

Workshop: Introduction to Intercultural Competence

Facilitator's Guide



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GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT**

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Workshop Summary

This two-hour Introduction to Intercultural Competence workshop is designed to help students begin thinking about their own culture as well as the differences between their culture and the culture of others. It will specifically address what culture is, the danger of assumptions, how to address conflicts rooted in cultural differences, and the challenges that come with being in a culture different from one's own.

Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

Through participation in this workshop, students will be able to:

- define culture in a general sense;
- identify some of their own cultural values;
- recognize the problems assumptions cause when it comes to conflicts rooted in cultural differences;
- appreciate the challenges faced when one enters a culture different from one's own; and
- open dialogue with others when difficulties arise when working with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Pre-Workshop Survey

In preparation for the workshop, the facilitator should send out a survey to participants in order to gauge their current comfort with intercultural issues. The survey can be found [here](https://goo.gl/forms/fXmy9cGwOZQdjLg62) (<https://goo.gl/forms/fXmy9cGwOZQdjLg62>), and the questions are listed in Appendix A.

Prior to the start of the workshop, review the answers to the survey. Participants who have taken or are enrolled in COSK2221 Intercultural Communications will be more familiar with some of the topics in this workshop, whereas the material may be completely new for students who have not taken the course. Responses to other questions may also indicate more or less comfort with intercultural conflicts. Use the survey responses to determine if you may need to spend more or less time on a particular activity.

Workshop Overview

PARTICIPANTS

- 4-25

TIME

- 1 hour 40 minutes – 2 hours

MATERIALS

- Computer with internet access and projector/TV monitor hookup
- Intro to ICC Workshop PowerPoint Presentation
- Post-It Notes (1 per participant)
- Human Nature/Culture/Personality Signs
- Tape or sticky tack
- Masking tape (for smaller rooms)
- 1 set of envelopes with squares inside for every 6 participants (See Broken Squares activity and Appendix C)
- Tables or other flat spaces (1 per every 6 participants)
- Assessment handouts (1 per participant)

OUTLINE

- Poll Everywhere as students arrive; 2-3 minute debrief at start of session
- Introductions 5 minutes
- Objectives and Ground Rules 10 minutes
- Cultural Tree Activity 10 minutes
- Assumptions 12 minutes
- Human Nature/Culture/Personality 10 minutes
- Gung Ho Videos..... 15 minutes
- Broken Squares30-40 minutes
- Perception 1 minute
- Assessment5-10 minutes

Poll Everywhere

as students arrive; 2-3 minute debrief at start of session

The following question should be projected as a Poll Everywhere (polleverywhere.com) question for students to answer as they arrive prior to the start of the workshop:

Which knows more about water: a fish or a bird?

Do not show the poll answers until you are ready to begin the workshop.

Once all students have arrived, discuss the answer. Ask students why they chose the answers they did. Start with talking about fish. They live in water, so they must know a lot about it, right? Then move on to talking about birds. Fish don't have the perspective that birds do. Birds know that there is air and water, while fish only know of water. They are immersed in water for their entire lives, but they don't understand it in the same way that birds do.

Culture is similar to water. We are fish in our own culture; our culture exists around us, but we can't truly understand it until we begin to look at it from the perspective of a bird. That's what we're here to do today.

Introductions

5 minutes

Go around the room and ask students to share their name, what international experience they have (if any!) and to answer one of the following questions:

- When was the first time you realized there were other cultures?
- What is a unique tradition in your family?
- What is a fun fact about you or something no one else in this room knows about you?

Share your own answers once all students have taken their turn.

Objectives and Ground Rules

10 minutes

Briefly explain the objectives of the workshop as listed on the PowerPoint slide.

Then, move onto ground rules, explaining that this workshop may bring up some ideas that challenge the participants or make them uncomfortable. In order to combat this, we're establishing some ground rules.

Go over each point from the slide:

- Be open. (This means being open to new ideas and open to sharing your own ideas with others in the workshop.)
- Be respectful. (Don't judge others for what they say or do, and state your opinions in a respectful manner.)
- Assume good intentions. (Sometimes we say things in a way that implies something we don't mean. Feel free to discuss things in a respectful manner or ask the facilitator for help.)
- Treat this workshop like Vegas. (Don't share anything someone else says here with others outside of the workshop.)

Ask if anyone would like to add any additional rules. If anyone does, discuss them as a group and agree to add them (or not). Otherwise, move on.

Cultural Tree Activity

10 minutes

Hand each student a post-it note and give them one minute to draw a tree. Once they are finished, have them place their post-it note on the wall.

Ask the students closest to the trees to describe what they see. What parts of the tree do they see? Did anyone draw the roots of a tree?

Explain that the roots are what support the tree, but they are not usually visible, and most students probably didn't even think to include them in their drawings. Culture is like a tree. There are some aspects of it that we can see easily, but other parts that are less visible but very important to the foundation of a culture. Ask for ideas of what more visible aspects of culture are, then for ideas of what cultural "roots" might be. Some examples are:

Visible Aspects of Culture

- Artwork and music
- Literature
- Religious rituals
- Holiday customs
- Foods and eating habits
- Clothing

Less Visible "Roots" of Culture

- Values
- Religious beliefs
- Work ethic
- General world view
- Social etiquette
- Nature of friendship and relationships

Many of the visible aspects (often behaviors) of culture are influenced by the values and beliefs that are hidden underground.

