



Body Language Across Cultures

Reading Worksheet — Level C | tahricteaches.com

People around the world use body language every day. Body language is how we move our body to show feelings or ideas. A **gesture** is one kind of body language. We use our hands, face, and body to send messages to other people, sometimes without any words.

In many countries, people **nod** their head up and down to say 'yes.' But in Bulgaria, nodding means 'no.' This can be very confusing! Before you visit a new country, it is a good idea to learn about how people there use body language.

A **greeting** is a way of saying hello to someone. In Japan, people often **bow** to say hello or thank you. A deeper bow shows more respect. In some countries in the Middle East, people touch their heart with their hand as a sign of respect. Both ways are polite, but they look very different.

Eye contact is another interesting example of body language. In the United States, looking into someone's eyes when you talk shows you are listening. This is polite. But in some Asian countries, avoiding eye contact can show respect, especially when you talk to an older person.

Body language is not the same everywhere in the world. A gesture that is friendly in one country can be rude in another place. When we learn about body language, we also learn about other cultures. This helps us understand and respect people from many different places around the world.

A. Vocabulary

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. gesture ____ | a. way of saying hello or welcome to someone you meet |
| 2. nod ____ | b. not showing respect; having bad manners toward others |
| 3. culture ____ | c. looking directly into another person's eyes while speaking |
| 4. polite ____ | d. movement or action that sends a message to someone |
| 5. bow ____ | e. having good manners and showing respect for other people |
| 6. eye contact ____ | f. bend your body forward to show respect or say hello |
| 7. wave ____ | g. move your hand from side to side to say hello or goodbye |
| 8. rude ____ | h. movement of hands or body used to show a feeling or idea |
| 9. signal ____ | i. move your head up and down to say yes or show understanding |
| 10. greeting ____ | j. beliefs, customs, and way of life shared by a group of people |

B. True or False

- | | |
|--|---|
| ____ 1. Body language uses words to send messages to other people. | ____ 2. In many countries, nodding your head up and down means 'yes.' |
|--|---|

- ___ 3. In Bulgaria, nodding your head means 'yes.'
- ___ 4. In Japan, people often bow to say hello or thank you.
- ___ 5. A small, shallow bow shows more respect than a deep bow.
- ___ 6. Body language is the same in every country in the world.
- ___ 7. In the United States, eye contact shows that you are listening.
- ___ 8. A gesture that is friendly in one country can be rude in another.
- ___ 9. People in the Middle East wave their hand to show respect.
- ___ 10. Learning about body language helps us understand other cultures.

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: bow, greeting, eye contact, gesture, nod, wave, polite, rude

1. A smile is a _____ that can mean you are happy.
2. In Japan, people _____ to show respect when they say hello.
3. She gave a small _____ with her head to say yes.
4. Saying 'Hello, nice to meet you!' is a friendly _____.
5. Good _____ while someone is talking shows you are listening.



D. Comprehension Questions

1. Why is it important to learn about body language before visiting a new country?
2. How do people in Japan show respect when saying hello to someone?
3. What does making eye contact show in the United States?

E. Discussion Questions

1. What body language do you use to say hello to your friends? Is it different from how you greet your teacher or an older person?
2. Have you ever seen someone from another country use body language that was different or surprising? What did they do?



Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-h, 2-i, 3-j, 4-e, 5-f, 6-c, 7-g, 8-b, 9-d, 10-a

B. True/False: 1-F, 2-T, 3-F, 4-T, 5-F, 6-F, 7-T, 8-T, 9-F, 10-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-gesture, 2-bow, 3-nod, 4-greeting, 5-eye contact

D. Comprehension:

1. Body language is different in each country, so a gesture that is polite in one place can be rude or confusing in another.
2. People in Japan bow to show respect when saying hello, and a deeper bow shows even more respect.
3. In the United States, eye contact shows that you are listening and is considered polite.

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