*Culture makes people understand each other better. And if they understand each other better in their soul, it is easier to overcome the economic and political barriers. But first they have to understand that their neighbor is, in the end, just like them, with the same problems, the same questions.* (Coelho)

**The International Student Resource Center** will support and promote the success and personal growth of international students at Indiana State University. Our international student body is composed of students from over 70 countries where they embrace different cultures, languages, history, religion, and traditions. Below discover some of the interesting facts about the top 10 countries where our student hail from.

1. **Interesting Facts about Saudi Arabia**

* Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam and home to the religion’s holiest shrines, Mecca and Medina. In 2012, over 3 million Muslims made a pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia. It is known as “hajj” and is one of the most sacred things a Muslim can do. (Facts about Saudi Arabia)
* Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the world without a river. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* Riyadh’s camel market is one of the largest in the world and sells about 100 camels per day. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* Homosexual activity in Saudi Arabia is a criminal offense that can attract the death penalty or, at the very least, time in prison with the customary public flogging as an additional punishment. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* Saudi Arabia remains an absolute monarchy and has the last significant monarchy in the world. The country has been ruled by the Al Saud family since its inception as a nation on September 23, 1932. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* According to Forbes magazine, Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah is the 8th most powerful person in the world and the world’s most powerful Muslim. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* Non-Muslims are not allowed to have Saudi citizenship, and non-Muslim places of worship are not allowed in Saudi Arabia. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* The Saudi Arabian Bedouin, or Bedu, have a number of historical traits that form the bedrock of Saudi society: the refusal to surrender to outside authority, a fierce loyalty to one’s family and tribe, the primacy of courage and honor, the purity of language and dialect as preserved in poetry and desert legends, a belief in the desert codes of hospitality, blood feuds and mutual obligations, and the tradition of *razzia*, or raiding against travelers or other tribes. Some 1.8 million Bedouin still claim to live a semi-nomadic lifestyle in Saudi Arabia. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* Women are officially forbidden to drive within Saudi cities, although this became a formal law only in 1990. Saudi and foreign women are allowed to drive inside the foreign oil compounds. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)
* Not only does Saudi Arabia have a civil police force, it also has a religious police forced called the Mutaween, which is in charge of purifying thought and action in Saudi communities. Its full name is the “Committee for the Preservation of Virtue and for the Prevention of Vice. (70 interesting facts about . .Saudi Arabia)

1. **Interesting Facts about India**

* India is about 1/3 the size of the United States, yet it is the second most populous country in the world, with a population of 1,166,079,217. (61 interesting facts about India)
* India is the largest democracy in the world. (61 interesting facts about India)
* Cows can be found freely wandering the streets of India’s cities. They are considered sacred and will often wear a *tilak,* a Hindu symbol of good fortune. Cows are considered one of humankind’s seven mothers because they offer milk as does one’s natural mother. (61 interesting facts about India)
* India is the birthplace of chess. The original word for “chess” is the Sanskrit *chaturanga*, meaning “four members of an army”—which were mostly likely elephants, horses, chariots, and foot soldiers. (61 interesting facts about India)
* Every major world religion is represented in India. Additionally, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism all originated in India. (61 interesting facts about India)
* India has the world’s largest movie industry, based in the city of Mumbai (known as the “City of Dreams”). The B in “Bollywood” comes from Bombay, the former name for Mumbai. Almost all Bollywood movies are musicals. The term "Bollywood" refers to just a part of the larger Indian film industry, which includes other film companies operating in other languages. (61 interesting facts about India)
* Hindi and English are the official languages of India. The government also recognizes 17 other languages (Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Nepali, Manipuri, Konkani, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu). Apart from these languages, about 1,652 dialects are spoken in the country. (61 interesting facts about India)
* After the great Indus Civilization collapsed in 2000 B.C., groups of Indo-Europeans called Aryans (“noble ones”) traveled to northwest India and reigned during what is called the Vedic age. The mingling of ideas from the Aryan and Indus Valley religions formed the basis of Hinduism, and the gods Shiva, Kali, and Brahma all have their roots in Aryan civilization. The Aryans also recorded the Vedas, the first Hindu scriptures, and introduced a caste system based on ethnicity and occupation. (61 interesting facts about India)
* India never invaded any country in her last 100,000 years of history. (India)
* Yoga has its origins in India and has existed for over 5,000 years. (India)

