

Lesson plan 1 THE VISIBLE, THE LESS VISIBLE, THE INVISIBLE

In this lesson plan the students discuss the visible and invisible aspects of culture.

EXPERIENCES

Learners

- express their representations and expectations about other peoples' cultures
- become more aware that some aspects of a culture can be accessed easily by opening their eyes and ears while other aspects are more subtle and require time to be approached

TARGETED COMPETENCES

Students

- can observe/analyse cultural phenomena in cultures which are more or less familiar (FREPA, skills, S-1)
- can formulate hypotheses in view of an analysis of cultural phenomena (FREPA, skills, S-1.1.2)
- can identify/recognise specific forms of behaviour linked to cultural differences (FREPA, skills, S-2.10)
- can argue their own opinion respectfully and listen to others opinions without premature judgment (ICCinTE, p. 13)

PROCEDURE

BEFORE



Students in groups brainstorm and list the aspects which in their opinion constitute their own cultures.



Then the teacher presents a picture of an iceberg as a way of representing the cultures of people they will meet: the visible part is what you can observe (ways of greeting, art, architecture, festivals, etc.). The invisible part is what you can experience when involved with a specific shared culture for a certain amount of time (concepts of time, values, cleanliness, etc.).



The teacher draws a blank iceberg or provides a copy (see the example provided) and asks the students in groups to complete the iceberg with the aspects of their own cultures they have written down at the beginning of the session – they have to decide which aspects go above and which aspects go below the surface of the water. The teacher also asks the students to place the aspects of culture presented in example 1c in the visible/invisible part of the iceberg.



The learners discuss their findings with the whole class and discuss any similarities or differences between their results. Students explain why they have decided to locate their aspects of culture in the visible/invisible part of the iceberg model. Some topics might be placed above or below the line depending on how you define them or what you focus on.



Additionally, students are asked to choose a certain number of items from the iceberg (some above and some below the water line). They write down what they already know or what they presume about people living in the host country and/or what they would like to learn.

To be realistic and to avoid boredom we suggest a maximum of 3 items above the line and 3 below, but of course it can also depend on the type of mobility project.

DURING



Discussion/group work: Students, from all participating institutions, in mixed groups, present their icebergs and share their expectations and experiences of each other's cultures.



They have the opportunity to compare their views with those of people they meet in the host country as well as to find out how they themselves and their own cultures are perceived by others.

AFTER



After returning to their home institution, students modify and adapt their icebergs (above and below the line). They discuss their results with their classmates. They observe if their ideas and opinions have changed as a result of their mobility experience.



Students are encouraged to recall any examples illustrating the visible and invisible aspects of the cultures of people they have encountered in the host country. They select one where they have experienced some change and present it to the others, who can react and ask further questions.

It is important that the students notice that there is a common culture in a country/region but that at the **same time there is a huge diversity and that people have complex identities and can belong to different cultures.**

