

Thinking Questions:

Mapping Mental Models

How does your cultural lens impact how you see and interpret the world (and the objects in it)? For example, an ear of corn for the Mayan people (who believe that humanity emerged from corn) is understood and experienced differently from most Americans (who use corn to make inexpensive sweetener and ethanol, etc).

Instructions:

Your instructor will share an object with you. Use Column A to record your thoughts about the object and what its significance might be from your perspective. Then, use Column B to record a cultural informant's (teacher or other cultural insider) perspective about how the object is used in the target culture.

	Column A: Your interpretation	Column B: A cultural insider's interpretation
Place: Where would you find it & where would it be used most often?		
Emotions: What emotional associations do users have with the object?		
Conceptual Connections: How might the object be connected to peoples' identity, role, & status?		
Social Coordination: Do you think others' from your cultural context have similar interpretations?		

Extend:

Option 1 - Make a mind map illustrating the difference between these two ways of understanding the object. How could you illustrate the difference between your perspective on the cultural artifact and the cultural insider's perspective? Are there certain key differences or similarities you would like to try and illustrate?

Option 2 - Review the thinking question at the top of this worksheet and discuss your opinion with a partner. Record the conversation and send it to your teacher.

