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My Travel

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→ I can still remember the first time I thought about leaving Saudi Arabia my home country to study

abroad. It was an important and a difficult decision. So I made a list of eligible countries that I would

love to explore and learn their culture. At first I was leaning toward the UK because it was closer to

C.O. Saudi Arabia than any other country on my list and I thought they were better at teaching English.

However the UK was ~~a lot~~ more expensive to live in ~~plus~~ I felt the United States would be better in terms

C.O. of living expenses and the people are more friendly than the UK. Being from Saudi Arabia means I come

C.O. from a different culture and there is a great deal of cultural differences between the two countries. For

instance, The huge jump in climate change. From a very sunny and hot weather most of the year to a

very cold and rainy weather In the winter here in Seattle. I also had to add ~~a bunch~~ of winter clothing to

my closet. Furthermore I think that these cultural differences I'm going to address in my essay have

added lot to my personality without even knowing. For example, After being through a lot of changes in the period of time I spent here in the US, I have developed new skills and methods In order to overcome many obstacles I faced and suffered though. Due to the big differences between my culture and the culture of this part of the country I am in right now. Durning my stay here in the Seattle area I have had my fair share of awkward moments and encounters one of which is something called the private space.

Wait, private space! I didn't even know that this term even existed before. For example, when you kiss a male friend on the cheek, people around you might think you and your friend have some sort of a relationship, a serious one I mean. In some countries it's completely normal and people do it on a daily basis. To us it's a public way to show respect. As well as it's something I've been doing for over twenty years. But I had to use the American way of shaking hands and maybe give a small hug to my closest friends. The second thing is food, When I arrived to America, I was not able to eat well and I did not know how to cook. Because Traditional Saudi Arabian cuisine is similar to other Middle Eastern foods they all include lamb, rice, and a wide variety of vegetables and spices. Because of the Islamic prohibition against pork, it is absent from all Saudi cooking. Both Gahwah (a coffee of unroasted beans and cardamom) and tea, are very popular. I think we are different when it comes to food ours is more of a variety of different foods at a time while the US is more centered and value single dishes at a time. Next the Traditional Saudi clothing for men consists of a thobe, along sleeved loose-fitting garment that covers the body from neck to ankles. Thobes are made of cotton or wool and may be plain white or very colorful with fine embroidery work. A head-piece is also customary, designed to protect against Heat elements. For special occasions, Saudi men may wear a bisht, a gold-edged cloak, over the thobe. While in the United States most male Saudi students adopt Western standards of dress, including fashionable brands as well as jeans, T-shirts and the like. Many Saudi women do not wear the abaya(black long coat) while in the United States, and some do not wear a head covering at all, although most women do, depending on the family's religious beliefs it might influence how a woman will dress

after arriving in the United States. In conservative settings such as the mosque, or for celebrations, both men and women are more likely to wear traditional clothing. Another difference between us is the relationship between family members, Saudi families are usually big and live with each other while caring about each other and the head of each household will still provide even if their kids can take care of them self. On the other hand, American family are small and it's not common to have a big family and they live and care about each other. However, many will leave their parents home after high school.

Then they depend on themselves and might not be close to their families as much as the Saudi families.

In Saudi they celebrate holidays in a different ways . For example in Eed Alfater which comes after Ramadan they go and visit thier families and friends and give children some money. It will last for three days. In America they celebrate holidays like Christmas and thanksgiving they will share the gifts and send holidays cards to them families and friends. Finally Every one has his/her own culture and own traditions and it's ok to be different than other and there is not a good culture or bad one and being different doesn't mean that one better than the other . For Saudi culture and American culture they are different in how the families caring about each other and how the celebrating in holidays and how the greeting each other and these differences doesn't mean some of them are right or wrong but this is the traditions and people still stick with it.

How have these differences impacted you?

How have you changed

as a result of living

in the U.S.?

driving question

(^{use} examples as evidence)