1. **Interesting Facts about China**

* China is often considered the longest continuous civilization, with some historians marking 6000 B.C. as the dawn of Chinese civilization. It also has the world’s longest continuously used written language.The oldest form of the Chinese written language was found in the Oracle Bone inscriptions carved on tortoise shells and mammal bones during the Shang dynasty (c 1600-1100 BC). (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* One in every five people in the world is Chinese. China’s population is estimated to reach a whopping 1,338,612,968 by July 2009. China’s population is four times that of the United States.Today, Chinese (Mandarin) is the most widely spoken language in the world, with about 850 million native speakers (and about 1.34 total speakers worldwide). (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* The Chinese invented paper, the compass, gunpowder, and printing. (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* By the fourth century B.C., the Chinese were drilling for natural gas and using it as a heat source, preceding Western natural gas drilling by about 2,300 years. (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* The most important holiday in China is the Chinese New Year or Lunar New Year. Chinese traditionally believe that every person turns one year older on the New Year and, thus, that day is considered to be everyone’s birthday. (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* Red symbolizes happiness for the Chinese and is commonly used at Chinese festivals and other happy occasions such as birthdays and weddings. (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* The bat is a traditional good luck symbol that is frequently depicted in designs for porcelain, textiles, and other crafts. (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* While the dragon is typically seen as an evil creature in Western culture, it holds first place among the four greatest creatures in Chinese mythology, including the phoenix, tiger, and tortoise. It is typically associated with the emperor. (74 interesting facts about . .China)
* China has the world’s oldest calendar. This lunar calendar originated in 2600 B.C. and has 12 zodiac signs. It takes 60 years to complete. (74 interesting facts about . .China)

1. **Interesting Facts about United Arab Emirates**

* The Burj Khalifa, in Dubai, was completed in January 2010 and became the world's tallest building at 2,716 feet (828 meters) and 160 stories. (United Arab Emirates)
* The capital of the U.A.E. is Abu Dhabi (nope, not Dubai). It's also bigger in area than all the other 6 Emirates combined. (Some amazing facts about UAE / Dubai, n.d.)
* Dubai ranks third in cities with highest number of skyscrapers (148 skyscrapers in Dubai), and Abu Dhabi ranks 27th (30 skyscrapers). (Some amazing facts about UAE / Dubai)
* There are no personal taxes in the U.A.E. (20 facts you didn’t know about UAE and Dubai)
* Dubai has no address system, no zip codes, no area codes and no postal system. For a package to be sent properly, the sender would have to leave proper directions to the destination of said package. (20 facts you didn’t know about UAE and Dubai)
* The Palm islands and The World, in Dubai are among thelargest man-made islandsin the world. These islands added nearly 500 kms to Dubai's coastline. (Some amazing facts about UAE / Dubai)
* The Persian Gulf used to be known as the Pirate Coast until in 1853, tribes began to raid trade ships from India. Now, the same families that governed those tribes now rule the United Arab Emirates and Qatar among the richest countries in the world due to their petroleum. (Some amazing facts about UAE / Dubai)
* The iconic Chrysler Building in Manhattan is owned almost entirely by the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
* Ferrari owns the largest indoor theme park in Abu Dhabi. Their rollercoaster, the Rosso, is the world’s fastest, reaching 150mph in 5-seconds. (20 facts you didn’t know about UAE and Dubai)
* A city is currently being built in Dubai that will rely entirely on solar energy and other renewable energy sources, with a sustainable, zero-carbon, zero-waste ecology. (20 facts you didn’t know about UAE and Dubai)

1. **Interesting Facts about South Korea**

* The name “Korea” comes from *Goryeo*, which was the name given to the dynasty established by General Wang Geon in AD 918. Goryeo means “high and clear.” Some poetic interpretations of the name Korea are “Land of High Mountains and Sparkling Streams” and “Land of the Morning Calm.” (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* In Korea, babies are considered one year old at birth. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* South Korean men love makeup, spending close to US$900 million a year, or a quarter of the world’s men’s cosmetics. Up to 20% of the male Korean population is reported to use makeup regularly. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* South Koreans consider the number 4 as unlucky, and it is associated with death. This belief seems to have come from China. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* South Koreans love shopping, and the country has some of the biggest shopping malls in the world. The stores are open until 4:00 in the morning, while most restaurants, bars, and cafes are open only until 11:00 p.m. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* Since 1998, millions of people from around the world have flocked to South Korea’s Boryeong Mud Festival, where for 10 days revelers enjoy mud massages, mud photo contests, mud marathons, and mud wrestling contests. It was originally conceived as a way to advertise mud cosmetics. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* South Koreans are automatically classified at birth according to their blood type, which is a custom that originated in Japan but has become very important in South Korean culture and may even determine who gets to marry whom. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* All South Korean roofs are curved at the ends giving the appearance of a smile. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* The crane is a symbol of good fortune in South Korea. Red-crowned cranes can stand about 5 feet (1.5 m) high. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)
* For 3-weeks after a baby’s birth in South Korea, a straw rope of chili peppers or pine needles known as *kumjul* is hung across the door of the house to frighten away evil spirits and warn people not to enter. Seaweed soup and rice are also offered to Samsin Halmeoni, the Korean grandmother spirit, every morning and evening for a week. These foods are also given to the new mother to speed her recovery. (80 interesting facts about . .South Korea)

