

Defining Culture

Task 1: For this week you read the chapter called “Defining Culture”. To start this exploration, read eight sample definitions of culture. Then choose the four that you like the best and copy/paste them into the spaces below. Analyze your four selected definitions and identify commonalities and points of difference. Finish by creating your own definition of culture that synthesizes the ideas found in the four chosen definitions combined with additional ideas of your own.

Definitions of Culture:

- The customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group. -Oxford Languages
- The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. - Merriam-Webster 1
- The integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. -Merriam-Webster 2
- Shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and understanding that are learned by socialization. - Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition
- An umbrella term which encompasses the social behavior and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups. -Wikipedia
- The sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another. - dictionary.com
- The evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts. -Patrick Moran
- The habits of the people in a particular group and the way they generally behave. -Collins Dictionary

Our Top Four:

1	An umbrella term which encompasses the social behavior and norms found in human societies , as well as the knowledge, beliefs , arts, laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups . -Wikipedia
2	The integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief , and behavior <i>that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting</i> knowledge to succeeding generations . -Merriam-Webster 2
3	The evolving way of life of a group of persons , consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts. -Patrick Moran
4	The habits of the people in a particular group and the way they generally behave. -Collins Dictionary

Similarities	Differences
What are some similarities and differences between your chosen definitions? Don't write, just discuss.	

Putting It All Together

-In our opinion, culture is a set of tangible and intangible social constructions made by a group of people living within a common/ shared space. These people have the capacity to learn about the culture and pass it on to newer generations as their practices and living patterns are nurtured by previous generations in an ever evolving society.

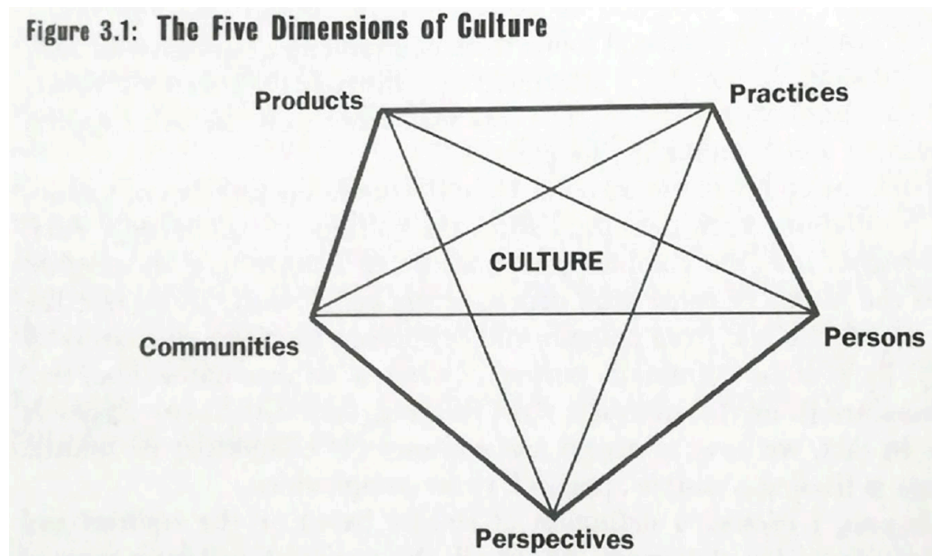
Task 2: Read the quote below and discuss why you think culture is such a complex subject to study or teach.

- “If, as some definitions purport, culture is all that humankind creates, from mascara to myths, marriage vows to slang, then complexity comes as no surprise. In fact, we have to accept and embrace the complexity of culture. The challenge is finding a simple approach to its complexities.”

Now, consider Moran’s Cultural Pentad Model.

- What are the elements?
- How are the elements related?
- How do the five dimensions of culture help teachers and learners make sense of the complexities of culture?

Figure 3.1: The Five Dimensions of Culture



Cultural Products are all things created by the humankind in a culture that can be perceived by the senses, it can be music, literature, architecture, clothing, etc

Cultural Practices are: Actions or behaviors that people use to interact with each other within the culture. IT can include celebrations, holidays, ways of greeting.

Cultural Perspectives are... all those aspects of culture that aren't explicit such as beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, values, orientation towards life.

Cultural Persons are people perceived as individuals. Each individual contributes in his/her unique way to create and support culture. Culture starts with the individual and passes on to the group, the collective.

Cultural Communities are... groups of people. Communities can be seen as physical communities (geographic communities) or group of people that share a common pattern (church communities, soccer supporters, unions etc)