

Teaching Locally, Thinking Globally



Why the Changing Face of International Schools
Matters for Educators

Presented by Ruth E. Van Reken

Getting Acquainted



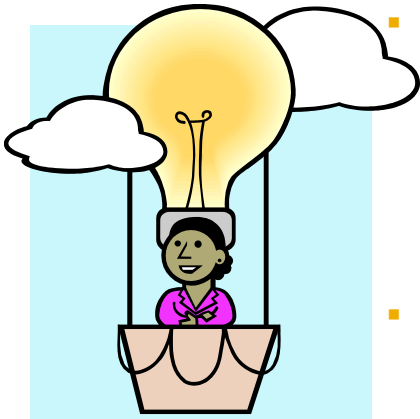
- Please tell me:
 - Your name
 - Your role in this school
 - Where your passport says you're from
 - How many countries you've lived/worked in
 - How long you've been working in international schools
 - Where do you call home?

My assumptions

- Those who have grown up globally are **not** a group of “cultural marginals” waiting to be rescued.
- We, as globally mobile families and educators **are** a community of people who are involved in living out new patterns of social structure in a fast-changing world.
- We **are** part of the discovery process of how these global changes impact individuals, families, societies, and nations.



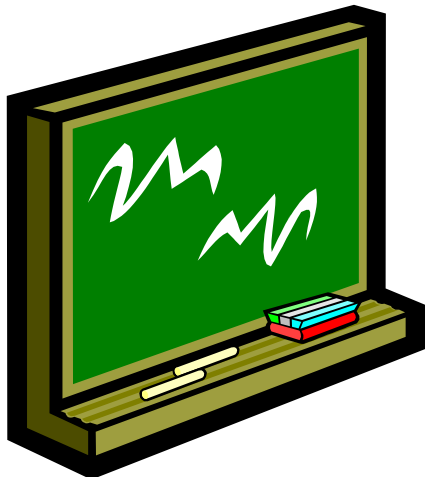
Overview for today's discussion



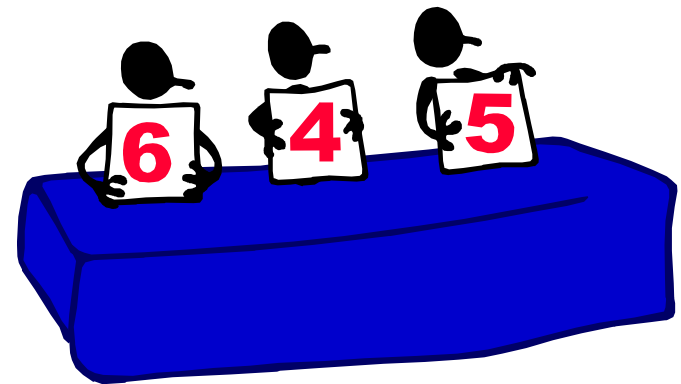
- Case presentation
 - Where we've been
 - *Short* history of TCKs and "third culture"
- Where we are
 - Understanding the increasing cultural complexity of students and why it matters for you as educators
 - Understanding the impact of mobility and why it matters for your as educators
- Where we're going
 - Strategizing for how to become more effective educators in this changing environment



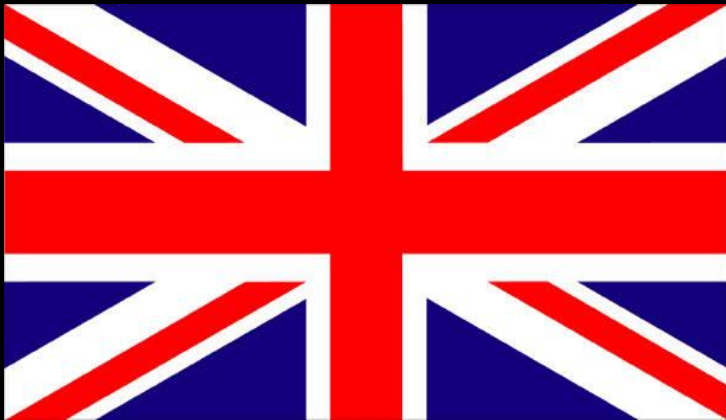
Methods we will use



- DVD – The Road Home
- Interactive Discussions
- Personal Stories
- Breakout groups



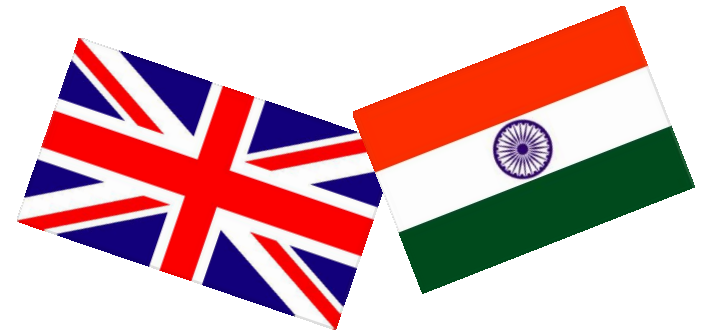
The Road Home by Rahul Gandotra



<http://www.facebook.com/rgandotra>

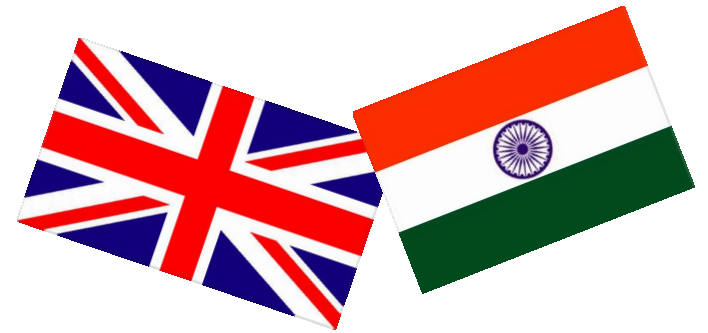
Small group discussion

- Imagine Pico is a student in your school. How would you begin to assess:
 - The situation itself
 - Pico
 - The schoolmates
 - The school's awareness or response
- What do you think is the basic issue of this film?
 - Is there “resolution”? If so, what is it? If not, what might be the ‘next step’ for Pico? His educators? Administrators? School counselors? Peers?
- Think of your students What other types of life stories among them might result in a similar response?
 - Why? What are common themes?



Feedback

- Imagine Pico is a student in your school. How would you begin to assess:
 - The situation itself
 - Pico
 - The schoolmates
 - The school's awareness or response
- What do you think is the basic issue of this film?
 - Is there “resolution”? If so, what is it? If not, what might be the ‘next step’ for Pico? His educators? Administrators? School counselors? Peers?
- Think of your students What other types of life stories among them might result in a similar response?
 - Why? What are common themes?



