



Orientation	Mid-Year
Session Overview	<p>Take the students through a brief “time travel” journey to help them reflect, discuss and share where they are in their adjustment process in the exchange experience. Have students fill out their own adjustment curve from the start of their exchange until today.</p> <p>Note the following lesson icons throughout the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - this indicates a take away point that should not be missed during the lesson ✓ - this indicates a question or idea that can be used to facilitate a conversation
Session Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the challenges of your exchange and develop solutions. • Develop plans and strategies to continue personal growth.
Participants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students <input type="checkbox"/> Host Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Host Siblings
Format	<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Active / Interactive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Activity / Interactivity <input type="checkbox"/> Independent
Duration	About 45 minutes
Group Size	Any size
Minimum Staffing	All volunteers present
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adjustment Curve ○ Optional Activity- Javier’s Story for all students • Flipchart to record anonymous HIGHS & LOWS of students’ adjustment curves to share with parents during Wrap Up session • Flipchart with blank curve drawn and to plot several students curves to show how the curves can vary <p>Visuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example of two adjustment curves on one graphic (copy from page 8) • Flipchart or slide of <i>Charles Swindoll attitude quote</i> written at end of session
Preparation	<p>Prepare High & Lows flipcharts</p> <p>Create example of Adjustment curve on White board, flip chart or slide.</p> <p>Create flipchart or slide of quote.</p>

BRIEF INTRODUCTION & ACTIVITY # 1 & DISCUSSION- (15 minutes)

Share these orientation objectives with the students:

- Discuss the challenges of your exchange and develop solutions.
- Develop plans and strategies to continue personal growth.

This next activity is a **visualization activity** created to help the students take time for self-reflection and become more in tune with their feelings and memories of their exchange experience so far. As the facilitator, you will set the tone and then read through the prompts below and encourage students to re-experience some of the moments they have had in their exchange. In order for the students to visualize each different part of the experience, talk slowly in a calm voice. Add additional prompts to help the students remember different details about their exchange and encourage deep reflection.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some students may become emotional or cry during this activity. Crying might indicate joy, homesickness, or loneliness (or other emotions). Make sure fellow volunteers are ready to talk one-on-one with students, as needed.

ACTIVITY #1- TIME TRAVEL

1. Instruct the students to:

1. Get comfortable in their seats.
2. Close your eyes and take a deep breath.
3. Listen to the questions without responding. Students do not talk during this activity: sit quietly, listen to my voice, and picture what I am saying.
4. For the next few minutes, try and think about how you felt or connected to each question. Visualize this and try to put yourself back in time to the moment described.

2. Slowly, read the prompts and remind students not to respond, but rather to visualize in their mind the scene. Encourage them to remember as many details as possible.

Initial meeting with the host family: Think about when you first met your host family, do you remember the day and the place. Think about that clothing they were wearing. Do you remember what they said? What were your feelings? Did they look like their pictures?

First days in the home: Do you remember some of the first few days in the home? Visualize and remember some of your first conversations and activities. Think about your first weekend... How was it different from your home country?

School: Think about your first day of school. Did you take a bus, drive with your host family, walk or take public transportation? Did somebody show you around the school? Did you get lost in the building? Can you visualize those first few weeks as you were getting to know the teachers and

other students? Think back to some of your “firsts” at school. First time going to a sporting event, or club; the first time you used an instrument in band class, or your first time giving a presentation.

Highs and lows: Think about your favorite memory so far. Re-visit that memory in your mind. What did you do, with who and where? Why is that memory special? Have there been some difficult times? What happened and who was there to help you? Did you learn anything from this?

Holidays: Let’s think about all the holidays....did you do anything for Halloween, like dress up and/or give out candy? Did you celebrate Thanksgiving- who did you meet, what did you eat? Did you travel? Was this fun, stressful or both? December included Christmas and a break from school. Remember the Holidays, visualize the activities with family and friends. Was this a happy time, or a challenging time- why?

3. Ask the students to open their eyes and talk about the Time Travel activity. Use these discussion questions, or develop your own:

- How did you feel during this activity?
- Was there a favorite memory that you can share?
- As you visualized these different parts of your exchange, what are you thinking about now?
- Why do you think we did this?

Highlight the point of the activity:

- ✓ This activity may have helped sharpen your memories about the first part of your exchange. We will do a bit more work thinking about the first part of our exchange and then we will talk about what has been particularly great or difficult. We did this activity to remind you of all you have accomplished so far and to help everyone think about the second half of the exchange year.

ACTIVITY # 2 –CREATING ADJUSTMENT CURVES (10 minutes)

1. Tell the students to think about the times they remembered as highs and lows during the time travel exercise. Tell them that they will use those memories to plot out their Adjustment Curves.
2. Using flip chart paper, draw the adjustment graphic (see example at the end of the session on how to set up the horizontal and vertical axis, with no plotted points yet) and ask students if they have seen this graph before. If they have, ask a student to explain the graph and how to read it, if not review the points below
 - ✓ Explain the Adjustment Curve can help students understand their adjustment process.
 - ✓ Time is shown on the horizontal line and how a person feels is represented by numbers 1-10 on the vertical axis.

- ✓ Help the students see the connection between 3-5-8 Choice and how the vertical scale can represent their emotions or feelings about certain times during the exchange, going from 1-10. 1-2 means a person felt very sad, upset, homesick or even angry; 2-4 means a person felt not very good; 4-6 means normal, pretty good; 6-8 means you are happy, and a 8-10 shows moments and times of joy and lots of happiness.

