

# Keeping Culture in Mind too!

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An Intensive course on culture.

Student's Book

Pre-intermediate to Advanced

Valley Music Publications (VMP)

[www.englishteacher.co.nz](http://www.englishteacher.co.nz)

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## Unit 4

### Overview of learning outcomes:

to learn about religion and its impact on culture	to learn about: master symbols; icons; numbers; time sense	to learn about: religious body language	to learn about: symbols; prediction; light ; perspective; signs; colours	to learn about: taboo words; bar codes and QR codes, warning colours
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Unit 4



666

*What do you think about 1-4?*  
*In small groups talk about your answers.*

1. I think unit 10 is about religion. Yes/No Why or why not?  
2. I think unit 10 is about writing. Yes/No Why or why not?  
3. I think unit 10 is about numbers. Yes/No Why or why not?  
4. I think unit 10 is about symbols. Yes/No Why or why not?  
How many of us agree? \_\_\_\_\_

Reading illustrations (pictures, photos etc)

*In small groups answer the questions below:*

1. Can you see any religious symbols? Yes? What are they and what do they mean?  
(Use your finger, point to it and say, “This one! It means.....”)  
Somebody \_\_\_\_\_/Nobody could help me with the meanings.  
Many religions put symbols at the top of their buildings. Which three buildings have something at the top of the building and what does each one mean?  
Which photo shows a *tekoteko* (a carving of an ancestor)? (Hint: it is usually at the top of a *marae*)  
(Use your finger, point to it and say, “This one!”)  
Who has seen this *tekoteko* on the Unitec *marae* before? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many photos are religious? \_\_\_\_\_ How do you know?  
Although many Maori are Christian or have no religion, the carving is often animist (a belief that there is no separation between spiritual and physical worlds and souls or spirits are in animals, plants, rocks , mountains, thunder etc  
Which photo represents a waterfall? (Use your finger, point to it and say, “This one!”)  
Who agrees with you? \_\_\_\_\_ Why?  
Look at the photos of buildings again. There is only one photo with people in it. What are they doing?  
How does the background of each photo of a building influence you?  
Taking it at night makes it look....  
Taking it at with a rainbow behind makes it look....  
Taking it by looking up makes it look....  
Taking it from a side angle makes it look....  
Taking it looking up makes it look....  
How many of us used **different** adjectives from beautiful and peaceful? \_\_\_\_\_

3. a) Not all of us have seen a hot cross bun but in New Zealand and many European countries, Christians (and other people) eat hot cross buns at Easter. Why do you think they call them that?  
What in the photo helped you to decide?  
How many of us eat a special food on religious days? \_\_\_\_\_  
b) a bar code represents a product at the checkout of a shop.  
Which illustration is this and how did you guess?  
There is another kind of code for products. Which one is it?  
Do you use Quick Response codes? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of us said yes? \_\_\_\_\_  
There are two other illustrations with numbers. What is different about them?  
How important are numbers in your everyday life?  
very quite a lot not that much a bit not at all  
Who does **not** agree with you? \_\_\_\_\_  
Are numbers and literacy similar? Yes/No Why or why not?

4. Look at the photo of a sign outside with a musical instrument. What is the instrument and what does the sign probably mean? How do you know?  
What is another illustration about music? (Use your finger, point to it and say, “This one!”) Is it a kind of writing? Yes/No Who agrees with you? \_\_\_\_\_  
Which illustration shows capital letters of the alphabet? Where are the letters?  
What are they for? How do you know?

5. Look at the colour red in the illustrations. What does red mean in them? How do you know?







Social Organisation

4. Learning about *tapu*, taboo and tabu Vocabulary you need

- a. ‘*Tapu*’, taboo and tabu mean:
- i) in *Maori* society a place or something is very special and sacred
  - ii) in *Maori* society there are problems when you do a certain thing and it is unacceptable behaviour
  - iii) certain places or parts of the body are untouchable
  - iv) forbidden/restricted access/against the rules of religion
  - v) all of these meanings (i-iv)

