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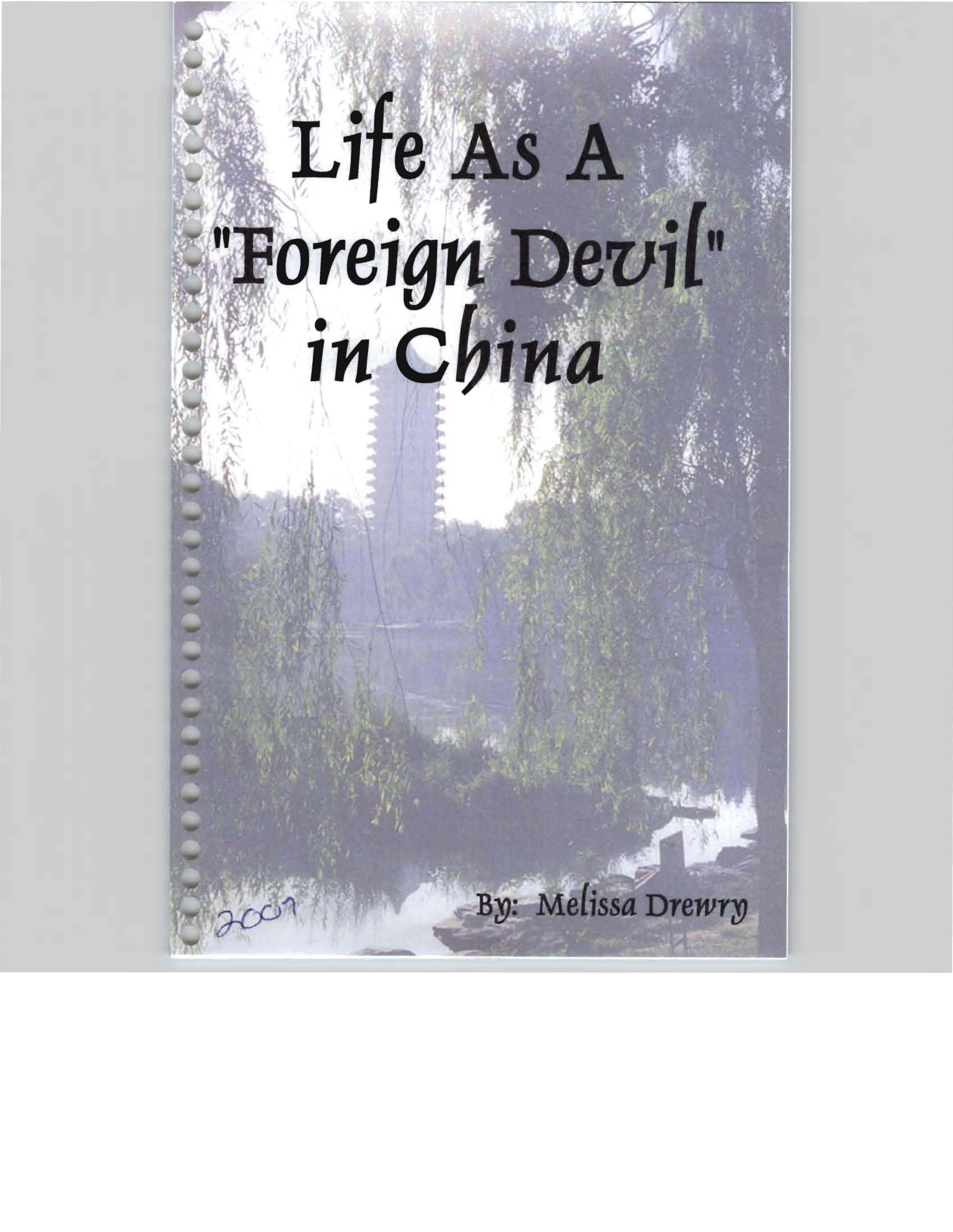
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*Life As A
"Foreign Devil"
in China*

2007

By: *Melissa Drewry*



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“Foreign Devil”
In China**

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**“Foreign Devil”
With No Place to Hide**

Introduction

After spending a year in China, it became apparent that preparation is one of the keys to life. Before embarking on any grand adventure, it is necessary to gain as much knowledge as possible about the adventure and what it may entail. The intention of this narrative is to provide future participants of study abroad programs to China with just such a knowledge base. Through discussion of Chinese culture from both a historical and a present day perspective, an understanding of what it may be like to live as a “foreign devil” amongst the Chinese in their own land will be presented.

Cultural differences between the U.S. and China are so widespread that the two countries could almost exist on separate continuums. Understanding the background of these cultural differences will help to ease one’s assimilation into a new life in China. The tips and information provided within these pages should also serve to lessen the effects of culture shock during adjustment. The life of a foreigner in China is not always an easy one, but the complexity is well worth it. Such an experience causes one to open his or her eyes and see the world in a different light on both an interpersonal and a cross-cultural level. An increased sense of compassion, empathy, and humanitarianism is promoted through learning what it is

like to “walk a mile in someone else’s shoes”. Those shoes are the shoes of an outsider, a “foreign devil”.

Meaning of “Foreign Devil”

Yang gui zi....white devil or foreign devil is a common term used by the Chinese to describe foreigners. It may seem horrible to be thought of as a foreign devil, but in truth, it is not such an awful thing. Nowadays, this is just a figurative saying, and the Chinese do not really think of us as devils. Or do they? We will never know for sure.

When answering the question of what it means to be a “foreign devil,” it is necessary to look back to history. The answer may be related directly to China’s tendency to remain a closed country. From the beginning China had little or no contact with the outside world. It was believed that Heaven was round, the Earth was square, and the Four Seas bordered China on all four sides. Obviously, this information was inaccurate. But the true geographic situation was no better. In actuality, the south and east of China are bordered by the sea, the north by mountains, and the west by desert, which caused the Chinese to remain extremely isolated. In addition to geographical restrictions, the Chinese themselves enhanced the tendency to remain a country with closed doors. They considered themselves to be “at the very centre of the universe—richer, more

powerful, and culturally superior to all of [their] neighbours,” hence the name China, *Zhongguo* in Chinese, meaning the “Middle Kingdom” (M & M, 2). They intentionally made it difficult for foreigners to break the barrier through physical restrictions as well as policy restrictions. The Great Wall is a prime example of a physical restriction and is a “tangible manifestation of the Chinese sense of separateness” (M & M, 3). It was erected for the sole purpose of keeping outsiders from the North from entering the country. As for policy restriction, the best example is found in China’s trade with foreign countries. Once the West did begin to overcome the geographical barriers and to enter China, they encountered much resistance. The Chinese considered themselves far superior to all others, and they felt that any foreigner wishing to have court with the emperor must be willing to *koutou*, or “lie prostrate and make nine knocks of the head on the floor” before him (M & M, 3). Since most foreigners also saw themselves as superior and were unwilling to *koutou*, the initiation of trade talks was greatly hindered. Also inhibiting trade was the Emperor’s belief that his empire “possessed all things in prolific abundance, and lacked no product within its own borders” (M & M, 4).

It was during this same time period, in the 1300s, when Westerners began traveling to China, that the phrase

“foreign devil” was coined. Upon first seeing foreigners “with their red faces, protruding eyes and absurdly complicated and uncomfortable clothing...it was impossible for the Chinese to look on them as human beings like themselves” (Crow, 12). The Chinese instead believed that “all foreigners had the grotesque appearance of devils” and so began to term them as such (Crow, 12). But it was not just the appearance of Westerners that disturbed the Chinese; it was also their behavior. The Chinese found their manners to be distasteful and obscene. These “foreign devils” did not even “know how to enter a room or to drink a cup of tea or receive a card correctly” (Crow, 12). To make matters worse, they spoke “an unintelligible language resembling the twittering of birds” (Giles). This must have been unnerving since, “to the Chinese, their own language seemed to be the language of the gods [and] they knew they had possessed it for several thousand years” (Giles).

Westerners enhanced the idea that we are all “foreign devils” many times over. The most noticeable time was when Britain engaged in opium trade with China, knowing the probable outcome. It proved to the Chinese that the foreigner “was a pirate who had come to carry away their wealth, to filch from them their land, and to

overrun their country. This impression was crystallized in the expression ‘foreign devil’” (Headland).

