

# UNIT 1: Introduction: The Understanding of Culture, Society, and Politics

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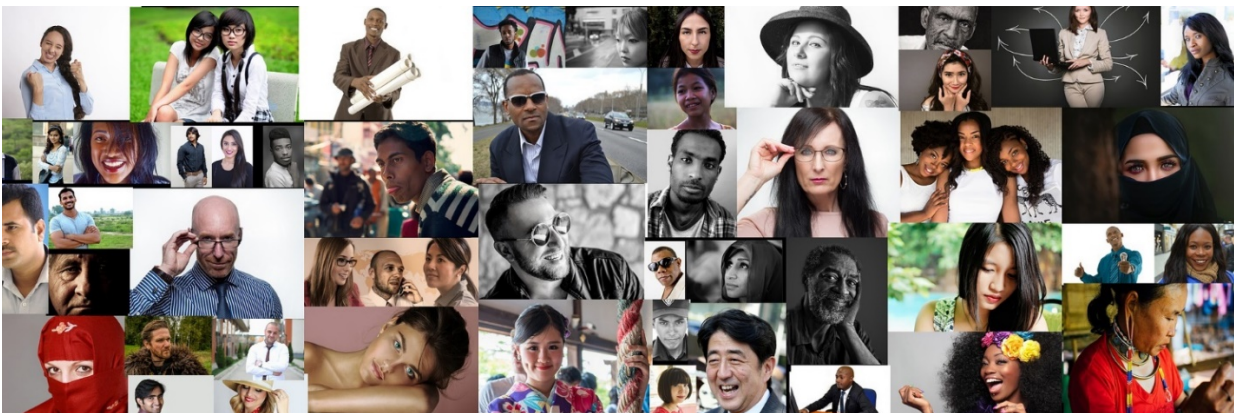
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GRADE 11/12 | Understanding Culture, Society and Politics

## UNIT 1

# Introduction: The Understanding of Culture, Society, and Politics

Society may be defined as a collection of people in a specific territory who share the same norms, values, and culture. These people work together, with the guidance of social norms, to maintain and sustain harmony in society. Some may even compare society to a single functioning organism. However, in order to study society, we must be able to dissect its aspects—their culture, norms, social institutions, social groups, and traditions and customs—to further determine and describe the dynamics among them. To do this, we must first give focus to arguably the most fundamental element of society—its members.



**Fig. 1.** Diversity of People across Different Societies

Accessed March 5, 2018. <https://pixabay.com/en/personal-network-social-media-3139194/>

People from the same society are usually distinguished, by outsiders, into one single category. “Filipinos are happy and hospitable”, “Americans are serious and straightforward”, and “the Japanese are respectful”, are only some generalizations about members of the same society. Although making generalizations is part of studying societies, recognizing particularities and diversity within and among societies is also an integral part of understanding them. As learners of culture, society, and politics, we must first be able to recognize ourselves as social

actors within the diverse collection of societies in the world, and start to be perceptive of our cultural variations and social differences. In this unit, we will be tackling these differences and discuss about how they are affecting and how they are effected by societies.



### Essential Questions

- How does culture and society shape and reshape gender, gender roles, and gender expectations?
- How do differences in socioeconomic classes affect power relations in society?
- What are the social implications of being a part of a specific ethnicity and religion?
- How do labels affect the lives of people with disabilities?
- What is the importance of nationality in the international platform?



## Learning Targets

In this unit, you should be able to articulate observations on human cultural variation, social differences, social change, and political identities.



## Lesson 1: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Gender

Gender constitutes one difference among members of society. It has always been a part of one's development and it also plays a role in determining how an individual would function in society. In this lesson, we will discuss about the concept of gender and its implication to society, culture, and politics.



### Starting Out

In your class, create a group with 4-5 members. Assign a documenter per group and in a piece of paper, create two columns and name them male and female. Talk about what you think are qualities and roles of each category. Write your answers in the columns you created. After this, reflect and discuss about the following questions:

- Do you believe in what you wrote as the qualities of male and female? Why or why not?
- What is the significance of distinguishing genders in society?
- How does an individual acquire gender?
- How does gender differences affect society?



