

**CULTURAL AWARENESS**

**SAMPLE UNIT: Secondary Education (CEF—B1)**

**Activity 1: Warm up. What is my daily routine?** Tick the things that you do or do not do on a regular school day

Activity	yes	no
I wake up between 6.00 and 7.00 am on weekdays		
I usually have cheese and bread for breakfast		
My school requires a uniform		
I take a bus to school		
I eat lunch at home		
I have after school lessons almost every day		
I check my Instagram account more than twice a day		
I go to bed after 11.00pm		

**Extension**

Move around the classroom. Find someone who...

Has a hard time waking up in the morning .....

Prepares his/her own lunch every day .....

Lives more than 15 kilometres away from the school .....

Plays a computer game (which one?) .....

Drinks coffe .....

Studies another foreign language after school .....

\* Be ready to share your answers in the class!

**Activity 2. Match these words or expressions with their synonyms.**

Have difficulties doing something	Revision
Go to	Schedule
Study	Gadgets
Talk	Chat
Allow	Head off
Home	Biscuit
Cookie	Household
Electronic devices	Struggle
Timetable	Permit

**Activity 3. Read the following texts about a regular day for some teenagers around the world. Complete the table below.**

**TEXT A**

My name is Sean Right and I am a British teenager, and here is my average day throughout the school week...

6:30AM: I wake up to an alarm with a ringtone I've been meaning to change for a good month. I lie in bed for around 10 minutes, wondering why I bother going to school.

7:00AM: I go out of bed and brushed my teeth. I put on deodorant and whatever else I need for the day. I then put on my uniform and I always seem to struggle to find my tie. Until 7:30 I am either doing homework I forgot about, or scrolling through my Instagram.

7:30AM: I pack up all my books and I head off to school. It's around one mile, so I make sure my headphones are also with me. I walk alone.

8:00AM: I make it to school, half an hour early.

1:10PM: Time for lunch. I usually buy something I can eat on the move.

5:40PM: I usually get home and try and do homework or revision. Of course, I always end up playing some video games. I eat at around 8:45pm.

8:50PM: I stay up, usually on my computer talking to friends or watching Game of Thrones. It depends really.

1:30AM or so, I sleep in preparation for the next day.

## TEXT B

My name is Emma Bold and I am from Australia. This is my day...

6:30am I wake up, think about what I want for breakfast. Go downstairs, put the kettle on and go back to the bathroom to brush my teeth.

6:45am I finish breakfast, get dressed, checked that I have everything in my bag. Check for Myki (it's an electronic train/bus/tram ticket).

8:25am Class starts but before that I'd usually chat with my group of friends, it's usually small talk.

12:35pm Lunch break. The lunch break lasts for an hour but we're not permitted to leave the school grounds.

3:10pm - School is out. 95% of the students in my school commute.

4:10pm I either swim or do some form of exercise in this period of time.

5:55pm Arriving home from swimming, do some more exercise such as yoga or weight training.

6:30pm Dinner

8:00pm Do homework, prepare for tests.

10:15pm Around this time I'll shower because everyone in my household (apart from my father) showers late.

## TEXT C

Hi I am a 17 year old from Cape Town, South Africa. My name is Ian De Klerk. Here is my usual routine:

5:30am - wake up to my alarm

6:00am Have coffee with a rusk (its like a biscuit you dip in the coffee, a common treat in South Africa). Get ready in bathroom, take a shower and put on a school uniform that hasn't changed since 1920 (ugh..). Have a quick breakfast of cereal, milk and fruit.

6:35am Get into the car for my mom to take me to school.

7:40am School starts, have registration and prepare for the next 8 periods of 45 minutes each.

12:35pm Lunch break which is an hour. I usually eat a sandwich and fruit which I packed in the day before.

3:00–3:30pm- school finally ends at 3pm and I might have meetings or have a sport practice as I do netball and sometimes fitness classes in summer. I rarely actually go home at 3pm

5:30 Walk the dog then go to yoga class which I have on a Monday.

7:20- Have supper and relax with a decaf cup of coffee.

10:00 Brush my teeth, go to bed and go to sleep. My favourite time of the day.

#### TEXT D

I'm a 17 years old Indonesian girl, currently in 12th grade (3rd year high school). My name is Ratu. I study in a Catholic school. Like most schools in Indonesia, we have to wear uniforms to school. We are not allowed to wear makeup, wear jewellery (a pair of earrings for girls is allowed because that's almost a culture here), use nail polish, have long nails, etc. We also have to put our phones and gadgets (except for laptops) in the phone locker before lesson starts. Here's how my schedule looks:

05.00am Wake up, drink water, eat breakfast, shower (includes brushing teeth and doing hair, no makeup because not allowed at school), say goodbye to mom and dad

06.35am School starts. Every morning, we have our morning prayer and we sing the national anthem. At 12.00, we pray the Angelus prayer.

