

**ИНОСТРАННЫЕ ЯЗЫКИ И МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОММУНИКАЦИЯ**  
**(Английский язык) /**  
**FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**  
**(English Language)**

10-11 классы / 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Grades

Вариант 6 / Version 6

**Duration – 80 minutes**  
**Maximum score – 100 points**

**The test consists of 2 parts: Language and Culture Studies and Analytical Writing.**

**PART 1. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE STUDIES (50 points)**

**Task 1. For questions 1-6, read the text below and answer the questions (24 points).**

**Understanding the concept of ‘space’**

While awaiting a friend at Keflavik Airport, I observed a quintessential display of Icelandic behavior. The arrivals area at the lovely ‘Kef’ represents the design of many international terminals: a large sliding door marks the threshold where incoming passengers seek out familiar faces. The waiting zone can accommodate approximately five hundred people in a concert-like style; or comfortably around fifty Japanese or English individuals adhering to their cultural norms of personal space.

Arriving early, I positioned myself slightly off-center in the open space, engaging with my Twitter feed and reading The Guardian on my smartphone. There were five or ten other people there—most of them lingering towards the front and the remainder randomly scattered. Everything was good. My initial idea to make it there early and chill out was working just fine. However, as time progressed, the space began to fill. And there were obvious walkways between the human obstructions.

Then the inevitable happened. People started using the walkway directly in front of me and I was being treated as the human equivalent of a wall: as something to bump. I stood, as one does while using a smartphone, holding the device with one hand and scrolling with the other, extending the phone approximately ten centimeters from my body.

This was clearly too much for the people to handle. As they were walking past me, my finely-tuned proximity alarms were going off like mad and warning me of impending collisions, of people walking straight at me and that if I didn’t get out of the way, a collision would happen. My life in England taught me the gentle give-and-take dance that the people in cities develop, that motion of

being in close proximity whilst not invading other people's space. However, I decided to conduct an experiment and to see what would happen if I fought the instinct and just stood my ground.

So, the bumping got worse. People passed close, nearly dislodging my phone from my grasp. Then, a glorious thing happened. One man, embodying the quintessential Icelandic approach to social interaction, obviously reflected a lack of spatial awareness and consideration.

"Ah-ROO-GAA!" His presence was announced not by words but by his attire — worn-out sports clothing, scruffy black sneakers, and unwashed hair. He positioned himself directly in front of me, his companion by his side, reducing the distance from my phone to his back to a mere ten centimeters. So not only was he completely blocking my view, he was also seriously invading my personal space. He obviously wanted a clear view of the arriving travellers and it didn't even occur to him that he might have been blocking someone's view.

Determined to continue for the sake of social observation, I maintained my position, sacrificing my comfort. So, he bobbed and weaved to improve his view, colliding with me multiple times. In England, such behavior would warrant immediate apologies and recognition of the intrusion. However, he saw nothing wrong with what he was doing. To him, this behavior was normative, with no intention to offend.

This encounter underscores a broader social phenomenon. Across cultures, individuals establish varying comfort zones. Proxemics, the study of personal space, reveals that the distance people maintain in social interactions varies significantly. In cultures with a low territorial imperative, individuals are more inclined to share space, whether in public areas, workplaces, or communal settings. In other countries such as my own, and the USA, for example, greater personal distance is preferable, while close proximity can induce discomfort.

*by the Reykjavik Grapevine*

1. According to the author, culture plays a significant role in people's perception of space.
  - a) True
  - b) False
2. The primary reason the Icelandic man positioned himself directly in front of the author was because
  - a) the man wanted to block the author's view intentionally.
  - b) the man was unaware of the author's presence and did not consider his personal space.
  - c) the man was trying to have a better view of the arriving passengers.
  - d) the man wanted to engage in a social interaction with the author.
3. What was the author's experience in the waiting area of the Keflavik Airport? Check all that apply.
  - a) The author was trying to find a less crowded spot to stand.
  - b) The author was able to relax and engage with his digital devices at first.
  - c) The author found the waiting area to be well-designed and accommodating.
  - d) The author was trying to analyse the social behaviour of people around.

4. The author stayed in his place because he wanted to assert his dominance and claim his personal space.
- a) True
  - b) False
  - c) Not stated
5. Match these characteristics with English or Icelandic behaviour descriptions given in the text.
- a) People would offer apologies if invading someone's personal space. ENGLAND/ICELAND
  - b) People prefer close proximity in social interactions. ENGLAND/ICELAND
  - c) People feel less formal about space, focusing more on practical needs. ENGLAND/ICELAND
  - d) People have a strong sense of personal distance. ENGLAND/ICELAND
6. In paragraph 1, find the word that means 'following, sticking to, or being faithful to' = \_\_\_\_\_ (*type it in small letters*).

