What is Culture?

– Culture: the way of life of a group of people who share similar beliefs and customs
  • Language?
  • Religion?
  • What are the smaller groups?
  • Daily life?
  • History?
  • Arts?

– Geographers, anthropologists, and archaeologists all study culture?
What is Culture?

• Social Groups
  – We all belong to many social groups
  – Socialization- the process by which people adjust their behavior to meet the “rules” of a social group
  – Everyone has a social status (importance or rank)
  – Family social group
What is Culture?

• Social Groups (cont’d)
  – Ethnic group (share a language, history, religion, and some physical traits)
  – US combines national culture with many ethnic cultures
  – Ethnocentrism- the belief that your ethnic group is superior to others
    • Extreme ethnocentrism leads to hatred and persecution of others
What is Culture?

• Language
  – Dialect- local form of a language that may have a distinct pronunciation or vocabulary
  – 2,000 languages worldwide- grouped into language families
What is Culture?

• Religion
  – Help people answer basic questions about life’s meaning
  – 100s of religions
  – 5 major religions - 4.5 billion followers, 2/3 of world
    • Buddhism
    • Christianity
    • Hinduism
    • Islam
    • Judaism
What is Culture?

• History
  – Shapes a culture’s self-image
  – Develops values, pride, and unity
  – Cultural holidays help celebrate heritage
What is Culture?

• Daily Life
  – What food you eat and how you eat it
  – What type of home you live in
  – The clothing you wear
What is Culture?

• Arts
  – Music, painting, sculpture, dance, literature, etc
  – Expressions of what is important to a culture
What is Culture?

• Government
  – Needed to avoid conflict
  – Limited- restricts power of leaders (ex: democracy- power held by the people)
  – Unlimited- leaders of unlimited power (ex: dictatorship)