Examples of other types of similar stories

- Local kids going to international schools
- International kids sent here to learn English in your school
- New TCK...someone raised in passport country making first move to TC
- Many TCKs during reentry or whenever they look like dominant host culture
- Parents issues too!
- Bicultural/biracial kids
- International adoptees

Where we've been



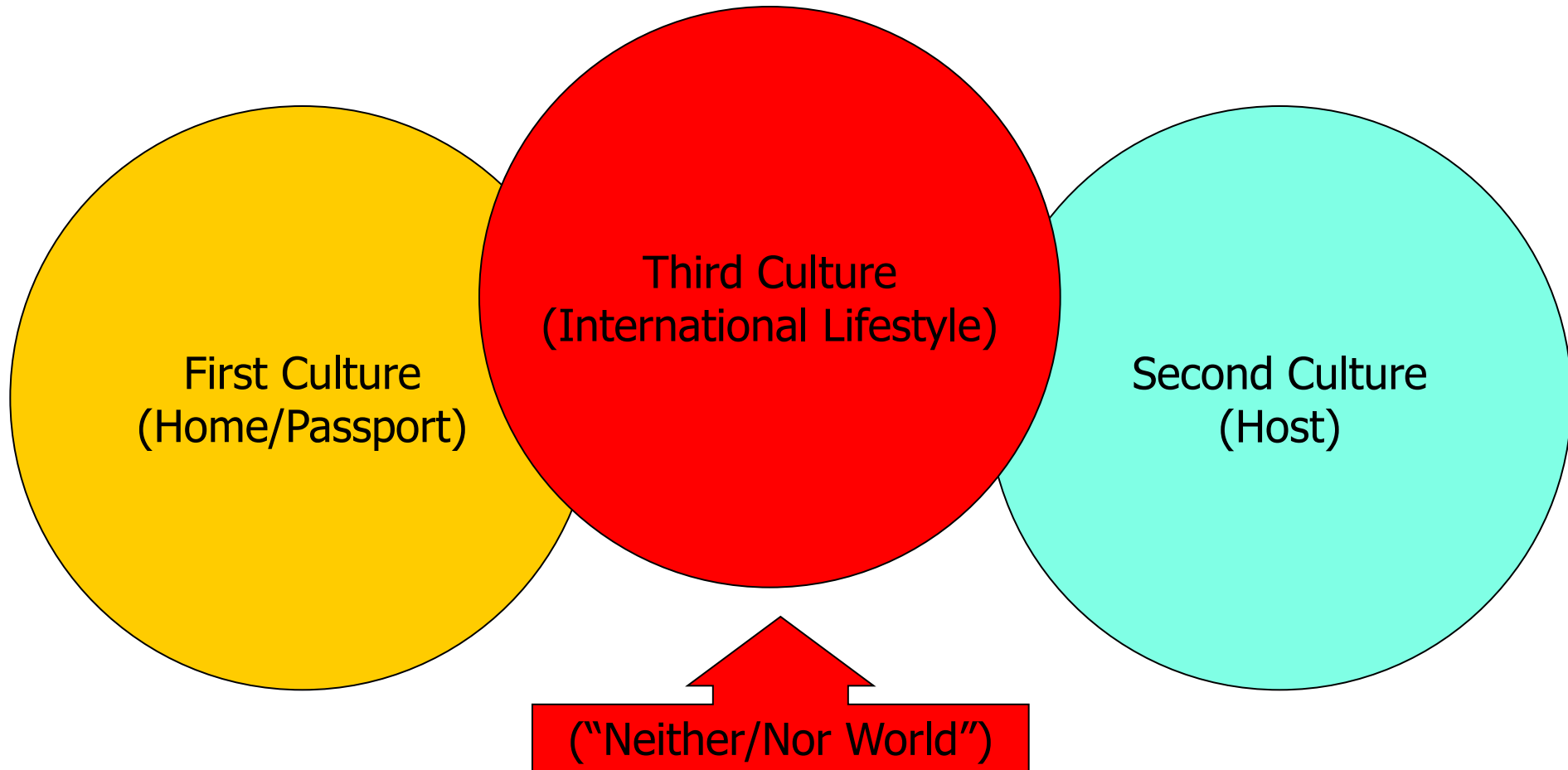
A little history: Who are Third Culture Kids (TCKs)?

“Children who accompany their parents into another culture [usually for a parent’s career choice].”

—Dr. Ruth Hill Useem, Sociologist,
Professor Emeritus at Michigan State University,
Originator of the term



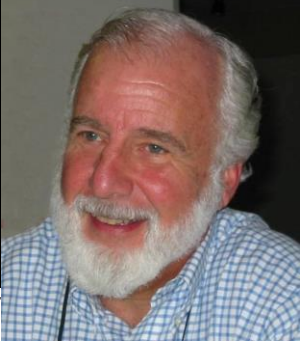
What is the “third culture?”



Characteristics of third culture

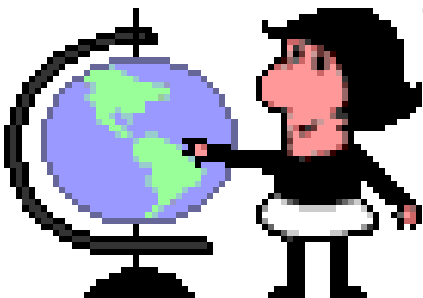
- Cross-cultural lifestyle
- High mobility
- Expected repatriation
- Often a “system identity”





Dave Pollock's TCK Definition

“A person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture(s)...



Expanded Description of Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

....Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the *sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background.*”

—David C. Pollock, developer of the TCK Profile



By now, who lives in this “third culture” (and why does it matter?)

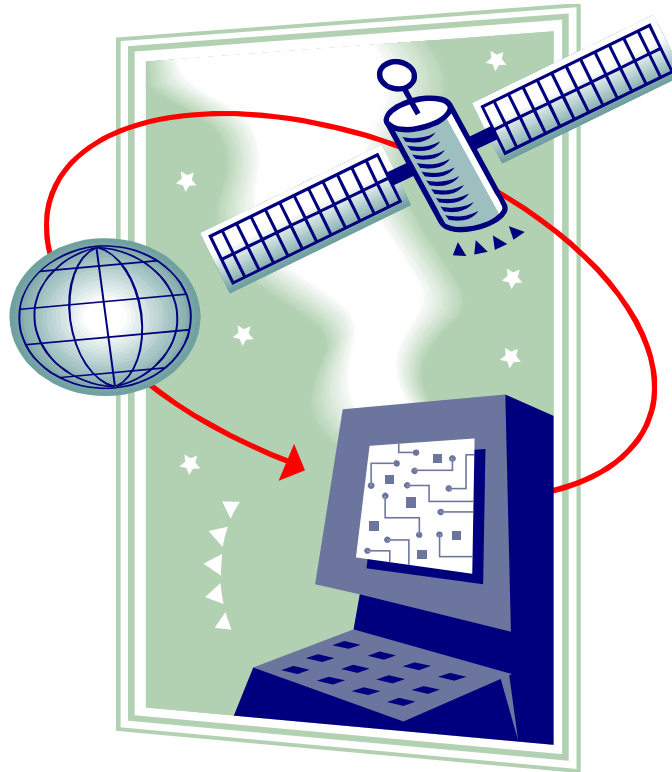


- **Third Culture Adults (TCAs)**
 - Those who make their first long-term international cross-cultural move as adults.
- **Third Culture Kids (TCKs)**
 - “Children who accompany their parents into another culture.”
 - Ruth Useem’s definition
- **Adult Third Culture Kids (ATCKs)**
 - Those who grew up as TCKs and now live as adults in this internationally mobile lifestyle.

Where we are now



Time for new language?



Evolving understanding...

- In 1984, Dr. Ted Ward declared Third Culture Kids (TCKs) as the “prototype citizens” of the future.
- Why?



