

Name..... Country

1. Read below descriptions (A & B) of the gestures, body language and body dos and taboos of two countries in Europe.

- What country is it?
- Find one description that is not true.

A.

The first thing you will notice in this country is that people use a lot of body language. In fact, during conversations they will move their whole arms almost all of the time. They also touch each other a lot. They are so famous for their body language that some of the gestures from the country have become widely known, for example showing that you enjoyed food by kissing your fingertips or insulting someone by pushing up your entire arm while holding the bicep with the hand of the other arm. In fact, as every gesture has a meaning you have to be very careful what you do with your hands.

Some Americans were arrested in this country for making the sign of cow horns with the first and little finger, as it means that someone else is sleeping with your wife. Touching your throat while someone else is speaking means that you want them to stop and let you speak and touching your earlobe, which in most countries means nothing, has a sexual meaning here.

B.

People in this country do not use their hands and arms very much while talking, and someone such as a politician using too many gestures while speaking is usually seen as untrustworthy. As well as controlling your arms in general, there are some particular gestures you will need to avoid if you want to be polite. For example, if you want to show the number two you will need to make sure that your palm is facing you like a peace sign or a victory sign as the other way round is a bad insult. Using the middle finger for the number one is okay in this country, though, unlike in the USA. Blowing your nose in public is perfectly okay in this country, but tapping the side of your nose with your index finger is used to mean that someone should mind their own business and not ask about your private matters.

Other things mothers from this country always tell their children are not to point at people, and certainly not with just one finger, and not to put your elbows on the dinner table.

Now check the answers on the next page and see if you have guessed right.

ANSWERS

A . The country is Italy.

FALSE: Touching your throat has no particular meaning. In fact, the Italians will touch the people they are speaking to on the arm to stop them speaking.

B. The country is Britain.

FALSE : Using your middle finger is a very bad insult. The British start counting from the first finger or thumb.

2. Now write a similar description for your country.

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THANK YOU!