

Essay on culture shock

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Unknown country, unknown people, unknown customs. That is what people like about journeys, everything new excites them. Traveling is very popular nowadays when there are a lot of opportunities to explore world and broaden one's mind. People travel for different reasons – some are looking for a better life, some are having a rest on a vacation, some go abroad for studying and some just want to get a job with high salary. When one thinks about another country the picture in his head is full of bright colors, inspiration and excitement. But no one ever thinks about the culture shock. For me moving to another country – the United States of America – was my first step on the way of achieving my biggest goal so far – I wanted to become an engineer. Also, I believed that if I moved to another country I would receive a priceless experience and I would truly become a 'grown-up'. I decided to live alone and I knew it would make me a better person – I would become more responsible and more mature. This decision was not easy for me. I had lived in Saudi Arabia for all my life and my parents did not want me to move to another country. But I insisted on this as I understood how important it would be for my future career and life. I knew it would be hard to get used to new living conditions so I decided to pick a sunny Miami hoping the sun, salt and the water would brighten my new life and cheer me up a little. I have got accepted in the Miami Dade College after finishing my English course and now I study Mechanical Engineering. At first I did not think it would be hard for me to get accustomed to new life, I thought I would like living alone but instead I was shocked because I could not handle it well. Then I realized I was experiencing a culture shock.

When I was going to America, of course, I realized it would be different. But I

was surprised that everything was not like at home. The first thing that surprised me – there are lots of people talking in Spanish. I knew that America was like a ‘melting pot’ but I never realized that Spanish language is quite popular there. I’ve met a lot of people and made lots of friends not only from America, but from other countries too. I have met students from Spain, Germany, Russia and other countries. It was both interesting and helpful because, on one hand, I got to learn not only about America within but also about other cultures and, on the other hand, I got a chance to talk to students who were experiencing culture shock as well so we could support and help each other.

Also, it was hard for me to get used to the climate. In Saudi Arabia it is dry and hot and here it is always raining and cloudy. The weather depresses me because everything is grey, moody and dull. But there are very bright days as well, when the sun is shining and the weather is warm and nice, and on these days, sitting on the shore, I never regret my arrival to America.

Another thing that shocked me is the amount of homeless people everywhere. I have always known that America is a wealthy country and I never would have imagined that there are so many people here that do not have a place to go to, they do not have money and they are forced to beg for them. It is a well-known stereotype that America is a country that has ‘no problems’ that every citizen is happy and has everything he needs. So when I came here I found out that it was a truly democratic country, however, there were some issues that needed to be resolved. There are many poor people, many homeless people, and many people who need the help from the government.

I have been in America for over two years now but there is a thing I still cannot go along with. I cannot stand loud music everywhere I go. It plays in the shopping malls, in restaurants, in stores etc. I like music, I enjoy listening to it and of course we have music back in Saudi Arabia but it is never as loud. When I am in a restaurant talking to my friends usually I can barely hear what they are saying. I do not want the music to be turned off at all; I just want it to be a little quieter.

The thing that did confuse me and caused some troubles was the names of the street. In my country the streets are names mostly after famous people and here, in Miami they are just numbered. I thought it was weird but I got used to it in some time.

The food is also different here. The cuisine of the USA has been influenced by many immigrants and you can find the restaurants with cuisine of all nations. There are Mexican restaurants, Italian, Chinese, French and others. I enjoy having dinner in a restaurant with my friends, especially if it has a nice view, on the ocean, for example. But on the other side, there is fat and greasy food, so-called 'junk food'. These are hamburgers, French fries, sandwiches and so on that are very popular among Americans. I think there should be less junk food because the country is facing problems with childhood obesity.

Holidays are quite different here, too. For example, it was interesting to observe and even participate in holidays, like Halloween. We do not celebrate it in my country so it was a nice experience. My friends told me stories from their childhood when they went 'Trick or Treating' asking for candies. Another holiday that we do not have in Saudi Arabia is

Thanksgiving. I think it is a very nice tradition and it began way back ago. All family gathers at the table and has a meal together. The essential attribute of the holiday is turkey. Everybody has to eat at least one slice and everyone has to say what he is thankful for this year. I really do think this holiday is very sweet and cozy.

The years have passed and I do not have culture shock anymore. I have adjusted to this country, to its traditions and mentality. People have helped me a lot to get through my culture shock as everybody in America is very nice and easy-going, students are prepared to help me any time I ask for it and everybody is always smiling and hugging you. Overall, everybody faces the problem of culture shock when he comes to another country but it goes away eventually because you simply forget about it enjoying the new life and new opportunities.