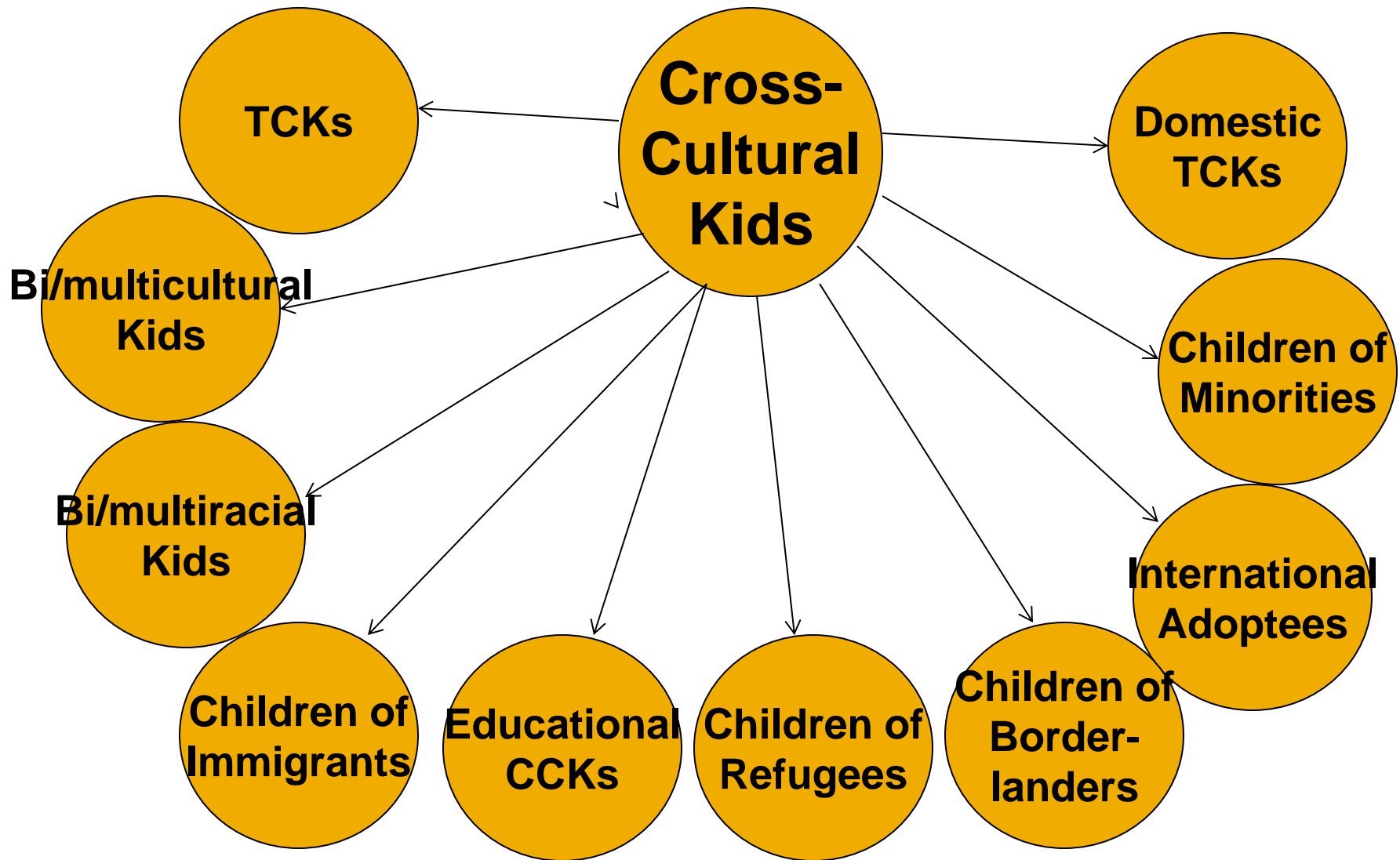
Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK)

- A Cross-Cultural Kid (CCK) is a person who is living in—or meaningfully interacting with— two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during developmental/childhood years.
- An Adult Cross-Cultural Kid (ACCK) is someone who grew up as a CCK.

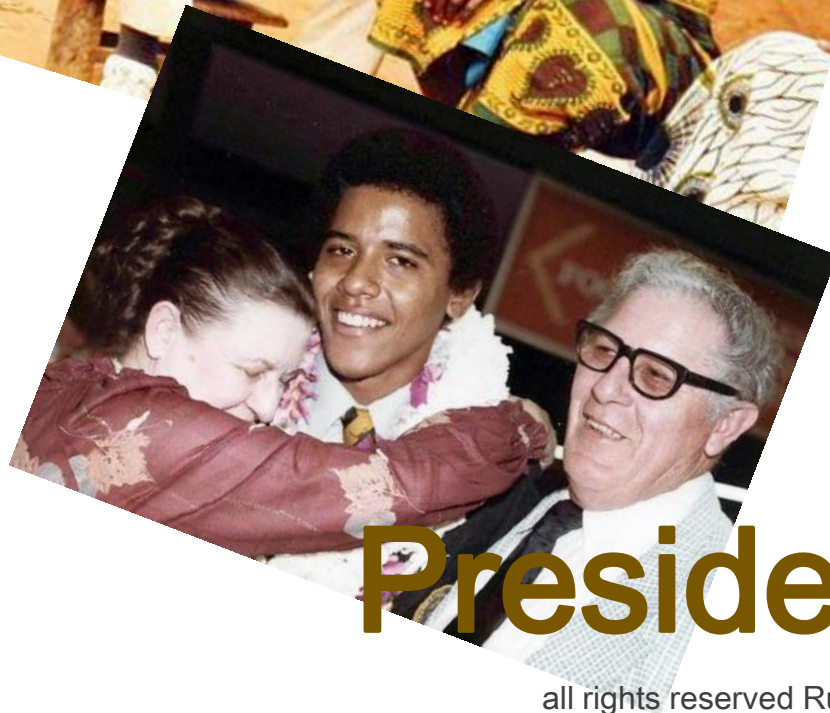
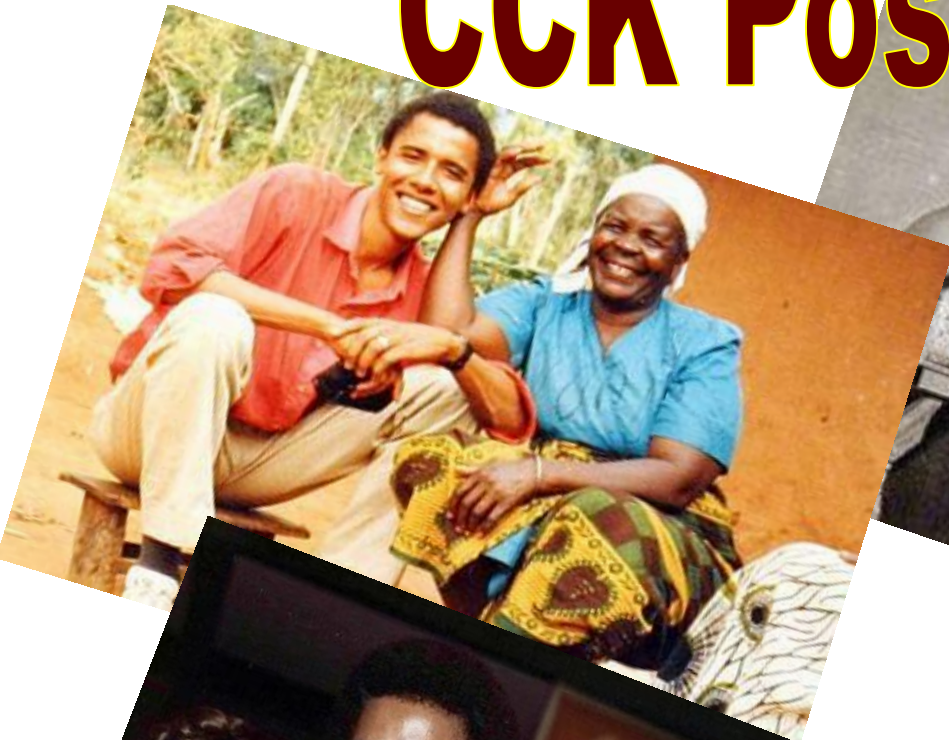
- Ruth E. Van Reken, co-author, *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds*, 2002



