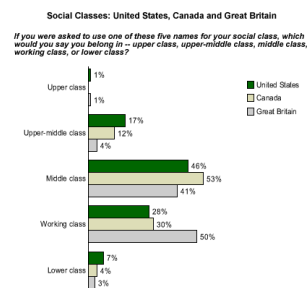


# THE SEVEN ELEMENTS OF CULTURE

## 1. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

- Creates social structure by organizing its members into small units to meet basic needs.
- Family Patterns: family is the most important unit of social organization. Through the family children learn how they are expected to act and what to believe.
  - Nuclear family: wife, husband, children. This is a typical family in an industrial society.
  - Extended family: Several generations living in one household, working and living together: grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins. Respect for elders is strong.
- Social classes: rank people in order of status, depending on what is important to the culture
  - Examples: ancestry, money, job, education, etc.



## 2. CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

- Rules of Behavior are enforced ideas of right and wrong. They can be customs, traditions, rules, or written laws.
- Cultural law sometimes enforces the rules of behavior. (Our family & friends let us know if we are doing the right thing or not.)



## 3. LANGUAGE

- Language is the cornerstone of culture.
- All cultures have a spoken language (even if there are no developed forms of writing).
- People who speak the same language often share the same culture.
- Many societies include a large number of people who speak different languages.
- Each language can have several different dialects.

## 4. ARTS AND LITERATURE

- They are the products of the human imagination.
- They help us pass on the culture's basic beliefs.
  - Examples: art, music, literature, and folk tales
- Things that entertain, please & teach us about a culture.
  - Examples: movies, books, plays, sports, TV, paintings

## 5. FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

- People form governments to provide for their common needs, keep order within society, and protect their society from outside threats.
- Definition of government:
  - Person/people who hold power in a society
  - Society's laws and political institutions.
- Democracy: involves voting from the citizens & the majority rules. Can be representative or direct.
- Republic: people choose leaders who represent them. The government rules according to law. This law is framed in the Constitution to limit the powers of government & ensuring some rights & protection to minorities & individuals.
- Dictatorship: ruler/group holds power by force usually relying on military support for power.



## 6. RELIGION

- Answers basic questions about the meaning of life.
- Supports values that cultures feel are important.
- Religion is often a source of conflict between cultures.
- Monotheism is a belief in one god.
- Polytheism is a belief in many gods.
- Atheism is a belief in no gods.



## 7. ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

- How people use limited resources to satisfy their wants and needs.
  - Answers the basic questions: what to produce, how to produce it, and for whom.
- Traditional Economy: people produce most of what they need to survive (hunting, gathering, farming, herding cattle, make own clothes/tools).
- Market Economy: buying and selling goods and services
- Command Economy: Government controls what/how goods are produced and what they cost. Individuals have little economic power
- Mixed Economy: Individuals make some economic decisions and the government makes others.