**Task 2. For questions 7-12, think of one word which can be used appropriately in all three idioms, proverbs, or expressions from around the world. Type the word in small letters (12 points).**

7. A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ is a friend you have not yet met. (Swedish proverb)  
Don't share your personal matters with a(n) \_\_\_\_\_. (Hindi proverb)  
A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ has no friend. (Arabic proverb)
8. Love your \_\_\_\_\_, but don't tear down your fence. (German proverb)  
When your \_\_\_\_\_ walks through your orchard, the polite thing to do is to ignore it. (Chinese proverb)  
A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ who doesn't greet you is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ who doesn't like you. (Spanish proverb)
9. Leave a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ between you and others that makes them comfortable. (Arabic proverb)  
\_\_\_\_\_ is not measured in meters, but in feelings. (Spanish proverb)  
The \_\_\_\_\_ between words is as important as the words themselves. (French proverb)
10. He who travels a lot becomes wise; he who is wise stays \_\_\_\_\_. (Chinese proverb)  
Rather free in a foreign place than a slave back \_\_\_\_\_. (Norwegian proverb)  
An Englishman's \_\_\_\_\_ is his castle. (Traditional proverb)
11. Familiarity breeds contempt; distance breeds \_\_\_\_\_. (Nigerian proverb)  
\_\_\_\_\_ spiritual beings but keep your distance. (Chinese proverb)  
Whoever does not \_\_\_\_\_ you, insults you. (Moroccan proverb)

12. The \_\_\_\_\_ is like a prince when he comes, a prisoner when he stays, and a poet when he goes away. (Arabic proverb)  
 A constant \_\_\_\_\_ is never welcome. (German proverb)  
 A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ becomes a burden after a while. (Turkish proverb)

**Task 3. For questions 13-19, match the sociocultural facts with their countries of origin. There are more countries than you will need (14 points).**

<b>A</b>	Spain	<b>D</b>	Saudi Arabia	<b>G</b>	India
<b>B</b>	Brazil	<b>E</b>	Japan	<b>H</b>	the USA
<b>C</b>	Sri Lanka	<b>F</b>	Nigeria	<b>I</b>	South Korea

13. In this country there is a Festival of Colours, where people throw colored powders and water at each other which involves a temporary break from normal boundaries and personal space, symbolising unity and the joy of shared experience.
14. This European country holds La Tomatina festival the participants of which engage in a massive tomato fight, where personal space is significantly reduced highlighting how space can be creatively redefined in a celebratory context.
15. In this island country, subways have special cars that are to be used only by women to avoid violations of their personal or intimate space by men.
16. Due to the very condensed geographical space and the amount of people who occupy it, personal space is not guarded very closely in this country as people generally expect to come into contact with strangers on busy streets and tend not to worry or apologise when personal space is invaded as compared to the Western countries.
17. Cultural norms of this country dictate that men and women who are not related maintain a significant distance and avoid physical contact.
18. People of this island country use a head waggle as a sign of appreciation or acknowledgement at someone which may also be seen on the train every time someone new gets on, or on the street when people who know each other cross paths.
19. In this country people like to keep more open space between themselves and their conversation partners: roughly 4 feet (1.2 m) compared to 2 to 3 feet (0.6–0.9 m) in Europe.

## **PART 2. ANALYTICAL WRITING (50 points)**

**Task 4. Now you have learned about the concept of space in intercultural communication. Write an essay analysing the role of personal space in social interactions in your everyday life from the perspective of your cultural experience and background. Your essay should have an introduction, two/three body paragraphs, and a conclusion.**

**You must:**

- define the cultural phenomenon using your own words;
- explain how this cultural phenomenon impacts intercultural communication;

- analyse how this cultural phenomenon is reflected in your culture in the given sphere providing examples.

**You can receive a maximum of 50 points for this task.**

## **ANSWER KEY**

### **TASK 1**

- 1) A
- 2) C
- 3) B, D
- 4) B
- 5) a - ENGLAND; b - ICELAND; c - ICELAND; d - ENGLAND
- 6) adhering/ adhere

### **TASK 2**

- 7) stranger
- 8) neighbor / neighbour
- 9) space / distance
- 10) home
- 11) respect
- 12) guest

### **TASK 3**

- 13) G
- 14) A
- 15) E
- 16) I
- 17) D
- 18) C
- 19) H