1. **Interesting Facts about Brazil**

* The word Brazil, meaning “red like an ember,” comes from *pau brasil* (brazilwood), a tree that once grew abundantly along the Brazilian coast that produced a deep, red dye. Brazilwood was valued by European traders who came from the Portuguese coasts in the 16th century to trade with the Tupí-Guaraní Indians. (58 interesting facts about . .Brazil)
* Brazil has 4,655 miles (7,491 km) of coastline, making it the longest continuous coastline in the world. (58 interesting facts about . .Brazil)
* The National Day of Black Consciousness (November 20) established in January 2003 celebrates Brazilians’ African heritage. (58 interesting facts about . .Brazil)
* Oscar Niemeyer, the architect who gave Brasília it’s flair, is considered to be one of the founding figures of modern architecture. (26 facts that’ll make you proud to be Brazilian)
* Brazil has more animal and plant species than any other country. (26 facts that’ll make you proud to be Brazilian)
* 180 native languages are still spoken in Brazil today**.** (26 facts that’ll make you proud to be Brazilian)
* Brazil is considered the first country to achieve 100% self-sufficiency with their biofuels. (26 facts that’ll make you proud to be Brazilian)
* Same-sex marriage is legal in Brazil. (26 facts that’ll make you proud to be Brazilian)
* The Amazon rainforest is the world’s largest, containing one fifth of the world’s freshwater reserves and producing one third of the earth’s oxygen. About 60% of the Amazon lies in Brazil.

1. **Interesting Facts about Nigeria**

* The 2006 Census found Nigerians to be the highest educated ethnic or racial group in America. (Muri)
* Nigeria, with 521 languages has the fourth most in the world. This includes 510 living languages, two second languages without native speakers and 9 extinct languages. (100 years and 100 interesting facts about Nigeria, 2014)
* Nigeria hasthe highest paid legislators in the entire world. (Kazeem, 2015)
* Nigeria has more than 250 ethnic groups however, there are 3 dominant tribes: the Ibo, Hausa Fulani and Youruba. (10 interesting facts about Nigeria)
* Evidence from archaeological discoveries have shown that there was a history of human existence in Nigeria which has been dated to as far back as 9000 BC. It’s one of the oldest locations of Human Existence. The Walls of Benin (800-1400AD), in present day Edo State, are the longest ancient earthworks in the world, and probably the largest man-made structure on earth. (100 years and 100 interesting facts about Nigeria, 2014)
* Nigerian movie industry Nollywood has recently been ranked the second largest producers of movies in the world, just trailing behind Bollywood, the Indian film industry. Nollywood produces up to 200 movies every single week and her movies has won half of the yearly awards for best picture since 2005. (10 interesting facts about Nigeria)
* Nigeria boasts in being the most suitable habitat for the world’s largest diversity of the most colorful creatures- the butterflies. (10 interesting facts about Nigeria)
* Nigeria is home to seven percent (7%) of the total languages spoken on earth. (12 shocking facts about Nigeria)
* According to the World Resources Institute, Nigeria is home to 4,715 different types of plant species, and over 550 species of breeding birds and mammals, making it one of the most ecologically vibrant places of the planet. (12 shocking facts about Nigeria)
* Nigerian fashion is highly trendy and revolutionary. The typical wear is colorful especially for the women and the traditional wear of most Nigerian men and women is the style called buba which is usually sown as a loose fitting long-sleeved shirt or blouse. (Interesting facts about Nigerian people and culture)