At the end of this activity, have students brainstorm a definition of culture. Take notes on the PowerPoint slide (click in the blank text box and start typing!) or have one of the participants take notes for you.

The actual definition may vary, but important components include:

- Shared values, beliefs, and behaviors
- Normalization/acceptance of the above within the group
- Culture being learned and not innate

Let students come up with their own definition as a group, but make additions as necessary if they don't include one or more of the above components.

Once you have a definition that includes the ideas above, click to show the word cloud. Ask if anyone sees anything they would like to add to the group's definition, or anything they disagree with in the word cloud.

Assumptions

12 minutes

Pull up the following Swedish commercial and show it to the group (1 minute):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5onkl2EHV4>

Have the students to pair up with 1 or 2 people nearby to discuss the video for about 5 minutes. (Alternatively, you can group the students yourself if necessary.) They can talk about anything related to the video, but some guiding questions are on the slide if they need them:

- How does this video relate to culture?
- Does it teach us anything about what we should do or not do when interacting with someone we've just met?
- Is there anything either side could have done to ease the conflict earlier?

After the small group discussion, bring the group together to discuss the video with everyone. Ask someone from each pair/group to summarize what they've talked about, and open it up for general discussion (about 5 minutes). The questions above can be used if necessary.

If the topic is not brought up by students, ask them what the video says about **assumptions**.

Make sure that the following points are included in the discussion:

- Don't assume that people are like yourself or that their cultural background is the same as yours.
- Knowing someone's culture is a great place to start, but don't assume that everyone meets *all* of the values, beliefs, and behaviors of their culture.
 - For example, Germans are known for being extremely punctual, and timeliness is a part of German culture. However, any one specific person from Germany might be someone who always arrives 10 minutes late, no matter how hard they try to be on time.

Human Nature/Culture/Personality

15 minutes

Create three separate spaces in the room, either by dividing the floor into three areas with masking tape (for smaller rooms) or by designating different walls with signs (for larger rooms). See Appendix B for printable signs.

These three spaces should be labeled:

- Human Nature
- Culture
- Personality

While students are still seated, explain that while some values, beliefs, and behaviors are related to culture, others are more connected to an individual's personality and some are universal to human nature. Say that you're going to go through some examples and invite everyone to stand. Point out the three spaces (Human Nature, Culture, and Personality) and ask students to move to the space that they believe matches the statement you say. After each statement is read and participants choose a space, ask for participants to explain their decisions and have a short discussion about each statement.

Suggested answers are in parentheses after each statement, but allow students to make arguments for their answers. You may find another answer to be acceptable!

1. Eating with a knife, fork, and spoon (culture)
2. Liking spicy food (personality)
3. Running from a dangerous animal (human nature)
4. Sleeping with the bedroom window open (personality)
5. Respecting older people (culture)
6. Men opening doors for women (culture)
7. Regretting being the cause of an accident (human nature)
8. Wanting to have a large family (personality)
9. Laughing at something funny (human nature)
10. Being wary of strangers (culture)

Before students sit down again, ask them a few short discussion questions:

- Did any of the statements surprise you? Why?
- Can you think of any other statements that belong to any of the categories?
- How can you apply this knowledge to a conversation with someone from a different culture?

Gung Ho Videos

15 minutes

Have everyone return to their seats and pull up the first of the videos below. Ask if anyone has seen the movie *Gung Ho* from 1986. If they have, ask for a summary, but if not, give a quick summary yourself.

Summary: *Gung Ho* is about a failing car factory in Pittsburgh. The factory is bought by a Japanese company, and several Japanese businessmen move to Pittsburgh to run the factory. The film is full of cultural misunderstandings and problems because of different values within American and Japanese culture. Michael Keaton's character works as a liaison between the Japanese businessmen and the American factory workers and spends the movie navigating between the two cultures. He does not have any background in Japanese culture.

Tell participants that the first video occurs on a morning shortly after the Japanese businessmen come to the factory. Show the first video, then facilitate a full-group discussion around the questions below.

1. Morning Exercises (2 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9jsnAD4aNw>

What cultural values do you see at play for the Americans? What about for the Japanese businessmen?

What do you think of the interaction between the American and Japanese bosses? What about between the American boss and the factory workers? Was there anything you would have done differently? Why or why not?

Make sure the conversation includes the fact that the American boss should not have lied to the factory workers. This will cause trust issues between them in the future when the exercises continue and could cause problems with the Japanese businessmen if they find out about it.

Now tell participants that the second video takes place at a dinner with some of the Japanese businessmen, the American boss, and the American boss's wife. Production at the factory is not going well. Show the video and facilitate another full-group discussion.

2. Superior Quality Workers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKNeFHBPgRo>

What cultural values do you see in this video? Why does the Japanese businessman say what he does?