It was not only the common Chinese who thought of outsiders as devils; “the elite of China, unfortunately, had the same image of the foreigner” (Ch’en, 59). This became a basic assumption for the handling of foreign affairs and even the emperor “declined to deal directly either with the ‘foreign devils’ themselves or with the diplomatic emissaries of such remote barbarian countries” (Crow, 24). He instead handed the responsibilities off to others and “washed his hands of the entire business” (Crow, 24).

The expression “foreign devil” may sound as though it was cold and hateful, but in truth it was not. It was just a general term “applied by individual Chinese only to foreigners he did not know” (Crow, 12). Once the Chinese began to get acquainted with the foreigners, “they found that beneath the peculiar appearance, rough ways and barbarous customs...many of them were, under the skin, much like themselves” (Crow, 13). This tends to be the understanding today, and although the Chinese no longer truly think us to be devils, they still use the term “foreign devil” when referring to outsiders. “The people of a country do not unlearn in a day the long lessons of the past” (Headland).

the street without everyone staring or shouting the one English word they knew, “Hello!”

Why did everyone want so badly to interact with the foreigners if they considered them “foreign devils”? This question brings us back to the point. Nowadays, the term *yang gui zi* is not necessarily derogatory, as it was in the past. Although the direct translation does mean “foreign devil,” the meaning, as far as a Chinese is concerned, is simply “a foreigner”. The real issue is not what words are used to describe foreigners, but rather the Chinese mindset when it comes to foreigners. As mentioned previously, the country has been closed off to the rest of the world throughout its’ history; and therefore, the average Chinese knows very little about foreigners. To this day, there are a number of people in China who have never even laid eyes on a *yang gui zi*. But now that the doors are beginning to open, it is becoming more common to see foreigners walking along the streets of China. As this happens, the understanding that we are not all that different begins to grow.

It must still be understood though that there are some major cultural differences between the East and the West. Once you get to know a Chinese on a personal level and they realize that you are in many ways the same, you both begin to take notice of these cultural differences. This

came to my attention through my experience with dating a Chinese boy. At first I was willing to overlook all of our differences, both the cultural ones and the personal ones. It took three months to realize that I was ignoring the problems caused by these differences out of loneliness. The world is a very lonely place when the people around you automatically assume that you have nothing in common. It makes it tough to find friends. For this reason, as soon as I found someone who was willing to try and get to know me for who I was rather than just for the color of my skin, I latched on. Luckily no life altering decisions were made before the reality of the situation became apparent. If it had been up to Alex, we would have been married within the first month. A person must be willing to recognize and deal with the cultural differences of the people they choose to interact with while in China.

Cultural Dimensions

In order to understand how best to communicate and interact within the Chinese culture, it is important to be familiar with the dimensions of both the American and Chinese cultures, as well as the differences between the two. As noted by Richard Hodgetts and Fred Luthans, the Dutch researcher Fons Trompenaars found there to be “five relationship orientations that address the ways in which

people deal with each other” (H & L, 124). These orientations, or dimensions, are as follows:

1. universalism—“the belief that ideas and practices can be applied everywhere without modification”
vs.
particularism—“the belief that circumstances dictate how ideas and practices should be applied”
2. individualism—“which refers to people regarding themselves as individuals”
vs.
communitarianism—“which refers to people regarding themselves as part of a group”
3. neutral culture—“emotions are held in check”
vs.
emotional culture—“emotions are openly and naturally expressed”
4. specific culture—“individuals have a large public space they readily let others enter and share and a small private space they guard closely and share with only close friends and associates”
vs.

diffuse culture—“both public and private space are similar in size and individuals guard their public space carefully, because entry into public space affords entry into private space as well”

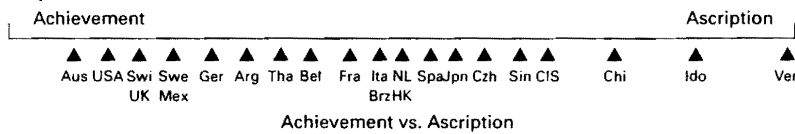
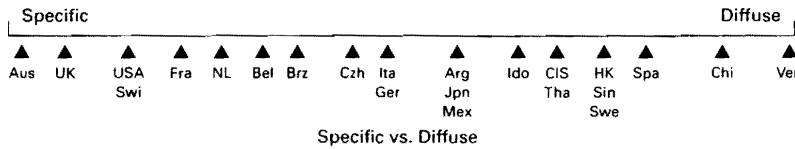
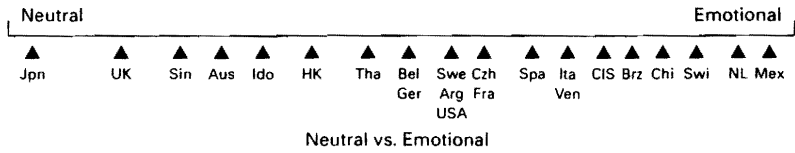
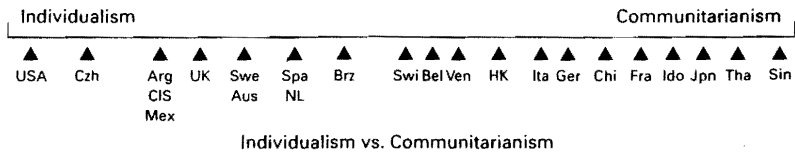
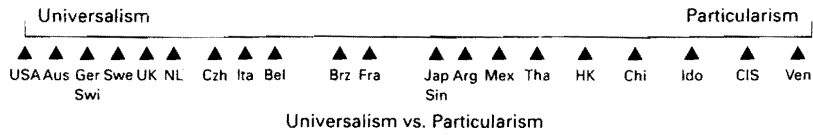
5. achievement culture—“people are accorded status based on how well they perform their functions”

vs.

ascription culture—“status is attributed based on who or what a person is” (H & L, 125-29).

What is important to note from Trompenaars’ work is that, on almost every count, China and the U.S. are on opposite ends of the spectrum. This is the main cause of all the culture shock experienced during my time abroad, which will be explained under the heading of Culture Shock. The U.S. leans toward the universalism, individualism, neutral, specific, and achievement side; whereas, China leans toward the particularism, communitarianism, emotional, diffuse, and ascription side.

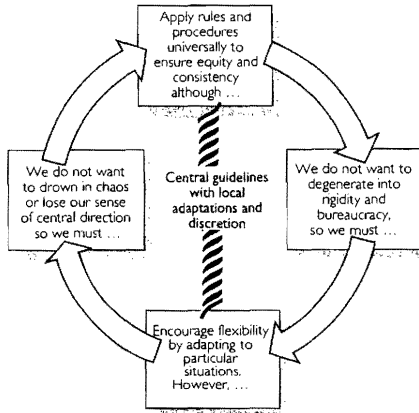
The following chart, extracted from “International Management: Culture, Strategy, and Behavior”, shows the exact placement of the two countries (H & L, 126).



Trompenaars not only derived the five relationship orientations, but also came up with some useful tips for interacting with cultures of opposing orientations. These tips, taken directly from Trompenaars' book, Riding the Waves of Culture, are revealed in the attached tables and will hopefully be useful to any American planning to travel in China (Trompenaars).

