Culture and Identity



What Is Culture?

Culture is the shared ways people live, communicate, and make meaning together. It's not something we're born with — it's learned over time and passed between people through stories, traditions, and everyday actions.

Culture helps groups understand what matters and why. It provides a common understanding of the world, guiding how we behave, what we celebrate, and how we treat one another.





Culture Includes:

- Ways of speaking
- Shared beliefs
- Traditions and customs
- Food and celebrations
- Ideas about what's
- important

Talk with an adult: What are some things people might share when they live or work together?

Culture Is Shared, Not Individual









Culture is not just about one person. It develops when people live alongside others, communicate regularly, and pass on ideas and practices. This is why people in the same group often do things in similar ways — they've learnt from each other over time.

Living Together

People share space and experiences

Communicating

Ideas and meanings are exchanged

Passing On

Practices are taught and learned

Talk with an adult: Why does culture need more than one person?

Culture Can Be Noticed

Culture can be noticed in everyday life, shaping the small moments we might otherwise overlook. These shared patterns help people understand what is expected and how to belong within a group.

Greetings

How people say hello – with a wave, a handshake, or a bow



Time

How time is treated – arriving early, on time, or taking a relaxed approach



Politeness

What is considered polite – saying please and thank you, or showing respect in other ways



Talk with an adult: What kinds of things can show shared ways of living?

Language and Culture

Language is an important part of culture. It includes not just the words people choose, but also the phrases that are commonly used and how people explain ideas. Language helps people share meaning and understand one another in ways that go beyond just speaking.

Words

The vocabulary people use every day

Phrases

Common expressions that carry special meanings

Explanations

How people describe and share ideas







Talk with an adult: How does using the same words or phrases help people understand each other?

Culture Is Learned Over Time

People are not born knowing culture. Culture is learned gradually through listening, observing, and taking part. This learning often happens through everyday situations such as at home, at school, in the community, and during celebrations.



Learning culture is a bit like learning to ride a bicycle: it takes time, practice, and patience. The more we experience, the more we understand.



Listening

Hearing stories, songs, and conversations

Observing

Watching what others do and how they behave

Taking Part

Joining in activities and traditions

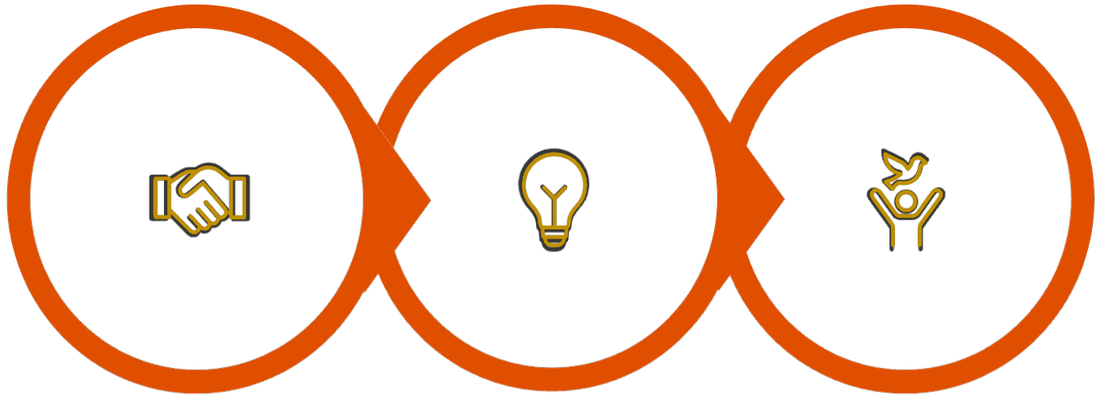
Talk with an adult: Why does culture take time to learn?

Culture Can Change and Grow



Culture is not fixed or frozen in time. As people meet others and experience new places, culture can grow, adapt, and include new ideas. This is a normal and healthy part of life.

Think about how music, food, and celebrations have changed over the years. New influences blend with old traditions, creating something rich and evolving. Culture is a living thing that responds to the world around it.



Meet People

Experience Ideas

Adapt & Grow

Talk with an adult: Why might culture change over time?

Identity and Culture Are Connected

Identity is how people understand themselves and their place in the world. Culture can influence identity by shaping our values, ways of thinking, and shared meanings.

However, people relate to culture in different ways – some feel deeply connected to certain traditions, whilst others may blend ideas from multiple cultures.

Values

What we believe is important

Thinking

How we understand the world



Identity

Who we understand ourselves to be

Meanings

How we make sense of experiences

Talk with an adult: How might shared meanings influence how people see themselves?

Living Among Different Cultures

People often live alongside others with different cultures. Noticing similarities and differences can help people understand others better, avoid assumptions, and live alongside one another with respect and curiosity.

Learning about others does not mean losing your own identity. In fact, understanding different cultures can deepen your appreciation for your own whilst opening your mind to new possibilities.



Understand Others

See the world through different perspectives

Avoid Assumptions

Question what you think you know

Live Together

Build communities of respect and care

Talk with an adult: Why is it helpful to notice differences without judging them?

Culture and Identity

Both culture and identity can develop over time. As people grow and learn, their understanding of culture and themselves can deepen.
This process can be slow and gradual, unfolding across childhood, adolescence, and throughout life.

Take a Moment to Think and Discuss

Talk about how shared ways of living shape groups and why understanding culture can matter in our everyday lives.











'Culture helps people by…'

'I've noticed that culture…'

'Understanding culture can help…'

Remember

Culture is shared, learned, and ever-changing. It shapes who we are and how we relate to others.
By understanding culture, we can appreciate both our own identity and the identities of those around us.