

Truth or Stereotype?

After reading the statements below, decide whether you **agree** or **disagree** with the conclusions drawn

- _____ 1. The concept of privacy is the same in Puerto Rico as it is in the United States.
- _____ 2. The parents of your student from Brazil show that they don't care how their child is doing in school when they arrive 45 minutes late for a conference with you.
- _____ 3. Your Dominican students are always in your face. This shows that they don't respect your space.
- _____ 4. You have learned the appropriate gestures for traveling in Bolivia. You can apply this knowledge all over Latin America.
- _____ 5. Your Mexican parents keep their children out of school on the flimsiest of pretexts. They don't care about their children's education.
- _____ 6. You arrive at dinner an hour late in Costa Rica. Your hosts will be insulted.
- _____ 7. When you go to a bank in Colombia you would have no trouble cashing a check. Just stand in line and wait your turn. Colombians have great respect for a line.
- _____ 8. Your new student from Argentina stares at you all the time. The student is belligerent and wasn't taught any manners.
- _____ 9. If you want your friends to be on time in Venezuela, you need to clarify that it is "American time," not "Venezuelan" time.
- _____ 10. Your Brazilian business associate will not be shocked if you give him the "O.K." sign to show agreement.

Answer Sheet

Truth or Stereotype?

1. In Puerto Rico, homes are crowded. The concept of privacy is different there than in the United States. In the U.S. a closed door means privacy, In Puerto Rico people go within their mind to find privacy.
2. You wait 45 minutes for a conference with the parents of student from Brazil. They don't care how their children are doing in school. The concept of time in most South American countries is different from time in the U.S.A. 45 minutes is still acceptable for waiting period. If a person is too prompt, he is considered a status seeker
3. Your Dominican students are always in your face. This shows that they don't respect your space. The personal distance in most Latin American cultures is much closer than in the United States. U.S. personal distance is 18 to 30 inches. Latin American personal distance is much closer.
4. You have learned the appropriate gestures for traveling in Bolivia. You can apply this knowledge all over Latin America. Some gestures are shared but there are many which are not shared.
5. Your Mexican parents keep their children out of school on the flimsiest of pretexts. They don't care about their children's education - It's not that they don't care about education but that the family is more highly valued. If a family member needs help, that is a priority.
6. You are guests at a dinner in Costa Rica and you arrive right on time. You should feel insulted because your hosts are not ready to greet you. In many Latin American countries, an invitation for 9:00 does not really mean 9:00. A 9:00 dinner will probably not be served until 11:00 p.m.
7. When you go to a bank in a Colombia you will have no trouble cashing a check. Just stand in line and wait your turn. Although other clients may form a line, the line is not respected. You will have to fight for your turn all the time. After the teller takes your check, you must wait for it to clear and she waits on other people in the meantime. Americans are monochromatic and people in Latin America are generally polychromatic.
8. Your new student from Argentina stares at you all the time. You decide that the student is belligerent and wasn't taught any manners. Staring is not considered rude in many Latin American cultures.
9. Americans view of time is very linear and being on time is valued in the culture. In Latin American countries, the view of time is more relaxed.
10. The "O.K." sign means "that's great" all over Latin America. However, it is rude in Brazil.