Reconciling universalism and particularism

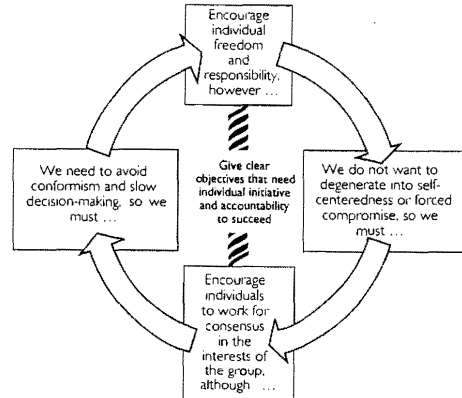
UNIVERSALISM



PARTICULARISM

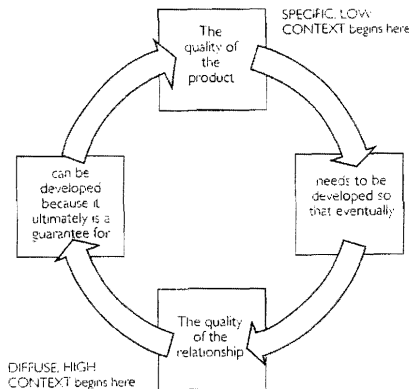
Reconciling individualism and communitarianism

INDIVIDUALISM



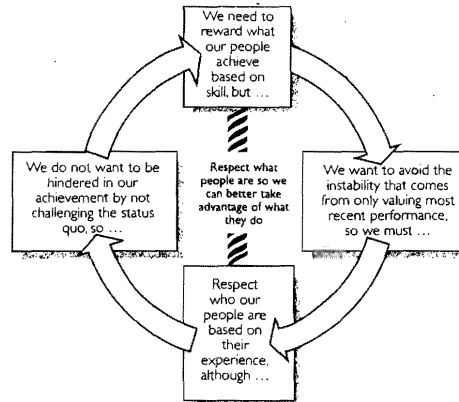
COMMUNITARIANISM

The specific-diffuse circle



Reconciling achievement and ascription

ACHIEVEMENT



ASCRPTION

**Practical tips for doing business in universalist
and particularist cultures**

Recognizing the differences

Universalist	Particularist
1 Focus is more on rules than relationships.	1 Focus is more on relationships than on rules.
2 Legal contracts are readily drawn up.	2 Legal contracts are readily modified.
3 A trustworthy person is the one who honors his or her word or contract.	3 A trustworthy person is the one who honors changing mutualities.
4 There is only one truth or reality, that which has been agreed to.	4 There are several perspectives on reality relative to each participant.
5 A deal is a deal.	5 Relationships evolve.

Tips for doing business with:

Universalists (for particularists)	Particularists (for universalists)
1 Be prepared for "rational", "professional" arguments and presentations that push for your acquiescence.	1 Be prepared for personal "meandering" or "irrelevancies" that do not seem to be going anywhere.
2 Do not take impersonal, "get down to business" attitudes as rude.	2 Do not take personal, "get to know you" attitudes as small talk.
3 Carefully prepare the legal ground with a lawyer if in doubt.	3 Carefully consider the personal implications of your legal "safeguards."

When managing and being managed

Universalists	Particularists
1 Strive for consistency and uniform procedures.	1 Build informal networks and create private understandings.
2 Institute formal ways of changing the way business is conducted.	2 Try to alter informally accustomed patterns of activity.
3 Modify the system so that the system will modify you.	3 Modify relations with you, so that you will modify the system.
4 Signal changes publicly.	4 Pull levers privately.
5 Seek fairness by treating all like cases in the same way.	5 Seek fairness by treating all cases on their special merits.

**Practical tips for doing business in individualist
and communitarian cultures**

Recognizing the differences

Individualism	Communitarianism
1 More frequent use of "I" form.	1 More frequent use of "We" form.
2 Decisions made on the spot by representatives.	2 Decisions referred back by delegate to organization.
3 People ideally achieve alone and assume personal responsibility.	3 People ideally achieve in groups which assume joint responsibility.
4 Vacations taken in pairs, even alone.	4 Vacations in organized groups or with extended family.

Tips for doing business with:

Individualists (for communitarians)	Communitarians (for individualists)
1 Prepare for quick decisions and sudden offers not referred to HQ.	1 Show patience for time taken to consent and consult.
2 Negotiator can commit those who sent him or her and is very reluctant to go back on an undertaking.	2 Negotiator can only agree tentatively and may withdraw an undertaking after consulting with superiors.
3 The toughest negotiations were probably already done within the organization while preparing for the meeting. You have a tough job selling them the solution to this meeting.	3 The toughest negotiations are with the communitarians you face. You must somehow persuade them to cede to you points which the multiple interests in your company demand.
4 Conducting business alone means that this person is respected by his or her company and has its esteem.	4 Conducting business when surrounded by helpers means that this person has high status in his or her company.
5 The aim is to make a quick deal.	5 The aim is to build lasting relationships.

When managing and being managed

Individualists	Communitarians
1 Try to adjust individual needs to organizational needs.	1 Seek to integrate personality with authority within the group.
2 Introduce methods of individual incentives like pay-for-performance, individual assessment, MBO.	2 Give attention to <i>esprit de corps</i> , morale and cohesiveness.
3 Expect job turnover and mobility to be high.	3 Have low job turnover and mobility.
4 Seek out high performers, heroes and champions for special praise.	4 Extol the whole group and avoid showing favoritism.
5 Give people the freedom to take individual initiatives.	5 Hold up superordinate goals for all to meet.

Practical tips for doing business in neutral and affective cultures

Recognizing the differences

Neutral	Affective
1 Do not reveal what they are thinking or feeling.	1 Reveal thoughts and feelings verbally and non-verbally.
2 May (accidentally) reveal tension in face and posture.	2 Transparency and expressiveness release tensions.
3 Emotions often dammed up will occasionally explode.	3 Emotions flow easily, effusively, vehemently and without inhibition.
4 Cool and self-possessed conduct is admired.	4 Heated, vital, animated expressions admired.
5 Physical contact, gesturing or strong facial expressions often taboo.	5 Touching, gesturing and strong facial expressions common.
6 Statements often read out in monotone.	6 Statements declaimed fluently and dramatically.

Tips for doing business with:

Neutrals (for affectives)	Affectives (for neutrals)
1 Ask for time-outs from meetings and negotiations where you can patch each other up and rest between games of poker with the "impassive ones."	1 Do not be put off your stride when they create scenes and get histrionic; take time-outs for sober reflection and hard assessments.
2 Put as much as you can on paper beforehand.	2 When they are expressing goodwill, respond warmly.
3 Their lack of emotional tone does not mean that they are disinterested or bored, only that they do not like to show their hand.	3 Their enthusiasm, readiness to agree or vehement disagreement does not mean that they have made up their minds.
4 The entire negotiation is typically focused on the object or proposition being discussed, not so much on you as persons.	4 The entire negotiation is typically focused on you as persons, not so much on the object or proposition being

When managing and being managed

Neutrals	Affectives
1 Avoid warm, expressive or enthusiastic behaviors. These are interpreted as lack of control over your feelings and inconsistent with high status.	1 Avoid detached, ambiguous and cool demeanor. This will be interpreted as negative evaluation, as disdain, dislike and social distance. You are excluding them from "the family."
2 If you prepare extensively beforehand, you will find it easier to "stick to the point," that is, the neutral topics being discussed.	2 If you discover whose work, energy and enthusiasm has been invested in which projects, you are most likely to appreciate tenacious positions.
3 Look for small cues that the person is pleased or angry and amplify their importance.	3 Tolerate great "surfeits" of emotionality without getting intimidated or coerced and moderate their importance.

Practical tips for doing business in specific and diffuse cultures

Recognizing the differences

Specificity	Diffuseness
1 Direct, to the point, purposeful in relating.	1 Indirect, circuitous, seemingly "aimless" forms of relating.
2 Precise, blunt, definitive and transparent.	2 Evasive, tactful, ambiguous, even opaque.
3 Principles and consistent moral stands independent of the person being addressed.	3 Highly situational morality depending upon the person and context encountered.

Tips for doing business with:

Specific-oriented (for diffuse individuals)	Diffuse-oriented (for specific individuals)
1 Study the objectives, principles and numerical targets of the specific organization with which you are dealing.	1 Study the history, background and future vision of the diffuse organization with which you expect to do business.
2 Be quick, to the point and efficient.	2 Take time and remember there are many roads to Rome.
3 Structure the meeting with time, intervals and agendas.	3 Let the meeting flow, occasionally nudging its process.
4 Do not use titles or acknowledge skills that are irrelevant to the issue being discussed.	4 Respect a person's title, age, background connections, whatever issue is being discussed.

When managing and being managed

Specific-oriented	Diffuse-oriented
1 Management is the realization of objectives and standards with rewards attached.	1 Management is a continuously improving process by which quality improves.
2 Private and business agendas are kept separate from each other.	2 Private and business issues interpenetrate.
3 Conflicts of interest are frowned upon.	3 Consider an employee's whole situation before you judge him or her.
4 Clear, precise and detailed instructions are seen as assuring better compliance, or allowing employees to dissent in clear terms.	4 Ambiguous and vague instructions are seen as allowing subtle and responsive interpretations through which employees can exercise personal judgment.
5 Begin reports with an executive summary.	5 End reports with a concluding overview.

