General World Cultures

Chapter 3—Human Geography

**culture**- everything people make, think, and do

**nuclear family**- a social unit consisting of parents and their children

**extended family**- a social unit consisting of parents, their children, and other relatives

**subsistence**- providing only the basic needs of life

**commercial**- done for the purpose of making money

**industry**- businesses that make finished products

**rural**- in the country

**technology**- the use of science for practical purposes

**urban**- in or around a town or city

**population**- the whole group of people in an area

**custom**- a pattern of behavior followed by a whole group of people

**nomad-** a person who travels all the time in search of food

**What is Culture?**

**Culture** is everything that people make, build, think, believe, and do. Human geography focuses on culture. It looks at how cultures differ from place to place.

\* Geographers sometimes divide the world into cultural regions. They group together people who share the same broad way of life. In some cases, the line between one cultural region and another may be hard to define. Even so, dividing the world into cultural regions is useful. It is a good way to explore how different people live on the Earth.

\* What makes Illinois different from Indiana? Wisconsin? Missouri? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Families and Social Structure**

How is your family set up? Who lives with you? Do you see relatives regularly?

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\* The family is the most basic unit of social structure. It is one of the ways that people organize themselves. Every culture has this type of unit. They may look different than yours and mine. Cultures define families in different ways. For example, there are **nuclear families** and **extended families**.

\* In some cultures, the family can be a whole **clan**- a large group of relatives. A clan, in fact, can include hundreds of people. Some cultures are organized into tribes as well. A tribe is a group of related families or clans.

\* Is it possible to be in other groups or organizations in society? Do you or your family members belong to any other groups or organizations? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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\* Do you believe that the family is more important the friends you have? Could you ever feel the opposite of the way you do now? If so, describe. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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\* People may belong to other groups as well as to a family. For example, they may belong to clubs, unions, or political parties- all of which are part of the social structure of a culture.

\* Government is another part of the social structure. Every culture has a government, which makes laws and tries to bring order to human life.

**Agriculture and Industry**

Where does the food that we eat come from? Describe as many as you can think of.

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\*Almost every person on the Earth depends on agriculture. However, not everyone on Earth is a farmer. Nor is farming done the same way in all places. In some regions, **subsistence** farming is common. They often work with simple tools and grow several different crops. They eat what they grow and have nothing left over to sell to others.

\* Another type of farming is **commercial** farming. They often use machines, as well as chemicals, to fertilize the soil and to kill insects. They grow one crop over a large area.

\* Commercial farmers in developed countries often have full use of science and modern inventions. In developed countries, only a few people work as farmers. That is because there are many other types of jobs.

\* Developed countries usually have a lot of **industry**, including businesses that make things out of raw materials. Most of those products are made in factories, where machines do much of the work.

\* Life is generally more comfortable in an industrialized country. There is more food and safer drinking water than in non-industrialized countries. There are more health workers and hospitals, and most people own things like cars and televisions. Most developing countries are working to become industrialized countries.

**Rural and Urban Life**

\* Hundreds of years ago, most people lived in **rural** areas. They lived in the country or in small villages. Farming was the main type of work.

\* Then, technology improved. How would technology make life easier for workers?

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Industries began to grow, and people started working in factories. Trade became more important, too. More and more people began to sell things for a living. People left the farms and moved to towns, which grew into big cities, or urban areas.

**Population**

\* In 1990, there were over 5 billion people in the world. By 2000, the **population** exceeded 6 billion. According to <http://www.census.gov/popclock/> the population of the world is 7,095,643, 875 as of July 2, 2013. The United States population is 316,172,011. By 2025, it is expected to be about 8 billion. Every 8 seconds, the population in the United States experiences a birth and decreases by one every 12 seconds (death). Therefore, the U.S. population increases by one every 24 seconds. We also experience a migration every 44 seconds.

\* Today, all around the world, urban areas are growing quickly. In 1960, only about 25 people out of every 100 lived in urban areas. Cities are more crowded than rural areas. A geographer would say that cities have greater **population density**. That is, more people live in each square mile than ever before.