If students have taken COSK2221 Intercultural Communications, they may bring up Hofstede's dimension of *Individualism vs. Collectivism*. The US is a very individualistic culture, whereas the Japanese culture is more collectivistic, which can be seen from the Japanese willingness to work overtime without pay. You may also bring this topic up yourself as well. Then ask students to brainstorm first the pros of each type of culture, then the cons. If most participants are American, it may be more difficult for them to think of Individualist cons and Collectivist pros. Some examples are:

Individualist Pros

- Recognition for a job well done
- Ability to choose your own path in life

Individualist Cons

- Less group support in times of trouble
- More possibility of failure

Collectivist Pros

- Loyalty from other members of the group
- No one is made to feel better or worse than other members of the group

Collectivist Cons

- Individual often makes sacrifices for the good of the whole group (like working when sick)
- Family may make big decisions for you

Finally, wrap up the discussion by brainstorming different ways to resolve this cultural conflict. Most examples will include open communication and some sort of compromise for both the Japanese businessmen and the American factory workers.

Broken Squares

30-40 minutes

Split participants into even groups of 4-6. If possible, include one person as an observer for each group, for a total of 5-7 in each group. If there is only one group, the facilitator may act as the observer.

After students are in their groups, have each group sit at its own table. Once they are settled, explain the rules, which are also included on the PowerPoint slide:

“Each person will be given an envelope which includes pieces of squares. Each person will make one square, but you may or may not have all the pieces you need. All squares will be the same size. You may give pieces away, but you may not take them. When you give a piece away, you must give one piece away at a time and you must give it to a specific person. You are not allowed to place a piece in the middle of the table for anyone to take. This is not a competition to create your square the fastest, and you will only win once everyone has a completed square in front of them. Most importantly, you are not allowed to speak, point, write messages, or communicate in any way.”

Ask if there are any questions before passing out the envelopes. After answering any questions, tell them that there is to be no talking until the end of the activity.

You will need one set of envelopes with pieces of squares for each group. The templates for the squares are in Appendix C. When you hand out the envelopes, tell students that the letters inside do not indicate anything about the squares, but are only to keep the pieces in the proper envelopes. The activity should be done with the letter side down to avoid confusion.

Observe the group(s) as they work and enforce the rules as necessary. If there are any students acting as observers, ask them to enforce the rules as well. Consider the following questions while the participants work:

- What do participants do when they have completed their squares?
- Does anyone struggle with his/her square but refuse to give pieces away?
- Describe the emotions of the group. What is the level of frustration?
- Do you notice a turning point when the group begins to work together?
- Does anyone try to violate the rules? How do they respond when you enforce the rules?

If participants are still struggling after 10-12 minutes, you may want to give them one or more hints, as appropriate:

- “Sometimes when I think I have my act together, I really don’t.”
- “Sometimes I have to risk taking action even when I am not sure what I am doing.”
- “Sometimes I need to stop and look at the bigger picture in order to see the obvious.”

Allow the groups to continue working until every person has a complete square in front of them. Once they do, open up a discussion. Use the following questions to guide the discussion, but allow other topics to emerge as well.

- What do you think this exercise was all about?
- How do you feel about what happened in your group today?
- Observers: What happened from your perspective?
- What things did you do in your group that helped you to be successful in solving the problem?
- What things did you do that made it harder?
- What did you learn from this activity?
- How does this activity relate to living in another culture?

Some points that may be brought up in relation to the last question include:

- Difficulty with language
- Having to take initiative
- Paying close attention to what other people are doing
- Finding something that initially seemed easy being actually very hard
- Coming to an impasse and wanting to give up
- Breaking rules that seem pointless
- Feeling lost

As these and other points are brought up in discussion, ask for participants to give examples from their own or others' experiences.

Wrap up the discussion by asking how they can apply what they've learned from this activity to their lives at RMU.

Perception

1 minute

Tell students you have one more short activity before you pass out a quick assessment.

Have students stand, then raise one hand over their head with their index finger pointed up. Tell them to move their finger in a clockwise circle. Once they've started, have them slowly move their finger down in front of themselves, still pointed upward and moving in the same circle. They can stop when their finger is in front of their chest. Ask them which direction their finger is moving now. (The answer should be counter-clockwise!)

Comment that our perception of events depends on our perspective, and that each person has a different perspective.

Ask if there are any questions related to the workshop before you pass out the assessment.

Assessment

5-10 minutes

Hand out copies of the survey in Appendix D and switch to the last slide of the PowerPoint, which reiterates the workshop objectives. Tell the participants it should take 5-10 minutes to complete and will be used to improve the workshop for the future. Emphasize that the assessment is *not* a test and that they do not need to write their names on them. Indicate where they can place the surveys when done and leave the room.

After the workshop, read the assessments to determine if:

1. learning outcomes are being met
2. what changes, if any, need to be made to the workshop

Appendix A: Pre-Workshop Survey Questions

The questions below are included on the pre-workshop survey, which can be found here: <https://goo.gl/forms/fXmy9cGwOZQdjLg62>. An * indicates a required question.

