

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

10-11 классы / 10th and 11th Grades

Вариант 2 / Version 2

The test consists of 2 parts: Language and Culture Studies and Analytical Writing.
Duration – 80 minutes.

PART 1. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE STUDIES (50 points)

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

Which fruit are you?

Back when I could socialise freely, I was once at a dinner-party and among the small-talk introductions I casually asked a French couple how long they had been together. For me it seemed like a normal exchange of information, but according to their facial expression the question had caught them off-guard.

It's a classic mistake. One of the first things you notice when arriving in a new culture is that the rules about what information is and is not appropriate to ask and share with strangers are different. Understanding those rules, however, is a prerequisite for succeeding in that new culture; simply applying your own rules gets you into hot water pretty quickly.

A good way to prepare is to ask yourself whether the new culture is a "peach" or a "coconut". In peach cultures like the USA or Brazil people tend to be friendly ("soft") with new acquaintances. They smile frequently at strangers, move quickly to first-name usage, share information about themselves, and ask personal questions of those they hardly know. But after a little friendly interaction with a peach, you may suddenly get to the hard shell of the pit where the peach protects his real self and the relationship suddenly stops.

In coconut cultures such as Russia and Germany, people are initially more closed off from those they don't have friendships with. They rarely smile at strangers, ask casual acquaintances personal questions, or offer personal information to those they don't know intimately. But over time, as coconuts get to know you, they become gradually warmer and friendlier. And while relationships are built up slowly, they also tend to last longer.

Coconuts may react to peaches in a couple of ways. Some interpret the friendliness as an offer of friendship and when people don't follow through on the unintended offer, they conclude that the peaches are disingenuous or hypocritical. Igor Agapov, a Russian colleague, was surprised on his first trip to the United States: "I sat next to a stranger on the airplane for a flight to New York. This American began asking me very personal questions: was it my first trip to the U.S., what

was I leaving behind in Russia, had I been away from my children for this long before? He also shared very personal information about himself, his wife and a newborn child.” In response, Agapov started to do something unusual in Russian culture. He shared his personal story thinking they had built an unusually deep friendship in a short period of time: “I thought that after this type of connection, we would be friends for a very long time. When the airplane landed, imagine my surprise when, as I reached for a piece of paper in order to write down my phone number, my new friend stood up and said, ‘Nice to meet you! Have a great trip!’ And that was it. I never saw him again.

On the other hand, coming from a peach culture as I do, I was equally taken aback when I came to live in Europe and my friendly smiles and personal comments were greeted with cold formality which I took as signs of arrogance, snobbishness, and even hostility.

So what do you do if you’re a peach fallen amongst coconuts? Authenticity matters; if you try to be someone you’re not, it never works. So go ahead and smile all you want and share as much information about your family as you like. Just don’t ask personal questions of your counterparts until they bring up the subject themselves. And for my coconut readers, if your peach counterpart asks how you are doing, shows you photos of their family or even invites you over for a barbecue, don’t take it as an overture to deep friendship or a cloak for some hidden agenda, but as an expression of different cultural norms that you need to adjust to.

by Erin Meyer

1. According to the author, to communicate successfully with a representative of a different culture you need to be able to resort to the patterns of behaviour of your culture.
 - a) True
 - b) False

2. According to the author, the representatives of peach cultures tend to (*choose all that apply*):
 - a) be cautious not to reveal too much about themselves.
 - b) be genuine and show their real self.
 - c) close up after a short friendly conversation.
 - d) avoid talking about their interlocutor.

3. People representing coconut cultures may often regard people representing peach culture as
 - a) being initially distant and hard to communicate.
 - b) being generous and willing to give support and help.
 - c) being insincere or not telling what they really mean.
 - d) willing to say something behind someone’s back.

4. The behaviour of a stranger on an airplane was unexpected in the context of his culture as he shared some personal information.

- a) True
 - b) False
 - c) Not stated
5. Match these characteristics with 'Peach' or 'Coconut' culture patterns of communicative behaviour given in the text.
- a) The inability to easily engage in conversation with the person they meet for the first time. PEACH/COCONUT
 - b) Ease with which a relationship is established at the outset does not grant access to all areas of that person's world. PEACH/COCONUT
 - c) A longer developmental process is required to establish a long-term relationship. PEACH/COCONUT
 - d) Relationships may not last very long as they are built-up rather quickly and not very deeply PEACH/COCONUT
6. Find the word from the text that means the following: 'something that is required as a condition for something to happen' = _____ (*type it in 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. Friendship is a plant we must often _____. (German proverb)
 Friendship between gentlemen appears indifferent but is pure like _____. (Chinese proverb)
 The friendship of _____ and fish. (Japanese proverb)
8. There are many kinds of fruit that _____ on the tree of life, but none so sweet as friendship. (American proverb)
 Absence makes the heart _____ fonder. (American proverb)
 May the hinges of our friendship never _____ rusty. (Irish proverb)
9. In the _____ of the good we become good. (Dutch Proverbs)
 Cheerful _____ shortens the journey. (German Proverbs)
 In a choice between bad _____ and loneliness — the second is preferable. (Spanish Proverb)
10. An enemy will _____, but a friend will argue. (Russian proverb)
 If you seek a reputation for wisdom, _____ with everyone. (Yiddish proverb)
 The wolf and the dog _____ about the goat -- which together they eat. (Basque proverb)
11. Friendship with the French is like their wine; exquisite but _____ lived. (German proverb)
 _____ reckonings make long friends. (German proverb)
 God bless him who pays visits – _____ visits. (Arab proverb)
12. A friend's frown is better than a fool's _____ . (Danish Proverb)

All are not friends who _____ at you. (Dutch Proverb)

Whoever welcomes his friend with a _____, it's as though he gave his friend the finest gifts in the world. (Hebrew 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).

A	Saudi Arabia	D	Nigeria	G	Uzbekistan
B	France	E	Japan	H	New Zealand
C	Argentina	F	USA	I	Kenya

13. In this island country there are 9 ways to say 'friend' which may include the level of formality of the situation as well as the relationship with this person and the description of different types of friends in life: from acquaintances to close and best friends.
14. Indigenous people of this country greet each other by pressing their nose and forehead together with the nose and forehead of the person they are greeting which means the sacred welcoming of a visitor into the culture.
15. The word for 'friend' in the language of this country in the eastern part of the continent comes from the Arabic word meaning 'companion' and it is also used as the name of a supporting character in one of the most famous Disney's animated feature films.
16. To receive a gift which is thoroughly examined as a sign of appreciation from anyone but the closest friend is considered inappropriate and embarrassing in this country.
17. The date of the celebration of Friend's Day in this country is different from that of the UN as it corresponds to the day of Neil Armstrong's landing on the moon as the professor who promoted this celebration date was greatly inspired by the event which united all the people.
18. In this country close friends and relatives often greet each other with kissing which is most often done two or three times on alternating cheeks and which is a more vibrant display of affection than a simple handshake.
19. In this country relationships are usually categorised into groups such as 'family friends', 'college buddies', 'colleagues' and so on.

PART 2. ANALYTICAL WRITING (50 points)

Task 4. Now you have learned about the notion of 'peach' and 'coconut' cultures in intercultural communication. Write an essay analysing how people communicate with friends and strangers 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.

ANSWER KEY

TASK 1

- 1) B
- 2) B, C
- 3) C
- 4) B
- 5) a – COCONUT; b – PEACH; c – COCONUT; d – PEACH
- 6) prerequisite

TASK 2

- 7) water
- 8) grow
- 9) company
- 10) agree
- 11) short
- 12) smile

TASK 3

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