

Promoting Civic Engagement through Intercultural Education and Skilled Volunteering



This resource is dedicated to all newcomers to Canada. Thank you for not giving up on your talents and uniqueness despite the challenges you face. May the road rise to meet you and may you rise to meet the road.

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Taslim Damji

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Introduction

Background:

Newcomers to Canada often say that they experience a number of barriers to participating in their local communities. A lack of proficiency with language as well as a lack of familiarity with the unspoken cultural codes of interaction can leave many feeling excluded and unable to participate in daily activities that contribute to healthy self-concept, social connection and feelings of belonging.

According to the City of Vancouver, “A sense of belonging, connectedness and engagement in the places and spaces that matter to us is critical for our physical and mental well-being”, but survey results from a Vancouver Foundation Report on Community and Engagement reveal “a growing sense of isolation and disconnection...we live increasingly in silos, separated by ethnicity, culture, language, income, (and) age”. The same survey shows that people are “retreating from community activities”.

The inability to participate in one’s community impacts the individual as well as the growth and sustenance of a community. If we do not actively support growing inclusive communities in which all of us can find a place and role, our communities will become fragmented. Tending to that basic human need to belong and be included, will keep our communities safe, connected and progressively evolving.

It is, therefore, vital that newcomers be able to find meaningful access points to the communities in which they live that *validate their skills and experience* and provide them with the chance to develop deeper connections with other community members. Such connections promote feelings of belonging and wellness, they also offer opportunity to observe culture in action and find authentic models for interaction. In turn, newcomers develop the necessary tools to successfully engage civically in their new homes. One way in which newcomers can make meaningful connection is through **skilled volunteering**.

Skilled volunteering not only offers a meaningful access point to the community, it also empowers newcomers as they reconnect with their professional identities and showcase their abilities. The benefits of skilled volunteering are mutual. Immigrants come to Canada through professional immigration as well as other channels. Whatever their route, each brings with them a wealth of expertise and depth of knowledge that can be utilized through volunteering. Ultimately, employers will also benefit from the richness and range of newcomer experience. In truth, without a commitment to ongoing support for newcomer civic engagement, it will be more challenging for newcomers to establish themselves in their new homes as well as for volunteer recruiters and employers to find and retain the talent they need.

However, newcomers who were surveyed about their experiences volunteering in Canada cited a number of challenges to participation. They felt that one of the primary barriers to

engagement was cultural communication - fear of cultural misunderstanding and not having tools to deal with miscommunication. The following infographic highlights key newcomer challenges to civic engagement.



This resource was developed using data that was collected from a newcomer focus group and interviews with individual newcomers and community stakeholders. (Appendix 1 - *Data Collection – Sample Interview Questions*). Information provided by the focus group and interviews was used to guide resource content. The scenarios are all taken from real experiences. This resource aims to help prepare newcomers with the intercultural awareness and education they need to more confidently access and participate in skilled volunteer roles. In this way, the resource hopes to encourage stronger civic engagement.

Purpose Statement:

The goal of this resource is to ***promote newcomer civic engagement through intercultural education***. It interprets the experience of newcomers and community stakeholders through an intercultural lens. Interviews and focus groups were conducted to discover obstacles to civic engagement and explore how a lack of cultural “know how” can prevent newcomers from successfully participating in their communities.

Grounded in intercultural theory and Indigenous teachings around building sustainable communities, the resource helps newcomers bridge intercultural differences. It supports community engagement by preparing newcomers to succeed not only in skilled volunteering opportunities, but also by providing a foundation for their future professional and economic engagement.

This resource addresses intercultural concerns by providing a structure which instructors, facilitators and organizations can use safely in the classroom, in pre-employment programs and during onboarding orientations to:

- raise awareness of cultural differences and similarities
- develop comfort with the range of cultural norms
- discuss differences
- come up with strategies to successfully navigate intercultural difference

Intercultural Theoretical Underpinnings:

The resource draws on two main inspirations for its theoretical underpinnings. It applies the Native teachings of Dr. Martin Brokenleg regarding belonging to newcomer contexts. The word "native" in this resource reflects the terminology used Dr. Brokenleg in his Circle of Courage framework. In his *writings*, Dr. Brokenleg describes how successful participation is aided when a person feels they belong to a community and invested in it.

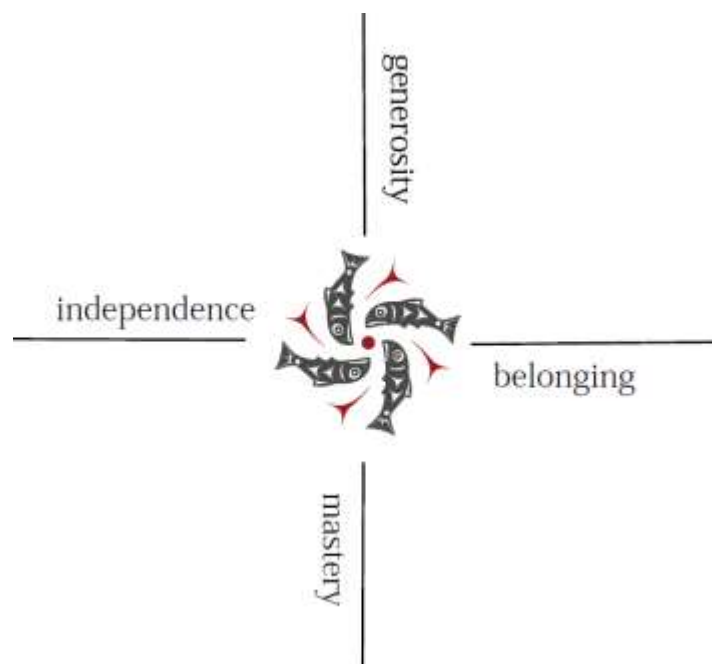
It also introduces Dr. Milton Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* to provide instructors and participants with the opportunity to notice and work with their feelings around different or unfamiliar behaviors. It is also offered as a tool to grow their comfort with difference and confidence to bridge it.

The Circle of Courage

The *Circle of Courage* co-created by Dr. Martin Brokenleg from the Lakota Nation is based in a traditional medicine wheel and is a core part of his work with Indigenous youth¹. It offers an approach that fits well with the challenges that many newcomers encounter as they try to find their place in their new “home”. It demonstrates an empathic and relevant approach to inclusion and civic engagement – both of which are necessary to growing healthy communities.

Imagine yourself as a newcomer with limited language, little knowledge of socio-cultural norms and few social connections. In your first culture, you knew how to navigate the world around you. You had tools. You could speak the language, you knew how to go to the store, write a resume and be productive. You knew what was expected of you at a workplace. You knew what to talk about and what not to talk about, how to make friends, etc. Now, in the new culture, everything is done differently to what you thought you knew. How will you learn the rules of communication – the spoken and unspoken codes? How will you learn what you need to know to survive, fit in and ultimately thrive? What kind of help would *you* would hope for as you tried to find your way in your new environment?

Dr. Brokenleg advocates for a framework for self-actualization and community sustainability that includes four stages: *Belonging, Independence, Mastery* and *Generosity*.



Dr. Brokenleg Framework adapted by
Taslim Damji & Aaron Nelson-Moody, 2018

¹ Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern 1990

Stage 1 - Belonging: Successful participation is often facilitated when we feel that we belong to a community. That feeling of belonging can provide a sense of safety that nurtures our motivation – a feeling that can be so elusive to many. Why move forward when you don't feel that you are welcome or that you belong?²

Stage 2 - Mastery: In this part of the Circle, we “seek mastery over (our) environment”. A lack of mastery over the new environment poses an obstacle to integration. Brokenleg says, “deprived of opportunities for success ... people express their frustration through troubled behavior or by retreating in helplessness or inferiority”.³ In newcomer contexts, this means that newcomers have to master a multitude of small tasks e.g., greetings, introductions, small talk, following instructions, seeking clarification, receiving feedback, etc. – all of which are accompanied by invisible cultural protocols and language. They must then carefully weave this into a seamless set of interactions so as not to trigger misunderstandings.

Stage 3 - Independence: Before independence, there must be “opportunities to be dependent” and to learn “through explanation”.⁴ Newcomers are working towards being able to apply new cultural behaviors and use language autonomously. How can we be more supportive? Having shared cultural and linguistic information, space and time is needed to learn how to apply this new knowledge. It will take newcomers time to understand their new culture, their rights, responsibilities and unspoken codes. This part of the Circle of Courage is for trying, making mistakes and asking questions. Our role becomes more an ongoing mentorship that continues until a newcomer has the ability to code switch between their first culture and the new culture independently. This ability is what will ultimately empower newcomers to find their place and successfully participate in their new community.

Stage 4 – Generosity: The native thinking that knowledge is responsibility differs from western thought which tends to see knowledge as power.⁵ However, in this domain, the idea of sharing or giving back to the community is both a Native and Canadian value. “Native cultures share with Western democracy the fundamental tenet of responsibility for the welfare of all others in the community”.⁶ Having been nurtured as they mastered the necessary knowledge and skills to become independent in their new culture, newcomers are now in a position to support others to find their place in society.

The Indigenous wisdom teachings that underpin the Circle of Courage show us a different way of seeing our responsibility in supporting others. The Circle reminds us that integration doesn't happen on its own and that we all have an ongoing part to play in supporting integration so all can participate and feel a sense of personal investment in their communities.