FINAL PRODUCT FOR THE PORTFOLIO

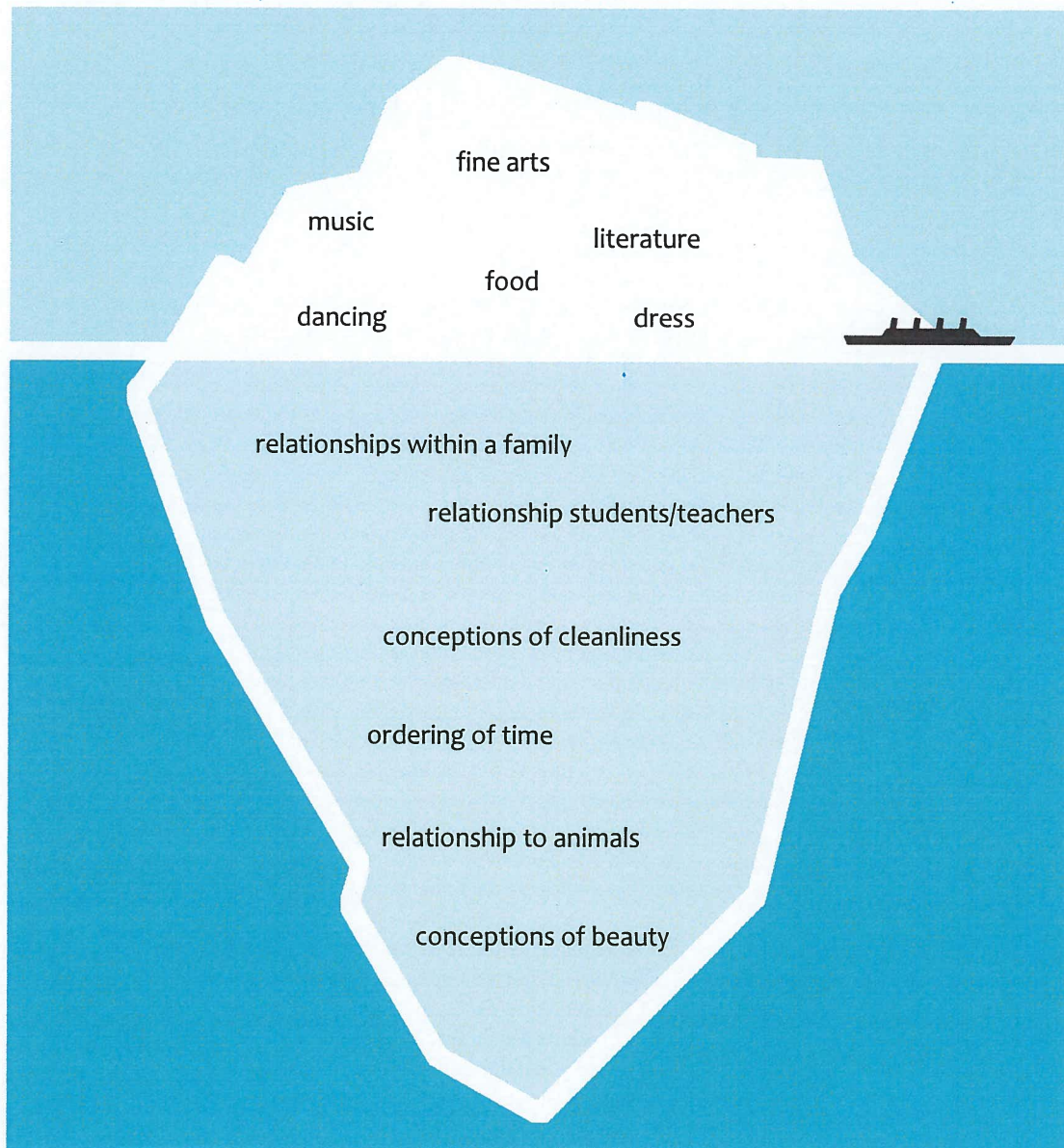
The modified iceberg (or a photo of the iceberg)

