

Handshake Activity

Teacher's note: This activity attempts to promote the exploration of cultures embodied by each student. In groups (3–4 people), students will first discuss the activities that define the group (e.g., football, church, etc.). Next, they will define their group culture as a whole (e.g., athletes, Greeks, etc.). Finally, they will compose, discuss, and demonstrate a handshake that symbolizes their defined culture to the rest of the class.

Prompt:

Today's activity is called the Handshake Exercise. You will be creating a handshake that symbolizes a culture.

Steps:

1. In a group, introduce yourselves and share at least three things that you do that define you, and why you enjoy them. For example, "Hi my name is David, I am a soccer player, musician, and college student. I like these things because" (Time: 5 minutes)
2. Next, discuss common activities that define the group as a whole and why. For example, "Together as a group, we are athletes because" (Time: 2–3 minutes)
3. Then, create a handshake that represents your group. For example, "we bump elbows rather than shake hands because we are surgeons. If we hurt our hands we lose our livelihood." Your handshake can be one move or a series of moves. Also, your handshake can involve just two of the group members or all of them. The point is to be as creative as possible when imaging how to symbolize your culture. (10 minutes)
4. Finally, discuss and present your handshake to the rest of the class. Each group member should participate.