1. What country are you from?*
 - [short answer]
2. Have you ever traveled outside your home country before?*
- Yes
- No
3. If yes, what countries have you been to, and how long did you spend there? (Example: Canada - 2 weeks, Mexico - 1 week)
 - [short answer]
4. Do you speak any languages other than English?*
- Yes
- No
5. If yes, which language(s)? Please rate your fluency for each as native, advanced, intermediate, or beginner. (Example: Spanish - advanced; Japanese - beginner)
 - [short answer]
6. Have you ever had an intense or challenging experience with someone from a different culture?*
- Yes
- No
7. If yes, please describe the experience and how you resolved it.
 - [short answer]
8. Why do you want to take this cultural workshop?*
- [short answer]
9. Are you a member of the Global Village Living Learning Community?*
- Yes
- No
10. Have you taken COSK2221 Intercultural Communications?*
- Yes
- No
- I am currently enrolled.
11. What is your age?
 - [short answer]
12. What is your gender identity?
 - [short answer]

Appendix B: Human Nature/Culture/Personality Signs

See the next three pages for signs that can be printed for the Human Nature/Culture/Personality activity.

Human

Nature

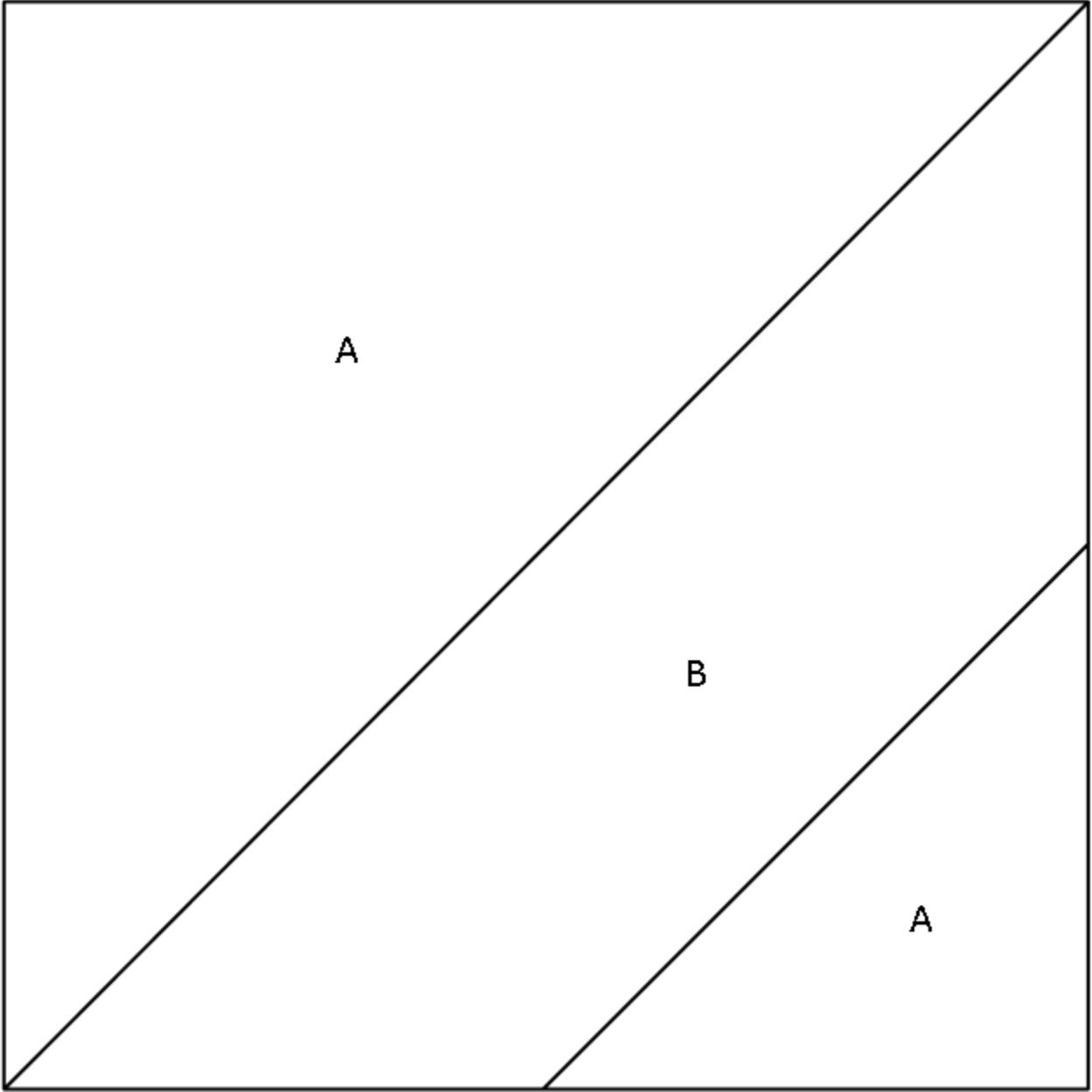
