

Putting It into Perspective

Just as you had resources and preparation before you departed for your time abroad, similar resources and preparation can help a great deal in returning to the US. This activity begins by asking you to think back about when you were getting ready to go abroad and then asks you to consider how you might have changed during your time abroad. Answering these types of questions is a way to help you recognize small changes in yourself, while also helping you find the words to explain to others what your experience was like and why it is so important. Take your time to think about the questions before answering them, and feel free to come back to the activity later if you remember something you would like to add.

1. Before you left for your program, what excited you about it?

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The opportunity to study overseas | <input type="checkbox"/> Developing professional skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Living in a different culture | <input type="checkbox"/> Becoming more independent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking another language | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making new friends | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

2. What reservations or fears did you have about going abroad?

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Studying in a different culture | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial arrangements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing arrangements | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving friends and family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking another language | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making new friends | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

3. What expectations did you have about the following items?

- Academic environment _____
- Communicating in another language _____
- Housing _____
- Transportation _____
- Traveling _____
- Developing new relationships _____
- Keeping in touch with family and friends back home _____
- Food _____
- Other _____

4. Were your expectations met? If not, why?

5. Think back to when you first arrived in your host country and city. What were your initial observations and experiences? Were you surprised by anything you saw or experienced?

6. How do you feel now about those initial observations and experiences?

7. What environmental factors affected you when you first arrived in your host country?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise level/type | <input type="checkbox"/> Racial/ethnic population |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hours of sunlight | <input type="checkbox"/> Population density |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Automated systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Smells |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urban/rural settings | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

8. Will these environmental factors be the same or different when you return to the US?

9. Did living in another culture cause you to change your daily routine? How is it different from the daily routine you had in the US before you went abroad?

10. How did your attitude change toward the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concept of Time | <input type="checkbox"/> Dress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibilities at home/school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Status/prestige on campus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spatial relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Pace of life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Touching | <input type="checkbox"/> Material concerns |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Independence | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic course load | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

11. What were the three easiest adjustments for you to make? How long did it take to make those adjustments?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

12. What were the three most difficult adjustments for you to make? How long did it take to make those adjustments?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

13. What did you do to make these adjustments?

14. What skills did you use in making these adjustments?

15. Is there anything that you were never able to adjust to?

16. What did you enjoy most about your time abroad?

17. Are there any customs, sports, styles of dressing, foods, shopping patterns, etc. that you have adopted from your host culture?

At School

Socially

At Home

18. Will you be able to continue these practices or customs back in the US?

19. What greetings, gestures, or expressions that you have begun to use regularly?

20. How do you think your family, friends, and professors will react to the items you listed in #17 and #19?
