

# Stages of CULTURE SHOCK

1. **The Honeymoon** – lasts about a month (this is the last time students may feel good for a long time)
2. **The Crash** – lasts from about six weeks to six months (or about most of the school year!)

The crash is categorized by feelings of frustration, anxiety, depression, homesickness, confusion, anger, and excessive concerns with things like cleanliness, food, health, etc.

Behaviors during this stage (which may be apparent at school and/or home) may include any or all of the following:

- silence, sometimes in first language as well
- a mask of smiles or calm
- strong desire to fade into woodwork or disappear
- use of non-US body language or gestures
- clinging to teacher
- crying
- regression
- spacing out
- not reacting to others at all

### 3. **The Adjustment** – lasts from several months to indefinitely

In the adjustment stage, students may experience “holes” in new knowledge, or, for young children, “holes” in old knowledge as they forget.

The adjustment stage is categorized by frustration of trying to “fit in” with the new culture, unrealistic expectations of self (or by teachers,) balancing of cultures, guilt at deserting old culture, and rejection or down-playing of the new culture.

Behaviors during this stage may include any or all of the following:

- acting out or (“bad” behavior)
- using obscene or inappropriate language
- “laziness” (often due to frustration or lack of understanding)
- trouble because of incomplete grasp of appropriate language or behaviors for different situations

### 4. **The Acceptance** – last indefinitely, once the student has finally reached this stage

In this stage, the student has successfully put together the two languages and cultures into a coherent whole. They are bilingual and bicultural. They can expect problems only when they react to a totally new situation.