3. Next, pass out Adjustment Curve handouts. Ask students to write their name on the handout. Then provide the following instructions:

- You are going to create your own Adjustment Curve that shows how this process has been going for you.
- Think about the good times and the challenging times you have had. Describe your own experience, from your arrival thru now by plotting points on the graph.
- Plot 5-10 points on the graph to show your own adjustment from the time of your arrival in the U.S. to today.
- Remind the students that there is no “normal” adjustment and everyone has their own highs and lows.

4. Tell the students that they have 10 minutes to reflect on their highs and lows and complete their adjustment curves.

DISCUSSION & WRAP UP (10 MINUTES)

Facilitator Note: At the end of this activity, you will need to collect the students’ adjustment curves and save them for Re-Entry orientation when they will be returned to students. Also, make sure that you save the flip chart with the highs and lows for use later in the day in the Wrap Up Session.

Lastly, during the discussion, pay attention to what students are saying when they talk about their highs and lows. Note these on flipchart paper as these will be shared later. A volunteer may need to provide some basic counseling and then reach out to an SSM for additional assistance.

1. After the students have created their adjustment curve, ask them to share their adjustment curves and a few of the high and low points. Encourage 3 or 4 students to volunteer to plot their curve on a common flip chart page to show how they can vary. Have a volunteer record examples of highs and lows on a flip chart (without names attached) to share with the parents. Use these questions below to help spark further discussion:

- Can someone tell me the most exciting thing that they have done so far?
- What is the moment that you were the happiest?
- How about a moment that was low?
- What about an experience that was especially difficult or challenging?
- Does anyone have suggestions to help solve this challenge?

- Does anyone else have another experience to share?
- Tell us about a happy memory with your host family, or friends at school?
- What is the best thing that has happened so far?

3. Wrap up the discussion by making sure to hit these three points:

- ✓ Each exchange experience is unique and equally valuable.
- ✓ Students need to understand where they fit emotionally in the adjustment process at this point.
- ✓ Students should understand the importance of their own attitudes towards the exchange experience.

5. Finish the session by reading the quote below:

“The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day We cannot change the past... we cannot change the fact that people act a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...”

- Charles Swindoll

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY- JAVIER’S STORY GROUP WORK (20 MINUTES)

1. Ask students to form teams of two or three students.
2. Give each group a copy of the story about Javier and a flipchart page to draw Javier’s adjustment.
3. Give students 10 minutes to read the story, talk about Javier and his adjustment process. Then they should complete the adjustment graph and plot at least four points on the graph for Javier.
4. Ask a few groups to briefly present their adjustment curve for Javier. As they present use the following questions to talk about Javier and his adjustment:
 - Why did you give him that number during that time frame?
 - How did things change in that month?
 - Who has experienced something similar, what happened?

Point out to the students:

- ✓ how quickly things can change within a month
- ✓ everyone has a unique adjustment process
- ✓ everyone has ups and downs

For optional activity

Javier's Story

Javier is from San Sebastian, Spain. He arrived in late August, just in time for the school year. When he first arrived, he was so excited about living in Iowa. He tried all the different foods, met almost all his classmates during the first week of school, and joined the journalism club to help write the school newspaper. He asked his seven year-old host brother every day to help him with English. He felt like life in the USA was perfect!

Later in September, Javier started to feel overwhelmed. His classes were difficult and he was having trouble understanding English. Students and teachers at school used so many words and phrases that he had never heard before. While he had met many other students, he didn't feel like he had many friends. One boy talked with Javier a little in Calculus class, but Javier often ate lunch alone.

Javier's Area Rep suggested that he try to talk to more students in the journalism club and make some friends. Javier tried a bit more to talk to people. Some people in the club were friendly, but Javier was a little embarrassed about his English. Thankfully, at the end of October, one girl took special notice of Javier and asked him to join her and her friends at lunchtime. This made Javier feel better and he started hanging out with the girl and her friends.

Later in December, Javier started to feel very sad and homesick. During the last week before winter school break, he got into an argument with his host mom. He didn't like rushing in the morning, and had slept late causing him to miss the bus for the second time that week. His host mom had to drive him to school and scolded him when he got home that evening. He felt like she was always wanting him to hurry up; he didn't understand why Americans were rushing all the time, "Why can't they just relax?" he often thought.

Over the holiday break, Javier's host brother kept asking Javier to play. Javier wanted to be left alone, he was tired of the "baby games." The snow was deep and all the cold weather made Javier miss the warm temperatures in Spain. Things at school were going well, but he was still having a lot of trouble with his classes, especially Chemistry. And the students he met in the journalism club were often talking so fast, Javier felt like he could not keep up. To make matters worse, the girl from his journalism class rejected his asks for a date and she had a new boyfriend. Javier started to miss his "easy" life with friends and family. He missed swimming in the ocean and relaxing on the beach. The more and more he thought about the warm beach, the more angry he became with the cold weather in Iowa. "How can people live in this horrible cold?"

ADJUSTMENT CURVE

NAME: _____

Awesome: 9-10
(Very Happy)

Smiley Face: 7-8
(Happy)

Doing OK: 5-6
(Normal)

Bummer: 3-4
(Unhappy)

**Don't want to get
out of bed: 1-2**
(Very Unhappy)