Examples of Cross-Cultural Kids

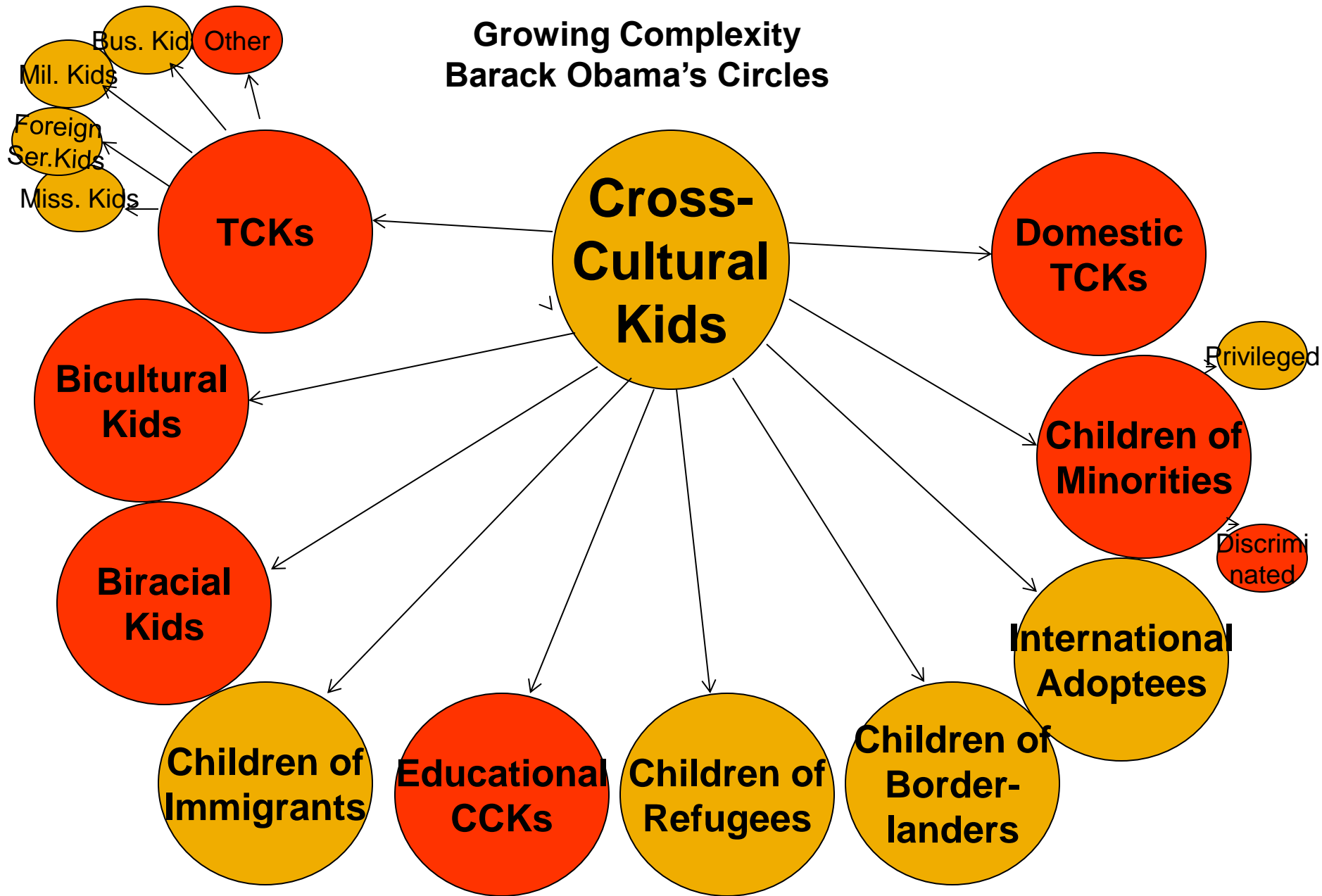


CCK Poster Child



President Obama

Growing Complexity Barack Obama's Circles



**CCKs represent any and all nationalities/
ethnicities/economic groups**



How have these global changes affected demographics in International Schools?

- How things used to be
 - Many schools were Western-based or mainly focused on a particular country
 - Students primarily from those backgrounds
- How they are now
 - Multiple nationalities even in “national” school or local schools
 - Multiple mother tongues
 - Diverse cultural and religious views and values



Why these global changes matter to you as educators

- These are the children/students in your schools
 - You are in a key position
 - You are shaping them in the very heart of their process
 - You are shaping the leaders of the future



Why these global changes matter to you as educators

- In increasing ways, have to take into account:
 - The differences in culture, religious views, and values



How you were taught – or even taught how to teach – might not work for every student

- How the level of language acquisition affect each student



Why these global changes matter to you as educators

- Rapidity of change means no generation has walked this way before en masse



Why these global changes matter to you as educators

- You are part of a discovery process:
 - How does growing up among many cultural worlds differ from growing up in one primary cultural environment?
 - How does it impact the educational/counseling process?



Group discussion...



- What are some general cultural differences you've noticed between
 - Students of various nationalities
 - You and some of your students?

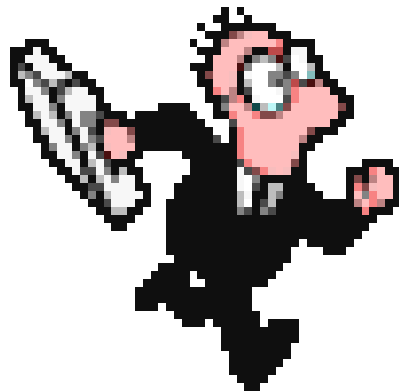
- What are differences you've noticed between
 - Your students' past educational system and here
 - Curriculum
 - Method of teaching
 - ???

Some potential cultural differences

- Time vs. relationship
- “Bullying” vs. “honor”
- Importance and style of greeting
- To accuse or shame worse than the crime
- How emotions are expressed
- How respect is expressed
- What is lying vs. being polite?
- Academic expectations/teaching/learning styles
- Left hand/right hand use



Time for a Break!

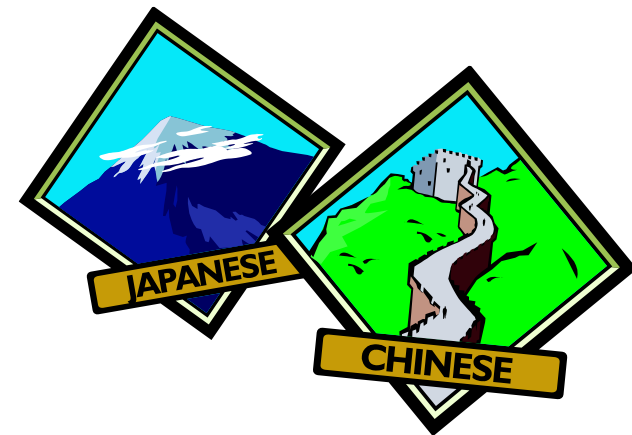


Why Cross-Cultural Childhood Matters



What do you consider gifts and challenges of this lifestyle? For your students? For you?