### Learn about It!

#### Sex and Gender

Many people use the terms sex and gender interchangeably because of the perception that these two only refer to the same concept. Sex and gender, in fact, are different concepts. In order to understand gender, we must first distinguish the differences between these two

terms. **Sex** refers to biological differences that distinguishes humans and other animals into two main categories: male and female. Biological differences between males and females include variation in (a) chromosomal structure, XX for female and XY for male; (b) hormone production, generally more testosterone production for males and more estrogen production in females, which facilitate development of secondary sex characteristics (e.g. lower voice for males, wider hips for females); and (c) internal and external reproductive organs (penis and testes for males, and vagina and ovaries for females). Sex, in summary, is in-born and is purely biological in nature.

While sex is a biological concept, gender, on the other hand, comes from a rather cultural perspective. **Gender** encompasses all the social, cultural, psychological characteristics that a culture assigns to males and females. It categorizes whether which behaviors and traits are appropriate for men and women. There are two main types of gender: masculine and feminine. Each gender has its own **gender role**, which is defined as culturally-assigned tasks and activities to sexes. For example, in many societies, one gender role of males is to handle physically demanding activities, such as construction work, while females are tasked to handle domestic activities, like child-rearing and house chores.

Many people are usually confused about the difference between sex and gender because in many societies, gender and gender roles are highly attached to one's sex. This manifests what social scientists refer to as the **sex-gender system**, which tells us how gender and gender roles are a product of one's biological sex. In a society with this system, it is normal and expected for males to be masculine and females to be feminine. However, this is always not the case, especially in contemporary and modern societies.



### What do you think?

What do you think is the significance of the sex-gender system to society? Can you give concrete examples that prove the sex-gender system's presence in your society?

## Culture, Society, and Gender

Culture is largely involved in defining gender in societies. The concept of gender as a cultural construction tells us that gender is a product of how societies and their culture adapted to the conditions of their natural and social environment. Let us consider a hunting and gathering society as an example. In such societies, gender differentiation is evident in their division of labor as gender roles are determined through sex differences. Since male members are physically stronger than females, they are largely in-charge of hunting wild animals for food. Females, on the other hand, due to their natural ability to nurture children (through breastfeeding), are tasked to manage the home. They are also tasked to gather plant resources to serve different functions (e.g. food, shelter) for the survival of their family and tribes.

Another example could be the agricultural societies in Cordillera. The *Ifugao* communities living in Banaue still attribute planting activities to their female members due to the belief that women's touch are nurturing. Male *Ifugao* members are mainly associated with rituals that deal with slaughtering animals such as pigs and chickens. In these examples, it can be seen how a group's adaptive strategy shapes gender roles in the society. Besides adaptive strategy and environment, other researches also suggest that factors such as economy, and type of political systems contribute to the determination of gender and gender roles in a society.



### REMEMBER!

Gender is a product of a society's culture and adaptation to its environment. Differences in culture and adaptation across societies entail different definitions of genders

Unlike sex, which is relatively absolute and universal because of biological structures (e.g. chromosomes, hormones, genitalia), gender is more malleable and changing across societies. The cultural construction of gender entails that different societies, having different cultures, will have varying definitions of masculinity and femininity. Feminine characteristics in a

particular group may not be considered a feminine trait in another. Conversely, characteristics considered to be masculine may be different from culture to culture. For example, in the Philippines, construction work is considered to be “man’s work”; but in other countries like Thailand, women who are actually doing manual labor such as construction work is normal.

A particular culture’s own definition of gender is still subject to change especially when social change in the society is in progress. As norms, values, and ideas in a specific society is modified, it is also a possibility that their definitions of masculinity and femininity will change. For instance, America in the 1950s considered women to only be suitable in domestic work (that is doing house chores and taking care of their kids and their husbands). Opportunities of women for university education, back then, was also scarce; but due to the rise of feminist movement, social change occurred in USA that modified citizen’s view of women’s social roles and capabilities.



