

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO BE ON TIME?				
Type of Appointment	Scheduled Time	Very Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
dentist	9 A.M.			
university class	11 A.M.			
lunch with a friend at school	12 P.M.			
dinner with your spouse	7 P.M.			
a friend's party	9 P.M.			
job interview in a bank	2 P.M.			

Track 1



## A Cultural Difference: Being on Time

1 In the United States, it is important to be on time, or punctual, for an  
 2 appointment, a class, a meeting, etc. However, this may not be true in all  
 3 countries. An American professor discovered this difference while teaching a  
 4 class in a Brazilian university. The two-hour class was scheduled to begin at  
 5 10 A.M. and end at 12 P.M. On the first day, when the professor arrived on time,  
 6 no one was in the classroom. Many students came after 10 A.M. Several arrived  
 7 after 10:30 A.M. Two students came after 11 A.M. Although all the students greeted  
 8 the professor as they arrived, few apologized for their lateness. Were these students  
 9 being rude? He decided to study the students' behavior.

10 The professor talked to American and Brazilian students about lateness in  
 11 both an informal and a formal situation: lunch with a friend and in a university  
 12 class, respectively. He gave them an example and asked them how they would  
 13 react. If they had a lunch appointment with a friend, the average American  
 14 student defined lateness as 19 minutes after the agreed time. On the other hand,  
 15 the average Brazilian student felt the friend was late after 33 minutes.

16 In an American university, students are expected to arrive at the appointed  
17 hour. In contrast, in Brazil, neither the teacher nor the students always arrive at  
18 the appointed hour. Classes not only begin at the scheduled time in the United  
19 States, but they also end at the scheduled time. In the Brazilian class, only a few  
20 students left the class at noon; many remained past 12:30 P.M. to discuss the class  
21 and ask more questions. While arriving late may not be very important in Brazil,  
22 neither is staying late.

23 The explanation for these differences is complicated. People from Brazilian  
24 and North American cultures have different feelings about lateness. In Brazil,  
25 the students believe that a person who usually arrives late is probably more  
26 successful than a person who is always on time. In fact, Brazilians expect a  
27 person with status or prestige to arrive late, while in the United States lateness  
28 is usually considered to be disrespectful and unacceptable. Consequently, if a  
29 Brazilian is late for an appointment with a North American, the American may  
30 misinterpret the reason for the lateness and become angry.

31 As a result of his study, the professor learned that the Brazilian students  
32 were not being disrespectful to him. Instead, they were simply behaving in the  
33 appropriate way for a Brazilian student in Brazil. Eventually, the professor was  
34 able to adapt his own behavior so that he could feel comfortable in the new  
35 culture.



**A**

## Fact-Finding Exercise

Read the passage again. Read the following statements. Check whether they are True or False. If a statement is false, rewrite the statement so that it is true. Then go back to the passage and find the line that supports your answer.

1  True  False On the first day of class, the professor arrived late, but the students were on time.

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2  True  False The professor decided to study the behavior of Brazilian and American students.

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3  True  False In an American university, it is important to be on time.

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4  True  False In a Brazilian class, the students leave immediately after the class is finished.

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5  True  False In an American university, many students probably leave immediately after the class is finished.

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6  True  False Most North Americans think a person who is late is disrespectful.

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7  True  False In Brazil, most successful people are expected to be on time.

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8  True  False As a result of the study, the professor changed the Brazilian students' behavior.

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**B**

## Reading Analysis

Read each question carefully. Circle the letter or the number of the correct answer, or write your answer in the space provided.

**1** What is the main idea of the passage?

- a.** It is important to be on time for class in the United States.
- b.** People learn the importance of time when they are children.
- c.** The importance of being on time differs among cultures.

**2** Why did the professor study the Brazilian students' behavior?

- a.** The students seemed very rude to him.
- b.** He wanted to understand why the students came late.
- c.** He wanted to make the students come to class on time.

**3** Read lines 1 and 2.

- a.** What does **punctual** mean?

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**b.** How do you know?

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**4** In line 8, what does **few** refer to?

- a.** The professor
- b.** The students
- c.** Greetings

**5** Read lines 7–9.

- a.** What does **as** mean?

1. Because
2. When
3. If

- b.** What is **rude behavior**?

1. Impolite behavior
2. Noisy behavior
3. Studious behavior

**6** **a.** Read lines 10–12. Which is an example of an informal situation?

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b. Which is an example of a formal situation?

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c. How do you know?

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d. What does this word mean?

1. The same as
2. In the same order
3. Opposite

7 Read lines 13–15. How does **on the other hand** connect the American idea of lateness with the Brazilian idea of lateness?

- a. It shows a similarity.
- b. It gives more information.
- c. It shows a contrast.

8 Read lines 17 and 18: “Neither the teacher nor the students always arrive at the appointed hour.” Who arrives at the appointed hour?

- a. No one
- b. The students only
- c. The teacher and the students

9 Read lines 18 and 19: “Classes not only begin at the scheduled time in the United States, but they also end at the scheduled time.” What does **not only ... but ... also** mean?