² Nelson Moody December 2017: Personal Communication

³ Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern 1990: 39

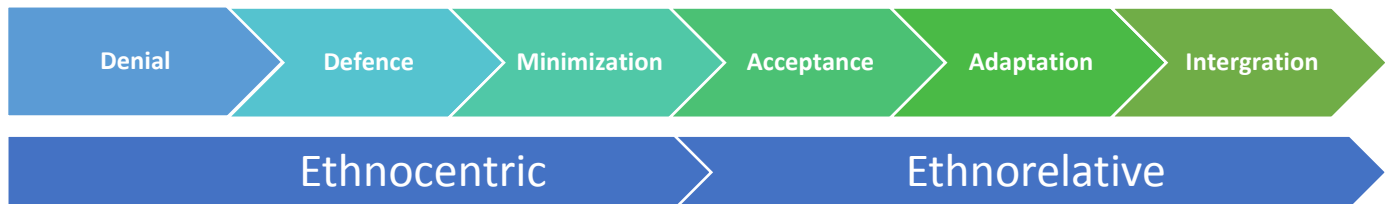
⁴ Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern 1990: 41

⁵ Nelson Moody December 2017: Personal Communication

⁶ Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern 1990: 45

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

As humans coming from different contexts, we inevitably will approach things differently. It is important to ask ourselves how comfortable we feel about difference. Dr. Milton Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* (DMIS) is a continuum that describes people's experience and comfort with cultural differences. The **DMIS** is often used in discussing intercultural competence. It describes how our own cultural worldview influences how we act and communicate with others.



The continuum moves between two experiences of difference: **ethnocentric**, seeing a particular culture as the central reality and other cultures as threatening; and **ethnorelative**, recognizing all behavior exists in a cultural context, including their own. Based on Bennett's descriptors, the stages on the continuum can be explained as follows:

Denial – We ignore different groups in our environment. Perhaps knowing that they are there but not perceiving them as relevant to our lives.

Defense – We see our culture as the correct culture and feel threatened by difference.

Minimization – We see our own culture as universal – we focus only on our commonalities, minimizing difference.

Acceptance – We acknowledge our culture as *one* of many equally valid, complex worldviews. Acceptance does not mean agreement.

Adaptation – We are empathetic, curious and able to adjust our thinking and behavior to succeed in other cultural frameworks.

Integration – We can communicate and act successfully across many cultures.⁷

The DMIS is not a scale of bad to good. It's a tool to help us understand and measure our feelings about and awareness of difference. It can be useful to reflect on where you would place yourself on the continuum. This can support us when we try to understand and navigate intercultural conversations or challenges.

The starting point for many newcomers will be Denial or Defense. In *Denial*, if we are new to a place, we may be aware that we are now existing within a different culture but have not started to develop an interest in exploring how it is different or how those differences may be relevant to our lives. In *Defence*, we might find that our feelings about the new culture align to the

⁷ Bennett 2004

experience of culture shock; we may find our new experiences threatening and uncomfortable in relation to how we are used to doing things.

How does the DMIS relate to your use of the materials?

Being aware of the DMIS will help you decide how to respond to a newcomer respectfully and constructively as you talk about the “norms” around intercultural communication in your context. If you notice that a newcomer experiences other cultures from the *Denial* stage you might simply raise awareness of the existence of other cultures. We’re just looking to notice others. At *Defense*, you might point out commonalities. At *Minimization*, you might acknowledge differences. Once you reach *Acceptance*, you are already seeing other cultures as equally complex as your own and the sense of threat has been removed.⁸

Using the Resource:

This resource is suitable for LINC and EAL learners (*Intermediate Level+*). It is interactive and task-based in its approach and aims to build confidence and empathy when interacting with the diversity of local communities.

Who is the resource for?

The resource is intended for use by members of the language, employment and settlement sectors who would like to prepare newcomers for skilled volunteering opportunities by

- Exploring commonly experienced intercultural challenges
- Understanding challenge through an intercultural lens
- Building strategies to effectively respond to difference
- Providing guidance for how to process and respond to difference

The resource can also be used in volunteer recruitment, onboarding and support. It also highlights the necessity for local employers to actively support engagement by cultivating a sense of belongingness and providing mentorship.

How do teachers, facilitators and community stakeholders use this resource to support newcomer integration?

We are looking to:

1. *Anticipate* possible intercultural challenges and respond to them with appropriate instructional content.
2. *Help* newcomers notice others and become aware of the many different ways that people have of thinking and doing. Develop comfort with difference through framed discussion.

⁸ Apedaile 2015: Personal Communication

3. *Bridge* difference by providing pragmatic and intercultural lesson/training content.
4. Provide ongoing classroom or workplace *support/mentorship* as newcomers learn new cultural norms and expectations to facilitate successful civic engagement and integration.

Targeting levels:

This resource may be used with CLB 3 with some modifications but would be best suited to CLB 4+. The resource activities are built around an intercultural challenge shared in a **Scenario** card that students/participants read, explore through an intercultural lens, and then roleplay. There is a **Teacher Culture Note** section at the beginning of each activity to clarify the intercultural challenge and provide cues to respond to student questions. There are also suggestions for useful language to support student success in the roleplay activity as well as a **Take-Away Tip** for students/participants to help them strategize.

How to Use the Resource:

At lower levels (CLB 3/4) intercultural learning is scaffolded by:

- a **Teacher Culture Note** section
- a **Pre-Reading Vocabulary** section
- a **Scenario**
- a **Reading Task** – a set of levelled reading comprehension questions
- a **Post-Reading Discussion – perspective-taking activity**
- a **Roleplay**
- a **Take-Away Tip** for students

At lower levels, the teacher/facilitator introduces the topic and pre-teaches the vocabulary. Students/participants do vocabulary activity and then read the scenario, analyse the intercultural challenge through the lens of a perspective taking activity, and roleplay. It is recommended that the teacher input and practice the suggested language from the teacher culture note. If there will be an accompanying assessment, suggested language should be practiced prior to the role play.

At higher levels LINC 5+, intercultural learning is scaffolded by:

- a **Teacher Culture Note** section (can be shared with students)
- a **Scenario**
- a **Perspective-Taking Activity**
- a **Roleplay**
- a **Take-Away Tip** for students

At higher levels, the students/participants read the scenario, analyze the intercultural challenge through the lens of a perspective taking activity, and roleplay. It is recommended that the teacher/facilitator input the suggested language from the teacher culture note. If there will be an accompanying assessment, suggested language should be practiced prior to the role play.

Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA):

Use the resource activities to assess Reading and Speaking.

Reading:

The scenarios are accompanied by a series of levelled questions that the teacher can adjust and score as appropriate.

Speaking:

The role play activity offers the opportunity to use

- **Peer Assessment**
- **Self-Reflection**
- **Teacher Assessment**

The **Peer Assessment**, **Self-Reflection** and **Teacher Assessment** can be used in conjunction with each other. As a result, students can benefit from comparing what they felt about their performance with what the teacher and their peers observed. A template of each tool can be found in Appendix 2.

A sample of the **Teacher Assessment** tool might look like this:

	Can do	Needs Practice
*Uses (suggested language)		
*Uses body language/tone appropriately		
Makes appropriate eye contact		
Speaks clearly		
Speaks confidently		
Additional criteria aligned to CLB indicators		
*must use suggested language to pass assessment		
*must use body language/tone appropriately to pass assessment		
What you did well:		
What you could work on:		

A sample of the **Student Self-Reflection** tool may look like this:

	I did this	I need to practice
Used (suggested language)		
Used body language/tone appropriately		
Makes appropriate eye contact		
Spoke clearly		
Spoke confidently		
Additional criteria aligned to CLB indicators		
What was difficult for me?		
What would help me do this task better?		

A sample of the **Peer Assessment** tool might look like this:

	Yes	Needs Practice
Uses (suggested language)		
Uses body language/tone appropriately		
Makes appropriate eye contact		
Speaks clearly		
Speaks confidently		
Additional criteria aligned to CLB indicators		
Something I liked about your role play...		
One thing that would be helpful to work on...		



Teacher Materials

Overview of Topics and Intercultural Challenges

The following topics are not laid out in any specific order so instructors can feel free to select topics relevant to student needs.

1. Greetings
 - Intercultural Challenge: Personal Boundaries
2. Timeliness
 - Intercultural challenge: Arriving Early for your Volunteer Job
3. Personal Boundaries
 - Intercultural Challenge: Small talk
4. Respect 1
 - Intercultural Challenge: Boundaries of Social Conversation - Personal Comments
5. Respect 2
 - Intercultural Challenge: Equality and Boundaries
6. Inclusion
 - Intercultural Challenge: Sharing ideas in a meeting
7. Feeling Valued 1 – Respecting Time and Skills
 - Intercultural Challenge: Asking Questions
8. Feeling Valued 2 – Team Work and Acknowledgement
 - Intercultural challenge: Feeling Valued
9. Feeling Valued 3– Respecting Time and Skills
 - Intercultural Challenge: Understanding the parameters of a volunteer opportunity
10. Responsibility – Accountability
 - Intercultural Challenge: Taking on Responsibility

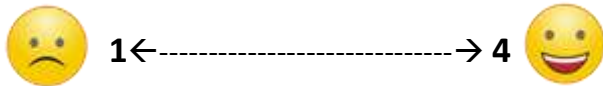
1. Greetings

Intercultural Challenge: Personal Boundaries

Teacher Culture Note: Greetings are deceptively simple and we can have a lot of assumptions around how we manage them. However, they are often one of the most confusing and difficult interactions to get comfortable with and do right. Canadians are not a homogenous group and there is not a single appropriate way to greet. This is a good moment to teach students different ways of greeting and how to side step awkward situations, for example, if you don't want to shake hands, you can signal this by putting your hand on your chest to show respect, intention and avoid embarrassment.