- Large world view vs. ignorance of passport culture
- Linguistic skills vs. linguistic confusion
- Cultural chameleon: adaptability vs. lack of true cultural balance
- Arrogance: real vs. perceived
- Belonging “everywhere and nowhere”
- Great opportunity to travel/see the world
- Independence vs. isolation
- Guardedness in forming close relationships



Practical skills often acquired

- Can be effective cultural bridge
- Language skills
- Observational skills
- Adaptability
- Confidence
 - To start something new
 - To move and start again

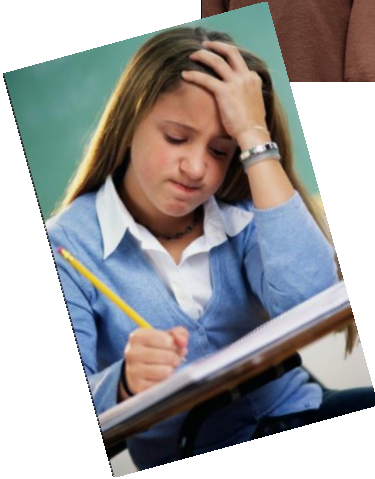


Common long term challenges TCKs may face

- Question of identity
 - “Which of my many selves am I?”
 - “I never feel like I belong anywhere....”
- Unresolved grief
 - Depression
 - Withdrawal, etc

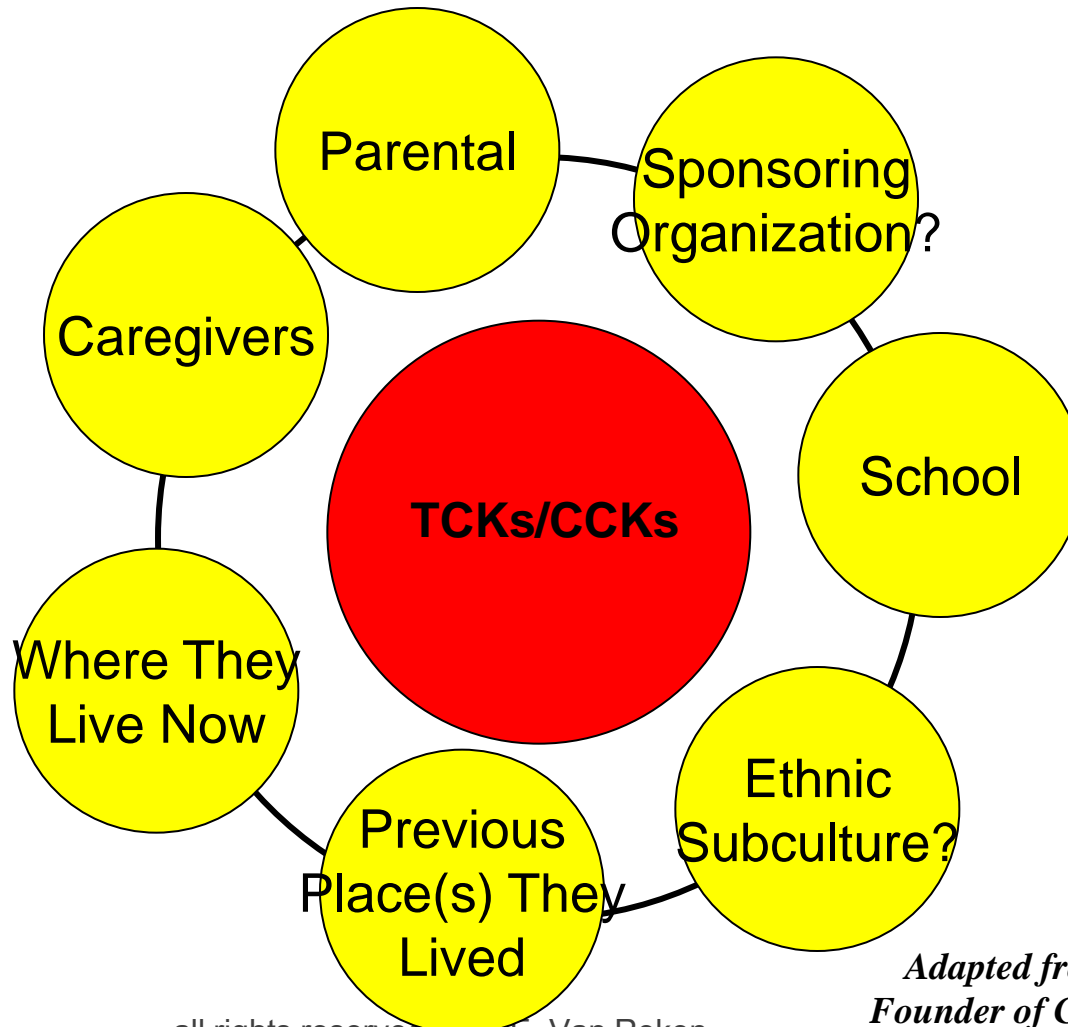


To understand this developing landscape...



- What is the difference between a traditional monocultural upbringing and a cross-cultural upbringing?

Possible Multiple Spheres of Cultural Influence in a TCK/CCK's World



Changing “Mirror” of TCKs/CCKs’ Cultural Identity in Relationship to Surrounding Dominant Culture

Foreigner	Hidden Immigrant
Look Different Think Different Speak Different	Look Alike Think Different Speak Alike/Different
Adopted	Mirror
Look Different Think Alike Speak Alike	Look Alike Think Alike Speak Alike

PolVan Cultural Identity Model @1996

Get into groups of two: Tell your story through this grid
Think of one student and tell his/her story through this
How similar/different is it from yours?

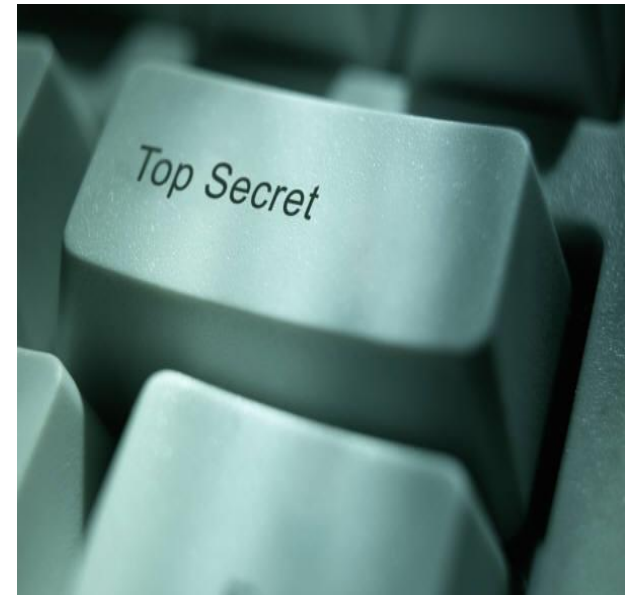
Foreigner	Hidden Immigrant
Look Different Think Different Speak Different	Look Alike Think Different Speak Alike/Different
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Look Different Think Alike Speak Alike	Look Alike Think Alike Speak Alike

PolVan Cultural Identity Model @1996

What is often the result of such a TCK/CCK childhood?

