

Topic: My People (Social Groups)

Let's get started . . . Who were your favorite people when you were a child?

Story: Case 1 - A young woman from Togo comes to the U.S. asking for asylum. She is put in detention and treated badly. One day, one of her friends in detention introduces her to another young woman, "She is your sister. She speaks your language." The two women cry and hug and begin talking in Ewe, their tribal language.

Case 2 - Two Japanese students meet in an English class at Bellevue College. They discover that they both graduated from the same university in Japan. They are excited and become instant friends.



Case 3 - Marcos comes to Seattle from Mexico. He has many cousins in the area. He immediately moves into an apartment with two of his cousins. They also recommend him to their boss, and soon he begins work at the same company.

What do you think of these stories? Can you tell a story like this about your own life?



In pairs, talk about the following questions.

"Birds of a feather flock together." Do you have a saying like this in your native culture? Is it true in your own experience? Give examples.

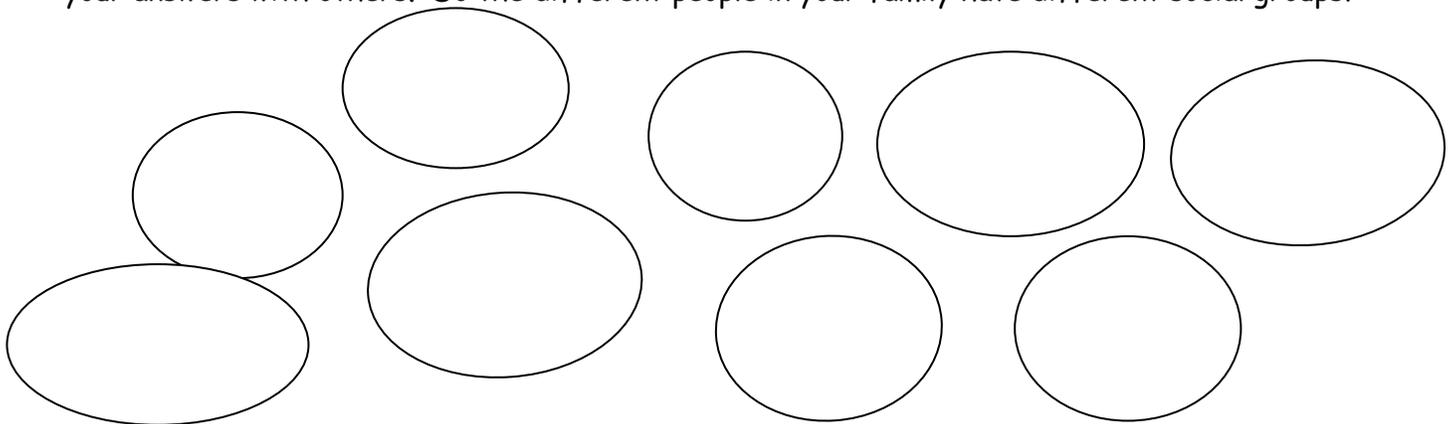


What does it feel like to be alone, far from the "flock"? Explain.



Share with the larger group something you learned.

What social groups do you belong to? (Examples: Farsi-speakers, middle-aged men, soccer fans, parents of teenagers, construction workers, the Diaz family.) Which social groups influence your life a lot? Which influence your life a little? Write in the "balloons" below. Share your answers with others. Do the different people in your family have different social groups?



Discussion Questions - talk in pairs or small groups. Change groups from time to time.

In your native culture, how do people choose a spouse for their children or themselves? Do they think about different social groups - family, education, hometown, profession? What is most important in making a good marriage decision?



What do you think about people from different nationalities, ethnic groups or races intermarrying?

There is a saying, "It's not **what** you know, but **who** you know." Is this true in your native culture? Is this true in the United States? Explain.

In some cultures, it is customary to introduce yourself not by your name only, but by your company. For example: "I am Alisa Moreno of Microsoft." How do people introduce themselves in your native country?



When is it good to be an "outsider", outside of the normal social groups? Are there any advantages to being a foreigner in the U.S.? Explain.

Dialogue (Conversation) - Practice one of the conversations below. Then, change the conversation. Practice in pairs and share your new conversation with the group.

Bill and Hong are going to the company lunch room to eat lunch. They are talking about where to sit.

<i>Harder</i>	<i>Easier</i>
<p>Hong: Look, there's Tom and Lee from the sales department. Shall we go sit with them for a change?</p> <p>Bill: I don't know. Do you think they want to eat with us? Sales is a pretty tight group.</p> <p>Hong: True. But, they may think we're a pretty tight group too.</p> <p>Bill: I guess someone has to take the initiative, or we'll all just stay in our little cliques.</p> <p>Hong: Let's do it.</p>	<p>Hong: There's Tom and Lee. Shall we sit with them?</p> <p>Bill: I don't know. Do they want to sit with us?</p> <p>Hong: I don't know. Let's ask them.</p> <p>Bill: Ok. We can try.</p>

New vocabulary: asylum, detention, tribal language, discover, instant, recommend, feather, flock, influence, membership, social group, custom, "outsider", advantages, foreigner, "for a change", "pretty tight group", "take the initiative", "little cliques".

Keep talking about it this week: Ask a coworker or friend: "Is it true, 'It's not what you know, but who you know.?' " Write down their answers and share at Talk Time next week.

More on cliques and social groups - movies to see:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_School_Musical#Plot

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Side_Story_\(film\)#Plot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Side_Story_(film)#Plot)