Lead-in:

I am comfortable with touching other people when I meet them for the first time or greet them.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) AiAi and Hung were **introduced** by AiAi's sister. They have been married for 20 years now.
- b) The **main** person in the group is the most important person.
- c) John had been sitting at his computer all morning. His back was hurting so he stood up from his desk and **extended** his arms above his head to stretch.
- d) Larissa put her arms around her daughter and gave her a big **hug** because she was crying.
- e) I have a **plot** of land outside the city so I can grow fruit and vegetables.
- f) Emir dropped his coffee in the restaurant. He was so **embarrassed** because there was coffee all over the floor. It felt like everyone was looking at him!

Scenario – Personal boundaries

Neesha and her husband have just joined a community garden group. When they went there the first time, they were introduced to one of the other main volunteers, Jim. He extended his hand to meet her and then he pulled her in to hug her, but when it was time to meet her husband, he just shook his hand. Neesha’s husband was not happy. When he walked away back to his plot, Neesha’s husband asked her why Jim had hugged her. She told him she didn’t know. So, later when Jim came back, Neesha asked him, “Why did you hug me?” Neesha’s husband was looking at him. Jim laughed and walked away; Jim was so embarrassed. Now Neesha’s husband doesn’t want them to go to the gardening group anymore.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What happened to Neesha?
- b) How did Neesha’s husband feel?
- c) Was Neesha surprised?
- d) Why do you think Jim shook Neesha’s husband’s hand?
- e) Why do you think Jim was embarrassed?
- f) What would you do if you were Neesha?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Neesha	For Neesha’s husband	For Jim
What happened?			
How does each person feel?			
What do you think are the cultural differences here?			
What are some options to make the situation better?			

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: Greetings can make or destroy a relationship before we've even opened our mouths to speak! Impressions are made in the first few seconds of an interaction and if the greeting goes wrong, it's hard to repair. Try watching people. Perhaps you can work out how they will greet you and if you are comfortable, you can respond accordingly. There may be some situations when you feel uncertain or uncomfortable. Try to assume good will and if you're not sure, it's okay to ask, but be careful with your tone! It may be better to ask someone who is not part of the situation.

2. Timeliness

Intercultural challenge: [Arriving Early for your Volunteer Job](#)

Teacher Culture Note: It can be awkward for a newcomer when they arrive too early for their volunteer work. They may not be sure if it's okay to wait at the volunteering location and feel self-conscious as a result. Volunteers may arrive early for different reasons, e.g., the transit schedule or coming from another commitment. If an employer notices, they can provide guidance. However, an employer may have no way of knowing, and so it is important to encourage newcomers to communicate about timing or their needs. Teaching language to request permission and give a reason/explanation like "I'm wondering if it's alright if...because..., are you okay for me to...because..." helps newcomers communicate their needs clearly without feeling shy.

Lead-in:

I feel comfortable asking my manager for help or to explain something if I don't know.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) The train **runs** regularly to Vancouver. A train goes every 2-3 minutes.
- b) It takes a long time to travel from Vancouver to Delta because the **connections** are not always good. You have to take a train to Marine Drive, but then it can be a 20-minute wait for the bus to Delta.

- c) Lei is very **worried** about his driving exam. If he fails, he will not be able to drive his children to school.
- d) She acts really differently than other people and it makes me feel uncomfortable. I think she's **strange**.
- e) James couldn't stop talking about himself during a date with his new girlfriend. He wanted to make a good impression, but instead came across as **over-eager**.

Scenario – Arriving early for your volunteer job

Leah volunteers on the other side of town. The bus only **runs** every half hour and the transit **connections** are not very good, so the only way she can arrive on time is if she arrives at her volunteering job 30 minutes early. Last time Leah volunteered, it was raining, but she decided to wait outside. She was **worried** that her supervisor would think she was **over-eager** or that she was **strange** to come so early. Finally, she decided to go in 10 minutes before her start time. Of course, she caught a cold! When Leah, went in, her supervisor was surprised that she had waited outside. She told her she shouldn't wait outside next time, she should just come in.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why is Leah early for her volunteer job?
- b) Why did Leah decide to wait to go in?
- c) What happened to Leah because she waited outside in the rain?
- d) Was Leah's supervisor happy she waited outside?
- e) If you arrived 30 minutes early for your volunteering, would you wait outside in the rain? Why? Why not?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For the Leah	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: If you are coming from far away and your transport connections do not allow you to arrive at your volunteering job at the right time, it is okay to explain your situation to your supervisor and ask if it’s possible to adjust your schedule. That way, it will be easier to be at your volunteer job at the right time. Your time and commitment are valuable and appreciated, if your supervisor can adjust your schedule, they likely will.

3. Personal Boundaries

Intercultural Challenge: Small talk

Teacher Culture Note: Norms around the boundaries for acceptable small talk vary from culture to culture. Some cultures are more sharing of personal domains while others are more protective.⁹ For some newcomers, sharing personal information will be a way to bond with others, for other newcomers coming from different contexts, this may seem intrusive or unsafe. Share your norms around small talk with the students. Give examples of what normal questions or subjects might be. Let them know if a question feels normal, it’s okay to answer. Remind

⁹ (Rosinski, 2003)

them if someone asks them a question that makes them feel unsafe, they can politely decline to answer. Another strategy is to turn the question back to the asker. So, they can ask the questions first and get a sense of how to answer! It's important to consider what the intention behind a question is. This is a good activity to teach language strategies for declining to answer a question and boundaries of acceptable small talk.

Lead-in:

It is normal to ask people questions about their family and home life at a volunteer job or at work.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) **Refugees** often have to leave their country because it is not safe for them. They don't want to leave home, but they must.
- b) There has been **conflict** in many parts of the world for years. People are always fighting wars.
- c) Be very careful when you give your **personal** information. Don't give your bank details or SIN number to anyone on the phone or in an email.
- d) The restaurant was closed because there was a **private** party. Only people with invitations could go inside.
- e) ESL classes for newcomers need to teach language that is **relevant** to their lives in Canada.

Scenario – Small Talk

Aisha came to Canada as a **refugee** because there was **conflict** in her home country. She is currently going to English classes and doing a little volunteering in the community. Sometimes, when Aisha goes out to volunteer, people ask her **personal** questions, for example, how many kids she has or if she's married. Aisha doesn't want to answer. She feels uncomfortable and that this information is **private** and not **relevant**. She doesn't understand why anyone needs this information. These questions make her feel unsafe.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Is Aisha’s home country safe?
- b) What questions do people ask her at her volunteering job?
- c) Are these questions normal small talk in Canada?
- d) Why do you think these questions make Aisha feel unsafe?
- e) If you were volunteering with Aisha, would you ask her those questions? Why? Why not?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Aisha	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: Norms around small talk vary from culture to culture. Sometimes, people will ask you questions that seem too personal for you to feel comfortable answering. That’s okay. You don’t have to answer small talk questions that feel strange to you. However, if a question is asked in friendly curiosity, receive the question in the spirit it was asked in. In a multicultural society, you may find a range of questions that people ask. At the same time, it’s important to keep in mind that Canadians generally do not talk politics, religion or sexuality in volunteer or workplace contexts!

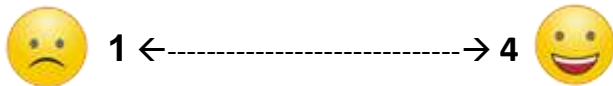
4. Respect 1

Intercultural Challenge: *Boundaries of Social Conversation - Personal Comments*

Teacher Culture Byte: Sometimes, volunteers perceive the boundaries around social behaviours as more relaxed when volunteering because you are giving your time and skills. A volunteer may feel the boundaries are looser because their work is appreciated. This perception of boundaries can be related to what is acceptable in the volunteer's first culture or to their personal culture. Some cultures are more formal - there are protocols and rules to be followed, while other cultures may be informal and more spontaneous.¹⁰ Whichever the cultural preference – formal or informal - levels of formality will often shift depending on context. Sometimes, newcomers don't recognise the boundaries may not be the same in Canada as in their previous country. This can be a good activity to work on the language of appropriate small talk and comments.

Lead-in:

I often make comments about the clothes I'm wearing or the food I eat and I feel okay when people make comments about me.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- The smell of strawberries makes me think of summer. It **reminds** me of when I was a child.
- Everyone likes Wan because she is so nice. She's very **popular**.
- If you don't want to be **overweight**, you should exercise, eat healthily and avoid stress!
- It's difficult to know what makes people laugh in different countries. Sometimes, we say things **jokingly**, but the other person may not understand that it was funny.
- When the little boy's mom shouted at him, he cried because he felt very **hurt**.

¹⁰ Rosinski 2003

Scenario – Personal Comments

Lu is a very **popular** volunteer at a local community center. He is kind and helpful. Everybody likes him. He often **reminds** people of a favourite uncle. Lu feels comfortable with the people who come to the community center. He also feels good with the other volunteers. He enjoys talking to them and eating together. It feels great to be making friends in the community! One day Lu was sharing a meal in the kitchen with two other women volunteers. One of the women was a little bit **overweight**. She had brought her own lunch of fried meat and rice. She had also brought a piece of chocolate cake for dessert. It was a good- sized meal and it looked delicious! Lu looked at her and **jokingly** said, “Oh my goodness! Are you going to eat that?” The woman was **hurt** and complained to the supervisor.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why did everyone like Lu at the community center?
- b) How do you know that Lu felt good at the community center?
- c) What did Lu do wrong?
- d) Why was Lu looking at the other volunteer’s lunch?
- e) If you were the supervisor, what would you say to the woman volunteer? What would you say to Lu?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Lu	For the woman volunteer
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: It can be hard to find the right balance between friendly small talk, making conversation and getting too personal. Generally, in Canada, people can be sensitive to comments that might refer, e.g., to their weight, size, colour, religion, sexuality or looks. The good rule would be to stick to positive, neutral comments - *That looks tasty! That's a nice colour on you! What a nice shirt!* It's also important to be aware of which comments are appropriate between men, women or between men and women. These are not the same!