Practical tips for doing business in ascription- and achievement-oriented cultures

Recognizing the differences

Achievement-oriented	Ascription-oriented
1 Use of titles only when relevant to the competence you bring to the task.	1 Extensive use of titles, especially when these clarify your status in the organization.
2 Respect for superior in hierarchy is based on how effectively his or her job is performed and how adequate their knowledge.	2 Respect for superior in hierarchy is seen as a measure of your commitment to the organization and its mission.
3 Most senior managers are of varying age and gender and have shown proficiency in specific jobs.	3 Most senior managers are male, middle-aged and qualified by their background.

Tips for doing business with: .

Achievement-oriented (for ascriptives)	Ascription-oriented (for achievers)
1 Make sure your negotiation team has enough data, technical advisers and knowledgeable people to convince the other company that the project, jointly pursued, will work.	1 Make sure your negotiation team has enough older, senior and formal position-holders to impress the other company that you consider this negotiation important.
2 Respect the knowledge and information of your counterparts even if you suspect they are short of influence back home.	2 Respect the status and influence of your counterparts, even if you suspect they are short of knowledge. Do not show them up.
3 Use the title that reflects how competent you are as an individual.	3 Use the title that reflects your degree of influence in your organization.
4 Do not underestimate the need of your counterparts to do better or do more than is expected.	4 Do no underestimate the need of your counterparts to make their ascriptions come true.

When managing and being managed

Achievement-oriented	Ascription-oriented
1 Respect for a manager is based on knowledge and skills.	1 Respect for a manager is based on seniority.
2 MBO and pay-for-performance are affective tools.	2 MBO and pay-for-performance are less effective than direct rewards from the manager.
3 Decisions are challenged on technical and functional grounds.	3 Decisions are challenged by people with higher authority.

Culture Shock

It has already been noted that there are cultural differences between foreigners and the Chinese. These cultural differences are the cause of culture shock, another of the difficult aspects of living in China. The following section intends to provide an explanation of culture shock from both an academic standpoint and a personal one, as well as tips for coping.

How amazing it is to step off of a plane and suddenly be in a completely different world. It is amazing, but also frightening. The sense of fear would have been overwhelming had it not been for the sheer exhaustion. After nearly thirty hours of travel time, fatigue left little room for awe. The only thought that entered my mind was to find the hotel and get some rest. If only it were so easy! Finding the hotel was in itself a difficult task. First, I had to find a cab and drag my four overstuffed pieces of luggage to it. Then, I had to try and explain to the cab driver (in Chinese of course) where to go. Luckily I had studied some Chinese before embarking on my grand adventure. Somehow we overcame the language barrier and were finally on our way, or so I thought. As it turned out, the cab driver had no idea where my hotel was. We stopped three times for him to ask directions before finally arriving at the destination. As luck would have it, I arrived

late in the evening and was able to go straight to bed. So concluded the first day in China.

It was the next morning that the awe began to sink in. The thought, “Wow, I’m really in China,” kept running through my head. That, and “what the hell was I thinking”. So began the voyage into the wonderful world of culture shock. There are four stages of culture shock: honeymoon, hostility, humor and home. The honeymoon stage, also known as the initial euphoria phase, “begins with the arrival in the new country and ends when this excitement wears off” (Adjustment). It is characterized by exhilaration, discovery and anticipation, perceptions are positive, and emotions include excitement and euphoria. The awe of being in China was a part of this honeymoon stage. One tends to believe that everything (and I do mean everything) is just wonderful, hence the term euphoria. Even the stink in the air was nice. Yes, China does have its own distinct smells. Then comes the hostility or irritability phase:

“[This is when one begins] acclimating to the new setting which produces frustration because of the difficulty in coping with the elementary aspects of everyday life when things still appear so foreign. Your focus will likely turn to the differences between the host culture and your home, and these

differences can be troubling. Sometimes insignificant difficulties can seem like major problems.” (Adjustment).

This phase often evokes emotions directly opposite those found in the honeymoon phase. In this phase, “The novelty wears off and the host culture begins to intrude on the visitor’s life, [causing] confusion, frustration, loss, depression and withdrawal” (Stages). That little bit of smell in the air is now the most heinous smell that ever existed. It is amazing how emotions can flip-flop so easily. Next, one is likely to enter the humor stage. This is a period of gradual adjustment to the new culture. Things that were so frustrating before may now be somewhat funny. It is not such a big deal that the air smells strange. As a matter of fact, it is almost humorous. What on Earth could cause such a stink? Finally, often after a good deal of time has passed, the home stage will be reached. This is a period of true adaptation when one begins to feel that they fit in, as much as is possible, and have the “ability to function in the new culture” (Adjustment).

Most experts agree that culture shock is inevitable in one form or another. It is also agreed that not everyone experiences it in the same manner. As stated by one source:

“Culture shock is [not] some kind of disease that everyone routinely catches and after a certain length of time, recovers from...[some people] never recover from this condition despite the length of their stay [in another culture]” (Adjustment).

It is important to recognize these points. As the saying goes, “foretold is forewarned”. In other words, understanding the phenomenon and its possible causes may help to decrease its effects. This was definitely beneficial in my case because it was important to me to understand why I was prone to become frustrated for seemingly no reason, or why the most insane things would seem funny. The knowledge was helpful for maintaining a relatively stable emotional state. This is not to say that I did not have times when I broke down, but rather that knowing why I was breaking down made it just a little easier to deal with.

As mentioned, everyone experiences culture shock. This is good to know because “knowledge is half the battle”. It is also important to express how one deals with these intense emotions and how best to cope? Below is a

list of general tips taken directly from the Internet, which may help to ease the cultural adjustment.

- Do not take anything too seriously . . . for an open mind is the beginning of a fine international experience.
- Do not let others get on your nerves . . . for you have come a long way to learn as much as you can, to enjoy the experience, and to be a good ambassador for your country.
- Read carefully the information in your Student Guide and from your program . . . those who have gone before you have good advice to share.
- Do not worry . . . for one who worries has no pleasure.
- Remember your passport so that you know where it is at all times . . . a person without a passport is a person without a country.
- Do not judge the people of a country by the one person with whom you have had trouble . . . for this is unfair to the people as a whole.
- You should remember that you are a guest in every land . . . for one who treats a host with respect will be treated as an honored guest.
- Cultivate the habit of listening and observing, rather than merely seeing or hearing.

- Realize that other people may have thought patterns and concepts of time, which are very different than yours—not inferior, just different.
- Be aware of the feelings of local people to prevent what might be offensive behavior.
- Make no promises to local, new friends that you cannot implement or carry through.
- Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences in order to deepen your understanding of your experiences.
- Learn as much as possible about your new culture.
- Develop cross-cultural communication skills including good listening skills and a non-judgmental attitude.
- Learn to take care of yourself in positive ways. Pay attention to your physical and emotional health.
- Form friendships with host nationals.
- Remember the ways you have been able to reduce stress in difficult situations in the past and apply those methods in your present circumstances. For example, you might take a long walk, go to a movie theater, or write a letter to a close friend or relative. Try to see the humor in confusing situations that you encounter; laughter is often the best “medicine”.

- Recognize the advantages of having lived in two different cultures. Meeting people whose cultural backgrounds are not the same as yours will enrich your life. Share your time with many different people. Avoid having friends only from your country but maintain strong personal ties to your culture while you are away from home. Think about how you can help local residents learn how people from your country believe and act.
- Acknowledge your progress in adjusting to the new culture. Think of all that you have learned since the day you arrived. Recognize that, like other people who have lived in an unfamiliar country, you can and will make a successful adjustment to the other culture (Adjustment/Handbook/Coping).

It is not a difficult task to view culture shock from an academic standpoint, as I have done up to this point in the narrative. We know it exists, we know how it typically manifests itself, and we have general tips for how to deal with it. But explaining culture shock on a more personal level is not quite so simple. It is easy to read the books, look at the information and understand *how* to deal, but it is not quite so easy to actually deal. Yes, “knowledge is half

the battle”, but that is just it, it is only *half* the battle. The tough part comes with the actual experience.

