

A photograph of the Tejpal Temple in Jaipur, India, showing its white marble facade and multiple minarets against a clear sky.

Expectation vs. Reality

Grade Level: Grades 7–12

Objective: To become familiar with the ABC World Culture database while comparing expectations with reality for a chosen international country.

Duration: 1 – 2 hours

Materials: Expectation vs. Reality instructions, individual access to ABC World Culture for all participating students, writing materials

Instructions: Select a country to learn more about, make predictions about its culture, review content modules relevant to your predictions and then write about how the country's reality is similar to or different from your expectations.

Assignment 1: Select a country to learn about.

- Go to ABC World Culture and review the world map or peruse the list of countries.
- Choose one country to virtually visit for this exercise.

Assignment 2: Make your predictions.

- Go to that country's Maps module to find out more about your country's place in the world. Pay attention to the geography, the neighboring countries, etc.
- Based on your review of the map, address the following questions in a short writing exercise:
 - Based on this country's location, what are your expectations regarding the culture?
 - In what language/s do you guess that suppose greet each other? Are any of these languages spoken in your home country?
 - Would you imagine that most residents have their roots in this country, or would you expect a large recent immigrant population?
 - Would you expect that most residents are of the same ethnic background and religion, or would you expect a high degree of ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural diversity in this place?
 - How would you expect the cuisine to be similar to and different from the food eaten in your home country?
 - Overall, how do you suppose this country's culture is similar to and different from the mainstream culture and other cultures found in your home country?

Assignment 3: Expectations versus reality.

- Now read the articles in the following modules: Country Snapshot, Cultural Overview, The People, Language, Points of Interest, and National Cuisine.
- Address the following questions in a short writing exercise:
 - How do your guesses before reading compare to the actual lives of this country's citizens?
 - What is as you expected, and what surprises you?
 - Would you want to travel to the country you studied? Why or why not?
 - Do you feel more or less inclined to travel in general, after this exercise, than you did before? Why?

Extra Credit: Present what you've learned to a classmate or parent and discuss what you learned from this exercise.