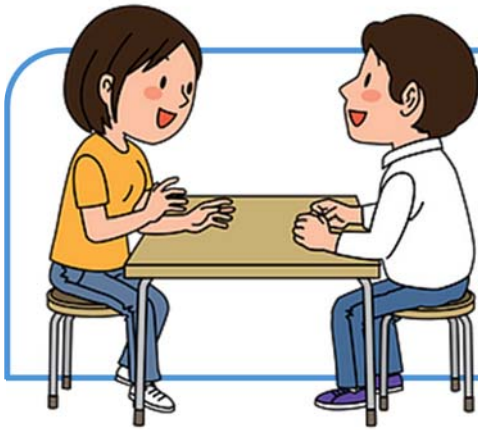


Name _____



Gesture Meanings

Directions: Read the passage about cultural body language carefully. Then answer the questions that follow to show what you learned about how gestures and facial expressions can mean different things in different places.

When people communicate, they often use gestures and facial expressions without thinking. However, not every culture reads those signals the same way. For example, in the United States, making direct eye contact is often seen as a sign of confidence and honesty. In some Asian cultures, though, too much eye contact can seem disrespectful or challenging. Similarly, the "thumbs-up" gesture in the United States usually means "good job" or "OK," but in parts of the Middle East, it can be considered rude. Even smiling can mean different things. In many Western countries, smiling shows friendliness, while in some cultures, people smile to hide embarrassment or discomfort. Understanding these differences helps us communicate respectfully and avoid misunderstandings in a global world.

1. What does direct eye contact usually mean in the United States?

2. How can the meaning of eye contact differ in some Asian cultures?

3. What does the "thumbs-up" gesture mean in the United States, and how can it be viewed differently elsewhere?

4. Why might someone smile when they feel embarrassed?

5. What is one reason it is important to understand cultural differences in body language?