- **Hidden Diversity**— a diversity of experience that shapes a person's life and world view but is not readily apparent on the outside, unlike the usual diversity markers such as race, ethnicity, nationality, etc

▪ *Ruth E. Van Reken and Paulette Bethel, CIES, 2003.*



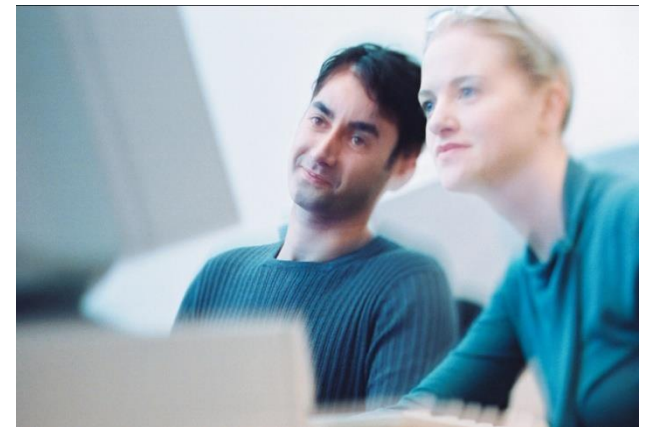
Common reactions as TCKs/CCKs try to sort out identity issues...



- "Chameleon"—tries to find "same as" identity
- "Screamer"—tries to find "different from" identity
- "Wallflower"—tries to find "non-identity"

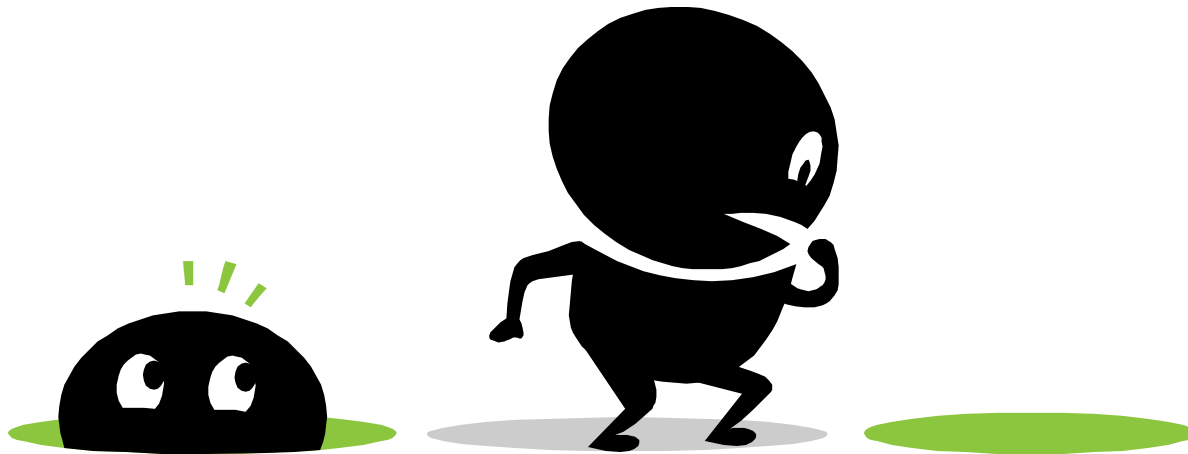
Other fallout ...

- In interpersonal relationships
 - Spouses/significant others
 - Peers at university or workplace
- Teachers may not understand students
 - What happens when hidden diversity isn't recognized?



Discussion...

- What happens if educators don't recognize these often hidden cross-cultural experiences among students?



What happens if educators don't recognize these often hidden cross-cultural experiences among students?

Jambo

- Difficulties with language may be overlooked
 - For those from non-English speaking backgrounds
 - For those from other countries with English as mother tongue



Sanu!

Hola!

What happens if educators don't recognize these often hidden diversities among students?

- Lack of availability for help with homework may be overlooked
 - Parents may not share assumed knowledge



What happens if educators don't recognize these often hidden cross-cultural diversities among students?

- Parental interactions or support may be misunderstood
 - Difference in expectations of how teachers and parents relate
- Academic learning may suffer if student doesn't understand expectations of new school



What happens if educators don't recognize these often hidden cross-cultural diversities among students?



- Social interactions may be misinterpreted
 - Different behavior has different meaning in different cultures
- Parents or teacher may not understand reactions towards a child

What happens if educators don't recognize these often hidden cross-cultural diversities among students?

- The wealth of what they know through life itself is lost to the class
- Child can be placed in wrong grade



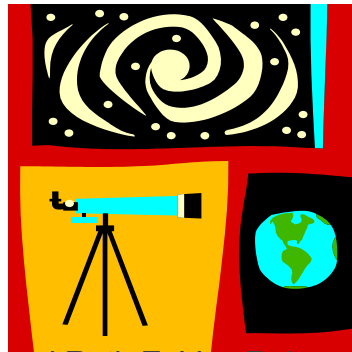
What happens if educators don't recognize these often hidden cross-cultural diversities among students?

- May be misdiagnosed with learning disabilities
- Learning disabilities may be overlooked
- Typical responses of cross-cultural experience may be misinterpreted



What happens when hidden diversity is recognized?

- Students are affirmed
- Teachers can tap previously unrecognized resources
- The student's potential within is released!



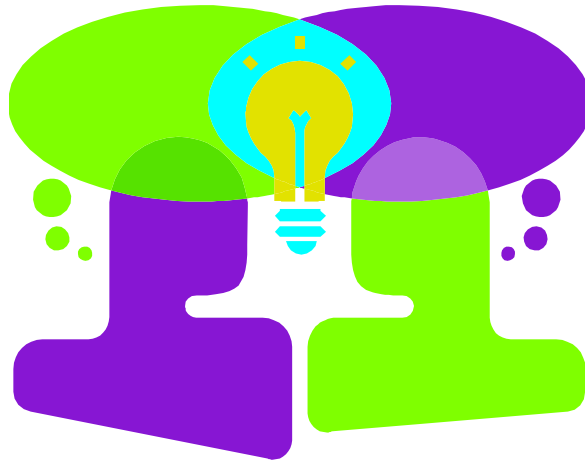
Discovering a child's hidden diversity

- Bottom line, back to basics: More now than ever, to be most effective, educators need to know each child's basic story
 - We can affirm likeness
 - "Emotions are the universal language"
 - We can affirm uniqueness
 - No one's story is the same



Need to know their stories

- How are we going to hear the stories?
- How are we going to understand the stories?