Culture

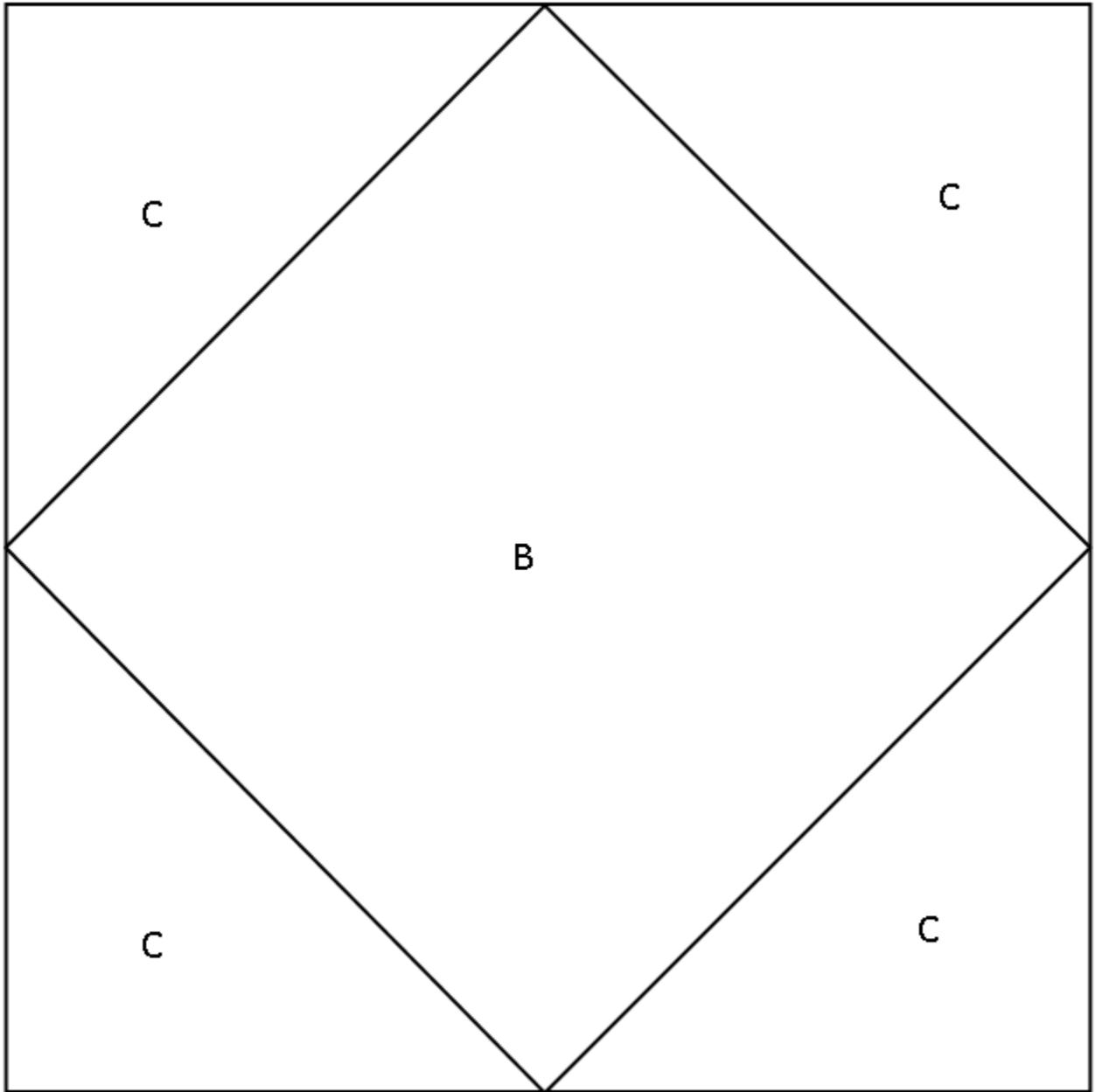
Personality

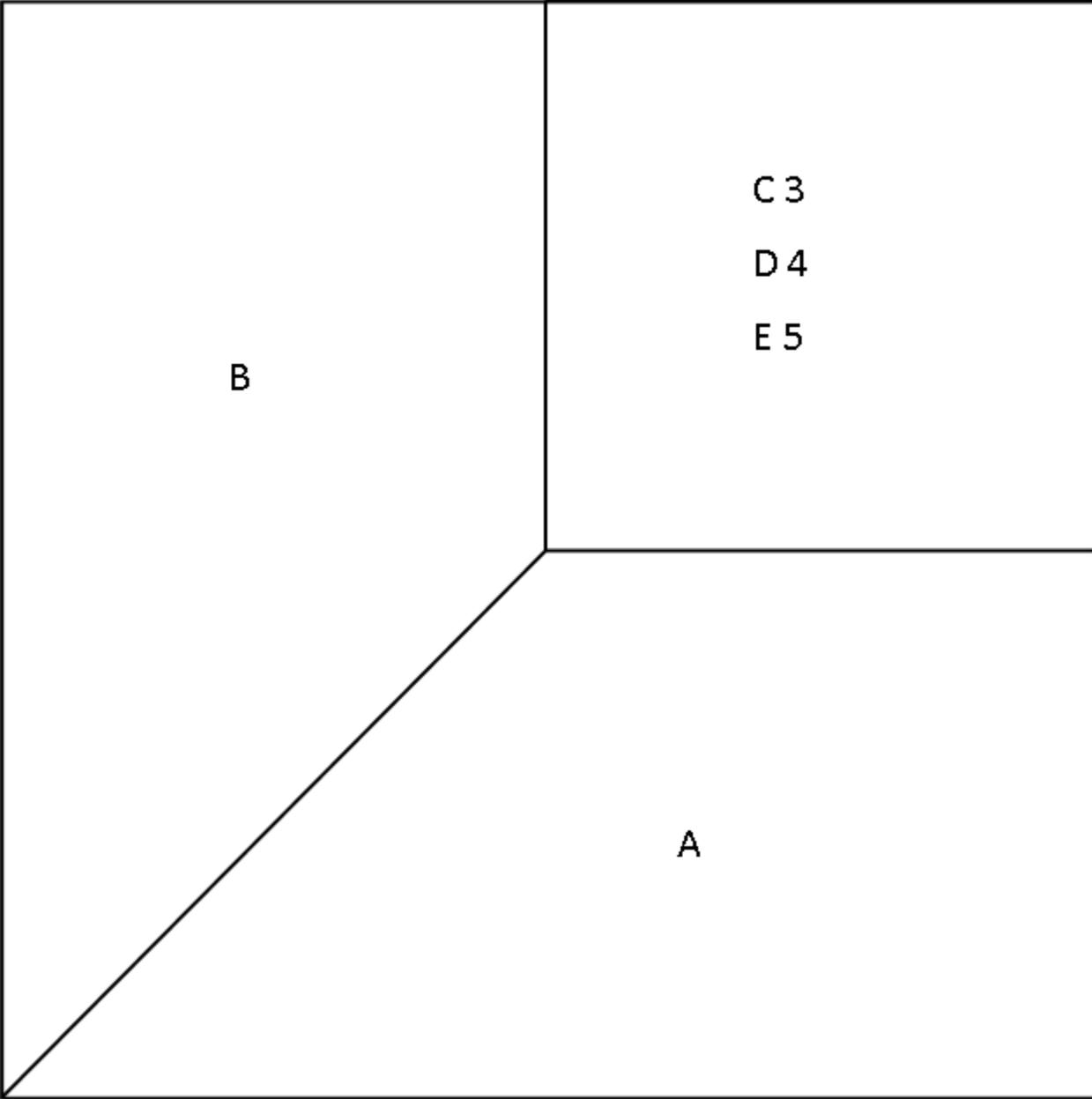
Appendix C: Broken Squares Template

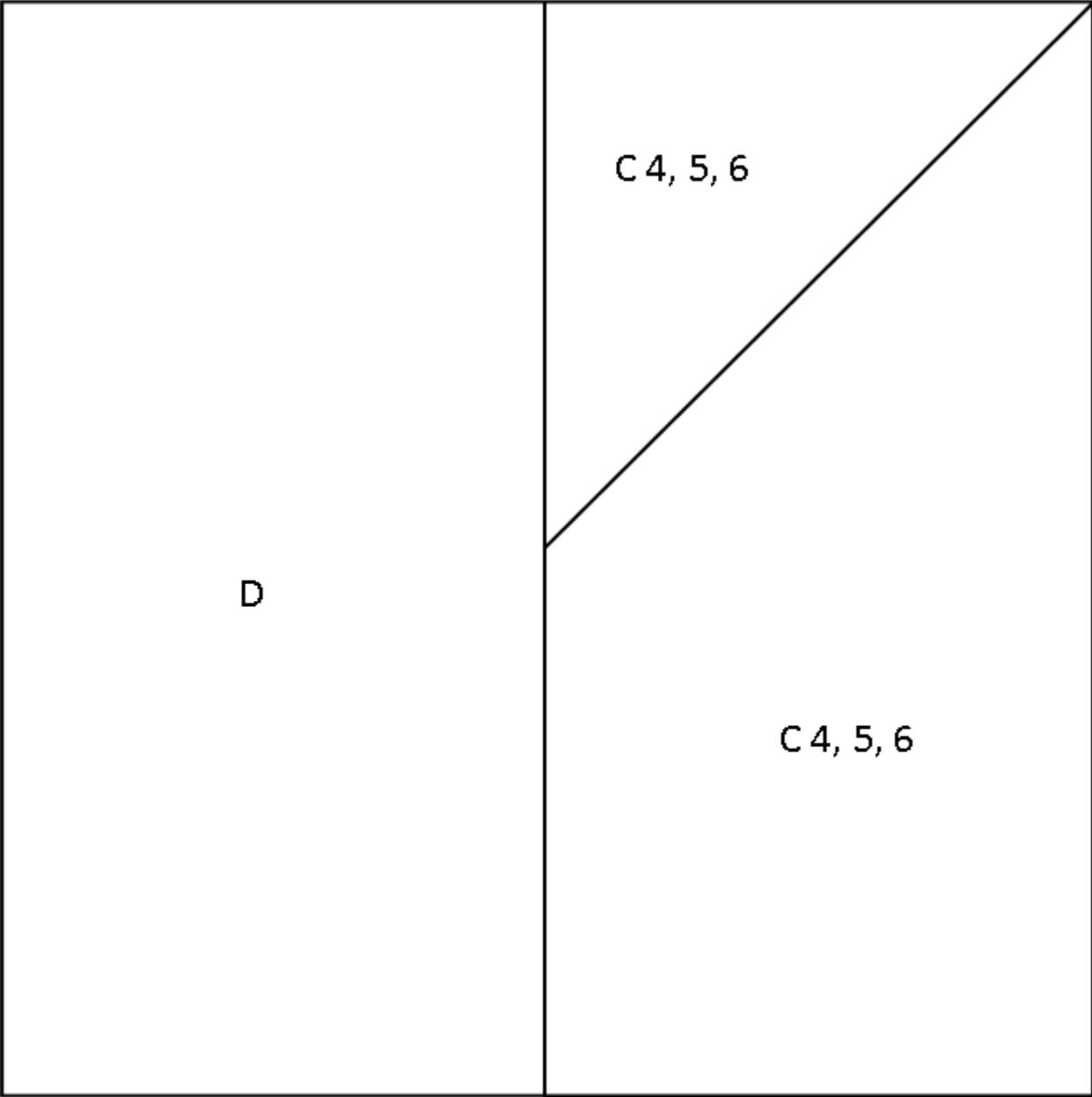
The next six pages include printable templates for the Broken Squares activity. Print one set of squares for each set of six participants. Cut the squares out and put all pieces with the same letter into a single envelope, for a total of six envelopes. If there are fewer than six participants, you may use fewer envelopes. In that case, use Envelopes A-E for five participants, A-D for four participants, and A-C for three participants.

