

# Intercultural Proficiency Resource List



## Overview

The resources listed below are suggested for developing intercultural proficiency. The novels and movies offer glimpses into a diversity of cultures. The other books listed provide more general information about cultural difference and/or reflect on the dynamics of particular cultures. The experiential activities, group activities and podcasts are designed to provide additional avenues for engaging cultural difference. It is suggested that all these resources are better benefited from when explored with others. For example, watching one of the movies listed below with a small group of people and discussing the movie afterwards can be a rich opportunity to encounter different perspectives, aiding in the process of intercultural proficiency development. As you discuss the novels and movies listed below, you might wish reflect on questions such as:

- What are some ways in which the culture(s) represented in the novel/movie/ differ from your own? If there are multiple cultures represented in the novel/movie, how do these cultures differ from one another?
- How does cultural difference contribute to conflict within the novel/movie? If this is not evident in the plot of the novel/movie, what potential could you see for conflict to emerge because of cultural difference?
- For which intercultural skills does the novel/movie demonstrate a need?

## Novels

Title and Author	Description
<a href="#"><i>Things Fall Apart</i></a> by Chinua Achebe	This novel offers a view into pre-colonial life in Nigeria and explores the impact of the European invasion.
<a href="#"><i>The Poisonwood Bible</i></a> by Barbara Kingsolver	This novel tells a story of a Christian missionary family who move to the Congo. It is told through the lenses of each family member, offering different perspectives and raising questions about Christian mission.
<a href="#"><i>The Kite Runner</i></a> by Khaled Hosseini	This novel is set in Afghanistan, focusing on the story of a young boy amidst tumultuous events.

<a href="#"><i>The Tortilla Curtain</i></a> by T.C. Boyle	In this novel, the lives of a longtime Los Angeles couple collide with a couple of Mexican immigrants. This novel explores issues related to immigration, the “American dream,” and differing worldviews.
<a href="#"><i>Americanah</i></a> by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	In this novel, two young people depart Nigeria for the West and grapple with how their identities are perceived in a new culture.
<a href="#"><i>The House on Mango Street</i></a> by Sandra Cisneros	This novel tells the story of a young Latina girl growing up in Chicago.
<a href="#"><i>The Joy Luck Club</i></a> by Amy Tan	This novel tells the stories of four Chinese immigrant families who start a club to play the Chinese game of mahjong together.

## Other Books

Title and Author	Description
<a href="#"><i>Understanding the World's Cultures</i></a> by Craig Storti	This is a very user-friendly workbook that offers an introduction to understanding cultural differences. It provides simple activities to assess your own cultural perspective as well as content to reflect on how your perspective might differ from others.
<a href="#"><i>The Art of Crossing Cultures</i></a> by Craig Storti	This guidebook walks through some of the major challenges and blessings of crossing cultures. It is a wonderful resource for those preparing for immersive cross-cultural experiences, especially for a more extensive period of time.
<a href="#"><i>Return to Babel</i></a> edited by John R. Levison and Priscilla Pope-Levison	This book offers reflections on a wide variety of Scripture passages from contributors around the world. It covers a diversity of Biblical genres, with a Latin American perspective, an Asian perspective, and an African perspective on each passage chosen.
<a href="#"><i>Huia Come Home</i></a> by J. Ruka	This book draws upon the story of the extinction of a rare bird in New Zealand to symbolically explore the encounter between the native culture and the European culture in New Zealand, highlighting the religious component of this narrative.
<a href="#"><i>The Primal Vision</i></a> by John V. Taylor	This book tells of the journeys of a European missionary’s experience in Africa. Taylor shares his learnings about being attentive to indigenous culture and challenges common understandings of Christian mission.
<a href="#"><i>The Wolf Shall Dwell With the Lamb: A Spirituality for</i></a>	This book offers helpful suggestions on how to effectively engage and communicate with those who are culturally different than you

<a href="#"><u>Leadership in a Multicultural Community</u></a> by Eric H. F. Law.	and how to facilitate conversations between groups of people from different cultures.
<a href="#"><u>Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World</u></a> by David Livermore	This book addresses not only the importance of learning about other cultures and how to navigate through cultural differences but more importantly, how a deeper understanding of your own culture and values will help you embrace and effectively communicate with those from different cultures.

## Movies

Title	Description
<a href="#"><u>Anna and the King</u></a>	This movie is a tale of a romance between the King of Siam and a British schoolteacher in the 1860s.
<a href="#"><u>Bend it Like Beckham</u></a>	In this sports comedy film, the daughter of an Indian couple growing up in London wants to pursue professional soccer, despite her parents' wishes.
<a href="#"><u>The Joy Luck Club</u></a>	This film is an adaptation of Amy Tan's novel listed above.
<a href="#"><u>My Big Fat Greek Wedding</u></a>	In this romance/comedy film, a young Greek woman falls in love with a non-Greek man. It highlights her struggle to get her family to accept him.
<a href="#"><u>Real Women Have Curves</u></a>	This film tells the story of a first generation Mexican-American girl who struggles to compromise between her aspirations and the desires of her parents.
<a href="#"><u>What's Cooking?</u></a>	This comedy follows four ethnically diverse families in L.A. as they celebrate Thanksgiving.
<a href="#"><u>Yasmin</u></a>	This film tells the story of a young Muslim woman living in Britain.
<a href="#"><u>Avalon</u></a>	This film is set in the beginning of the twentieth century and tells the story of a Polish-Jewish family coming to the U.S.

## Experiential Activities

- Visit artistic exhibits that feature artists from a variety of cultures.
- Visit cultural sites within your area (e.g. museums).
- Utilize a journey to reflect on how you are encountering cultural difference in your daily interactions.
- Eat at restaurants of a variety of cuisines.

# Activities for Groups

The following websites offer tools for facilitating intercultural development in group settings:

- <https://www.uh.edu/cdi/resources/student-resources/activities/>. The University of Houston Center for Diversity and Inclusion provides a list of activities geared towards college students, faculty, and staff. Each activity is presented in the form of a PDF that offers details for facilitation.
- <https://hubicl.org/toolbox>. The Intercultural Learning Hub offers nearly 800 activities that can be filtered according to group size, duration, outcomes, and other factors. The activities come from a diversity of sources and are presented in a variety of formats.
- [Intercultural Development Inventory® \(IDI®\)](#). IDI® is a great tool to assess your and your leaders' cultural proficiency and to learn how to improve your cultural proficiency in the future. The IDI is designed for both individual and group use. We highly recommend this tool if you want to improve your and your church's cultural proficiency.

## Podcast

- <https://www.intercultural-academy.net/publications/podcasts.html>. This series of podcasts by the International Academy for Intercultural Research (a professional interdisciplinary organization dedicated to the understanding and improvement of intercultural relations through world-class social science research) discusses issues on intercultural communication and relations.
- <https://interculturaltoolbox.org/>. This podcast offers insights from interculturalists (people who facilitate interaction across cultures) through their personal journeys and work.