- a. And
- b. But
- c. So

10 In line 26, what does **in fact** indicate?

- a. A contrast between two ideas
- b. Something that is true
- c. Emphasis of the previous idea

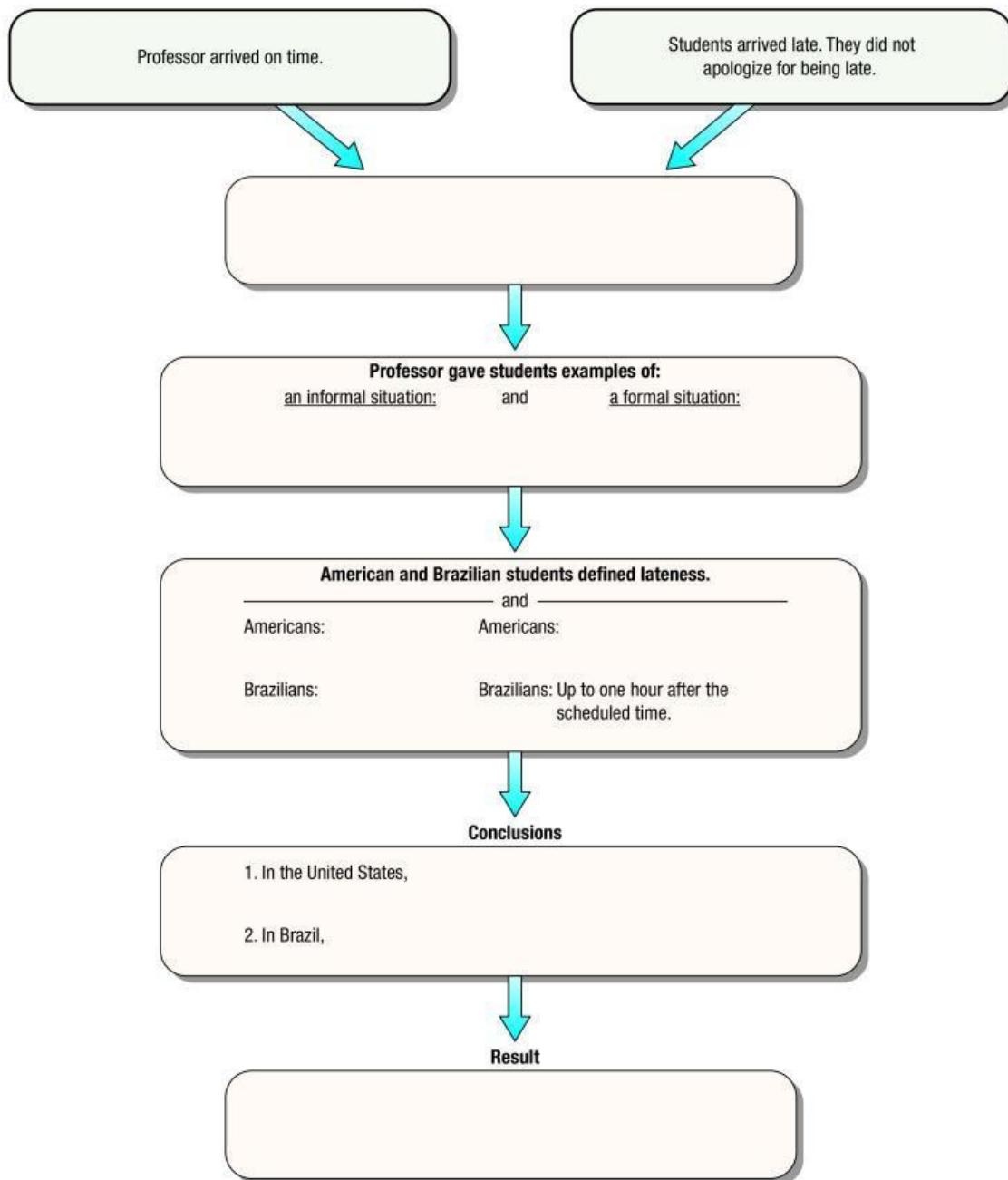
11 Read lines 31–33. What does **instead** show?

- a. A similarity
- b. A substitution
- c. An opposite

**C**

## Information Organization

Read the passage again. Underline what you think are the main ideas. Then scan the reading and complete the following flowchart about the reading. Use the sentences that you have underlined to help you. You will use this flowchart later to answer questions about the reading.



**D**

## Information Recall and Summary

Read each question carefully. Use your flowchart to answer the questions. Do not refer back to the passage. When you are finished, write a brief summary of the reading.

1 What did the professor decide to study?

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2 Describe the professor's experiment.

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3 Did American students and Brazilian students have the same ideas about lateness in class? Do classes always begin and end at the appointed hour in both cultures?

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4 What were the American students' and the Brazilian students' ideas about being late for a lunch appointment?

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5 In general, what did the Brazilian students think about people who are late?

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6 In general, what did the American students think about people who are late?

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7 What was the result of the professor's study?

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