

ABCs of Culture

Appearance
Beliefs
Communities
Domestic life
Eating
Family
Government
Heritage
Instruction
Jingles
Kitchens
Language
Music and the arts
Neighborhoods
Old age
Performance
Quarantine
Recreation
Shelter and other structures
Transportation
Units (social units)
Values
Work
Xenophobia
Youth
Zoology and Botany

THE ABC's OF CULTURE

Culture varies from country to country, region to region, town to town, neighborhood to neighborhood, family to family and individual to individual. Yet aspects of culture are also shared among people.

This list provides you with 26 (A-Z) categories or aspects of culture. Keep this list in your notebook. You will use it throughout the year as we analyze and evaluate different places from a cultural perspective.

Appearance is the way that people in a place look. Appearance includes clothing, hairstyles, make-up, jewelry and other fashions.

Beliefs are people's understanding and beliefs about the world: how it was made, how it works, and the role of people and nature. We get our beliefs from religion, science, superstition, etc.

Communities are where and how people live, work and socialize together. Communities may be large and small, strong or weak, peaceful or at war, old or new.

Domestic Life is life in the home. Questions about domestic life include: How large is the household? Are people who live together related by blood? What activities take place in the home?

Eating: This category includes the kinds of food and meals that people eat. Some questions about eating are: What kind of food do people eat and how is it prepared? What customs are followed at meals?

Family is people related by blood or domestic life. Families may be nuclear (including only mother, father, and children) or extended (including others like grandparents, cousins, etc.). What roles do family members play? What activities do families engage in?

Government is the system that manages the affairs and business of people in a place. Governments may be democracies (by all the people), monarchies (by a king or queen), military (by the army), or autocracies (by a few people).

Heritage is the traditions and customs that are passed down in families and communities. Heritage is related to a family's origins, or roots, in *a* place or several places.

Instruction is the different ways that information and traditions are passed down from generation to generation. Instruction includes the way people learn from school, family, community, etc.

Jingles are the songs and phrases used to advertise goods and services. This category deals with the kinds of products, shops and businesses that are popular in a place and why.

Kitchens are where people cook food, eat meals, and/or do other household chores. What kitchens look like and what people do in them tells a great deal about a culture.

Language includes how people communicate through speaking, writing, sign language, and body language. This category includes proper language as well as sayings and slang.

Music and the Arts are forms of creative expression. The arts include music, painting, drawing, dance, sculpture, literature and writing, theater (plays), architecture (building design), etc.

Neighborhoods are areas where smaller units where people live in cities or towns. Neighborhoods include physical characteristics (streets, shops, houses, parks, etc.) and social characteristics (celebrations, street life, markets, etc.).

Old Age deals with how elderly people are treated in a place. At what age are people considered old? Are old people cared for by family or put in a nursing home? Are they respected or treated poorly?

Performance is how people entertain themselves through shows, songs, plays, circuses, and other activities. In these activities, people or animals perform for other people.

Quarantine is the isolation of sick people, which is one way to treat those who are sick. This category examines ways that people care for the sick and includes medicine, hospitals, doctors, illnesses, etc.

Recreation is what people do for fun. This category includes sports, picnics, television, the arts, performances. Recreation takes place at parks, theaters, restaurants, home, etc.

Shelter and other Structures means the appearance and use of buildings. This category includes the size, materials, style and decoration of buildings. It also includes whether buildings are used as homes, shops, schools, etc.

Transportation deals with the ways that people get from place to place. This category can include cars, planes, public transportation, horses and other animals, and feet/walking.

Units (Social Units) are groups and organizations that bring people together for different purposes. Social units include families, friendships, churches, gangs, community organizations, etc.

Values are how we think people should act toward each other and toward the world around them. Values and morals are passed on through families, religion, schools and communities.

Work is what people do for a living. Work may be inside or outside the home, paid or unpaid. Questions about work include: What kind of work is done by men? By women? Are children expected to work?

Xenophobia is fear of outsiders. This category is about how we treat people from outside the community, or people who are different.

Youth is young people. Questions in this category are: What are expectations and rites of passage for young people? How long do young people go to school? How long do they live with their families?

Zoology is the study of animals. This category deals with how people treat animals, whether as pets, in the wild or for food.