The best way to explain what it is really like to deal with culture shock is through the sharing of a real life scenario. It will help show how one copes once in the actual situation. Do keep in mind though, that not everyone’s experience will be the same. The following is just a depiction of my personal trials and tribulations in the world of culture shock.

I stepped off the plane into China and was suddenly immersed into a whole new world. At first, I was so jet lagged that it did not register. It was not until the next day that it began to sink in. From the start, it was obvious that China was going to take some getting used to. At first I was completely awestruck. Everything was so wonderful. I was in the honeymoon stage and nothing could phase me. I recall walking around in a daze attempting to take in all the new sights and sounds. There was so much to experience all at once that only the good was noticeable. But it did not take long for the excitement to wear off. Out of nowhere, everything changed and suddenly China was the last place on Earth I wanted to be. The city had an unsavory aroma (especially when passing one of the public restrooms) and the air seemed to be filled with a thick gray haze. Often there was question of whether or not the sun would ever

appear again. Then there were the people, they annoying, and rude to boot. They were constantly “clearing” their throats and spitting on the ground. It was so bad, that one girl in our group ended up with spit on her face as she rounded a corner. Also, it seemed as though their mothers never tell them that it is rude to stare. After just a few weeks I was already ready to go home. Then out of nowhere my attitude would change again and everything would be fine. The air did not seem to smell quite so bad and the people were not quite so rude. Maybe they were just curious. It actually became quite comical. As I recall commenting in one of my early e-mails, it was funny to watch the Chinese almost get run over by people, bicycles, and even cars when we “Whities” walked by. They would often stare so hard that they would seem to forget to watch where they were going.

Were the Chinese really so rude? Did the air really smell that bad? Was everything there really so horrible? Or on the flip side, were the Chinese amazingly funny? Was the aroma in the air actually somewhat pleasant? And was China just the most wonderful place on Earth to be? No, of course not. All of this was completely dependant upon the phase of culture shock being experienced at the moment. For me, the whole deal was like one big continuous roller coaster. In the beginning the loops were

close together and I would flip flop back and forth between stages almost daily. But with time, the ride became less bumpy.

The first three weeks of my time in China were spent in Beijing. For the most part, the honeymoon phase dominated. There were short bursts of both hostility and humor, but they did not seem to last long. Knowing that the time to be spent in Beijing was limited, I was never able to enter into the home phase. It was not until settling in Shenzhen, where the remainder of the year in China would be spent, that I was able to begin feeling at home. I finally had my own apartment and the chance to actually settle into my new life.

Reverse Culture Shock

A sense of home was developed and I managed to survive the entire year. It would be nice if that were the end of the story, but it is not. After returning to the States, there was a whole new realm of culture shock to be dealt with. This time, it was reverse culture shock experienced during what is known as the re-entry phase. This phase of culture shock is probably the most difficult of all. The problem is that this phenomenon is hard to understand and even harder to explain. The main issue was that upon returning to the States, the realization of how extensively I

had changed began to sink in. This is not an uncommon occurrence when dealing with re-entry. According to one source, it is normal to “realize that you have changed, although you may not be able to explain how” (Adjustment). Being with old friends and family was no longer the same and this was as obvious to them as it was to me. There was a strong desire to tell everyone all about life in China, but it did not take long for them to get bored. It is not so much that I wanted to talk about China all the time, but more that there was nothing else to talk about. Conversation is typically based on day-to-day experiences, and all of mine, over the entire last year, had been in China. My friends just could not understand where I was coming from. It was not until I met a girl who had studied abroad and been through many of the same experiences as I that I was finally put at ease. We talked about our mutual experiences and there seemed to be a true understanding between us. As it turns out, she had felt just the same as I was feeling when she returned home from her time abroad. That alone made me feel more comfortable because I needed to know that I was not crazy. I also desired to know that others had been in my shoes. And finally, I sought someone who could listen to my experiences with the same excitement that I felt as I talked about them. This conversation was all it took for me to finally begin to

readapt to life here in America. If I could go back and do it all over again, I would be sure to seek out other study abroad students immediately upon my arrival back in the States. That is what I suggest for anyone else who may choose to go to China. As soon as you return home, be sure to make contact with others who have been “in your shoes”.

Benefits of Study Abroad

It is understandable that all of this information may be somewhat overwhelming. The intent is not to dissuade anyone from participating in a study abroad program in China, as there are many benefits to study abroad. The most important of these benefits is the opportunity to see life through the eyes of an outsider. China caused me to realize the importance of not judging people based on appearance or social status. The expression “never judge a book by its cover” truly came into play. The learning came from being placed in a position of being judged based on appearance alone, the appearance of a foreigner. It was rare to come across someone who wanted to get to know me for me and this made it quite difficult to ever feel acceptance and a sense of home. Because feeling like a “foreign devil” was such an unpleasant experience, there is now a stronger sense of empathy toward minority groups in

America. If there is one thing to be learned from living in China it is the importance of looking at life from various perspectives. It is to see things from the other side. It is to become a “foreign devil”.

Conclusion: Be Prepared

As preparation is key, hopefully the information provided in these pages has been helpful in preparing readers for a life in China. Participating in such a significant life experience without gaining useful knowledge beforehand often makes the experience more traumatic than need be. If possible, it may be beneficial to follow these basic tips:

1. study the culture beforehand
2. read more books like this one
3. talk to others who have gone before you
4. search the internet for useful information, and
5. brush up on the basics of the language.

There are many resources available to aid in the preparation process. Below is a list of books and Internet sites, broken down into categories, which may be of interest.

Culture, cultural differences, and culture shock:

- International Management: Culture, Strategy, and Behavior by Richard M. Hodgetts and Fred Luthans
- Breaking Through Culture Shock by Elisabeth Marx
- The Art of Crossing Cultures by Craig Storti
- Coping with Culture Shock compiled by International Student Services
<http://www.iaffairs.unl.edu/text/foreign_students/shock.htm>
- Study Abroad Handbook: Living and Studying in a Foreign Country compiled by Central Michigan U
<http://www.oie.cmich.edu/StudyAbroad/HandBook/sahb_page12.htm>
- The World at Your Fingertips: Cultural Adjustment compiled by U of California, Irvine
<<http://www.cie.uci.edu/world/shock.html>>
- Studyabroad.com Handbook
<<http://www.studyabroad.com/handbook/handbook.html>>

China—life, history, people, and interacting:

- China Bound: a Guide to Academic Life and Work in the PRC by Anne F. Thurston, Karen Turner-Gottschang, and Linda A. Reed
- The United States and China by John King Fairbank
- China and the West: Society and Culture 1815-1937 by Jerome Ch'en
- Foreigners Within the Gates by Michael J. Moser and Yeone Wei-Chih Moser
- Foreign Devils in the Flowery Kingdom by Carol Crow
- The Civilization of China by Herbert A. Giles
- Court Life in China by Isaac Taylor Headland
- Communicating Effectively with the Chinese by Ge Gao and Stella Ting-Toomey

Teaching ESL

- Conversational English for the Non-English-Speaking Child by Nina Phillips
- When You Teach English as a Second Language by Constance and Robert Jolly
- EnglishCLUB Teachers' Room: Lesson Plans
<<http://www.englishclub.net>>
- Dave's ESL Café compiled by Dave Sperling
<<http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/>>



**“Foreign Devil”
Teach My Child**

When I arrived in Shenzhen and actually began to teach at my permanent position, it did not go well. There were no resources, no school supplies, very little knowledge base to work from, and only a few ideas for lesson plans. Luckily, there is the Internet. It seems to be by far one of the most useful resources for teachers of ESL. If I were to go back and do it all over again, I would do things quite differently.

