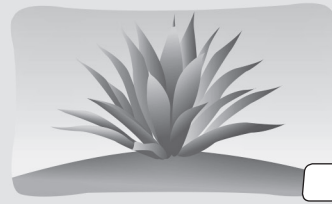
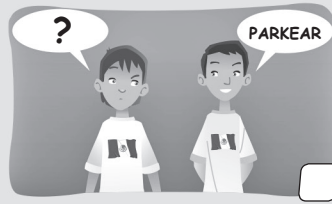
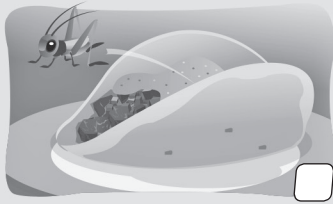


Name _____

1 Read and number the pictures in the order they are mentioned.



Analyzing Your Culture

A In the modern world of Internet and accessible travel, we are more exposed to people from different countries and cultures than ever before. Contact with different cultures is **unavoidable**, so keeping an open mind is good practice for future—real or virtual—travelers.

B However, before considering other cultures, it is important to look at our own. I live in Mexico, which is a huge country, and the differences in language, food and other cultural elements are as varied as the climates and landscapes the country has to offer. We have beautiful beaches, colonial cities, deserts, mountains and tropical jungle. Likewise, we have a variety of traditional dishes that change drastically from coast to coast.

C It's no secret that tacos are a staple food of Mexico, but depending on where you are, the ingredients can differ greatly. Obviously, seafood—such as shrimp, marlin or lobster—is a main ingredient in coastal areas. Inland, meat tacos are generally more popular, and nothing goes to waste. *Lengua* (tongue) and *seso* (brain) tacos might seem extreme to some foreign visitors, but in parts of Mexico—like Coahuila, Colima and Guadalajara, for example—it's quite normal to find them as regular items on the menus of the many taco stands that line the streets. In Oaxaca, you can even find grasshopper tacos. The insects are usually cooked with chopped onion, lime juice and salsa.

D Another dish, which is considered a delicacy in parts of Mexico, is *escamoles*. The dish is particularly popular in Mexico City and the

surrounding areas. *Escamoles* (known as the “Mexican caviar”) are the edible larvae from a particular type of ant. The ants are **harvested** from the roots of the agave plants, which are the plants used to make tequila—another great tradition from Mexico! They can be mixed with scrambled eggs, or cooked in butter or herbal tea.

E Spanish is the most common language in Mexico, but with a large indigenous population, there are other languages that are still widely spoken in parts of the country. Nahuatl, for example, has almost 1.4 million speakers, while Yucatec Maya is spoken by over three quarters of a million people. Even within the Spanish-speaking population, the **colloquialisms** used can vary greatly across the country, which aside from being a problem for foreigners visiting Mexico, can also cause **miscommunication** among Mexicans. In the north of Mexico, for example, in cities like Tijuana, Mexicali and Ciudad Juarez, you can hear a lot of English influence creeping into the Spanish. This is due to the close proximity of the cities to the US. Aside from **Anglicized** Spanish, we use a great deal of **slang** in Mexico, which can be extremely confusing if you're not from the area.

F So remember that understanding different cultures isn't limited to learning about other countries. There is a lot to discover on your own doorstep, too!

G Glossary.....

unavoidable:
inevitable, bound to happen

harvest: to gather or collect (something) for use

colloquialism: a word or phrase particular to a certain area

miscommunication: failure to make ideas clear

Anglicize: to make (something) English or more English

slang: very informal language

2 Read again and write the letter of the paragraph with the information.

0. The differences in Mexico's most famous dish.
1. An example of an especially rare food in Mexico.
2. Communication difficulties among residents of Mexico.
3. Geographical variations.
4. Adapting words from English.
5. Contact with people and customs from many countries.
6. Taco ingredients that may be considered strange by visitors to Mexico.

Paragraph

- C
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

1 min Think Fast! Write a list of the food in your community or country that might be considered strange by outsiders.