14.30pm Go home, eat lunch on the way

17.30pm Do whatever I want

19.00pm Do homework, study for tests, prepare tomorrow's stuff. Some say Indonesian students get more homework than students of other countries.

22.00pm ideal sleep time. I usually end up sleeping at 23.00.

#### TEXT E

I'm a 14-year-old from Israel. My name is Rivka. My day usually looks like that:

07:00am I wake up, get ready for school, eat cereal. Sometimes I have enough time to read a bit. I read mostly science fiction, fantasy and mystery (I'm a Harry Potter fan).

08:15am School starts. All students study Hebrew, English, Arabic, literature, history, math and science. We also have gym class. Most schools also have bible lessons but my school doesn't. I also study music (most of my friends chose art, theater or basketball instead of music).

14:30pm End of school day. If I am not busy after school, I eat lunch at home, but if I am, I eat at school. I come back home by bus. Usually I listen to music on my headphones the entire bus ride (I listen **mostly** to non-Israeli music, like Queen, David Bowie, Pearl Jam, Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin and Nirvana).

15:15pm I get home.

19:15pm I have singing lessons like my sister did when she was a teen. She is now a soldier.

22.30pm Go to bed and try to catch some sleep

Source: Quora <https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-average-day-of-a-teenager-around-the-world>

	<b>Country &amp; Age</b>	<b>Morning routine before school</b>	<b>Transport to school</b>	<b>School starting time</b>	<b>Lunch routines</b>	<b>After school activities</b>
SEAN						
EMMA						
IAN						
RATU						

RIVKA						
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**Activity 4. Write the right name to the statements below**

- I am not allowed to wear makeup .....
- I listen mostly to non-Israeli music .....
- I go to bed after midnight .....
- I have coffee with a rusk for breakfast .....
- I wake up at 5.00am .....
- I either swim or do some exercise after school .....
- I watch Game of Thrones .....
- I tend to shower after 10pm .....

**Extension:**

Are there any differences between your day and those teenagers around the world? Which ones?  
 What is the most shocking thing that you have learned about them?  
 Who has the best typical day in your opinion? Why?

**Activity 5. Watch the following video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8QwKTGLlyw> and decide whether the following sentences are TRUE or FALSE**

- . Austin lives in the southeastern part of the USA .....
- . He wakes up at 6.30 .....
- . His family usually has breakfast together .....
- . A large majority of teenagers take the bus in the USA .....

- . He brings his lunch from home .....
- . He takes art classes after school .....
- . Austin's mother picks him up after school .....
- . After dinner he usually watches TV .....

Write down at least 3 similarities and 3 differences between your school day and Austin's

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

**Extension:**

- ✓ Do you think that all American teenagers are like him? Why?
- ✓ Could you find different examples of different teenage daily routines on the internet (female or male)?

**Activity 6. Find words 1-9 in the text below and match them with definitions A-I**

**A) notice B) avoid C) misunderstanding D) commitment E) apt F) adhere G) amount H) youth I) hostile**

1. Firm promise or agreement
2. Ready to do something
3. Unfriendly or aggressive
4. Know something, be aware of something
5. Quality of being Young
6. Support or believe in something
7. Number
8. Not doing something, or not talking about something
9. Difficult situation, no understanding

**Activity 7: Cultural differences among teenagers. Complete the text with the following headlines**

**Multigenerational families/ Direct Speech/Communication/German Cultural differences/family/Non-verbal communication/friendships/confrontation**

**The Expression of Cultural Differences in Teenagers**

If you attend a culturally diverse school it means you will have to communicate with teenagers from different ethnic backgrounds. You'll notice cultural differences in body language and oral communication. Understanding your friends' cultural differences can help interact and **avoid misunderstandings**.

*A) Hispanic Cultural Differences*

Hispanic culture can affect that way that you interact with friends and their family. It can also affect your family relationships and school life. Learn the different cultural variations teens might experience.

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Family comes first in the Hispanic culture. Teenagers stay close to home and have a stronger **commitment** to their parents. While Hispanic families are very dependent on each other, American families encourage their children and teenagers to be independent.

Dating

Since some Hispanic teens have such a strong tie to their family, they may show a similar **commitment** to their boyfriend/girlfriend. However, if the family does not approve of the relationship, the Hispanic teenager may be more **apt** to break it off out of respect for his/her family.

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Hispanic individuals are comfortable with less personal space. They also will hold onto a hug or handshake longer. Actions like holding your hands on your hips can be seen as a **hostile** gesture.