5. Respect 2

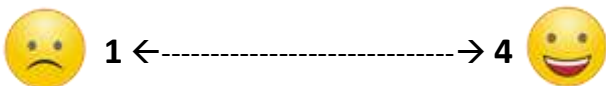
Intercultural Challenge: *Equality and Boundaries*

Teacher Culture Note: In some societies the teacher speaks with absolute authority. There is a strong sense of hierarchy and the teacher is expected to provide clear leadership. Also, as someone with high education, the teacher is ascribed, or given, status.¹¹ However, when newcomers come to Canada, traditional norms around status can shift. Canada tends to have a flatter hierarchy and status is often achieved, i.e., accorded to someone based on their accomplishments.¹²

Equality is favoured over hierarchy and this is embedded in the Canadian Charter of Rights. This can be particularly sensitive for professionals or for men who enjoyed higher status in their previous contexts. Suggested language input for this activity might be offering advice or making suggestions, e.g., *Have you thought about...? Have you tried...? Here's something that worked for me..., It can be a good idea to...*

Lead-in:

I like it when the teacher tells me what to do.



¹¹Rosinski 2003

¹² Rosinski 2003

Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) A **facilitator** helps people in a group have conversations and talk about their ideas together.
- b) After Afshan finished studying medicine at university, she got a job working as a **researcher** at the BC Cancer Agency.
- c) It's **challenging** moving to a new country because people do things differently in different places and you need to learn how they do things.
- d) Amir is **committed** to learning English. He works in the day and goes to language classes every evening.
- e) Jana is **passionate** about helping people who have mental illness, so she is studying to be a psychologist.

Scenario – Equality and Boundaries

Al was volunteering as a **facilitator** with a group of men at a community organization. He was a **researcher** at a university before he came to Canada. Al was used to people listening to him because he had worked at the university. When he talked to the group, he was always lecturing them. He would often say things like, “you should” or “you must...”. Al really wanted the group of men to succeed in their new lives in Canada. After some time, the men stopped coming to the group. They didn't like being told what to do. The supervisor found the situation **challenging** because Al was a very **committed** and **passionate** volunteer.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why did people listen to Al in his first country?
- b) Did the group of men want to listen to Al? Why? Why not?
- c) Why did the men stop coming to the group?
- d) Why do you think Al would tell the men what they should do or what they must do?
- e) How would you have spoken to the men?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For AI	For the men in the group	For the Supervisor
What happened?			
How does each person feel?			
What do you think are the cultural differences here?			
What are some options to make the situation better?			

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: The language around giving advice or making suggestions can be delicate. It is often really important in Canada to be seen to treat others as your equal. You may find that in facilitated groups, classrooms or team work, Canadians will *offer* a suggestion rather than tell someone what to do. The idea is to show a possibility and give choice. This can be confusing for newcomers when they come from a culture where a teacher, facilitator or manager is expected to give direct instructions and expert advice or rules.

6. Inclusion

Intercultural Challenge: *Sharing ideas in a meeting*

Teacher Culture Note: “There can be a lot of fear because often volunteers are not empowered to bring their ideas forward. Most cultures I have encountered come from systems where you don’t ask a lot of questions, you don’t clarify. It’s more following orders.” It can be useful to include protocols around participating in a meeting and language to insert yourself into a conversation, for example: As someone new to the group, I’d like to offer my thoughts..., I have

something I'd like to add..., Can I say something? Having listened to the group, I think..., my experience working in this area has taught me...

Lead-in:

I think that meetings should have a leader and that the leader should ask the opinion of everyone who is participating in the meeting.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) Oscar's work is **event planning**. He helps people arrange weddings, parties and big meetings.
- b) Shaina has a lot of great **skills** for working in a restaurant. She's good with people and speaks three languages
- c) Zainab had over 20 years' **experience** working as a doctor before she came to Canada.
- d) It is important to speak English at all times in the classroom, so that nobody feels **excluded**.
- e) Jan was in a hurry to get to work and ran across the road. He **ignored** the traffic lights and crossed even though the walk signal was red.

Scenario – Sharing ideas in a meeting

Marta did a lot of **event planning** as part of her job before she came to Canada so she felt her skills would be useful if she volunteered with a community group who was planning community events. Marta went to the meeting and found she was the only new member and also the only newcomer in the group. The group members had all worked together before and were excited to see each other again. They did not ask Marta about her **skills** or **experience** or try to find a way for her to help out that would use her skills. Marta was surprised and hurt. She felt **excluded** and that her skills were **ignored**.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why did Marta think she would be good at planning a community event?
- b) Was the community group interested in learning more about her skills?
- c) Why do you think the group did not ask Marta about her skills or experience?
- d) Do you think Marta should feel upset? Why or why not?
- e) What kind of advice could you give Marta as a newcomer to the group?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Marta	For the Women
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: As a newcomer, you may have many rich contributions to make at a meeting. It can be useful to watch how other people insert their contributions and then use that as a guide to help you insert yourself. It is helpful to acknowledge the experience of others in the group before adding in your thoughts. An experienced chair of a discussion will introduce the newcomer to the group and invite their participation. However, if this does not happen, it will be up to you to insert yourself into the conversation.

7. Feeling Valued 1 – Respecting Time and Skills

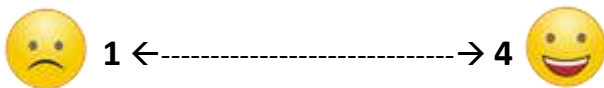
Intercultural Challenge: Asking Questions

Teacher Culture Note: It can be uncomfortable for newcomer volunteers to ask questions if something does not seem right, especially if they come from hierarchical societies in which it would not be appropriate to question a supervisor. It is useful to teach skills such as asking polite questions, checking-in questions, clarifying questions if something seems amiss.

“There can be a lot of fear because often volunteers do not feel empowered to bring their ideas forward. Most cultures I have encountered come from systems where you don’t ask a lot of questions, you don’t clarify. It’s more following orders”.

Lead-in:

I feel comfortable asking questions if I don’t understand the instructions my manager or teacher gives me.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) Where I lived before, I worked as a nurse. **Currently**, I am working as a caregiver and going to school to improve my English.
- b) When Li arrived in Canada, she didn’t know how to speak English, find work or a place to live. Her friend told her to go to a **settlement** agency to help her start her new life.
- c) Lola is an **instructor** at a college. She teaches math.
- d) My **supervisor** at work is very young, but he is good at answering my questions when I don’t understand what to do.
- e) It is helpful to make a **list** of all the things I need to buy before I go to the store: bread, rice, beans, tomatoes, soap, toilet paper... That way, I don’t forget anything!
- f) Chris uses Facebook and WhatsApp to stay in **contact** with friends and family in other countries.

Scenario – Asking questions

Mei Lin has been living in Canada for around 18 months. At home she was a teacher at a college. She is **currently** volunteering at a local **settlement** organization as an English **Instructor** for informal groups of students who cannot access regular ESL classes. Mei Lin was asked to teach a class of newcomers. Her **supervisor** brought her a list of the clients so she could call them and let them know about the class. It took her a few hours. But the **list** was old and the clients were not the actual clients. He gave her a list of 100 people and asked to **contact** all of them. Later she found out that only 7 of them were current clients. It was a lot of people to call. Mei Lin felt upset.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What was Mei Lin’s volunteer role?
- b) What did Mei Lin’s supervisor tell her to do?
- c) What was wrong with the client list?
- d) Why was Mei Lin upset?
- e) If you were Mei Lin, what would you do in this situation?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing.

What’s going on?	For Mei Lin	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: If you are not sure about an instruction or something doesn't make sense to you, it's okay to ask about it. For example, you can ask: Are the people on this list current clients? Is this a recent list? How long do clients stay on the list? This way you can open up a conversation about your concerns. People can get busy at work and sometimes they can miss things!

8. Feeling Valued 2 – Team Work and Acknowledgement

Intercultural challenge: *Feeling Valued*

Teacher Culture Note: The message around hierarchy and equality can seem mixed and unclear to newcomers. On one hand, we often talk about how each person's voice is equally valued and on the other hand, this can shift according to the situation. Sometimes, we are expected to show initiative and share ideas; at other times, we are expected to follow instructions. In their own context, a newcomer might have been able to take more control over a given situation, but in Canada, newcomers need to learn how roles and expectations shift.

Newcomers, whatever their backgrounds, come to us with skills and a lifetime's worth of experience. It can be frustrating not being able to use these fully. It is therefore useful to highlight volunteering as a place for learning the nuances of workplace culture through mentorship. This activity can be a good place for teaching the language of offering to help, for example: Is there something else I can do? What do you want me to do next? Is there anything else that needs doing?

