

A different view

1 Discuss the photos with your partner. Which country do you associate with each photo?



2a Read the postcards about Australia. How are they different? What typical stereotypes about Australian people can you find?

Dear Jun,

I'm on holiday in Australia and I'm having such a great time. It's always hot here and the people practically live outdoors. Nearly everyone lives by the beach and they go surfing, swimming and scuba diving all the time.

I'm staying with a very friendly family, and we eat prawns cooked on the barbecue every evening. They're delicious! Brett, my exchange friend, just lives in his shorts and flip-flops, and can you believe he even rides a kangaroo to school? Incredible! And his little sister has a pet koala that lives in a eucalyptus tree in their garden. It's just as I imagined it to be!

Bruce, Brett's dad, works on a sheep farm and he's always in one of those hats with corks hanging from it to stop the flies getting at his face while he's working - you know the hats I mean! Australians always wear them.

Brett is always doing sports. If it's not cricket, it's rugby, or a game called Australian rules football. And guess what? At his school, they even have crocodile wrestling as a sport! I'm too scared to try it though ;).

I'll tell you more when I'm back. Until then, I've got some surfing to do ;)!

Lai



Jun Lee

Apartment 2

Tajong Complex

Orchard Way

Singapore

Dear Jun,

I'm on holiday in Australia and I'm having such a great time. There are big cities, deserts, tropical rainforests and beautiful coastlines. It's so much more varied than I expected!

I'm staying with a family and each day I go to school with Brett, my exchange friend. We travel by bus, and Brett wears a uniform just like we do. At Brett's school, I go along to his lessons and I participate in some of the extra-curricular activities. Today at school, I played Australian rules football for the first time!

I'm surprised by how multicultural it is here. People from all over the world are living and working here. In fact, one in four of the population comes from overseas. For instance, Brett's ancestors were from Scotland, but he has friends who are Japanese, Brazilian, Greek and native Australian. So you can find different cultures, and the cities are really vibrant and cosmopolitan as a result.

Before visiting, I just thought Australia was one big hot desert with people spending their lives on the beach. But it is so much more than that. It has a very modern infrastructure and Australians generally enjoy a high quality of life.

Australia is better than I ever imagined! I'll definitely be back for another visit ;).

Lai



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2b Read the postcards again and decide if the sentences about Australia are stereotypes or not. Write S (stereotype) or F (fact).

- 1 All Australians know how to surf.
- 2 Australia has some animals that aren't found in other parts of the world.
- 3 Many Australian cities are modern and cosmopolitan.
- 4 Only Australians live in Australia.
- 5 Australians cook all their food on a barbecue.
- 6 Australia has a diverse landscape, from deserts to jungles.
- 7 Most Australian men work in sheep farming.
- 8 Although originally settled by Europeans, Australia is today a culturally diverse country.

2c Which postcard(s) do we learn this information from? Read the sentences and write 1, 2 or B (both).

- 1 Brett is of European descent.
.....
- 2 Lai is surprised by how his exchange friend gets to school.
.....
- 3 Lai is in Australia for a school exchange.
.....
- 4 Australians spend most of their time at the beach or having barbecues.
.....
- 5 Australia isn't how Lai thought it would be.
.....
- 6 Sport is an extra-curricular activity at Australian schools.
.....

Gateway to culture

3a Work with a partner and discuss the questions.

- 1 What do you think are the stereotypes people in other countries have of your country?
- 2 Are there any stereotypes about your country connected to the following?

clothes • food • lifestyle • music • people
sport • transport

- 3 Do you think any of them are true? Why/Why not?
- 4 How do you feel about the stereotypes people in other countries have of your country?

PROJECT

3b You are going to work on a project about the stereotypes versus realities in different countries. Read the questions and prepare your project research.

- 1 Work in small groups. Look back at the images you discussed in 1 on page 1. For each country you associated with a photo, can you think of some different information about that country?
- 2 As a group, choose one of the countries from 1, or any other country that interests you. Consider the following points:
 - What are the typical stereotypes for that country?
 - Why might people have these stereotypes?
 - Do these stereotypes apply to all the people in that country?
 - How you think the country would prefer to be viewed by the rest of the world?
- 3 Do some research on the Internet to find out interesting and surprising information about your chosen country. Consider:
 - population
 - food
 - geography and wildlife
 - customs and traditions
 - lifestyle

Share your findings with the group. Which information is most interesting?

3c In your group, choose the most interesting and surprising information on your country to make into an 'alternative postcard'. Write your information on the back of the postcard, and design a stamp.