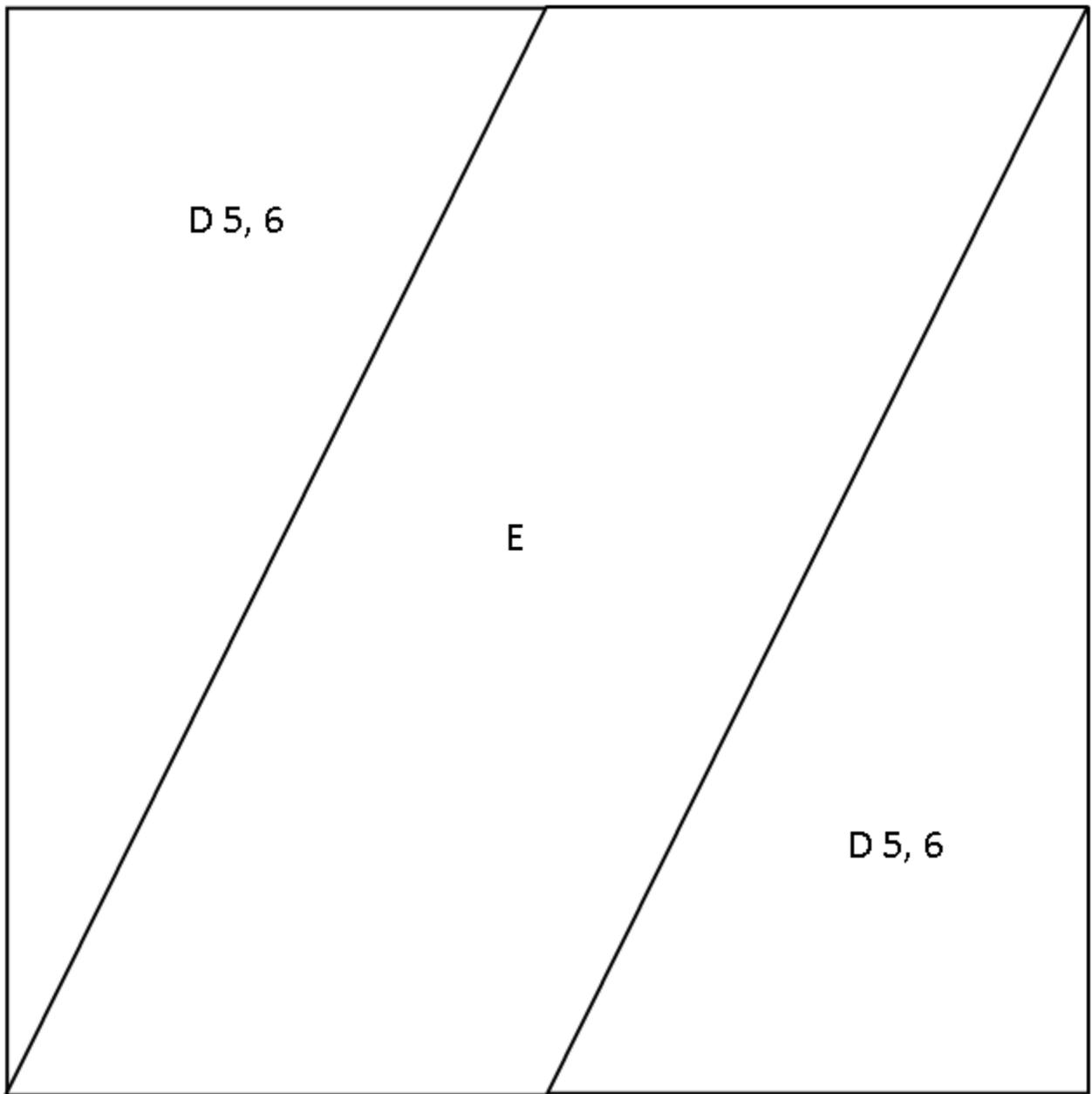
For pieces with a letter and a number, the number indicates the number of participants. For example, in the square on page 21, the C3/D4/E5 piece is placed in Envelope C for 3 participants, Envelope D for 4 participants, and Envelope E for 5 participants. If the number is higher than the number of participants, do not include that piece in the envelope.