Lead-in:

At a new job, I like someone to tell me exactly what I need to do so I know how to do my work.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) My child's school has a lot of students from different countries. Every year they put on an **intercultural** festival where the children can show something from their family's culture.
- b) Reiko is the **coordinator** at my volunteer job. She answers all our questions, makes everyone feel welcome and prepares the volunteer schedule.
- c) My daughter is a real **wiz** at Math. She is getting a 98% average in her Math class.
- d) In a **democratic** system, if 51% of people say they want Justin Trudeau to be their Prime Minister, then he will be their leader.
- e) She's a real **task master**, she makes everyone work so hard!
- f) I don't really like working with John because he's so **bossy**. He doesn't listen well and he always tell people what to do.
- g) For our class party, everyone will **pitch in**. We will all help out; we will bring food, drinks, set up the tables and clean up after.
- h) Often people spend a lot of time complaining about how much work there is to do, but I prefer to just **get on with it**.

Scenario – Feeling valued

Lara is a volunteer **coordinator** at a local community organization. She shared an **interculturally** challenging situation she had been part of. One of our long-term local volunteers was an absolute **wiz** at event planning with food. One time, we had a couple of new volunteers who had quite recently arrived to Canada. We had an issue because the meetings were very **democratic** and everyone had to **pitch in**, but on the event day, you always need a **task master**. The Canadian volunteer got very **bossy** as she had a really well-established procedure in place and the two other volunteers got very offended. They said: "We thought that this was very democratic, but on the day, it was not." Lara had to explain that there was a broad democratic foundation but, on the actual day, everybody **just gets on with it**.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What was Lara's job?
- b) How did the volunteers find the planning meeting different from the event?
- c) Why did the volunteers feel offended?
- d) Does Lara sound angry about the situation?

e) Why would you need a **task master** on the day of an event?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For the Volunteers	For Lara
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: On a team, each person usually has a role/roles. There is often a leader and when the pressure is on, depending on the team, you may find that what you experienced as *a conversation* during the planning stages, becomes *following instructions* during the actual event. If there is a leader already in place, you can learn from them about how things are usually done. As you gain more knowledge and experience, you may find you are given more responsibility depending on how comfortable and confident you appear with different tasks.

9. Feeling Valued 3 – Respecting Time and Skills

Intercultural Challenge: *Understanding the parameters of a volunteer opportunity*

Teacher Culture Note: Often times, newcomers are confused about how they can participate effectively in their volunteer role. Newcomers may act out of a spirit of helpfulness or according to the norms of their own culture and experience. The parameters of their role may not make

sense to them. There can also be union considerations or concerns about insurance and liability of which the newcomer is not aware. It is useful to make students aware that there might be important parameters to a volunteer role. We can then teach how to ask questions in a polite and curious manner. This activity provides a good opportunity to look at the language of being curious, for example: Is there a reason why volunteers don't ...? Are there rules about volunteers doing...? Are there things that volunteers shouldn't be doing? Is there something I need to know about what volunteers can or cannot do?

Lead-in:

I understand the differences between volunteering in my country and volunteering in Canada.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) If you are older than 55, you can take many classes that are specially for **seniors**.
- b) After the accident, Miriam could not walk so she had to use a **wheel chair**.
- c) Many of the **staff** at Mo's office have worked there for over 10 years.
- d) Jana's son has a lot of food **restrictions**. He cannot eat peanuts, tomatoes or eggs. It is difficult to cook for him.
- e) Students are not **allowed** to smoke in front of the school.
- f) I'm very thankful for all your help. I really **appreciate** it.

Scenario – Understanding the parameters of a volunteer opportunity

Before Pauline moved to Canada she had been working as a nurse. She was very good at her job and is hoping to take the exams to be a nurse in Canada, so she has been volunteering at a **seniors' home**. Her job is to clean or push the **wheel chairs**, but if she tries to do anything else, the **staff** tell her she is not **allowed**. She is not permitted to touch anyone or anything. Pauline feels there are many **restrictions** and the staff always seem angry. She feels like they don't respect her time or **appreciate** her skills.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What was Pauline’s job before she came to Canada?
- b) What does Pauline do at the seniors’ home?
- c) Why is Pauline volunteering at a seniors’ home?
- d) In the scenario, Pauline is *not allowed to touch anyone or anything*. Why do you think this is?
- e) If you were Pauline, what would you do in this situation?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Pauline	For the Staff
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: There will be a lot of things that may not make sense to you in the new culture, and there can be misunderstandings which feel uncomfortable or even upsetting. It’s okay to ask questions in a spirit of gentle curiosity. It’s healthy to ask others why things are the way they are. This will help you understand what’s going on around you objectively.

10. Responsibility – Accountability

Intercultural Challenge: Taking on Responsibility

Teacher Culture Note: In many cultures people don't show managers or coworkers that they don't know how to do something. But, in Canada, if something goes wrong, it might well be considered your responsibility if you indicated you could do something when you couldn't. Therefore, it is necessary to be clear on what you should be doing. In some situations, the manager/supervisor will provide clear training or guidance on what the volunteer should do. However, if a volunteer is not clear, it is important to ask. It is useful to teach students the language of asking for instructions so they can get the information they need to be successful at a task and be prepared for any difficult situation that may arise, e.g., What should I do if..., What would I do if..., Who should I call when...?

Lead-in:

I feel comfortable asking questions if I don't understand the instructions my manager or teacher gives me.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

- a) Raj picks up his younger sister from school. He gives her a snack and then takes her to the playground. He **looks after** her until his parents get home from work.
- b) School starts in September so everyone goes shopping for **supplies** like notebooks, pens and pencils because they need them to study.
- c) The stress of Bob's job and difficult family life made him **mentally ill**. Now he is feeling better. The doctor gave him medicine, he meditates and walks every day. He also joined a men's group so he can talk to other men about his life.
- d) Olga is very **relieved** to be in Canada. In her home country, she was often worried for her safety.
- e) Elena feels **confident** about her driving exam. She practices every day and she has read the driving book so she knows all the rules.

Scenario – Taking on responsibility

Gina volunteers at the hospital gift shop. One day her manager tells her that she will leave her for 30 minutes to **look after** the store because she needs **supplies**. Gina is really worried. Before she leaves, the manager tells Gina if anything happens, she can call her on her cell. The manager also reminds Gina that there's a little red button she can press in an emergency. Gina has to deal with different customers – some mentally ill, homeless, etc. Half an hour later, her manager returns. Gina is **relieved**, but she also feels more **confident** now that she successfully looked after the shop on her own!

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Where does Gina volunteer?
- b) What does Gina's manager do before she leaves Gina alone in the store?
- c) Is it easy for Gina to look after the store for half an hour?
- d) Is it good that the manager left Gina on her own?
- e) How would you feel if you had to deal with customers who were mentally unwell or homeless?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what's going on and strategizing

What's going on?	For Gina	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Language Input (Teacher directed)

Roleplay

Take-Away Tip: Often when volunteers stay at their position for some time, they learn more skills and become more comfortable with their tasks. As your supervisor sees your skills and confidence grow, they may ask you to do more complex tasks and give you more responsibility. This is good news! However, before you take on more responsibility, make sure that you know what you are doing. If you're not sure, check and clarify with your supervisor. They will be pleased that you asked and you will set yourself up for success.

Appendix 1:

Data Collection – Sample Interview Questions

Volunteering and Civic Engagement – Newcomer Experience - Interview Questions

1. I currently volunteer

- In what capacity do you volunteer?
- Is your volunteering in some way related to your professional skills?
- Why do you volunteer?
- Is your experience of volunteering generally positive or negative?
- What have been the benefits of your volunteering experience?
- What is difficult about volunteering?
- What kind of support would be helpful to you in your volunteering?
- Do you have a story of intercultural challenge you would like to share?

2. I have volunteered in Canada

- In what capacity did you volunteer?
- Was your volunteering in some way related to your professional skills?
- Why did you volunteer?
- Was your experience of volunteering generally positive or negative?
- Why did you stop volunteering?
- What were the benefits of your volunteering experience?
- What was difficult about volunteering?
- What kind of support would have been helpful to you in your volunteering?
- Do you have a story of intercultural challenge you would like to share?

3. I have never volunteered in Canada

- Would you consider volunteering?
- Is there something that stops you from volunteering? What?
- In what capacity would you consider volunteering?
- Would it be important to you that your volunteering be in some way related to your professional skills?
- What do you think would be the benefits of volunteering to you?
- What do you think would be difficult about volunteering?
- What kind of support would be helpful to you in your volunteering?
- Do you have a story of intercultural challenge you would like to share?

1. I have worked with a newcomer volunteer

In what capacity did they volunteer?

Was their volunteer role related to their professional skills?

Would you describe your experience of working with newcomer volunteers generally positive or negative?

What were there benefits you perceived to working with newcomer volunteers?

What was difficult about working with newcomer volunteers?

What kind of support do you think would be helpful to a newcomer volunteer?

Do you have a story of intercultural challenge you would like to share?

2. I have worked with a newcomer

In what capacity did they work with you?

Was their role related to their professional skills?

Would you describe your experience of working with newcomers generally positive or negative?

What were there benefits you perceived to working with newcomers?

What was difficult about working with newcomers?

What kind of support do you think would be helpful to a newcomer?

Do you have a story of intercultural challenge you would like to share?

Appendix 2:

Assessment Templates

Teacher Assessment Tool Template

	Can do	Needs Practice
*Uses (suggested language)		
*Uses body language/tone appropriately		
Makes appropriate eye contact		
Speaks clearly		
Speaks confidently		
Additional criteria aligned to CLB indicators		
*must use suggested language to pass assessment *must use body language/tone appropriately to pass assessment		
What you did well:		
What you could work on:		

Student Self-Reflection Tool Template

	I did this	I need to practice
Used (suggested language)		
Used body language/tone appropriately		
Makes appropriate eye contact		
Spoke clearly		
Spoke confidently		
Additional criteria aligned to CLB indicators		
<p>What was difficult for me?</p> <p>What would help me do this task better?</p>		

Peer Assessment Tool Template

	Yes	Needs Practice
Uses (suggested language)		
Uses body language/tone appropriately		
Makes appropriate eye contact		
Speaks clearly		
Speaks confidently		
Additional criteria aligned to CLB indicators		
<p>Something I liked about your role play...</p> <p>One thing that would be helpful to work on...</p>		

This more detailed sample assessment has been shared with the kind permission of Vesna Radivojevic and can be used for assessing the discussion component of the Greetings Activity for CLB 7.