### Let’s Analyze!



**Fig. 2.** Photo of a Factory

Accessed March 7, 2018. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/air-air-pollution-chimney-clouds-459728/>

Before, there is no distinction between work and home, and all family members (e.g. mother, father, and children) are working together, in the same capacity, for a family business or agricultural farms. The advent of Industrial Revolution changed this when longer hours for work were established, and females and children were discouraged to work in order take on the role of a housewife and study, respectively. Men now had more opportunities to work and was considered to be the “breadwinner” of the family. What do you think is the role of Industrial Revolution in the change of gender roles in societies then?



As culture dictates appropriate characteristics for each gender, society is the one to propagate these definitions and characteristics. Through socialization among different social groups, members of society are able to learn and shape their conceptions and expectations of what is feminine and what is masculine. The learning starts with families who encourage behaviors and characteristics that are suitable for each sex (male or female) and discourage those that are not. This learning is further strengthened by peers, church, school, and media. It is with this reason that gender constructs are so embedded in people social and psychological. It also explains why societal members have gender expectations for each sex. In a heteronormative society that propagates the worldview that heterosexuality is the norm, males are expected to act 'manly' and females, 'womanly'. However, these conceptions on gender are constantly being challenged, as the LGBT and feminist movement struggle to normalize gender equality, not only for men and women, but also for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, and other categories.

Gender does not only function to distinguish males and females. In a larger perspective, it can be seen that gender provides organization in society as it dictates which roles are to be assumed by males and females. However, these perceptions on gender and gender roles, are constantly changing, alongside social and cultural changes occurring in different societies.



### History Maker



**Fig. 3.** Photo of Betty Friedan  
Palumbo, Fred. January 1, 1960.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1265917>

**Betty Friedan** is an American writer who is known for her work entitled "The Feminine Mystique", published in 1963. It delved into the conditions of women, post-World War II, who were trying to conform to 'ideal' concept of a woman as a wife, mother, and housewife. She exposed how this idea of a woman had prevented women from success and happiness. Her work in "The Feminine Mystique", was considered to put up the spark to the Women's Liberation Movement in America.



## Check Your Understanding

- A. Identify each statement if it is true or false.
  1. Sex is a product of biological characteristics.
  2. Gender is a cultural construction of what is male and what is female.
  3. Sex and gender are one and the same concept.
  4. The sex-gender system states how gender is a product of one's sex.
  5. It is impossible for an individual to have incompatible sex and gender (i.e. male sex with feminine characteristics).

- B. Based on the lesson about gender, what is the implication of gender differences to the political identity of males and females? Does gender differences between males and females affect power relations among them? Cite some concrete examples.

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- C. Cite five ways in order to mitigate gender inequality among men, women, gays, lesbians, and transgender.

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_





## Putting Value

Look back and consider the state of gender and gender differences in the Philippines. What are your observations? Are you happy with the state of gender equality in the Philippines? Do women enjoy the same rights as men, in the workplace, at home, at school? How about the LGBT community? Are they treated and respected in our society? Why or why not? What can you do, as a Senior High School student, to contribute in the resolution of issues that concern gender differences? Share your insights with the class.



## Lesson 2: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Socioeconomic Class

Socioeconomic class is another way of categorizing members of society. Different societies consider different ways of determining socioeconomic class. Nevertheless, all of them have an implication to the social status and political influence of people in the society. In this lesson, we will discuss about socio-economic class and discuss how it affects power relations in society.



## Starting Out

Have you noticed the growing number of informal settlers in urban areas of the Philippines? You may see these squatter areas on the news or even in person, when you travel around Metro Manila. These people constitute families without legal house properties, who are left with no choice but to improvise and establish make-shift dwellings in privately-owned spaces of other citizens. Almost all people who live in these areas have come from different provinces and immigrated to Manila, with the hope of finding better economic opportunities in the city.