How many of us knew the meaning without looking at the answer? \_\_\_\_

b) Choose the best word from the box to fill the spaces below:

acceptable (2)	public (2)	knowledge	respect	night	water	once	shoes
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In New Zealand Maori have ‘*tapu*’ but with the movement of many Maori to the city and away from traditions, many people are losing the \_\_\_\_\_ of ‘*tapu*’. However, taking off \_\_\_\_\_ before you go into a ‘*marae*’ (meeting house area), not eating in the ‘*whare tupuna*’ (meeting house) and cleansing yourself with \_\_\_\_\_ after going into an ‘*urupa*’ (cemetery) still remain the same. The head is sacred to Maori so touching it is a ‘no-no’ but not many \_\_\_\_\_ this action these days. The concept of *tapu* tells people where food and drink can and cannot be eaten.

Similarly in ‘*pakeha*’ (non-Maori) society, there have been many changes in the last 50 years. Many Catholic Christians did not eat meat (taboo) on Fridays. Homosexuality and prostitution are still taboo in some religions but are legal now in New Zealand and becoming more \_\_\_\_\_. In certain situations you can see sexual parts of the body in \_\_\_\_\_ e.g. at nudist beaches or ‘Boobs on Bikes’ Parade in Auckland’s main street \_\_\_\_\_ a year. TV programmes also contain sexual or taboo material and taboo words late at \_\_\_\_\_ with R16 warnings only. However, spitting, urinating, using taboo words and picking your nose in \_\_\_\_\_ are still not \_\_\_\_\_.

🔊 Check with the audio What extra information is NOT on the audio:

c) Your experiences and comparison with other cultures

*In pairs or small groups ask each other the following questions:*

- i. What is taboo in your culture?  
What are the consequences of breaking a taboo? Does religion or society do something to you? What? Who has an interesting taboo in their culture? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is it different to your own culture? Yes/No Are any of them the same? Yes/No (Don’t forget food!)
- ii. What does R16 and R18 mean?  
You can / can’t do something, see something, buy something or go somewhere?  
Where do you see R16 or R18 ? \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you and your partner agree? Yes/No



4. Problem solving

**There is no right or wrong answer to this problem.**

Your son or daughter has fallen in love with someone of a completely different religion to your family, wants to marry and have children. What do you do?

- a) Explain to your son or daughter that their new partner must change their religion to yours and any children must have your religion.
- b) Explain that there are many partners of your own religion to marry instead.
- c) Give them your blessing and hope that with time they will change to your religion.
- d) Do nothing and hope they will change their mind.
- e) Some other solution?

*Discuss your answer with another student.* My partner has nearly the same answer as me. O  
My partner is completely different to me. O

b) Investigating religions

*In small groups investigate 4-5 major religious groups: Hindu, Buddhist, Christian (include Catholic and Protestant), Moslem (include Shiite and Suni) using general knowledge or e-search with Wikipedia or google search. If representatives of any of the religious groups are present then they stay with their religious group to help.*

INVESTIGATION:

Name of the religion and people and adjective: e.g. Christianity, Christians and Christian:

Main religious figures:

Sacred book name:

Place of worship:

Daily worship e.g. Saying grace before meals:

Special Days e.g. Good Friday and festivals e.g. Easter, Christmas and how many are public holidays?

Rites of passage with age e.g. communion ~11-13 years:

How do you join or do people welcome you to the religion?

Differences if any for male or female:

Taboos – e.g. food

Organisation of the religion e.g. Catholicism is hierarchical with Pope, Bishops, deacons, priests but Protestants do not have a global leader.

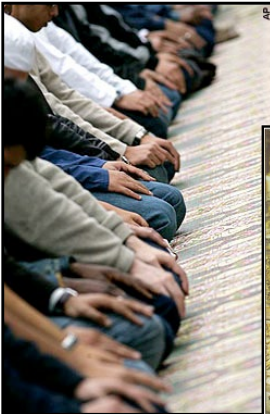
*One person from each religious group forms a new group and together try and find similarities.*

*Report on your results below:*

(Remember there is always variation in the religion and more than one way is possible.)


One similarity is in \_\_\_\_\_ people ....