*Complete the Population Statistics for Selected Countries Graph Study on page 33*

\* Population growth is not a new problem. However, the world is no longer producing enough food for everyone. People are using up the natural resources of the Earth very quickly. We are running out of space to dump our waste.

\* We will watch an episode of Bizarre Foods on Amazon.com

\* Population growth and density are not the same everywhere, though. The quickest growth is taking place in some of the poorest regions. Right now, some of the most heavily populated parts of the world are in Asia and Africa. As a result, in these places hunger is replacing disease as the major killer of humans.

**The Arts**

What are some types of art that you enjoy? Remember, art is more than just painting.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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\* Music, dance, literature, and folk tales are forms of art. They express what is important to people. Every culture has some form of art. Even in cultures that have no written language, people tell folk stories. One purpose of art is to make life more enjoyable. The arts also give people a chance to share their culture with others. Through the arts, people can develop their ideas, beliefs, and values.

**Language**

\* Language is one of the most important features of a culture. How many languages can you name? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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People who share a language can share information. They can share ideas and beliefs. Language helps tie people together.

\* Thousands of different languages are spoken around the world. In fact, more than 1,000 languages are spoken…in Africa alone! The many languages of the world can be grouped into 13 major language families. The largest is the Indo-European language family. English, German, Polish, and Russian belong to the family, and so do about 75 other languages.

**You will now go to the following site** [**http://www.translation.langenberg.com**](http://www.translation.langenberg.com) **and translate a sentence of your choice into 4 different languages.**

\* All the languages in the same family are related. They may have the same alphabet and grammar. They may share some words. This is because it started out as the same language.

\* Suppose that long ago, a group of people spoke the same language. Then this group split into two groups. Perhaps the two groups migrated to different areas. In those days, people could not communicate across long distances. They had no phones and could not send letters. Once people were separated, they lost touch with each other.

\* Meanwhile, within both groups, the language that they shared kept changing. New words crept in. Old words came to have new meanings. At last, after hundreds of years, the two groups spoke entirely different languages. In this way, a few languages branched into many.

**Customs and Traditions**

\* What are some of the customs (holidays, vacations, etc.) that you celebrate?

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\* In parts of Asia, some people use chopsticks. In other parts of the world, they use silverware. Patterns and habits like these are called **customs**. Every culture has its own set of customs. Every culture also has its own **traditions**, or customs handed down from the past.

\* Customs include what clothes are worn and how hair is styled. These customs may be affected by physical geography. In warm climates, people tend to wear less clothing.

\* Celebrations and ceremonies are also customs. Two cultures may celebrate the same event but they may do so in different ways. A wedding in Nigeria is unlike a wedding in Greece. Here are some traditions around the world.

<http://www.livescience.com/16810-10-world-wedding-traditions.html>

*Read Celebrations on page 36 and answer the Critical Thinking Question*

**Housing**

\* Because everyone needs shelter, all people build housing. Some people live in grass huts, some in stone buildings. Some houses are round, and some are square. Such differences are not random. They reflect differences in culture. Here are some houses from around the world. <http://www.hgpho.to/wfest/house/house-e.html>

\* Physical geography affects the kinds of houses that people build. For one thing, people use whatever materials are available to build their houses. In the Arctic, for example, houses are not built of wood but of such things as animal skins and whalebones. Why? It is because no trees grow there.

\* Houses may also reflect how people live. In Mongolia, for example, some people are **nomads**. They build houses that can easily be taken apart and put back together.

**Religion**

\* Religion is an organized set of beliefs about a god or gods. Most religions have rules about how people should behave. Muslim people, followers of the religion of Islam, and Jewish people must not eat pork because their religions consider pork unclean. Hindu people must not eat beef because their religion teaches that cows are sacred.

\* Religion can affect much more than what people eat, however. It can shape family life, influence art, and mold a culture’s form of government. In fact, religion can affect an entire culture.

\* Christianity and Islam are the most widespread religions. Christians and Muslims live all around the world.

*Complete the Geographer’s Tool Kit Using Bar Graphs on page 39*