However, due to their lack of education, only limited employment opportunities are available to them. Suitable economic opportunities, if there exists one, are only menial jobs with low conditions of work and pay. As a result, these informal settlers coming from different provinces remain poor and incapable of sustaining their families decently.



**Fig. 4.** Squatter Area in Manila

Sustainable Sanitation Alliance. February 25, 2007. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=36541655>

With this situation in mind, how do you perceive the state of people in the Philippines in terms of their socioeconomic classes? What factors determine one's inclusion in a particular socioeconomic class? How does socioeconomic class relate to one's status and power in society?



## Learn about It!

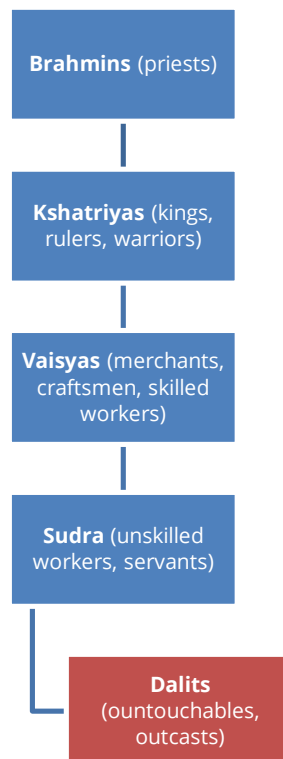
### Socioeconomic Class and Class Systems

As the word suggests, **socioeconomic class** refers to a category that groups people with the similar economic, social, cultural, and political status. It is important to note that the concept of socioeconomic class is far more complex and encompassing than that of economic status. In economic status, the basis for ranking people only include income in the family. A lower income puts one in a lower economic status while a high income advances people to a higher

status. Socioeconomic class, on the other hand, not only considers income but also other factors such as occupation and education. Different types of occupations and educational attainment have an attached prestige in them that influences an individual's categorization to a socioeconomic class. White-collar jobs such as doctors and lawyers are viewed to be prestigious, while blue-collar jobs like construction workers and janitors are socially

stigmatized. In terms of education, attainment of undergraduate degrees or more (e.g. master's and doctoral degree) is met with admiration in the society; deficiency or absence of formal education, in contrast, invites disapproval from societal members.

Different types of categorizing societal members into socioeconomic classes exist across various cultures. For instance, the caste system of India determine once social class and status in their society. Citizens from higher classes tend to be given more job opportunities in the government than lower caste members.



**Fig. 5.** The Indian Caste System

It should be noted that as culture change occurs in the society, conceptions of socioeconomic classes may change as well. Let us take the Philippines as an example. During the Spanish colonial era, Spanish blood and ancestry is a main determinant of one's social class in the colony. The highest socioeconomic class back then are *peninsulares*, which are citizens with pure Spanish blood who were born in Spain; next are *insulares*, pure Spaniards born in the Philippines; *ilustrados* are Filipinos who studied abroad (like Jose Rizal, and Marcelo H. Del Pilar); Chinese *mestizos* are fourth in the hierarchy; lastly, *indios* are native Filipinos that are born and raised in the Philippines. Each socioeconomic class enjoys different economic, social, and political rights. In the contemporary Filipino society, there are only three general socioeconomic classes that categorize Filipinos in terms of occupation, education, income, lifestyle, and other determinants. These are the lower, middle, and upper class.

Socioeconomic Class	Percentage	Occupation
Upper	10%	wealthy industrialists with big corporations, and owners of large plantation or haciendas
Middle	20%	professionals, skilled and semi-skilled workers in offices, factories, or farms
Lower	70%	laborers and unskilled workers

**Table. 1.** Summary of Socioeconomic Class in Contemporary Filipino Society According to Zaide (2005).

Other socioeconomic class systems include that of Karl Marx, which delineates the *bourgeois* and the proletariat. The *bourgeois* is the class that owns the "means of production" (e.g. monetary, land, technological capital), which are needed in order to initiate production. They do not have to work since they are already gaining money just from owning and investing their capital. The proletariats are anyone who is not an owner of the means of production and must work in order to survive. In this system of socioeconomic class, we can obviously see the difference between the classes' economic and social status.

