3.1 What Is Culture?

Culture is the shared beliefs, __________, and practices that people learn as part of that culture. Sociologically, we examine the situations and contexts where certain _____________ is expected, and in which situations perhaps it is not. How do you know what is ___________ and what is not in a culture different from your own, and who ___________ up these rules? In everyday conversation, people rarely distinguish between the terms culture and society, but the terms have slightly different meanings, and the distinction is ___________ to a sociologist. A society describes a group of people who share a community and a culture. By “community,” sociologists refer to a definable region—as ___________ as a neighborhood (i.e. the Artesia area south of Safford), but it could possibly be as large as a ___________.

Culture can be better understood by looking at its’ many parts. ___________ culture refers to the objects or belongings of a group of people. Nonmaterial culture, in contrast, consists of the ideas, attitudes, and ___________ of a society. Material and nonmaterial aspects of culture are linked, and physical objects are often closely ___________ to cultural ideas. A school building belongs to material culture, but the ___________ methods and educational standards are part of education’s nonmaterial culture.

Cultural Universals Often, when you compare one culture to another you see ___________ differences, but all cultures also share some common elements. Cultural universals are patterns or traits that are globally ___________ to all societies. One example of a cultural universal is the ___________ unit. Every culture has ___________ styles and tell jokes! What are some other examples?

Ethnocentrism and Culture Relativism Often, people in the United States express disgust at other cultures’ food ___________ and think that it’s gross to eat meat from a ___________ or horses, for example, while they don’t question their own habit of eating ___________ or pigs. Such attitudes are an example of ethnocentrism, or the ___________ that one’s own culture is superior to others. A high level of appreciation for one’s own culture can be ___________, like community pride. But ethnocentrism can lead to putting ___________ other cultures and could cause prejudice and conflict. Cultural imperialism, is the deliberate imposition of one’s ___________ cultural values on another culture. Euro Disney could be seen as an example. If you were a ___________ of England, would you resent or embrace American songs and movies? Ethnocentrism can be so ___________ that when confronted with all of the differences of a new culture, one may experience disorientation and frustration. In sociology, we call this culture ___________. Have you ever visited another culture and felt “lost”? Cultural relativism is the practice of assessing a culture by its own ___________ rather than viewing it through the lens of one’s own culture. Practicing cultural relativism ___________ an open mind and a willingness to consider, and even adapt to, ___________ values and norms. Sometimes when people pursue cultural relativism aggressively, they may ___________ way over to the other culture’s perspective and become ___________.! Xenocentrism is the opposite of ethnocentrism; it is when a person believes that ___________ culture is superior to one’s own.

3.2 Elements of Culture

Values and Beliefs: The ___________ and perhaps most crucial, elements of culture we will discuss are its values and beliefs. Values are a culture’s standard for discerning what is ___________ and just in society. Values are deeply embedded and ___________ for transmitting and teaching a culture’s beliefs. Beliefs are the tenets or convictions that ___________ hold to be true. Individuals
in a society have specific beliefs, but they also ________ collective values. To illustrate the difference, Americans commonly believe in the American Dream (a ________) but have different beliefs on how to achieve that dream. Values often suggest ________ people should behave, but they don’t accurately reflect how people ________ behave. Values typically portray an ideal culture, the standards society would ________ to embrace and live up to. But ideal culture is different from real culture, the ________ society actually is. The Univ. of Az. did a “_______ Survey” that illustrated the difference.

People sanction certain behaviors by ________ their support, approval, or permission, or by instilling formal actions of disapproval and nonsupport. Sanctions are a ________ of social control, a way to encourage conformity to cultural norms. Sanctions can be + or – and formal or _________.

Norms define how to ________ in ways that a society has defined as good, right, and important, and ________ members of the society live by them. Formal norms are established, written rules like ________, the course requirements for Soc. 101, and no trespassing signs. Informal norms are casual behaviors that are generally and ________ conformed to—like table manners and what is proper ________ in which setting. Norms may be further classified as either mores or folkways. Mores (mor-ays) are norms that include the ________ views and principles of a group. Violating them can have ________ consequences. Folkways are norms ________ significant moral underpinnings. Folkways direct appropriate behavior in the day-to-day practices and ________ of a culture. What are some mores and folkways?

Symbols and Language Humans, consciously and subconsciously, are always trying to make ________ of their surrounding world. Symbols—such as gestures, signs, _______, signals, and words—help people understand that world. They provide ________ to understanding experiences by conveying recognizable meanings that are ________ by societies. Almost anything can be seen as a symbol of one sort or another.

While different cultures have varying ________ of symbols, every culture has one type of symbols: language. Language is a symbolic system through which people communicate and through which ________ is transmitted. Language is typically an imperfect ________ to transmit ideas from one person to another. We try our best, but ________ there are miscommunications!

3.3 Pop Culture, Subculture, and Cultural Change

High Culture and Popular Culture—where do you fit in? How would you tell the difference ________ which is which? Is one better than the other?

Subcultures and Countercultures: A subculture is ________ what it sounds like—a smaller, culturally different group within a larger culture. People in subcultures mostly ________ the major mores’ of the larger culture. Countercultures on the other hand, ________ some of the larger culture’s norms and values. Hell’s Angels, Skin-heads, and Black Panthers are examples of countercultures. Countercultures at times might ________ defy larger society. Cults, a word derived from ________, are also considered counterculture group. Branch Davidians, polygamists groups, and Jim Jones’ Jonestown are examples of ________ considered cults by larger cultures.

Cultural Change: Innovation, Discovery, and Invention

An innovation refers to an ________ or concept’s initial appearance in society—it’s innovative because it is markedly ________. Discoveries make known previously ________ but existing aspects of reality. A textbook example is the ________ of a planet—the
planet was already there, just undiscovered! **Inventions** result when something ________ is formed from existing objects or concepts—when things are put together in an entirely new manner. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, ________ appliances were invented at an astonishing pace. Sociologist William F. Ogburn coined the term ________ lag to refer to the time that elapses between the introduction of a new item of material culture and its ________ as part of nonmaterial culture. In other words, the time between something new and the ________ that go along with its’ function in society.

**Diffusion and Globalization:** The integration of world ________ and technological advances of the last decades have allowed for greater ________ between cultures through the processes of globalization and diffusion. **Diffusion** is the ________ of material and nonmaterial culture from one culture to another. What foods or ________ have diffused to the U.S.?

Increased communications and ________ travel have greatly expanded international business relations, facilitating the flow not only of goods but also of information and ________ as well. This continued expansion is called **Globalization.** As with most aspects of ________ there is a good and a bad side to globalization. Can you think of some good and some bad consequences of globalization?

### 3.4 Theoretical Perspectives on Culture

**Functionalists** view society as a ________ in which all parts work—or function—together to create society as a whole. In this way, societies ________ culture to exist. Cultural norms function to support the fluid ________ of society, and cultural values guide people in making choices. Just as members of a society work together to fulfill a society’s needs, culture exists to ________ its members’ basic needs.

**Conflict theorists** view social structure as inherently ________, based on power differentials related to issues like class, gender, ________, and age. For a conflict theorist, culture is seen as reinforcing issues of "________" for certain groups based upon race, sex, class, and so on.

**Symbolic interactionism** is a sociological perspective that is most concerned with the face-to-face ________ between members of society. Interactionists see culture as being ________, maintained, or changed as people interact and in ________ that individuals and groups interpret each other’s actions.