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

A blank iceberg

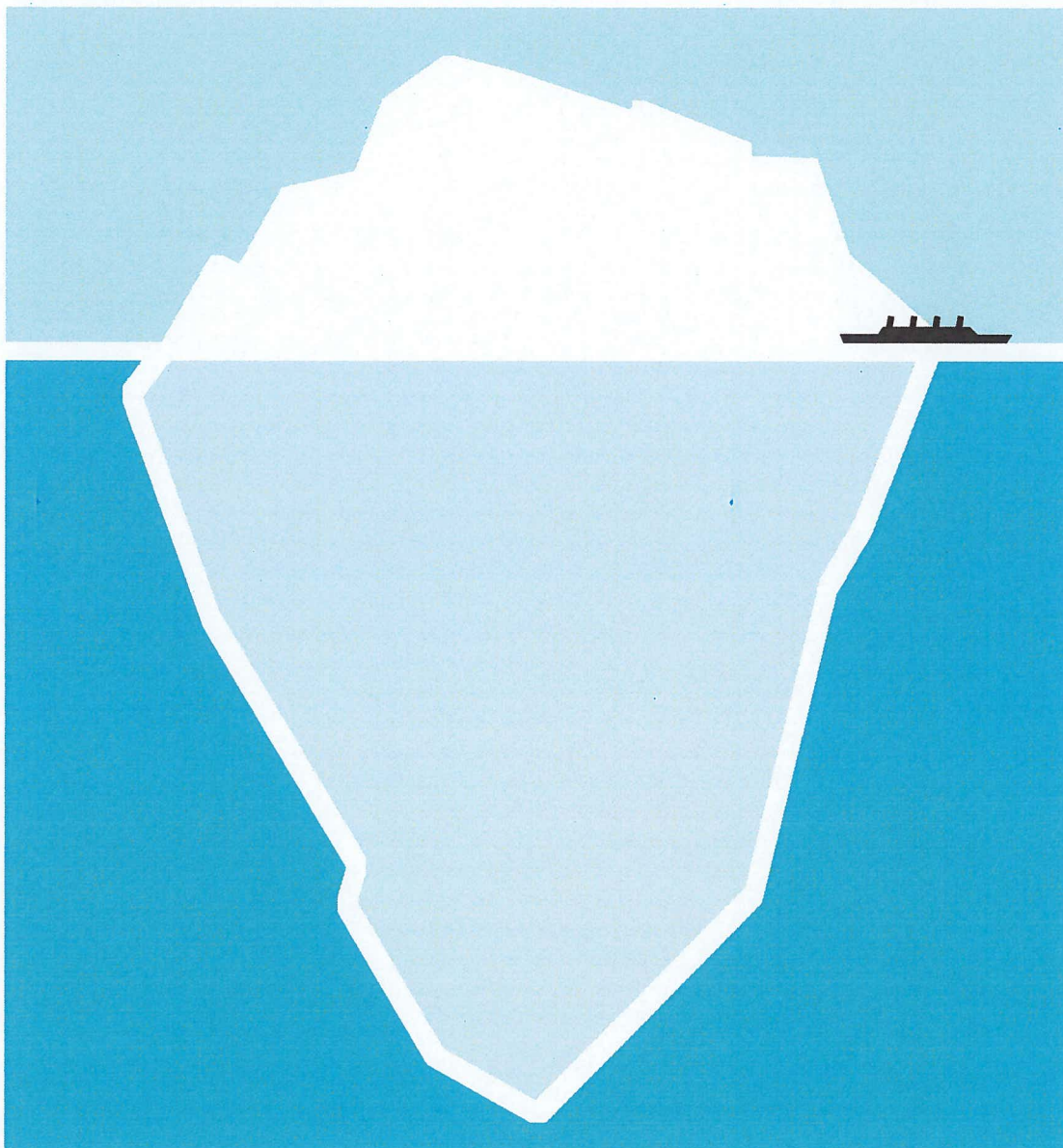
EXAMPLE 1

1a. Example of a completed iceberg



Based on an idea from LIFE. Ideen und Materialien für interkulturelles Lernen, BMW Group & Staatsinstitut für Schulqualität und Bildungsforschung

1b. Example of a blank iceberg



1c. Aspects of culture

Cut on the dotted line. Modify if necessary.

CUISINE	BODY LANGUAGE	SOCIAL MEDIA IN SCHOOL	MEANS OF TRANSPORT
GOOD MANNERS	PUNCTUALITY	NATURE OF FRIENDSHIP	SCHOOL SYSTEMS
STEREOTYPES	CLIMATE	DISCIPLINE	LEISURE
GENDER ISSUES	COMMUNICATION STYLE	PERSONAL SPACE	HEALTH CARE