Task: Give suggestions and advice to a friend who doesn't understand culture around greetings and shaking hands. Use persuasive arguments to encourage a friend to check cultural assumptions.

Speaking CLB 7 III.			
Topic: Understanding Different Cultures			
Task: Give suggestions/advice to a friend who doesn't understand culture around greetings and shaking hands.			
Holistic	Yes	Almost	No
* Friend is okay with suggestions and understands the reasons.			
Analytic Criteria	Yes	Almost	No
* Use a variety of expressions to give suggestions/advice. (Uses modals with the appropriate level of politeness.)			
* Explain some relevant differences in cultural values and consequences of not checking assumptions. (Uses appropriate persuasive arguments.)			
* Speak at a slow to normal rate with few hesitations.			
Use appropriate body language. (Uses appropriate non-verbal cues and signals.)			
Have good control of simple structures.			
Use adverb clauses of reason, result, condition, purpose, time... (Uses an increasing variety of grammatical structures, with developing control of complex structures.)			
What to do to improve:			

*These criteria must be checked “yes” to be successful at this task.

Achieved	
In Progress	
Not Achieved	

Appendix 3:

Scenarios

Scenario – Personal boundaries

Neesha and her husband have just joined a community garden group. When they went there the first time, they were introduced to one of the other main volunteers, Jim. He extended his hand to meet her and then he pulled her in to hug her, but when it was time to meet her husband, he just shook his hand. Neesha's husband was not happy. When he walked away back to his plot, Neesha's husband asked her why Jim had hugged her. She told him she didn't know. So, later when Jim came back, Neesha asked him, "Why did you hug me?" Neesha's husband was looking at him. Jim laughed and walked away; Jim was so embarrassed. Now Neesha's husband doesn't want them to go to the gardening group anymore.

Scenario – Arriving early for your volunteer job

Leah volunteers on the other side of town. The bus only runs every half hour and the transit connections are not very good, so the only way she can arrive on time is if she arrives at her volunteering job 30 minutes early. Last time Leah volunteered, it was raining, but she decided to wait outside. She was worried that her supervisor would think she was over-eager or that she was strange to come so early. Finally, she decided to go in 10 minutes before her start time. Of course, she caught a cold! When Leah, went in, her supervisor was surprised that she had waited outside. She told her she shouldn't wait outside next time, she should just come in.

Scenario – Small Talk

Aisha came to Canada as a refugee because there was conflict in her home country. She is currently going to English classes and doing a little volunteering in the community. Sometimes, when Aisha goes out to volunteer, people ask her personal questions, for example, how many kids she has or if she's married. Aisha doesn't want to answer. She feels uncomfortable and that this information is private and not relevant. She doesn't understand why anyone needs this information. These questions make her feel unsafe.

Scenario – Personal Comments

Lu is a very popular volunteer at a local community center. He is kind and helpful. Everybody likes him. He often reminds people of a favourite uncle. Lu feels comfortable with the people who come to the community center. He also feels good with the other volunteers. He enjoys talking to them and eating together. It feels great to be making friends in the community! One day Lu was sharing a meal in the kitchen with two other women volunteers. One of the women was a little bit overweight. She had brought her own lunch of fried meat and rice. She had also brought a piece of chocolate cake for dessert. It was a good- sized meal and it looked delicious! Lu looked at her and jokingly said, “Oh my goodness! Are you going to eat that?” The woman was hurt and complained to the supervisor.

Scenario – Equality and Boundaries

Al was volunteering as a facilitator with a group of men at a community organization. He was a researcher at a university before he came to Canada. Al was used to people listening to him because he had worked at the university. When he talked to the group, he was always lecturing them. He would often say things like, “you should” or “you must...”. Al really wanted the group of men to succeed in their new lives in Canada. After some time, the men stopped coming to the group. They didn’t like being told what to do. The supervisor found the situation challenging because Al was a very committed and passionate volunteer.

Scenario – Sharing ideas in a meeting

Marta did a lot of event planning as part of her job before she came to Canada so she felt her skills would be useful if she volunteered with a community group who was planning community events. Marta went to the meeting and found she was the only new member and also the only newcomer in the group. The group members had all worked together before and were excited to see each other again. They did not ask Marta about her skills or experience or try to find a way for her to help out that would use her skills. Marta was surprised and hurt. She felt excluded and that her skills were ignored.

Scenario – Asking questions

Mei Lin has been living in Canada for around 18 months. At home she was a teacher at a college. She is currently volunteering at a local settlement organization as an English Instructor for informal groups of students who cannot access regular ESL classes. Mei Lin was asked to teach a class of newcomers. Her supervisor brought her a list of the clients so she could call them and let them know about the class. It took her a few hours. But the list was old and the clients were not the actual clients. He gave her a list of 100 people and asked to contact all of them. Later she found out that only 7 of them were current clients. It was a lot of people to call. Mei Lin felt upset.

Scenario – Feeling valued

Lara is a volunteer coordinator at a local community organization. She shared an interculturally challenging situation she had been part of. One of our long-term local volunteers was an absolute wiz at event planning with food. One time, we had a couple of new volunteers who had quite recently arrived to Canada. We had an issue because the meetings were very democratic and everyone had to pitch in, but on the event day, you always need a task master. The Canadian volunteer got very bossy as she had a really well-established procedure in place and the two other volunteers got very offended. They said: “We thought that this was very democratic, but on the day, it was not.” Lara had to explain that there was a broad democratic foundation but, on the actual day, everybody just gets on with it.

Scenario – Understanding the parameters of a volunteer opportunity

Before Pauline moved to Canada she had been working as a nurse. She was very good at her job and is hoping to take the exams to be a nurse in Canada, so she has been volunteering at a seniors’ home. Her job is to clean or push the wheel chairs, but if she tries to do anything else, the staff tell her she is not allowed. She is not permitted to touch anyone or anything. Pauline feels there are many restrictions and the staff always seem angry. She feels like they don’t respect her time or appreciate her skills.

Scenario – Taking on responsibility

Gina volunteers at the hospital gift shop. One day her manager tells her that she will leave her for 30 minutes to look after the store because she needs supplies. Gina is really worried. Before she leaves, the manager tells Gina if anything happens, she can call her on her cell. The manager also reminds Gina that there's a little red button she can press in an emergency. Gina has to deal with different customers – some mentally ill, homeless, etc. Half an hour later, her manager returns. Gina is relieved, but she also feels more confident now that she successfully looked after the shop on her own!

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Student Materials

Greetings

Intercultural Challenge: Personal Boundaries

Lead-in:

I am comfortable with touching other people when I meet them for the first time or greet them.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

main	extended	hug	plot	embarrassed	introduced
------	----------	-----	------	-------------	------------

- a) AiAi and Hung were _____ by AiAi’s sister. They have been married for 20 years now.
- b) The _____ person in the group is the most important person.
- c) John had been sitting at his computer all morning. His back was hurting so he stood up from his desk and _____ his arms above his head to stretch.
- d) Larissa put her arms around her daughter and gave her a big _____ because she was crying.
- e) I have a _____ of land outside the city so I can grow fruit and vegetables.
- f) Emir dropped his coffee in the restaurant. He was so _____ because there was coffee all over the floor. It felt like everyone was looking at him!

Scenario – Personal boundaries

Neesha and her husband have just joined a community garden group. When they went there the first time, they were introduced to one of the other main volunteers, Jim. He extended his hand to meet her and then he pulled her in to hug her, but when it was time to meet her husband, he just shook his hand. Neesha’s husband was not happy. When he walked away back to his plot, Neesha’s husband asked her why Jim had hugged her. She told him she didn’t know. So, later when Jim came back, Neesha asked him, “Why did you hug me?” Neesha’s husband was looking at him. Jim laughed and walked away; Jim was so embarrassed. Now Neesha’s husband doesn’t want them to go to the gardening group anymore.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What happened to Neesha?
- b) How did Neesha’s husband feel?
- c) Was Neesha surprised?
- d) Why do you think Jim shook Neesha’s husband’s hand?
- e) Why do you think Jim was embarrassed?
- f) What would you do if you were Neesha?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Neesha	For Neesha’s husband	For Jim
What happened?			
How does each person feel?			
What do you think are the cultural differences here?			
What are some options to make the situation better?			

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Take-Away Tip: Greetings can make or destroy a relationship before we’ve even opened our mouths to speak! Impressions are made in the first few seconds of an interaction and if the greeting goes wrong, it’s hard to repair. Try watching people. Perhaps you can work out how they will greet you and if you are comfortable, you can respond accordingly. There may be some situations when you feel uncertain or uncomfortable. Try to assume good will and if you’re not sure, it’s okay to ask, but be careful with your tone! It may be better to ask someone who is not part of the situation.

