

GIFT GIVING IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

An African woman had lived in Australia for a few years. On her birthday, she was invited to the home of an Australian friend to celebrate. When she was presented with a gift, she thanked her friend and put the gift away. Her friend asked, "Aren't you going to open it?" The African lady said, "Oh no! I don't want to open it now."

In African culture, one is not expected to open a gift immediately after receiving it. In Australian culture, however, the opposite is true. There are other rules about gift-giving in African culture. It is important, for example, to avoid giving umbrellas, knives, scissors, and clocks.

Iranian culture has its rules too. Amanda, a young North American woman, went to the home of her fiancé's sister. She saw a small statue, and when she said she liked it, the sister insisted on giving it to her. Why? Many Middle Eastern people feel obligated to give something to someone who admires it. Amanda didn't want to accept the statue, but Fariba, the sister, insisted. Amanda should have continued to refuse. Iranians may continue insisting, but you are under no obligation to accept.



Now complete these sentences using modals: must, can't, may/might or should. Some sentences may require negatives and may be in the past or the present!

1. According to rules of Australian culture, the African lady _____ opened the gift at the party.
2. In African culture, you _____ open a gift immediately.
3. In African culture, you _____ avoid giving umbrellas, knives, scissors, and clocks.
4. Iranians feel you _____ give something to someone if that person likes it.
5. Amanda _____ refused to accept the statue.
6. Even if an Iranian keeps on insisting, you _____ accept.