or distance that feels normal in one culture may feel unusual in another.
4. 4. Acceptable answer: A person can listen to instructions, dress appropriately, and ask before taking photographs or touching important objects.

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5. 5. Acceptable answer: A person can describe both practices accurately, ask questions, and avoid saying that one culture is automatically better or more polite than the other.

Teacher note: For open-ended responses, accept different examples when students use the target vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate cultural awareness.

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