Teaching Guides

The first difference would be that my luggage would be packed with more goodies for the kids and less clothing. It was extremely difficult to find useful resources in China, but very easy to find clothes. The school did not even have a decent copy machine. It is not like here in the United States, where you can just stop in at Kinko's and run off some copies of handouts any time you need too. The first piece of advice for all the future teachers out there is....DO NOT assume that the resources you will be provided by your host school will be enough. Instead, plan for the worst. Take as many books, prepared lesson plans, handouts, word puzzles, picture cards, transparencies, Vis-a-Vis markers, etc. as you can possibly fit in your bags. It will be well worth it in the long run. Then, once you arrive at your host school, do not hesitate to ask about any

resources the school may be able to provide. It was months before I got a hold of transparencies and a Vis-a-Vis for the overhead projectors that were in each of the classrooms, and it was not until the end of the year that we learned of the school's movie room that was made available to all teachers. If I had known better, I would have asked all these questions within the first couple of weeks. Instead, I just assumed that my school would let me know of any and all available resources. Big mistake! Some other general tips for teaching are as follows:

- Do not let the students know you speak their language until well into the school year. I made this mistake when teaching in Beijing and it was detrimental. The students decided to speak Chinese in the classroom more than English, which completely defeated the purpose. It was just easier for them to ask a question in Chinese than to try and figure out how to ask in English. It got to be so bad, that I had to change classes after a few short days.
- Take charge from the beginning. Be sure to let the students know who is boss or they will run over you. Keep in mind that some classes need more discipline than others. You may not know this until

you have been teaching them for a while. It is best to begin firm and loosen up with time than to try and regain control after it has been lost. Again, I speak from experience. I lost control of one of my classes in Shenzhen, and I was never able to get it back. In the end, I had to fail eight students on their final exam because they either did not show up for the exam or did not do the work.

- Lay down the law with strict guidelines at the beginning.
- Require the students to refer to you in a formal fashion. For example, my students were required to call me Ms. Drewry. If your last name is too difficult for them to pronounce, then come up with an alternative.
- Know what is expected of the students by the school as well as by their native teachers, and require that you be treated with the same respect. If this becomes a problem with the students, take it to a higher power (i.e.: class teacher, principle, etc.).
- Know what your school will allow you to do in terms of punishment. Sometimes what native teachers can get away with is much more than what a foreigner would be allowed. Do not take the risk

of taking it too far. For example, in China it is common for students to have to stand during an entire class session as punishment for bad behavior, but Americans were asked to avoid this. Having an American ask a student to stand during the entire class it would likely cause the student to lose face, a serious disgrace in China.

- If at all possible, take a class before you dive into teaching. If that is not an option, then at least be sure to read a book or use other educational tools. Preparation pays off in the long run.

Useful Ideas for Any Lesson Plan

Schema Activators—these are catch phrases to get the students thinking and speaking in the right direction. For example, if you are discussing holidays you can begin the class by saying “Happy Holidays” and having the class repeat it back to you. You could also have individual students repeat the phrase “My favorite holiday is_____” and fill in the blank.

Brainstorming—this is pretty self-explanatory. All you have to do is have the class come up with as many words as they can think of on any given topic. We will use the holiday example again. Words related to holidays include....

Christmas	Mid-Autumn Festival
Chinese New Year	Mardi Gras
Valentine’s Day	April Fool’s Day
Thanksgiving	Parades
Birthday cake	Birthdays
Roses	Costumes
Moon cake	Halloween
Jokes	turkey

Mix and Match—again, pretty self-explanatory. Just make two columns of related words and have the students choose which ones best go together.

Christmas	Fireworks
Mid-Autumn	Turkey
Birthday	Jokes
Chinese New Year	Santa Claus
Mardi Gras	Roses
Valentine's Day	Cake
April Fool's Day	Costumes
Thanksgiving	Moon Cake
Halloween	Parades

Christmas=Santa Claus

Mid-Autumn=Moon Cake

Birthday=Cake

Chinese New Year=Fireworks

Mardi Gras=Parades

Valentine's Day=Roses

April Fool's Day=Jokes

Thanksgiving=Turkey

Halloween=Costumes

Scrambled Words—write words with their letters in the wrong order and have the students figure out what the words are.

Ex: trmscihas = Christmas
dmi-tmuanu sivelfat = mid-autumn festival
dtrabhiy = birthday
icnehse wne ayer = Chinese New Year
gktavhisnign = thanksgiving

Last Letter, First Letter—This is a very simple game to get the students speaking. It also practices a little bit of spelling. All it takes is a wad of paper and a topic. First, either the teacher or the class needs to come up with a topic. The teacher begins the game by throwing the “ball” to a student and saying a word that relates to the given topic. The student must then throw the “ball” to another student and say a word having to do with the same topic and beginning with the last letter of the word spoken by the teacher. And so on.

Ex.: Topic = Animals
Teacher: Frog
1st Student: Goat
2nd Student: Tiger
3rd Student: Rat

Toss a Question, Catch an Answer—Again, this is a simple game using a wad of paper. One person will toss the “ball” to another and when they do they must ask a question. The person who catches the “ball” answers the question, tosses the ball to the next person, and asks another question. The teacher may choose to stay on one specific topic, or it can just be random. This will depend on the skill level of the students.

Continuous Story—The teacher begins telling a story. After a few lines, the teacher has one of the students continue telling the story however the student sees fit. After a few more lines, another student should continue with the story. And so on, and so forth.

Student Composition—have the students write their own dialogs or stories based on a given topic.

Reading Comprehension Exercise—read a story to the students and afterward, ask questions to see how much information they retained.

Telephone Game—Begins with the teacher whispering one sentence to a student. That student is then supposed to “pass” the sentence on to the next student and so on until

the last student has been told. The last student is to say the sentence out loud to the group to see how much it changed from the original sentence.

Vocabulary Game—In this simple game, one student should stand at the front of the room with his back to the board. On the board, the teacher writes a vocabulary word, and then the class explains the word to the student without saying the word itself. The student is supposed to guess the word.

Which one Doesn't Belong?—choose a topic and name four items related to that topic. Have students tell you which one does not belong in the group. For example, if the topic is animals, you may say duck, frog, turtle, and cat. The clue here is that three of the four swim and the other does not. Therefore, the cat is the one that doesn't belong. After the students have guessed which one does not belong, you can ask them to explain why.



Other Ideas:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Pictionary | Hangman |
| Crossword Puzzles | Word Search Puzzles |
| Charades | I Spy |
| Red Light, Green Light | Red Rover, Red Rover |
| Songs | Dialogs |
| Tic-Tac-Toe | |

Lesson Plan Ideas for Introductions

Introduce yourself

Introduce yourself to the class using the name you would prefer for them to call you and have them repeat your name back to you.

Ex.: Hello class. My name is Miss Drewry and I am your new English teacher.

Explain the difference between different titles (i.e.: Miss, Ms., Mrs., and Mr.).

Then tell the class a little about yourself and ask them questions afterward to see how much they understood and retained. This is a good way to judge the English speaking level of your new students.

Ex.: I am from Knoxville, Tennessee in America.

I am 23 years old.

I have two brothers and one sister.

I study Chinese at the University of Tennessee.

How old did I say I am?

I have two sisters, right?

Where am I from? Which country is that in?

Am I a student? Where?

Name Tents

Have the students make name tents. Show them how to fold a piece of paper in thirds so that it forms a triangle that will sit on their desk. Have them write their English name on the front of the name tent and add some sort of decoration that tells the class something about them. There is a good chance that many of the students will not have English names yet. It was my experience that coming up with names for fifty kids on the spot was almost impossible. Below is a short list of names that I thought of. If possible, it would be a good idea to take a baby name book with you to class the first few days. Let the students know that they should bring the name tents to class each week. This provides a great opportunity to get the kids talking because you can ask different students to explain their artwork each week.

English Names (boys)

Chris	Dave	John	Greg	Matt
James	Jim	Johnny	Jack	Kevin
Luke	Kenny	Trey	Troy	Tony
Tim	Tom	Harry	Henry	Frank
Jake	Gary	Mark	Josh	Wes
Pat	Jason	Steve	Paul	Rick
Gill	Davis	Dick	Dickerson	Davis

English Names (girls)

Joan	Jackie	Megan	Mary	Kaye
Katie	Carry	Carrie	Joyce	Ann
Becky	Leigh	Patricia	Joy	Cecilia
Grace	Franny	Fran	Faye	Debbie
Melissa	Melanie	Anna	Allison	Tracy
Ellen	Christy	Kristen	Mona	Betty
Becky	Sarah	Liz	Jenny	Tonya

Game of Introductions

Play the game of introductions to further introduce yourself to the students. To play this game you will write words on the board that have significance to who you are. Then you ask the students to guess the significance.