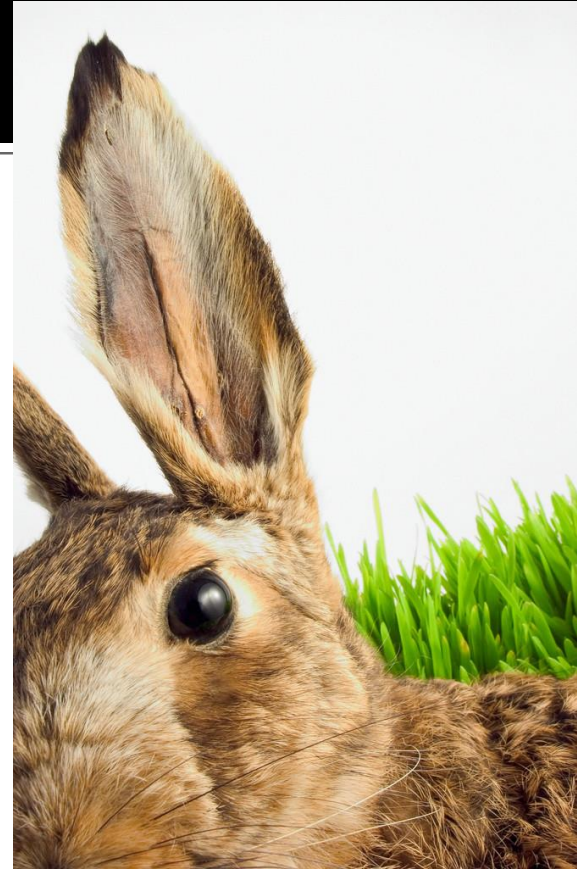
How to help? Discussion



- Please share some “best practices” you are already or could be doing to:
 - Prepare for/deal with cross-cultural overlay. Include:
 - Recognizing “hidden diversity”
 - What are some you see here?
 - Intentionally building on gifts
 - Help parents understand
 - Help teachers understand

How are we going to hear their stories?

- Admission form
 - Where born?
 - Where they have lived
 - Languages spoken?
 - Language spoken at home?
- Writing assignments
- Show and tell
- School fairs – any country you feel connected to
- Interviews with parents



To understand their stories, educators at all levels need to:

- Understand difference between educational systems or cultural expectations in areas e.g.
 - Overall educational model in different countries
 - Grading system
 - Methods of teaching
 - Homework expectations
 - Writing style/spelling
 - Emphasis on “whole person” vs. primarily academics
 - Cultural role of the school



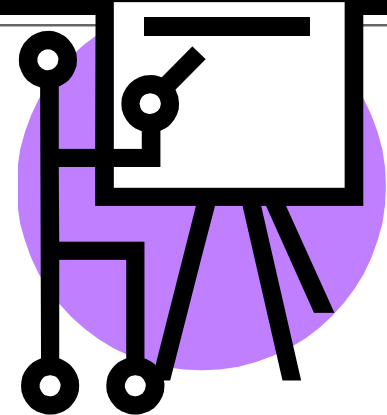
What you can do/have done...

- Develop programs that are embedded in school culture to make sure orientation for new teachers is strong in this topic
 - Original and on-going awareness of culture and CCK matters (and how differs from diversity at “home”)
 - How cross-cultural matters relate directly to educational process
 - Japanese teacher’s story
 - Planned mentoring with veteran teachers?
- Make sure parents of various cultural backgrounds are included in committees looking at various policies



Helping other educators...

- New teacher orientation
- Professional development days
 - Explore what they see in front of their faces
 - Listen to frustrations/challenges/joys
 - Consider how to expand their vision of cultural diversity
 - Use student panels to tell their stories
- When teachers send students to you for help, interview student with cultural and transition piece in mind. Share what you learn with teacher



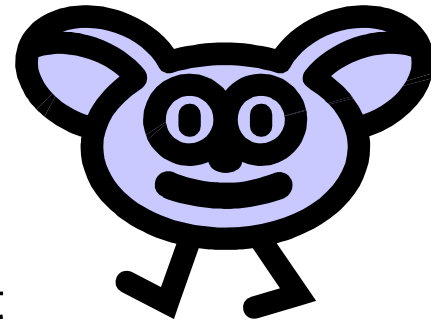
As you learn the story, help kids “normalize” it



- Help kids share their stories no matter the background. “Normalizes” the diversity of experience while keeping us connected to the common threads of our likeness
- Help them name their feelings after they describe an event
- Ask when others have felt this way
- Ask others how they think they would have felt in a similar situation

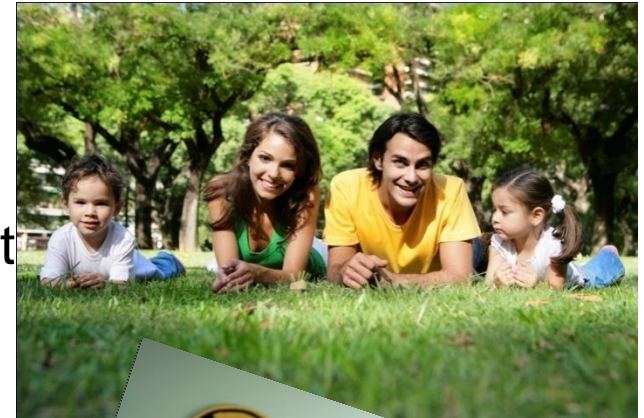
Helping kids “normalize” their story

- Ask about other ways you might do the same thing (make music, prepare food, etc.), pointing out the difference is in the details, not the common need or expression
- Looking for special strengths each child may have from their particular story and finding ways to use it here
- Finding common interests or projects to work on together



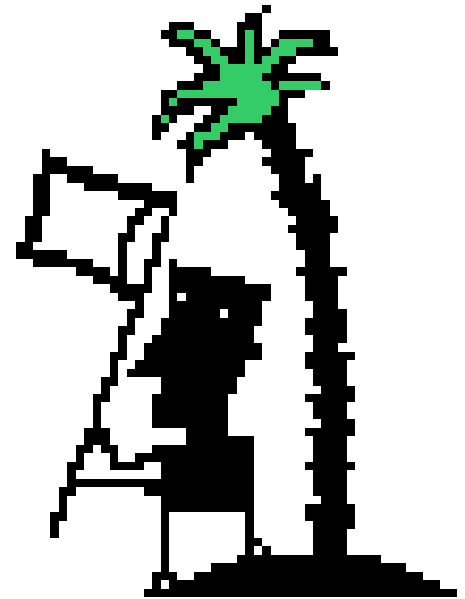
For students

- Remind TCK/CCK they can never lose who they are or were. It is their permanent foundation to build on.
- Affirm their international/ intercultural identity as well as national/ethnic one. They can be culturally complex as well as racially complex!



To help students...

- Have a file for who speaks what languages?
- Try to understand where they are at in the transition/crosscultural process. Help them name their feelings
- If they need to still say goodbye to the past, help them find closure
- Find a good mentor



Helping parents...

- Parent orientation – group and individuals
 - Making sure they understand overall educational structure
 - Making sure they understand grading system
- Don't forget a family from another state may also be in culture shock!
- Use translators for group meetings when possible, needed
- Use PTO to find mentors for new families



How to help parents

Work through parents groups to...

- Help them understand the basic CCK experience
- Help parents understand the importance of developing a strong sense of family identity
 - Use traditions
 - Vacations
 - Maintaining close contact with relatives here and “there”
- Encourage them to intentionally explore the places and cultures where they live and travel with their children

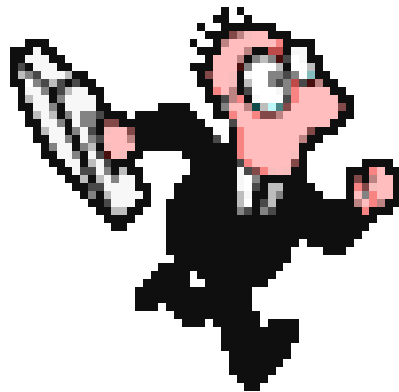


For parents: What you can do/have done...

- Work with parent's organization to develop regular session on transition/CCK matters for new parents
 - Help them understand dynamics of this school compared to where they are from
 - Homework expectations – (student vs. parent driven!)
 - Grading system
 - Teaching styles/methods of teaching
 - Interactions between educators and parents
 - Cultural role of the school



Time for Lunch Break!

