# **Re-Entry Orientation Summary and Guidance from E & T**

Thank you for volunteering to work with us to carry out orientations across the country! E&T is here to support you and provide you with tools to organize a meaningful orientation. As we strive to support orientation volunteers and standardize YFU’s orientations, we have two goals in mind: ensure that all students and families participate in high quality orientations; and to build volunteer capacity so that volunteers can take full ownership of orientations and carry these out at the local level. To help achieve these goals, we have developed the following guidelines:

* Facilitators follow the E&T curriculum to the best of their ability
* Each orientation meets a minimum length of time, as described in this Orientation Summary
* **All Orientation Coordinators submit sign-in sheets, Orientation Reporting Form, agenda and expense reports to E&T at orientations@yfu.org, (preferably within one week of the orientation)**
* Coordinators and facilitators can participate in collaborative webinars with E&T staff to discuss the content of the orientation. FDs are also welcome to participate.

**Objectives of the Re-Entry Orientation**

Students will be able to ….

*Identify the skills they have developed during their exchange experience and celebrate how their personal culture has changed.*

*Recognize that the end of the exchange brings many emotions and saying goodbye is difficult.*

*Make a plan for departure and saying goodbye.*

*Be prepared for re-entry to their home countries by examining the re-entry process and adaptation strategies.*

**Key Themes of the Re-Entry Orientation**

Amelie’s Letter- A letter written by a former exchange student outlines key themes discussed throughout the orientation- excitement about personal growth; sadness about leaving the US; anxiety about returning home; reverse culture shock when arriving home; and all of the preparations for departure. Familiarize yourself with the letter in order to have rich conversations with the participants about their experiences.

The New Me - This activity is also referenced in several sessions. During this activity, students will think about how they have changed over their exchange. Later, they will talk about how their *New Me* may face challenges as they re-adjust to life back in their home country. Get to know the writing prompts on the *New Me* worksheets in order to help students reflect about their new personal culture.

Practical Tips for Readjustment and Handling Reverse Culture Shock- We have compiled several concrete Re-Entry strategies so students have tools that will help them manage the challenges of readjustment.

After the Orientation- We have provided several documents for the host parents and students to look over once they return home. These documents are: Goodbye Timeline, Goodbye Plan and Practical Tips for Readjustment & Handling Reverse Culture Shock. Please give these handouts to the families/students as they leave so they may use them as a resource as they plan for the last weeks of this exchange experience as well as the departure of the student.

**Planning Your Orientation:**

Recognizing that orientations can vary in length, we have provided flexibility within the activities. Several sessions have optional activities, pending the time available. Work with your team to design an agenda that will best suit your group. The parents session is about 80 minutes long. Parents can meet for their session at the beginning of the day, and then take a longer break and return later in the day for the joint parent/student graduation session at the end.

We suggest a minimum time of 3.5 to 4 hours. This includes a 30-minute lunch and one ten-minute breaks for students. This also allows for plenty of afternoon time for social activities such as a picnic, hike, or group trip out for ice cream. See the sample agenda for ideas on how to organize the day.

**Sample Agenda**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Session Title** | **Length in minutes** | **Sample Time Table using the shorter sessions and includes break and lunch** |
| Session 1 Welcome | :25 | 10:00-10:25 |
| Session 2 The New Me | :40 | 10:25-11:05 |
| Session 3 Leaving the US | :35 | 11:05-11:40 |
| LUNCH | :30 | 11:40-12:10 |
| Session 4 Saying Goodbye (with Thank You Note activity) | :50 | 12:10-1:00 |
| BREAK | :10 | 1:00-1:10 |
| Session 5 Graduation & Wrap Up (parents join for this session) | :30 | 1:10-1:40 |
| **Total Time** | About four hours | 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM with one break and lunch |

**Optional Activities Available on the Re- Entry Web Page**

**Prediction Collage -** (20 minutes) **-**An optional prediction collage activity asks students to make predictions about Reverse Culture Shock.

**Back Home**- (65 minutes)- there are two options for the session. Both options focus on the challenges and the solutions when a student returns home; both use active methodologies where the students are working together to problem solve. Option 1 begins with further analysis of the students’ New Me, and then uses team work to look at problems and concerns. With option 2, students create and perform skits based on pre-developed quotations.

**Please don’t forget:**

**Entering Orientation dates for all to see**: Enter your orientation dates on my.yfu.org under the Events tab on the home page so volunteers in your local area will be aware of opportunities to help.

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