Ex.:

Write these words or phrases on the board:

23	2
Knoxville	UT
Tennessee	July 22
Chinese	frogs

Explanation of the significance of each word or phrase.

My age.	I have two brothers
I live in Knoxville (city).	I attend the University of Tennessee.
I live in Tennessee (state).	My birthday.
My major.	My favorite animal.

If this activity works well you can extend it to have individual students play the role you played above.

Student Information Cards

Now that you have introduced yourself to the students, this is a good opportunity to get information about each of them. This is best organized if you have access to index cards. If not, you can just have the students take out a sheet of paper and write down information about themselves that you feel you may need at a later date.

Ex.:

Name (English and Chinese)


Age and Gender

Where you are from (hometown)

Favorite subject

How long you have studied English

Five things you would like to talk about in this class



Facts and Lies

Have each student come up with three sentences about themselves. Two sentences should be true and one should be false. Then have individual students stand and tell the class their sentences. The class then tries to guess which ones are true and which is the lie.

Review

Ask questions about yourself again. The questions may be open ended.

Ex.:

My name is _____.


I am from _____.

I have ___ brothers.

I study _____ at the University of _____.

I am ___ years old.

My favorite animal is _____.



Lesson Plan Ideas for Teaching Colors

What color is it?

Point to various objects around the classroom and ask the class what colors the objects are.

Ball toss

Toss a ball around the room to random students. The first time around, each student just has to name a color. The second time around they have to say a color and an object that is that color.

Ex.: Red—Apple

Orange—Basketball

Green—Grass

Blue—Sky

Fill in the Blank Story

Read a story to the students, that contains many color words. The first time the story is read, it should include all the colors. The second time, the colors should be left out and the students should fill in the blanks as the story is read.


Ex.:

My best friend Trey has black hair and blue eyes. He likes to eat red apples and yellow bananas. His school colors are orange and white. He always wears a black and yellow hat. His least favorite color is pink and his favorite color is green. He never wears purple clothes, but he often wears brown clothes.

My best friend Trey has _____ hair and _____ eyes. He likes to eat _____ apples and _____ bananas. His school colors are _____ and _____. He always wears a _____ and _____ hat. His least favorite color is _____ and his favorite color is _____. He never wears _____ clothes, but he often wears _____ clothes.

Toss a Question, Catch an Answer

The game begins with all the students standing. The teacher throws the ball to the first student and asks the question "What is your favorite color?" The student catches the ball and answers the question in a complete sentence. Then that student throws the ball to the next student and asks the same question as before. The student who threw the ball is now allowed to sit. Once all students are sitting, the game is over.



Hangman

Prepare a number of small slips of paper before class that have different body parts written on them. Hand out the slips of paper to random students and make sure they don't show anyone. Have one student at a time come to the board and use their word to play a round of hangman.

◐
◐
Lesson Ideas for Learning Animals
◐
◐

◐
Brainstorm in Categories
◐

Choose different categories of animals (ex: fish, fowl, beast) and have the students come up with as many animals as they can in each category.
◐
◐

◐
Schema Activator
◐

Have each student repeat the following, filling in the blanks.
◐

My favorite animal is _____ because _____.

The teacher should start it off.

For example, my favorite animal is a dog because it is cute and smart.
◐
◐

◐
Which one does not belong?
◐

Name three or four different animals and have the class tell you which one does not belong. If you would like to take it a little further you can ask them to explain why.
◐
◐

Ex.: rabbit, dog, cat, snake

The snake does not belong. It is different because it does not have hair. It is also different because it does not have legs.
◐
◐
◐
◐
◐
◐
◐
◐
◐
◐

Ex.: Dog = good pet because it is smart, cute, fun to take
to the park, and is “man’s best friend”
Elephant = bad pet because it is too big, cannot
easily be tamed, and eats too much

Recently Compiled Lesson Plan Ideas

(from <http://www.englishclub.net/lesson-plans/>)

General knowledge quiz 1

Answer all questions in English.

1	How many years make a century?		
2	Name three oceans.		
3	Which is heavier, gold or plastic?		
4	Name two gases.		
5	Name three deserts.		
6	Name three metals.		
7	Name three islands.		
8	Name three birds.		
9	How many legs does an ant have?		
10	Of which country is Vienna the capital?		
11	How many inches are there in a foot?		

12	Is Spain bigger than Portugal?		
13	Where do polar bears live?		
14	How many legs does a spider have?		
15	How many feet are there in a yard?		
16	Is Laos or Wales nearer China?		
17	Name three rivers.		
18	Is a mushroom animal or vegetable?		
19	How many sides does an octagon have?		
20	How many pennies are there in a dollar?		
		score (out of 20):	

Hello Bingo!

Set up a page with 5 columns and 5 rows. Each box holds a different inquiry. Students must circulate around the room and speak with other students to complete the information in the boxes. The first student who completes the boxes in rows like a bingo game (across, down, diagonally) is the winner. This is an excellent activity for the first few days of class. Some inquiries that are especially good, and don't reflect a particular nationality are:

Someone who likes oranges	Someone with more than 5 children	Someone who has lived in more than 2 countries	Someone who is married more than 15 years	Someone who is married less than 1 year
Someone who cannot drive a car	Someone who can use a computer	Someone who...	etc	
Someone who works in a restaurant	Someone who...	etc		

Someone who doesn't know how to cook	etc			
Someone who visited the dentist this week (month)				

Secret Code

This activity is useful at the beginning of the year after a long-term holiday, such as those in Argentina (3 months in all). This will break the ice in new groups as they will introduce each other and talk about themselves.

Stage I: Welcome your students to the class and invite them to pick a lollipop or sweet. They will find a rolled piece of paper wrapped around their sweet or lollipop. It will contain a hidden message that they will have to solve individually first.

Stage II: Tell them the aim of the game, but make it clear that they will need to remember the letters of the alphabet to work out their hidden message. So make a quick revision by brainstorming the letters and writing them on the board. Next, tell students that each letter contained in their coded message uses the next letter in the alphabet. That is to say that if they have for example: 'TBZ ZPVS OBNF' this will mean ' Say your name'. Pick up one sweet for you and demonstrate the activity by writing the solution of your code on the board. Solve one or two clues as a demonstration, and once they know what they have to do, give them five minutes to solve the rest of the message.

Stage III: In turns then they carry out the instructions found in their hidden messages.

Duration: The whole activity takes up to 15 minutes. Not only can it be used as a socializing activity but also as a warmer activity whenever you need to revise structures or vocabulary previously taught.

Optional: If you have advanced levels you may adapt this activity in order to make them talk for about a minute on any topic they are familiar with, such as, 'favorite pop music, videogames, pros and cons etc'. This activity may be adapted to be used throughout the year.

Animals

Can you find an ANIMAL for each letter of the alphabet?

A	N
B	O
C	P <i>Panther</i>
D	Q
E	R
F	S
G	T
H	U
I	V
J	W
K	X
L	Y
M	Z

Country, nationality and language

She comes from... (country)	She is... (nationality)	She speaks... (language)
France		
	English	
	American	
Singapore	Singaporean	
Russia		
	German	
Scotland		
Spain		

	Columbian	
Australia		
Senegal		French
Hong Kong		
Canada		
	Egyptian	
Sweden		

Size

Put the following words in order of size, with the biggest or strongest at the top.

WATER

pond, puddle, ocean, lake, sea, pool

WIND

draught, gale, breeze, hurricane

ACCOMMODATION

cottage, tent, caravan, palace, bungalow, villa

WATER	WIND	ACCOMMODATION

Expressions of quantity

Insert the following Expressions of Quantity into the appropriate box:

a little any any many

a few many much lots of

some a lot of much

	COUNTABLE i.e.: onions	UNCOUNTABLE i.e.: salt
I've got ...	1	
+	2	3
	4	5

I haven't got ... -	6	
	7	8
Have you got .. ? ?	9	
	10	11

Describing things

Describe the following objects by shape, color and material:

	Shape	Color	Material
Briefcase			
Clock			
Casio watch			
Pencil sharpener			

Envelope			
Diskette			

Some words you can use:

rectangular, cylindrical, white, flat, silver, gray, metal,
square, yellow, brown, round, gold, black, plastic, glass,
paper

—
—
— **Word stress**

— **Listen to the teacher say each word. Then underline the**
— **stressed syllable:**

— 1 mother

— 2 America

— 3 computer

— 4 guarantee

— 5 paper

— 6 machine

— 7 answer

— 8 introduce

— 9 visitor

— 10 about

— 11 afraid

— 12 another

— 13 telephone

— 14 Japan

— 15 hotel

— 16 Hong Kong

— 17 animal

— 18 between

— 19 hairdresser

— 20 China
—
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—

Odd-One-Out

This simple activity practices vocabulary and to some extent speaking. Make a list of four or five words, all but one of which have something in common. Ask the students to find the "odd-one-out".

