

### **Talking about cultural differences with *be* and *get used to***

*Work in small groups. Talk about your experiences and feelings related to getting used to different cultures, with topics such as those below. Try to remember things in common and the most surprising things that you hear to share with the whole class afterwards.*

#### **Suggested phrases**

- ... in/ from... is easy for most people to get used to.
- ... in/ from... isn't as difficult to get used to as most people think (from what I have heard/ in my experience)./ It's easier to get used to... in/ from... than most people think.
- ... in/ from... seemed weird to me, but I got used to it in the end.
- ... in/ from... was really easy to get used to.
- I quickly got used to... in/ from...
- I slowly got used to... in/ from...
- I think foreign people have difficulty getting used to ... in/ from...
- I thought that I would never get used to... from/ in..., but eventually I did.
- I wish I could get used to... from/ in... (but I can't).
- I'll never get used to... from/ in...
- I'm already used to... from/ in...
- I've almost got used to... from/ in..., but not quite.
- If I had to live in..., I would never get used to...
- If you aren't already used to... before you get to..., it will be difficult to live there.
- It didn't take me too long to get used to... in/ from...
- It isn't as easy to get used to... in/ from... as most think.
- It took me months to get used to... in/ from...
- It will take me a long time to get used to... in/ from...
- It would be absolutely impossible for me to get used to... in/ from...
- My family had problems getting used to... in/ from... but I was fine with it.
- Old people find it difficult to get used to... in/ from..., but young people it is easy.
- The most difficult thing about living in... would be getting used to...
- The most difficult thing to get used to in/ from... (for me/ for most people) is...

*Share feelings and experiences that you have in common with your partner(s) and see if anyone else in the class is the same.*

*Share your partner's most surprising feelings and experiences, listen to the same from other groups, then vote on the most surprising.*

*Ask about any phrases or topics which you aren't sure about.*

### **Be and get used to cultural differences guess the country game**

*Choose a country. Without saying the country's name, talk about special things in that place and how strange foreign people find them, and talk about how quickly and how much that feeling of strangeness decreases. Continue until someone guesses where you are talking about, discuss if they agree with your descriptions, then guess other people's choice of places in the same way.*

## **Suggested topics**

### arts and media

- music
- TV (commercials)

### body language and gestures

- bowing
- public displays of affection (kissing, hugging, etc)
- shaking hands

### costs/ spending/ paying

- going Dutch/ splitting the bill

### festivals and celebrations

- local Xmas traditions
- number of public holidays

### food and drink

- acquired tastes (Marmite, etc)
- amount
- drinking down in one
- eating implements (chopsticks, hands, etc)
- fermented foods (kimchi, natto, etc)
- food combinations
- ingredients (seaweed, etc)
- meat
- oil/ fat
- richness
- saltiness
- smells
- spiciness – blandness
- strength of alcoholic drinks
- sweetness
- textures (sliminess, etc)

### gender roles

### language/ communication

- directness – indirectness
- polite language/ differences in formality
- silence/ interrupting/ talking over each other
- tonal language

### manners

- table manners

### nature

- weather and seasons (humidity, grey skies, etc)
- wildlife (insects, etc)

### noise

- street noises

### opening hours

### relationships

- (lack of) closeness
- romance

religion and superstitions

rules and regulations

- health and safety
- putting out rubbish
- queuing/ waiting

shopping

- haggling

smells

time

- lateness
- meal times
- office hours/ opening hours

transport and travel

- driving/ other drivers
- rules
- ticket barriers
- ticket machines
- unreliability

work

- level of hard work or laziness