Timeliness

Intercultural challenge: Arriving Early for your Volunteer Job

Lead-in:

I feel comfortable asking my manager for help or to explain something if I don't know.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

worried	runs	over-eager	strange	connections
---------	------	------------	---------	-------------

- a) The train _____ regularly to Vancouver. A train goes every 2-3 minutes.
- b) It takes a long time to travel from Vancouver to Delta because the _____ are not always good. You have to take a train to Marine Drive, but then it can be a 20-minute wait for the bus to Delta.
- c) Lei is very _____ about his driving exam. If he fails, he will not be able to drive his children to school.
- d) She acts really differently than other people and it makes me feel uncomfortable. I think she's _____.
- e) James couldn't stop talking about himself during a date with his new girlfriend. He wanted to make a good impression, but instead came across as _____.

Scenario – Arriving early for your volunteer job

Leah volunteers on the other side of town. The bus only **runs** every half hour and the transit **connections** are not very good, so the only way she can arrive on time is if she arrives at her volunteering job 30 minutes early. Last time Leah volunteered, it was raining, but she decided to wait outside. She was **worried** that her supervisor would think she was **over-eager** or that she was **strange** to come so early. Finally, she decided to go in 10 minutes before her start time. Of course, she caught a cold! When Leah, went in, her supervisor was surprised that she had waited outside. She told her she shouldn't wait outside next time, she should just come in.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why is Leah early for her volunteer job?
- b) Why did Leah decide to wait to go in?
- c) What happened to Leah because she waited outside in the rain?
- d) Was Leah’s supervisor happy she waited outside?
- e) If you arrived 30 minutes early for your volunteering, would you wait outside in the rain? Why? Why not?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For the Leah	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Take-Away Tip: If you are coming from far away and your transport connections do not allow you to arrive at your volunteering job at the right time, it is okay to explain your situation to your supervisor and ask if it’s possible to adjust your schedule. That way, it will be easier to be at your volunteer job at the right time. Your time and commitment are valuable and appreciated, if your supervisor can adjust your schedule, they likely will.

Personal Boundaries

Intercultural Challenge: *Small talk*

Lead-in:

It is normal to ask people questions about their family and home life at a volunteer job or at work.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

personal	conflict	relevant	refugees	private
----------	----------	----------	----------	---------

- a) _____ often have to leave their country because it is not safe for them. They don't want to leave home, but they must.
- b) There has been _____ in many parts of the world for years. People are always fighting wars.
- c) Be very careful when you give your _____ information. Don't give your bank details or SIN number to anyone on the phone or in an email.
- d) The restaurant was closed because there was a _____ party. Only people with invitations could go inside.
- e) ESL classes for newcomers need to teach language that is _____ to their lives in Canada.

Scenario – Small Talk

Aisha came to Canada as a **refugee** because there was **conflict** in her home country. She is currently going to English classes and doing a little volunteering in the community. Sometimes, when Aisha goes out to volunteer, people ask her **personal** questions, for example, how many kids she has or if she's married. Aisha doesn't want to answer. She feels uncomfortable and that this information is **private** and not **relevant**. She doesn't understand why anyone needs this information. These questions make her feel unsafe.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Is Aisha’s home country safe?
- b) What questions do people ask her at her volunteering job?
- c) Are these questions normal small talk in Canada?
- d) Why do you think these questions make Aisha feel unsafe?
- e) If you were volunteering with Aisha, would you ask her those questions? Why? Why not?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Aisha	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Take-Away Tip: Norms around small talk vary from culture to culture. Sometimes, people will ask you questions that seem too personal for you to feel comfortable answering. That’s okay. You don’t have to answer small talk questions that feel strange to you. However, if a question is asked in friendly curiosity, receive the question in the spirit it was asked in. In a multicultural society, you may find a range of questions that people ask. At the same time, it’s important to keep in mind that Canadians generally do not talk politics, religion or sexuality in volunteer or workplace contexts!

Respect 1

Intercultural Challenge: *Boundaries of Social Conversation - Personal Comments*

Lead-in:

I often make comments about the clothes I'm wearing or the food I eat and I feel okay when people make comments about me.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

overweight	popular	reminds	hurt	jokingly
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- a) The smell of strawberries makes me think of summer. It _____ me of when I was a child.
- b) Everyone likes Wan because she is so nice. She's very _____.
- c) If you don't want to be _____, you should exercise, eat healthily and avoid stress!
- d) It's difficult to know what makes people laugh in different countries. Sometimes, we say things _____, but the other person may not understand that it was funny.
- e) When the little boy's mom shouted at him, he cried because he felt very _____.

Scenario – Personal Comments

Lu is a very **popular** volunteer at a local community center. He is kind and helpful. Everybody likes him. He often **reminds** people of a favourite uncle. Lu feels comfortable with the people who come to the community center. He also feels good with the other volunteers. He enjoys talking to them and eating together. It feels great to be making friends in the community! One day Lu was sharing a meal in the kitchen with two other women volunteers. One of the women was a little bit **overweight**. She had brought her own lunch of fried meat and rice. She had also brought a piece of chocolate cake for dessert. It was a good- sized meal and it looked delicious! Lu looked at her and **jokingly** said, "Oh my goodness! Are you going to eat that?" The woman was **hurt** and complained to the supervisor.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why did everyone like Lu at the community center?
- b) How do you know that Lu felt good at the community center?
- c) What did Lu do wrong?
- d) Why was Lu looking at the other volunteer’s lunch?
- e) If you were the supervisor, what would you say to the woman volunteer? What would you say to Lu?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Lu	For the woman volunteer
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

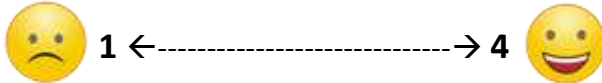
Take-Away Tip: It can be hard to find the right balance between friendly small talk, making conversation and getting too personal. Generally, in Canada, people can be sensitive to comments that might refer, e.g., to their weight, size, colour, religion, sexuality or looks. The good rule would be to stick to positive, neutral comments - *That looks tasty! That’s a nice colour on you! What a nice shirt!* It’s also important to be aware of which comments are appropriate between men, women or between men and women. These are not the same!

Respect 2

Intercultural Challenge: Equality and Boundaries

Lead-in:

I like it when the teacher tells me what to do.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

committed	researcher	challenging	facilitator	passionate
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- a) A _____ helps people in a group have conversations and talk about their ideas together.
- b) After Afshan finished studying medicine at university, she got a job working as a _____ at the BC Cancer Agency.
- c) It's _____ moving to a new country because people do things differently in different places and you need to learn how they do things.
- d) Amir is _____ to learning English. He works in the day and goes to language classes every evening.
- e) Jana is _____ about helping people who have mental illness, so she is studying to be a psychologist.

Scenario – Equality and Boundaries

Al was volunteering as a **facilitator** with a group of men at a community organization. He was a **researcher** at a university before he came to Canada. Al was used to people listening to him because he had worked at the university. When he talked to the group, he was always lecturing them. He would often say things like, “you should” or “you must...”. Al really wanted the group of men to succeed in their new lives in Canada. After some time, the men stopped coming to the group. They didn't like being told what to do. The supervisor found the situation **challenging** because Al was a very **committed** and **passionate** volunteer.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why did people listen to Al in his first country?
- b) Did the group of men want to listen to Al? Why? Why not?
- c) Why did the men stop coming to the group?
- d) Why do you think Al would tell the men what they should do or what they must do?
- e) How would you have spoken to the men?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Al	For the men in the group	For the Supervisor
What happened?			
How does each person feel?			
What do you think are the cultural differences here?			
What are some options to make the situation better?			

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Take-Away Tip: The language around giving advice or making suggestions can be delicate. It is often really important in Canada to be seen to treat others as your equal. You may find that in facilitated groups, classrooms or team work, Canadians will *offer* a suggestion rather than tell someone what to do. The idea is to show a possibility and give choice. This can be confusing for newcomers when they come from a culture where a teacher, facilitator or manager is expected to give direct instructions and expert advice or rules.

Inclusion

Intercultural Challenge: *Sharing ideas in a meeting*

Lead-in:

I think that meetings should have a leader and that the leader should ask the opinion of everyone who is participating in the meeting.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

experience	skills	ignored	excluded	event planning
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- a) Oscar's work is _____. He helps people arrange weddings, parties and big meetings.
- b) Shaina has a lot of great _____ for working in a restaurant. She's good with people and speaks three languages
- c) Zainab had over 20 years' _____ working as a doctor before she came to Canada.
- d) It is important to speak English at all times in the classroom, so that nobody feels _____.
- e) Jan was in a hurry to get to work and ran across the road. He _____ the traffic lights and crossed even though the walk signal was red.

Scenario – Sharing ideas in a meeting

Marta did a lot of **event planning** as part of her job before she came to Canada so she felt her skills would be useful if she volunteered with a community group who was planning community events. Marta went to the meeting and found she was the only new member and also the only newcomer in the group. The group members had all worked together before and were excited to see each other again. They did not ask Marta about her **skills** or **experience** or try to find a

way for her to help out that would use her skills. Marta was surprised and hurt. She felt **excluded** and that her skills were **ignored**.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Why did Marta think she would be good at planning a community event?
- b) Was the community group interested in learning more about her skills?
- c) Why do you think the group did not ask Marta about her skills or experience?
- d) Do you think Marta should feel upset? Why or why not?
- e) What kind of advice could you give Marta as a newcomer to the group?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Marta	For the Women
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

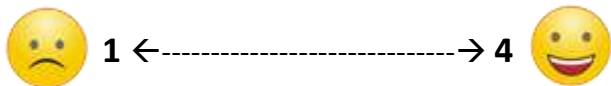
Take-Away Tip: As a newcomer, you may have many rich contributions to make at a meeting. It can be useful to watch how other people insert their contributions and then use that as a guide to help you insert yourself. It is helpful to acknowledge the experience of others in the group before adding in your thoughts. An experienced chair of a discussion will introduce the newcomer to the group and invite their participation. However, if this does not happen, it will be up to you to insert yourself into the conversation.

