

**8** Read four other views of the situations in exercise 7. Match each one to the correct situations 1–4.

When someone is a guest in our home, of course we try to give them everything they want. This is difficult if they want things that we don't want to give them. So, where I come from it's not always polite to admire things that are very expensive. It's similar to asking for them. As a host, I might give them to you, but I might not invite you to my home again. Times are changing though and younger people behave differently.

I think I'm very lucky because my wife is very talented but I don't talk about it in public. I thought it was strange when my American colleague praised his family. We're part of our families so it sounds like we're praising ourselves if we praise them. I try to be modest about them.

Where I come from, people are friendly and it's polite to say 'Hi'. I don't want to ignore anyone so I often use compliments to start conversations. I think it's a nice way to say 'hello' and welcome a stranger.

Age brings wisdom and we respect older people in our culture. Age is important for practical reasons, too. It affects the seating arrangements for a meeting, who speaks first and things like that. I can't always tell how old westerners are by looking at them, so I sometimes need to ask



## Speaking: Comparing cultures

**9** Discuss these questions.

**1** In your culture, do people use compliments to start conversations with strangers? Do men often compliment other men on their appearance? And what about women?

**2** Is it OK to tell people about the talents and accomplishments of your family, or does it sound conceited?

**3** Is it ever rude to admire other people's possessions? When? Are there any questions you can't ask, like 'How much did it cost'?

**4** When someone pays you a compliment, is it better to agree or to be modest and disagree?

**10** Prepare to tell a story.

**1** Think about a time when you visited a foreign country or entertained a foreign guest. Did anything interesting or surprising happen? For example ...

- during a meal.
- when you asked for directions.
- in a taxi ride.
- on public transport.
- when you visited someone's house.
- somewhere else (when?).

**2** Take a few minutes to prepare your story.

**11** Work in groups. Take turns telling your stories. Listen carefully to each other's stories. Identify the interesting and surprising events.

### TALKING POINT

- Do you think people were more hospitable to strangers in the past? Are traditions about hospitality disappearing in today's world?
- Do you think the growth in tourism around the world has made people less hospitable to strangers?