*B) Middle Eastern Cultural Differences*

Unique religions, dress, and family can play a large role in the life of a Middle Eastern teen. Learn how to appreciate cultural differences.

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Family plays a large role in the life of Middle Eastern teens. Families are also typically large and have several generations living together. This can go beyond grandparents to uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, etc. Therefore, their circle of friends typically includes family members.

Religion

While there are different religions found in the Middle East, Islam is a big one. Teens that **adhere** to the Islamic tradition might have a different style of dress, such as wearing a hijab. They might also be required to meet other religious requirements, such as praying five times a day.

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Those from the Middle East might have a distinct body language that is different from Americans. For example, due to specific customs, teens may lower their eyes when speaking to the opposite sex or older generations. They'll also generally give and require a standard **amount** of personal space. Affectionate touching outside of the home is rare.



C) *Asian Cultural Differences*

Asian and American cultures can vary in several ways. Explore some cultural differences found in Asian teens.

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Some teens might have less time to socialize. Asian cultures and parents can place great emphasis on academic success. This means Asian teens might study six or more hours per week than an American teen. Understanding this difference and being open to your friend and their family expectations can take your friendship further.

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You may **notice** that some Asian teenagers are not confrontational and will avoid controversial topics. Asian cultures find direct confrontation immature, according to Harvard Business Review.

Romantic relationships

Given the difficulty of academics and the emphasis placed on academic success, dating in high school is not accepted within Asian cultures. However, if grades are maintained it may be allowed. Many Asian teens are often more serious about relationships and will dedicate themselves to it for the long term.

Body Language

Looking an Asian person in the eye can be seen as rude. While American culture appreciates eye contact because it means the person is paying attention, this isn't the same for your friends who are raised in Asian culture.

D) *South African Cultural Differences*

Do you have a friend from South Africa? Learn the ways that their family life, relationships, and body language might differ from yours. This will help you to better understand one another and deepen your relationship.

Family and Friends

Family is important to South African culture, and their cousins might make up a large part of their social groups and friendships. This is because much of their time during the week is spent with family, but they do use the weekends to connect with friends from school.

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Teens coming from a South African home might not only speak louder than American teens, but they could use a direct speaking style that can be misconstrued. Unlike American teens who might beat around the bush or use evasive tactics, direct styles get right to point and don't mind pointing out when you're wrong.

Close Quarters

South African friends might stand closer to you when they are talking. This is because less personal space and touching are part of the culture.

E) .....

European cultures have different customs for schools and leisurely life. The family dynamic is similar to American cultures, but there are distinct differences.

Family Life

German parents value independence in their children. Teens are very independent and given more responsibility, according to Teen Life in Europe.

Relationships

German culture offers teens more freedom in dating. The culture is more open about sexual relations and the use of contraception. However, Teen Life in Europe points out that while social

and dating experiences are important in youth, family unity and romantic consistency are more important.

#### Communicating

German teens might have a direct speaking style. This isn't to be rude, but a functional part of their culture. Honesty is very important to this culture; therefore, they might worry less about your feelings and more about being honest.

Source: Adapted from [https://teens.lovetoknow.com/Cultural\\_Differences\\_of\\_Teenagers](https://teens.lovetoknow.com/Cultural_Differences_of_Teenagers)

#### **Extension: Class debate**

Do you agree with the text statements? Do you think that they might be a bit too stereotypical? Could you bring some examples that challenge these stereotypes?

#### Useful words for discussion

- I (really) think that ...
- In my opinion / My opinion is ...
- I agree with ...
- I feel that ...
- I could be wrong, but ...
- My (point of) view (on this) is ...
- Some people may disagree with me, but ...

#### **Activity 8. Crosswords Adjectives.**





**Activity 10. Final project. In groups. Choose one idea from the options below.**

- A) Each team member records a short video of his daily routine. In addition, the group records a weekend activity in which they present their city/neighbourhood/village.
- B) Choose one nationality. Go to the internet and find out about how life is for teenagers in that country. Present your conclusions to the class.
- C) Make a presentation of your city/town/village to a foreign student that is thinking of moving in. Give him/her cultural tips to help him adjust better.
- D) Examine common stereotypes for another culture. Find texts or videos that support/fight these stereotypes. Share your results in a visual way.

**Extension: COIL project** (in groups). Video conferencing or e-twinning.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR A COIL PROJECT** (for the EFL classroom)

- ✓ Compare your daily routine with teenagers from other countries
- ✓ Explore some European traditions and find similarities and differences
- ✓ Describe some aspects of your culture to the other participants and give them tips on how to behave
- ✓ Imagine an ideal secondary school for students from your culture and the other culture.