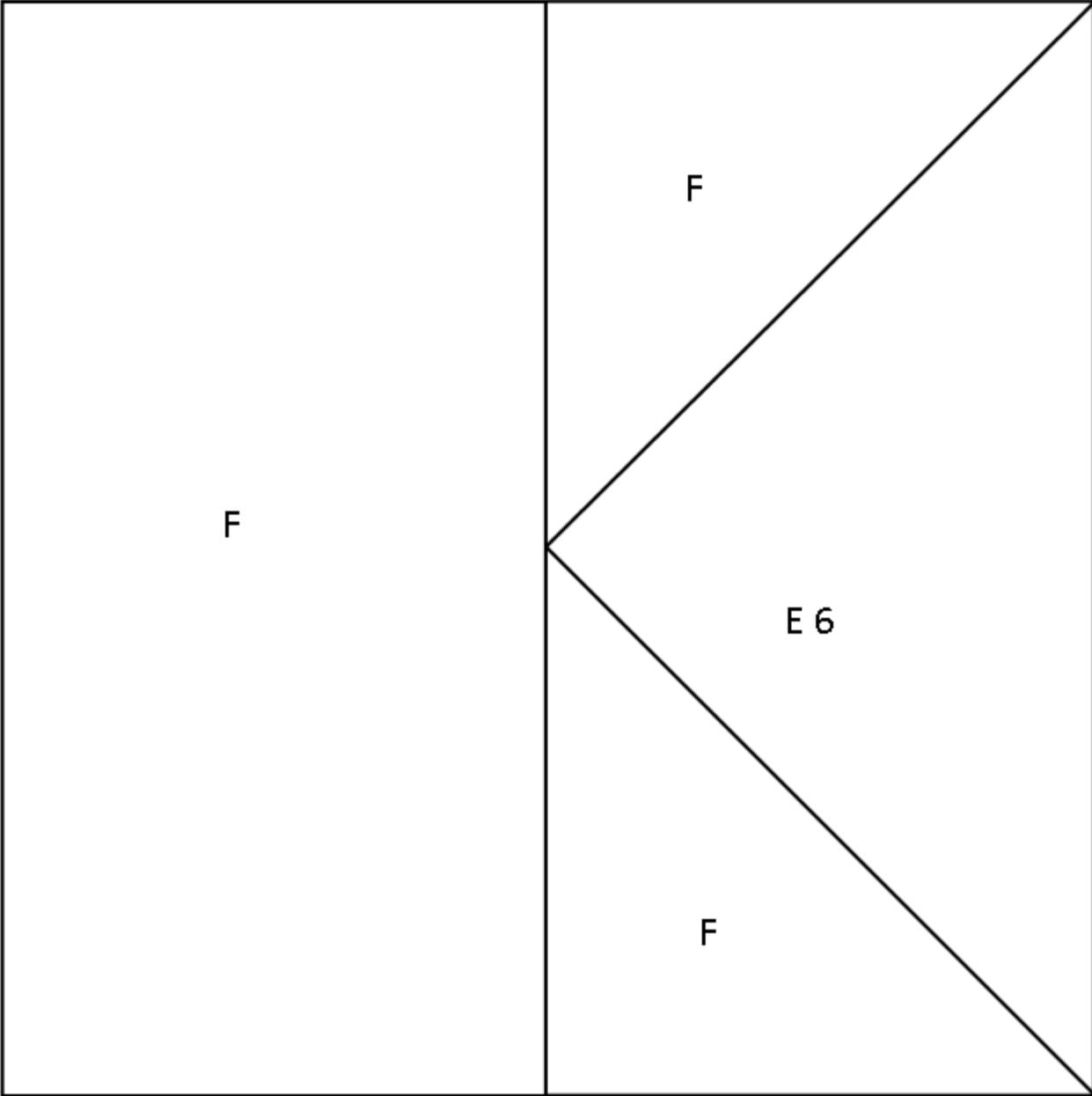












Appendix D: Assessment Handout

See the next page for an assessment handout. Print one copy per participant.

Introduction to Intercultural Competence Workshop Assessment

Date of Workshop: _____

Facilitator Name: _____

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Circle the answer that best matches your answer.

When I interact with new people in the future, I will assume that they share my culture until proven otherwise.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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I feel confident in my ability to communicate with someone from another culture when a conflict arises.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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2. Place a check mark in the box next to each activity that you feel was useful to you in meeting the workshop objectives.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poll Everywhere question and discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> Gung Ho videos and discussion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Tree activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Broken Squares activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> USS Montana vs. Lighthouse video | <input type="checkbox"/> Perception activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Nature/Culture/Personality activity | |

3. What is your definition of culture?

4. List two values or beliefs from your culture that you agree with and what that culture is (American, Japanese, etc.).

5. What is a challenge that someone might face when they move to a place with a different culture?

6. What is your biggest takeaway from the workshop? (What is going to stick with you the most?)

7. Please give at least one suggestion for a change for future versions of this workshop.