Don't be surprised if they come up with some surprising answers. Just ask them to justify their choice. You may well find it logical. Take, for example:

- **dog, cat, donkey, dragon**

The answer could be **dragon** (because it is the only mythical creature) or **cat** (because all the other words start with "d").

Ideally, the students should phrase their justification in a form such as:

- I think the odd-one-out is **dragon** *because it is a mythical creature and all the others are real creatures.*

Here are some suggested words. You can easily find more. And one good exercise is to ask your students to create some lists (along with valid justifications).

Words	Some possible answers
dog, cat, donkey, dragon	cat - begins c dragon - mythological
banana, tomato, peach, apple, pear	banana - shape
Thailand, Singapore, Tokyo, England, Vietnam	Tokyo - city, not country England - not in Asia
car, airplane, truck, bus, train	airplane - flies truck - not for passengers train - guided by rails
camera, computer, television, telephone, fax- machine	camera - doesn't need electricity television - 4 syllables

love, hatred, fear, greed, anger	love - positive greed - not an emotion
hotel, motel, town-house, condominium, classroom	condominium - 5 syllables classroom - not for residence
water, bottle, shop, pencil, river	water - uncountable noun
branch, strawberry, anvil, iceberg, boat	anvil - doesn't float in water

Opposite adjectives

Match the words in each column that mean the opposite or very nearly the opposite.

positive	extinct
intelligent	export
industrious	negative
complex	small
living	disagree
import	take
agree	lady
provide	simple
gentleman	lazy
enormous	stupid

Question tags


Add question tags to these statements to make questions:


- 1 You come from China,
- 2 He had to leave at 7 o'clock,
- 3 She hasn't got a dog,
- 4 It isn't snowing,
- 5 Jenny was hoping to come,
- 6 It's stopped raining,
- 7 He'd better come on time,
- 8 We've done this before,
- 9 You don't like football,
- 10 She won't be late,
- 11 Annie's French,
- 12 It was last week that we met,
- 13 That's wrong,
- 14 You'd never have thought it,
- 15 The sun will be shining tomorrow,
- 16 He'd rather go home,
- 17 He can't sing,
- 18 You should leave earlier,
- 19 I must stop,
- 20 Let's start,

WH- Question Practice

Teacher or pair student says: Ask me...

1. what my name is.
2. my nationality.
3. where I live.
4. how long I have lived there.
5. how much a packet of cigarettes costs.
6. where to buy sugar.
7. where to find a cash dispenser.
8. how big the room is.
9. how many legs the table has.
10. what the time is.
11. where the whiteboard is.
12. if I am well.
13. how I am.
14. if the mail has arrived yet.
15. what the film was like.

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16. what a crocodile looks like.
 17. what Mary's address is.
 18. how big Paris is.
 19. how many people there are in London.
 20. what my favorite film is.
 21. what to do next.
 22. when to leave to catch the bus.
 23. how much money you will need.
 24. how many people there are in the room.
 25. how many cups of coffee I have each day.
 26. how long the room is.
 27. how wide the room is.
 28. how high the ceiling is.
 29. what the size of the room is.
 30. where I bought my socks.
 31. why I am not wearing a hat.
 32. why I can't speak Russian.

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33. what 'ameliorate' means.
 34. how much money I can lend you.
 35. when I arrived at school.
 36. what I saw at the cinema last night.
 37. whether the film was good.
 38. who my favorite film star is.
 39. when Winston Churchill was born.
 40. whether I like swimming.
 41. whether I would like to go swimming now.
 42. whether I am going on holiday this summer.
 43. whether I have ever been abroad.
 44. if I will lend you \$100.
 45. how to spell the word 'irresistible'.

Controversial Statements

Here are some great controversial statements to get the conversation going. Use them in various ways. Give one or a few to students for pair/group discussion. Or casually toss one of these statements yourself into the conversation at an appropriate moment. Or organize a debate.

A woman's place is in the home.

Fare dodging on a train or bus is ok if you can get away with it.

Boys and girls should not have equal education.

A foreign language cannot be taught. It must be learned.

A country gets the government it deserves.

A man should have a wife for the family and a mistress for pleasure.

All property should be owned by the state.

Murderers should be executed.

Soft drugs like marijuana should be legalized.

Beauty is only a matter of taste.

Riches are for spending.

We are all basically selfish.

Punishment never has any good effect.

Those who can do, those who can't teach.

You will be happier if you stay unmarried.

People work better if they are paid more.

Committing suicide should be made legal.

Royalty and democracy are incompatible.

Vocabulary Cards

This is a classroom activity that works quite well.

Prepare index cards with sample sentences using the vocabulary of the course. Then prepare (on the computer) envelopes with the individual vocabulary word on the front where the address would go.

Insert the card into the envelope.

Students are dealt envelopes like a deck of cards, at random, two or three at a time.

They have to write their own sentences using the vocabulary word on the outside of the envelope.


They are only allowed to look inside after their own sentence is written, to check if they did it correctly.

The index card could also have the grammar rules, punctuation rules, spelling rules for irregular verbs, etc. Whatever was required by the lesson.

The nice thing about this method is that students all do not have to write sentences using the same words as the other students. When you have 40 students in a class, it is tedious to listen to all the same sentences.

This breaks the vocabulary list up for everyone to learn.

This may be done with many variations, including just giving the students an index card with the word



and they must use their dictionary to look up the word, write the part of speech and a sentence.

The variations are really limited by time and imagination.

Sometimes, when the students are all seated, you can fan out the cards like a regular playing deck, and they can choose their own from the pack!

As the work is completed, students return the cards and envelopes and another set is handed out. By the end of the class, the words have rotated around the room.

This also would work for math problems.

It is especially good for teamwork, where students have to solve real life problems and write paragraphs.

Songs 4 All


1. **Puzzles:** these can be done in big construction paper pieces (whole class) or using small paper strips (pair work/teamwork). You can scramble: stanzas, lines or words.
2. **Fill in the blanks:** you can select the words to hide at random or according to your teaching point, e.g. parts of speech (nouns, verbs).
3. **Pictures:** you can use flashcards as cues for filling in the blanks activities. Another option is to use pictures for story-telling/writing: give students a picture for each team and ask them to create a side story. Some tips for writing a story are: give the names, occupation and physical description of the characters; describe the place they live in; describe their relationship.
4. **Context questions:** after the song, you can ask students to answer true/false, comprehension or multiple choice questions to check for main ideas understanding. Your class can also discuss topics related to love songs, such as trust, love, faithfulness etc.



St. Valentine's Day Lesson

Here is a very successful lesson devoted to St Valentine's Day.

1. Decorate your class for this occasion. A month before Valentine's start a contest for the best Valentine's card and for a poem or translation of a piece of poetry devoted to the topic. Make an exhibition of best works.
2. Start your class with some nice poem ("It's Valentine's Day" by Jack Prelutsky) or song about love. You can give your students a chance to listen to it and after that they can do a "fill-in" test using the song (e.g. "And I love her" by the Beatles is very nice to hear and to write the words - I have even used it as a dictation).
3. Put the question: "What is "love"?" Give some dictionary definitions. Then ask students to create their own definition of love. You can use the poem "Love is..." by Greg Scelsa as an example.

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4. The next question is "Why do people love each other?" Start with the poem "I love you more than applesauce" by Jack Prelutsky and after the discussion ask students to create their own "I love you more than..." poems.
 5. Don't forget to praise the winners of the contest somehow and to show the best works.
 6. Finish your class with some more songs about love.

(Lesson Plans)

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