Feeling Valued 1 – Respecting Time and Skills

Intercultural Challenge: Asking Questions

Lead-in:

I feel comfortable asking questions if I don't understand the instructions my manager or teacher gives me.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

supervisor	currently	list	contact	instructor	settlement
------------	-----------	------	---------	------------	------------

- a) Where I lived before, I worked as a nurse. _____ I am working as a caregiver and going to school to improve my English.
- b) When Li arrived in Canada, she didn't know how to speak English, find work or a place to live. Her friend told her to go to a _____ agency to help her start her new life.
- c) Lola is an _____ at a college. She teaches math.
- d) My _____ at work is very young, but he is good at answering my questions when I don't understand what to do.
- e) It is helpful to make a _____ of all the things I need to buy before I go to the store: bread, rice, beans, tomatoes, soap, toilet paper... That way, I don't forget anything!
- f) Chris uses Facebook and WhatsApp to stay in _____ with friends and family in other countries.

Scenario – Asking questions

Mei Lin has been living in Canada for around 18 months. At home she was a teacher at a college. She is **currently** volunteering at a local **settlement** organization as an English **instructor** for informal groups of students who cannot access regular ESL classes. Mei Lin was asked to teach a class of newcomers. Her **supervisor** brought her a list of the clients so she could call them and let them know about the class. It took her a few hours. But the **list** was old and the

clients were not the actual clients. He gave her a list of 100 people and asked to **contact** all of them. Later she found out that only 7 of them were current clients. It was a lot of people to call. Mei Lin felt upset.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What was Mei Lin’s volunteer role?
- b) What did Mei Lin’s supervisor tell her to do?
- c) What was wrong with the client list?
- d) Why was Mei Lin upset?
- e) If you were Mei Lin, what would you do in this situation?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing.

What’s going on?	For Mei Lin	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

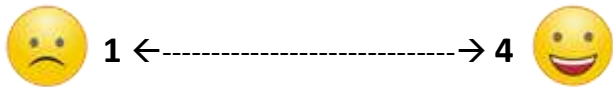
Take-Away Tip: If you are not sure about an instruction or something doesn’t make sense to you, it’s okay to ask about it. For example, you can ask: Are the people on this list current clients? Is this a recent list? How long do clients stay on the list? This way you can open up a conversation about your concerns. People can get busy at work and sometimes they can miss things!

Feeling Valued 2 – Team Work and Acknowledgement

Intercultural challenge: Feeling Valued

Lead-in:

At a new job, I like someone to tell me exactly what I need to do so I know how to do my work.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

task master bossy coordinator wiz intercultural democratic get on with it pitch in

- a) My child's school has a lot of students from different countries. Every year they put on an _____ festival where the children can show something from their family's culture.
- b) Reiko is the _____ at my volunteer job. She answers all our questions, makes everyone feel welcome and prepares the volunteer schedule.
- c) My daughter is a real _____ at Math. She is getting a 98% average in her Math class.
- d) In a _____ system, if 51% of people say they want Justin Trudeau to be their Prime Minister, then he will be their leader.
- e) She's a real _____, she makes everyone work so hard!
- f) I don't really like working with John because he's so _____. He doesn't listen well and he always tell people what to do.
- g) For our class party, everyone will _____. We will all help out; we will bring food, drinks, set up the tables and clean up after.
- h) Often people spend a lot of time complaining about how much work there is to do, but I prefer to just _____.

Scenario – Feeling valued

Lara is a volunteer **coordinator** at a local community organization. She shared an **interculturally** challenging situation she had been part of. One of our long-term local volunteers was an absolute **wiz** at event planning with food. One time, we had a couple of new volunteers who had quite recently arrived to Canada. We had an issue because the meetings were very

democratic and everyone had to **pitch in**, but on the event day, you always need a **task master**. The Canadian volunteer got very **bossy** as she had a really well-established procedure in place and the two other volunteers got very offended. They said: “We thought that this was very democratic, but on the day, it was not.” Lara had to explain that there was a broad democratic foundation but, on the actual day, everybody **just gets on with it**.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What was Lara’s job?
- b) How did the volunteers find the planning meeting different from the event?
- c) Why did the volunteers feel offended?
- d) Does Lara sound angry about the situation?
- e) Why would you need a **task master** on the day of an event?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For the Volunteers	For Lara
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

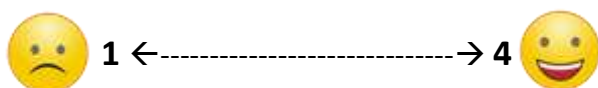
Take-Away Tip: On a team, each person usually has a role/roles. There is often a leader and when the pressure is on, depending on the team, you may find that what you experienced as *a conversation* during the planning stages, becomes *following instructions* during the actual event. If there is a leader already in place, you can learn from them about how things are usually done. As you gain more knowledge and experience, you may find you are given more responsibility depending on how comfortable and confident you appear with different tasks.

Feeling Valued 3 – Respecting Time and Skills

Intercultural Challenge: Understanding the parameters of a volunteer opportunity

Lead-in:

I understand the differences between volunteering in my country and volunteering in Canada.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

appreciate	seniors	wheel chair	restrictions	allowed	staff
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- a) If you are older than 55, you can take many classes that are specially for _____.
- b) After the accident, Miriam could not walk so she had to use a _____.
- c) Many of the _____ at Mo's office have worked there for over 10 years.
- d) Jana's son has a lot of food _____. He cannot eat peanuts, tomatoes or eggs. It is difficult to cook for him.
- e) Students are not _____ to smoke in front of the school.
- f) I'm very thankful for all your help. I really _____ it.

Scenario – Understanding the parameters of a volunteer opportunity

Before Pauline moved to Canada she had been working as a nurse. She was very good at her job and is hoping to take the exams to be a nurse in Canada, so she has been volunteering at a **seniors' home**. Her job is to clean or push the **wheel chairs**, but if she tries to do anything else, the **staff** tell her she is not **allowed**. She is not permitted to touch anyone or anything. Pauline feels there are many **restrictions** and the staff always seem angry. She feels like they don't respect her time or **appreciate** her skills.

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) What was Pauline’s job before she came to Canada?
- b) What does Pauline do at the seniors’ home?
- c) Why is Pauline volunteering at a seniors’ home?
- d) In the scenario, Pauline is *not allowed to touch anyone or anything*. Why do you think this is?
- e) If you were Pauline, what would you do in this situation?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Pauline	For the Staff
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

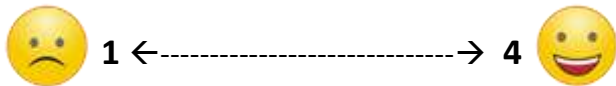
Take-Away Tip: There will be a lot of things that may not make sense to you in the new culture, and there can be misunderstandings which feel uncomfortable or even upsetting. It’s okay to ask questions in a spirit of gentle curiosity. It’s healthy to ask others why things are the way they are. This will help you understand what’s going on around you objectively.

Responsibility – Accountability

Intercultural Challenge: *Taking on Responsibility*

Lead-in:

I feel comfortable asking questions if I don't understand the instructions my manager or teacher gives me.



Pre-Reading Vocabulary – Fill the gap with the correct word

supplies	mentally ill	relieved	confident	looks after
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- Raj picks up his younger sister from school. He gives her a snack and then takes her to the playground. He _____ her until his parents get home from work.
- School starts in September so everyone goes shopping for _____ like notebooks, pens and pencils because they need them to study.
- The stress of Bob's job and difficult family life made him _____. Now he is feeling better. The doctor gave him medicine, he meditates and walks every day. He also joined a men's group so he can talk to other men about his life.
- Olga is very _____ to be in Canada. In her home country, she was often worried for her safety.
- Elena feels _____ about her driving exam. She practices every day and she has read the driving book so she knows all the rules.

Scenario – Taking on responsibility

Gina volunteers at the hospital gift shop. One day her manager tells her that she will leave her for 30 minutes to **look after** the store because she needs **supplies**. Gina is really worried. Before she leaves, the manager tells Gina if anything happens, she can call her on her cell. The manager also reminds Gina that there's a little red button she can press in an emergency. Gina has to deal with different customers – some mentally ill, homeless, etc. Half an hour later, her

manager returns. Gina is **relieved**, but she also feels more **confident** now that she successfully looked after the shop on her own!

Reading Task – Answer the questions

- a) Where does Gina volunteer?
- b) What does Gina’s manager do before she leaves Gina alone in the store?
- c) Is it easy for Gina to look after the store for half an hour?
- d) Is it good that the manager left Gina on her own?
- e) How would you feel if you had to deal with customers who were mentally unwell or homeless?

Post Reading Discussion – Perspective Taking: Identifying what’s going on and strategizing

What’s going on?	For Gina	For the Supervisor
What happened?		
How does each person feel?		
What do you think are the cultural differences here?		
What are some options to make the situation better?		

- What can happen as a result of a misunderstanding in this situation?
- Is there any way you could help in this situation? What could you say? What could you do?

Take-Away Tip: Often when volunteers stay at their position for some time, they learn more skills and become more comfortable with their tasks. As your supervisor sees your skills and confidence grow, they may ask you to do more complex tasks and give you more responsibility. This is good news! However, before you take on more responsibility, make sure that you know what you are doing. If you’re not sure, check and clarify with your supervisor. They will be pleased that you asked and you will set yourself up for success.