(based on Intercultural Language Activities by John Corbett CUP 2010 Religion pp227-232)





## Gestures and body language

1.  Write the order of the pictures as you hear them:



a. \_\_\_\_



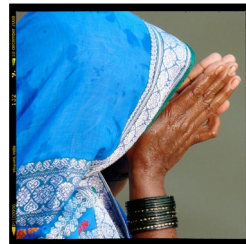
c. \_\_\_\_



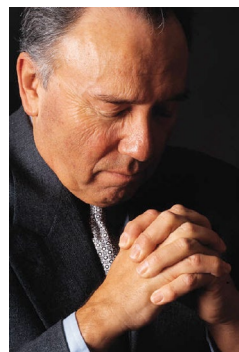
b. \_\_\_\_



e. \_\_\_\_



d. \_\_\_\_



e. \_\_\_\_



f. \_\_\_\_



h. \_\_\_\_



i. \_\_\_\_

2. Is any body language the same in your culture? Yes/No  
Do you have any religious body language to show other students? Yes/No

3. What was the most interesting body language for you to learn about?

.....  
.....  
.....

4. How many of these gestures or sacred customs are the same as your partner? \_\_\_\_

## Words and language (literacy)

1. Using symbols to mean words

: ) or ; ) are examples of emoticons and show the writer's emotions and feelings in on-line chat, discussions and email. Draw some that you use below:

How many are the same as your partner? \_\_\_\_

2. Bar codes and QR codes

*In pairs or small groups ask and answer the following questions i-iii:*

i) Look at the photos below and choose the correct photo for:

bar code \_\_\_\_ QR code \_\_\_\_

ii) Where do you see bar codes? \_\_\_\_\_

iii) You can have an app for QR codes on your smartphone. Do you have it? yes/no  
Yes? What do you use it for?

3. Colours to warn people

*In pairs or small groups ask and answer the following questions:*

a) What colour are stop and give way traffic signs? \_\_\_\_\_

b) What colour are no passing lines in the middle of the road? \_\_\_\_\_

c) Does gold or yellow have any special meaning in your religion or culture? Yes/No What?

Traffic sign colours are the same as my partner (from a different culture). Yes/No

4. Taboo words (or swearing)

*Read this:*

There are 3 kinds of 'swear' or taboo words in English: religious words, sexual words or words about the body. There are also many polite forms of the 'swear' words: heck holly help; golly gosh OMG; farrrr (out) fudge flip; blimmin' bleeding; geeze geezu gee geepers; shoot shivers

English has many 'hard' sounds so some people say it is the best language in the world for swearing: /t/ /k/ /p/ are in many swear words like piss, fuck and shit. New Zealanders use these bad/swear words as nouns and verbs and they are in R16 movies, on TV and in everyday life. Maori language does not have these words.

(i) Which polite words replace God, hell, Jesus, shit, bloody, fuck?

.....  
(ii) What are the religious (or taboo) words in your language?

(You can choose **not** to answer this question by saying, "There are words but I'd rather not say them.")

Are the words from religion, sex or parts of the body/body functions (like going to the toilet).

Is there any law about using them in public? Yes/No

Is there any punishment for saying them? Yes/No

How many of us have some kind of law or punishment for saying swear words? \_\_\_\_



a. \_\_\_\_



b. \_\_\_\_



c. \_\_\_\_

Reflections



1. What is the most interesting difference in symbols, religion or icons for you? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Religion is a very important part of my daily life. *(put an x on the line)*  
I agree completely ----- I disagree a lot.

3. My culture will **never** accept other religions as equal. *(put an x on the line)*  
I agree completely ----- I disagree a lot.