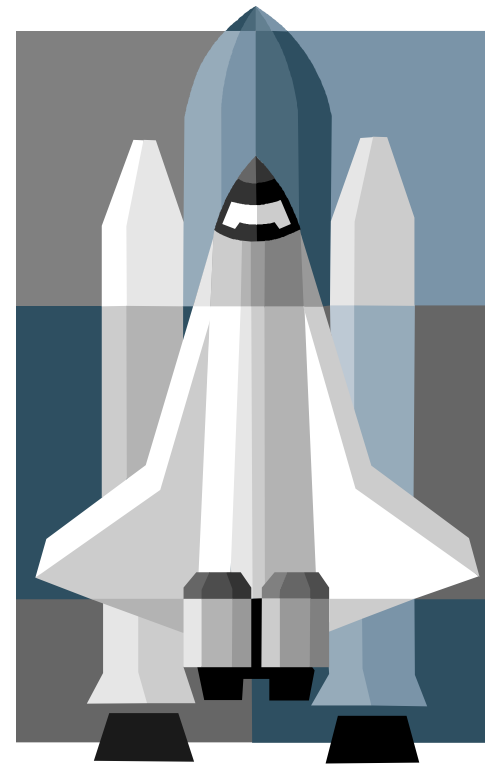


Understanding the impact of a mobile lifestyle and effect on educational process



What creates “high mobility” in our world?

- Cycles of mobility
- Frequency of mobility
- Community of mobility



What happens with each cycle of mobility?

- Each move involves going through a transition cycle
 - Multiple mini-transitions may be in each big one
- Each transition cycle involves loss as well as potential gain



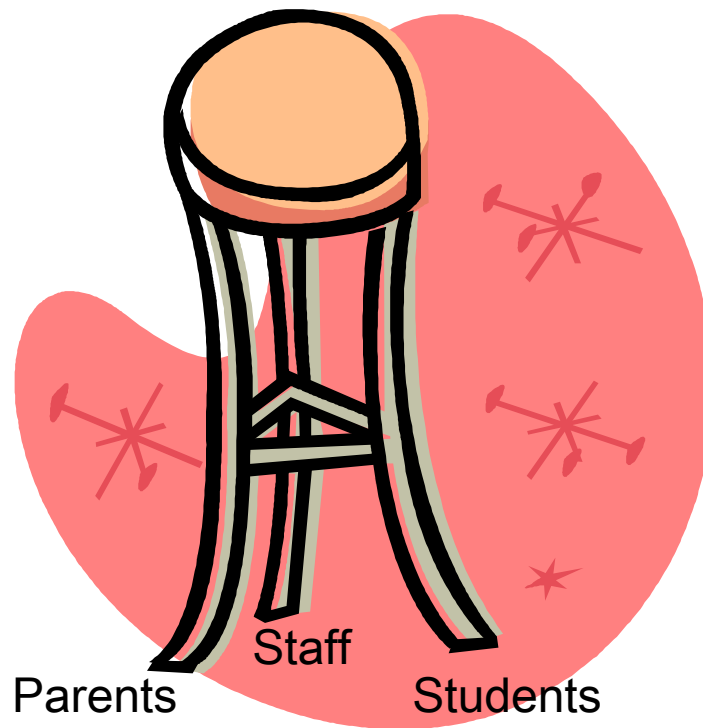
What happens with each cycle of mobility?



- The loss of something you love leads to grief
- Grief will always be expressed, either consciously or unconsciously
- Everyone in the school will be going through transition but not all at the same pace!

Who is going through transition in your school each year?

- The three-legged stool of American School of the Hague



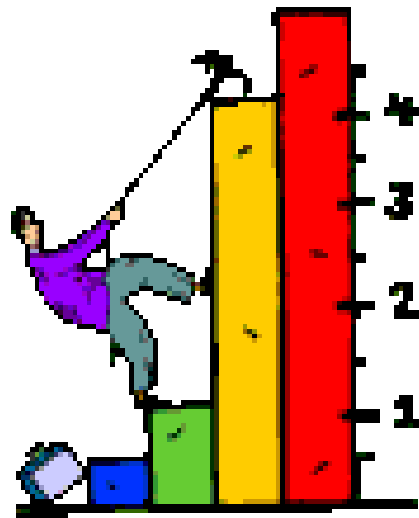
Stages of Transition Cycle (David C. Pollock's model)

- Involvement
- Leaving (Change)
- Transition
- Entry
- Re-involvement
- **Which ones do you see at your school?**



Why it's important to do transition well

If you don't, you'll wind up dealing with the biggest long term challenge of high mobility...



Unresolved grief

Expressions of unresolved grief



- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Sadness/Depression
- Withdrawal
- Rebellion
- Vicarious grief
- Delayed grief

To understand why grief from these losses is often unresolved...

- Lack of awareness
 - Losses are often “hidden” because they are intangible or invisible
 - Loss of a world
 - Loss of the dream (including what home is/was)
 - Loss of status
 - Loss of a sense of “system identity”
 - Loss of a sense of cultural balance
 - Loss of cultural cohesion in the family
 - Loss of lifestyle
 - Loss of possessions
 - Loss of relationships
 - Loss of system identity
 - Loss of the past that wasn’t
 - Loss of the past that was



To understand why unresolved grief occurs...

- Lack of permission to grieve
 - Grief is discounted
 - Grief is compared to the higher good
 - Grief is denied
- Lack of time to process
- Lack of comfort
 - Difference between comfort and encouragement



Discussion



- Please share some “best practices” you are already doing/could do to prepare for/deal with mobility overlay.
- Include how you:
 - Help students
 - Help parents
 - Help teachers

What you can do/have done...

- Student/all school transition teams
 - Welcoming
 - Including booklet on hidden rules of school!
 - Booklet on hidden rules of various home countries?
 - Leaving --Find ways to build the RAFT of transition for all ages
 - Reconciliation
 - Affirmation
 - Farewells
 - To people
 - To places
 - To pets
 - To possessions
 - Think Destination



Critical point when entering: flip side of the RAFT – the Bye/Hi

- ▶ “Unpack your bags and plant your trees”
- ▶ Say hello well
 - Accept invitations to meet others
 - Help kids explore new environment
 - Find good mentor
 - Invite others over



Some things other schools are doing...

- Transition teams
- Mentoring programs in school
- Language clubs for mother tongue continuity
- Allowing different spellings, etc.
- Join with other schools in the area for “best practices” seminars among teachers/administrators



Action plan time

- We have talked about many possibilities and ways we can better serve our community and grow ourselves.
- What do you see as the top three things your school should focus on?
- What is one concrete step you can do to begin implementing the first thing on your list?



Questions? Comments?



RDvanreken@aol.com

www.crossculturalkid.org

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Resources

- Some Resources:
 - Ruth at RDvanreken@aol.com or www.crossculturalkid.org
 - School Counselors
 - *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds* by David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken
 - *The Global Nomad's Guide to University Transition* by Tina Quick
 - *Bilingual by Choice* by Virginie Raguenaud
 - *Raising Global Nomads, Homeward Bound, Moveable Marriages* all by Robin Pascoe, www.expertexpert.com
 - www.My.TCKid.com website for TCKs/CCKs
 - The Road Home , follow its progress to distribution on <http://www.facebook.com/rgandotra>