1. **Interesting Facts about Congo**

* With over 215 different mother tongues, the Democratic Republic of Congo is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. This means that when two Congolese people meet at random, it is extremely unlikely they will speak the same native language. (People & culture)
* Music and dance are of huge importance to Congolese people. The region’s music is sometimes referred to as ‘musique Zaïroise’ (from Zaire, the old name of the country). A unique style arose in the region from the jazz and rumba bands of the 1940s and 1950s. Today, this popular style of African music is known as soukous. Many instruments are handmade and bands frequently form on the streets of towns and cities. In Goma, an annual Skiff arts festival is held as a showcase for the region’s music, poetry and films. (People & culture)
* The principle styles of music, known as Congolese rumba, soukous and ndombolo, are all accompanied by particular dances. (Congolese culture)
* The Congo River, the 9th longest river on the planet, is 2, 920 miles. It is also the deepest river on the planet, and it is over 700 feet deep. It is the second longest river in Africa. (Africa facts)
* The Congo River once in each direction crosses the equator twice. (Africa facts)
* More than 225 ethnic groups live in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The four largest tribes — Mongo, Luba, Kongo, and Mangbetu-Azande — make up about 45 percent of the population. (Congolese culture)
* Though there are more than 700 local dialects spoken throughout the country, French is the official language and is used as an ethnically neutral way to communicate. (Congolese culture)
* The Virunga National Park contains numerous habitats, from lowland plains to the Rwenzori Mountains. It is home to the world's largest concentration of hippos and also to the continent's most active volcanoes -- the Nyiragongo and the Nyamulagira. (Virunga Mountains)
* The majority of the Congolese population are Christians, comprising 46-48% Roman Catholics, and 26-28% Protestants. (Congolese culture)
* Congo, like most African countries, is known for its ancient sculptures and masks which can be seen in museums all over the world. The variety of art styles and the abundance of its production make Congo a center of exceptional artistic riches and one of the most remarkable in Black Africa in terms of traditional arts. (Congolese culture)

1. **Interesting Facts about Canada**

* Canada spans 3,849,674 sq. miles (9,970,610 sq. kilometers) and comprises six time zones. (20 interesting facts about Canada)
* Canada is the world's most educated country: over half its residents have college degrees. (Canada facts)
* Canada is home to Yonge Street in Ontario that starts at Lake Ontario, and runs north through Ontario to the Minnesota border. (20 interesting facts about Canada)
* Canada’s only desert in British Columbia is only 15 miles long and is the only desert in the world with a long boardwalk for visitors to walk on. (43 interesting facts about . . Canada)
* The border between Canada and the United States is officially known as the International Boundary. At 5,525 miles, including 1,538 miles between Canada and Alaska, it is the world's longest border between two nations. (43 interesting facts about . . Canada)
* The east coast of Canada was settled by Vikings around the year A.D. 1000. Archaeological evidence of a settlement has been found at L'anse aux *Meadows, Newfoundland*. (43 interesting facts about . . Canada)
* Canada has the longest coastline of any country in the world at 151,600 miles. (20 interesting facts about Canada)
* Canadians have made many important inventions, including Kerosene, the electron microscope, the electronic organ, insulin, the IMAX film system, the snowmobile, and the electric cooking range. (43 interesting facts about . . Canada)
* Many famous authors have come from Canada, including Lucy Maud Montgomery (*Anne of Green Gables*), Margaret Atwood (*The Handmaid's Tale*), and Alice Munro (*Lives of Girls and Women*). (43 interesting facts about . . Canada)
* Canada has made a significant contribution to rock and roll, beginning with “Sh-Boom” by the Crew-Cuts in 1954.i Other famous Canadian rock-and-rollers include Paul Anka, Neil Young, the Guess Who, Bachman Turner Overdrive, Steppenwolf, Avril Lavigne, Rush, Bryan Adams, and Barenaked Ladies. (43 interesting facts about . . Canada)
* Manitou Lake on Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron is the world's largest lake within a lake (41.1 square miles). (43 interesting facts about . . Canada)

1. **Interesting Facts about Cameroon**

* Mount Cameroon is one of the largest volcanoes in Africa, the highest peak in West Africa, and the fourth highest peak in all of Africa. Eruptions at the volcano date all the way back to the 5th century B.C. It still erupts every 10 to 20 years. (Facts about Cameroon)
* Tribes of pygmies live in Cameroon, including the Baka and Beti tribes. They are reputed to be the earliest inhabitants of the country, and have lived in the rainforests of Cameroon for centuries. They still practice traditional culture and medicine. (Facts about Cameroon)
* Limbe Botanic Garden is the second oldest in Africa and is home to an astonishing number of plants including cinnamon, nutmeg, cocoa, rubber, various palms. (Facts about Cameroon)
* French and English are the official languages. The approximately 250 local languages include Ewondo and Bulu, Duala, the Bamiléké languages, and Fulfulde. (Facts about Cameroon)
* The sharing of cooked food is one of the major ways to cement social relationships and express the high value placed on human company. Sharing food and drink demonstrates hospitality and trust. (Clothing & food - Cameroon)
* Greetings, use of proper names, and use of praise names are important parts of daily etiquette in many regions of Cameroon. (Cameroon)

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