4. Look at the results of at least three different partners’ (from a different culture) and this unit: (symbols, icons, taboos, social organization and changes, body language and literacy).  
Who from another culture thinks nearly the same as you?  
(Name) \_\_\_\_\_ What country did they come from? \_\_\_\_\_  
What do you have in common with them? Complete the next sentence:  
We both (like/are/have/go to/come from) \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Choose the best answer for you:  
1=Strongly agree 2= agree a bit 3= disagree a bit 4= strongly disagree  
a) I believe my religion is an important part of me (my identity). \_\_\_\_  
b) It is important to have a choice of religion. \_\_\_\_  
c) Religion can support you when you have bad times. \_\_\_\_  
d) Religion and government should work together. \_\_\_\_  
e) Religious change is sometimes uncomfortable but it is necessary. \_\_\_\_  
Do you and your partner agree? Yes/No



Plans for the future

I am going to think more carefully about my communication with someone from a different religion.  
Yes/No/Maybe  
I am going to respect other cultures’ religions. Yes/No/Maybe  
I am going to ask if there is a religious taboo when I work with someone. Yes/No/Maybe  
I am going to educate my children about my religion. Yes/No/Maybe  
I am never going to \_\_\_\_\_

Answers

How different is your culture to New Zealand culture?

symbol	Meaning in New Zealand
Hot cross buns	These mean Easter and a traditional food for Christians and non-Christians at this time.
black	Death and the traditional colour of clothes at a funeral. However it is also the colour of the national sports teams - All Blacks.
white	Pure, clean, hospitals, virginity.
green	Growth, the NZ bush, peace.
Red	Blood but also red roses mean love! It is also the Labour party colour.
A crown	royalty
Blue	conservative politics
A inside a circle	anarchy
The Southern Cross	NZ - you can only see it in the southern sky; it is on the NZ flag.
kiwi	New Zealanders
silver fern	NZ but it also a sports team.
Pohutakawa tree	Christmas on the beach/summer
ANZAC poppy and biscuits	War and soldiers that died. New Zealanders wear the paper red poppy and eat the 'war food' biscuits to remember them.
the cross	Christianity
pavlova	celebration; made first by a NZ chef to celebrate the visit of Anna Pavlova the ballerina. Mother's Day and Father's Day/Christmas.
country/farm	Sheep is the main symbol of farming.

4. Learning about *tapu*, taboo and tabu  
Answer is v).  
b) Audio 10.0 In New Zealand Maori have ‘*tapu*’ but with the movement of many Maori to the city and away from traditions, many people are losing the \_\_\_\_\_ of ‘*tapu*’. However, taking off \_\_\_\_\_ before you go into a ‘*marae*’ (meeting house area), **not eating in the ‘*whare nui*’ (meeting house)** and cleansing yourself with \_\_\_\_\_ after going into an ‘*urupa*’ (cemetery) still remain the same. The head is sacred to Maori so touching it is a ‘no-no’ but not many \_\_\_\_\_ this action these days. The concept of *tapu* tells people where food and drink can and cannot be eaten. Similarly in ‘*pakeha*’ (non-Maori) society, there have been many changes in the last 50 years. Many Catholic Christians did not eat meat (taboo) on Fridays. Homosexuality and prostitution are still taboo in some religions but now are legal and becoming more \_\_\_\_\_. In certain situations you can see sexual parts of the body in \_\_\_\_\_ e.g. at nudist beaches or ‘Boobs on Bikes’ Parade in Auckland’s main street \_\_\_\_\_ a year. TV programmes also contain sexual or taboo material and taboo words late at \_\_\_\_\_ with R16 warnings only. However, spitting, urinating, using taboo words and picking your nose in \_\_\_\_\_ are still not \_\_\_\_\_. What extra information is NOT on the audio: **not eating in the ‘*whare nui*’ (meeting house)**

Gestures and body language

10.1 Positive religious gestures include making the sign of the cross on your chest (cross my heart) for a promise (h), making a circle with your index finger above your head like an angel’s halo for goodness (i) or crossing your fingers in front of you to show that you promise to do something or hope for good luck (b). Crossing your fingers behind your back usually means you are lying.  
When people pray they nearly always close their eyes. Going on your knees with your head down to show respect or to pray to a deity (god) is common in group situations (a) and also in private. Some people put their hands together in front of their face to pray (d), some at their chest or in front of it (g), children often put their hands in front of their mouths (c) and some people, usually men, ‘knit’ their fingers together and put them close to their heart (e) or forehead (f).

Useful resources:

- Censorship
- Cross cultural communication -religion in NZ
- Mispronunciation of words can become taboo words!
- Religious statistics
- Video on taboo words with questions