

**Narrator:**  **Track 10 Listening Part 4, Worksheet 1**

**You will hear an interview with a travel writer called Anna Bryant, who is talking about what to do when visiting other countries. For questions 1–7, choose the best answer (A, B or C). You now have one minute to look at the questions.**

**Man:** Good morning Anna, and thank you for joining us on the Travel Programme. You're here to talk about travelling to other countries and how to deal with cultural differences. How can you find out about a country's culture before you travel?

**Anna:** Well, it's often tempting to turn to guide books, though many focus on things to do rather than how to behave. If you're lucky enough to know someone from the country you're visiting – I rarely have been – you've got the perfect consultant! My preference is to eat in a restaurant where the staff are from the place you're planning to visit – you can observe things like greetings and table manners. That isn't always possible, either, but it's worth a try!

**Man:** How can you get over the language barrier?

**Anna:** It does no harm to try to use the local language, especially if it's one you've studied at school. Even if you only remember a bit it helps – though maybe, not much! Often, you might not know any of the language and you'll have to rely on hand gestures or even drawing. I've been in situations where nobody understood a word anyone else was saying. Surprisingly the messages got across and now that's the least of my concerns when travelling, though I try to pick up as much language as I can.

**Man:** One thing people worry about is how to behave when visiting someone in their home.

**Anna:** Some people are concerned that telling their host they're nervous is rude – personally, I see little wrong with explaining why that's the case. It provides the host with the opportunity to make you feel at home. Otherwise, you could be trying to do what they're doing and get confused – copying them means you could end up behaving like the host instead of the guest. Talking to other people before you go might help, but every family has its own particular traditions, so it may not.

**Man:** Have you ever made a cultural mistake yourself?

**Anna:** Oh, yes, though thankfully I was fortunate enough to have an understanding host who put me at ease, and because of that I'm able to laugh about it now. I don't know why I made the mistake – I took an unlucky number of flowers as a gift. Looking back, it wasn't so serious really – I'd just misunderstood what someone had told me before I went. I'd never make the same mistake again, though.

**Man:** Have you ever experienced culture shock?

**Anna:** When I've lived abroad, yes. At first everything's exciting, but if you stay longer, you notice differences in cultural values and beliefs, and that can be confusing. Making good friends in a new place takes time, and it's important to try to let things happen rather than desperately trying to do everything at once. Doing familiar things helps – sleeping regular hours and eating food you like. It really worked in helping me get used to my new environment.

**Man:** What's the most interesting tradition you've experienced?

**Anna:** I remember being in China at New Year and seeing the Lantern Festival – there was this amazing parade of handmade lanterns. Seeing it taught me that no matter how much you think you know about something in advance, it can still take you by surprise! I was desperate to join in but didn't have my own lantern – it was still enormous fun to watch. The images of it are stuck in my memory – I

needn't worry about forgetting anything, despite not taking any photos.

**Man:** Finally, Anna, you're writing a book about culture.

**Anna:** That's right. I'm still at the beginning of the process, even though I've been working on it for a while. People who know me keep asking 'Isn't it finished yet?' but you've got to do the preparation. I'm still undecided about whether people will want to read about my own travels, or whether I should just focus on describing customs from around the world. I won't show anyone what I've written till it's finished – I'm hopeful that people will enjoy it!

**Narrator:** Now listen again.