**REMEMBER!**

Different cultures may have varying determinants and categories of socioeconomic classes. These systems may also change over time as societies undergo social and cultural change.

### Economic, Social, and Cultural Capital

As mentioned earlier, there are several factors that determine one's position in socioeconomic class. These determinants may generally fall under economic, social, or cultural capital.

Types of Capital	Definition	Examples
Economic Capital	refers to financial resources that an individual possesses	money, assets and properties, savings
Social Capital	collection or a network of an individual's social relations with people that may be of help in the future	relationship with peers, friends, family, teachers, fellow alumni, colleagues, employers, community members
Cultural Capital	combination of knowledge, behaviors, and skills that an individual has acquired to demonstrate once cultural competence and in turn, determine one's social status in society	material: sources of knowledge like books and computers, and non-material: academic degrees, job titles, religious titles, and other social roles

**Table. 2.** Summary of Types of Capital

The three aforementioned are interrelated in the sense that they can be exchanged for another. High economic capital would allow a person to avail services or education in a

prestigious college or university. In this university, one can develop his social capital by creating connections with professors, co-students, and friends that enhances his network of social relations at his disposal. Being able to get in to get in a university and expand one's social network, it will now be easy for an individual to acquire cultural capital by studying and in time, getting a degree. The cultural capital of finishing a degree in a prestigious university, together with the social capital one had formed through the years, will help an individual to secure an equally prestigious and high-paying job, which will enhance his socioeconomic class.



### Let's Analyze!



**Fig. 5.** Two Children Begging on the Streets

October 8, 2015. <https://pixabay.com/en/children-cambodia-road-asia-girl-975363/>

In the lower echelons of the socioeconomic class system, there are people who are not only income poor, but also food poor. This means that their economic resources are not even enough to put on a decent meal to fill their stomachs. In the Philippines alone, there are poor families and children living on the streets who depend on begging to sustain their basic needs. What do you think is the state of economic, social, and cultural capital of these children? How would their socioeconomic class affect their lives in the future?



## Social Implications of Socioeconomic Differences

The concept of socioeconomic class is not just discussed for the sake of studying it. More importantly, understanding and recognizing them is vital to expose the social, cultural, economic, and political barriers that it creates within each socioeconomic levels. The hierarchy that is always established in socioeconomic classes propagates inequality among members of society, in terms of acquiring basic resources, and economic opportunities. Families who belong in lower socioeconomic classes have little capacity to obtain basic needs (e.g. food, clean water, decent shelter) necessary for their survival. Members of the low socioeconomic

class also do not have enough economic capital to avail better educational opportunities that could lead to better employment opportunities and living conditions. Conversely, people in the high echelons do not have any problem in acquiring these needs and opportunities as they have all the economic, social, and cultural capital, at their disposal.

Power relations is also impacted by the existence of socioeconomic classes. Since people in the highest socioeconomic levels are more wealthy, prestigious, and powerful, they have more capacity to influence the political arena. For example, business tycoons or chief executive officers of multinational corporations have can use their money and status to influence government officials to create laws that will favor and proliferate their businesses, at the expense of the lower class. This could be in the form of tax exemptions for businesses or any policies that will free corporations to conduct economic activities even if it already harms the mass. People from the lower socioeconomic class do not have any political power to influence the government to protect them. Who will help them now?



## History Maker



**Fig. 6.** Photo of Carol Gilligan

Accessed March 14, 2018.

[https://its.law.nyu.edu/facultyprofiles/photo\\_vertical/index.cfm?personid=19946](https://its.law.nyu.edu/facultyprofiles/photo_vertical/index.cfm?personid=19946)

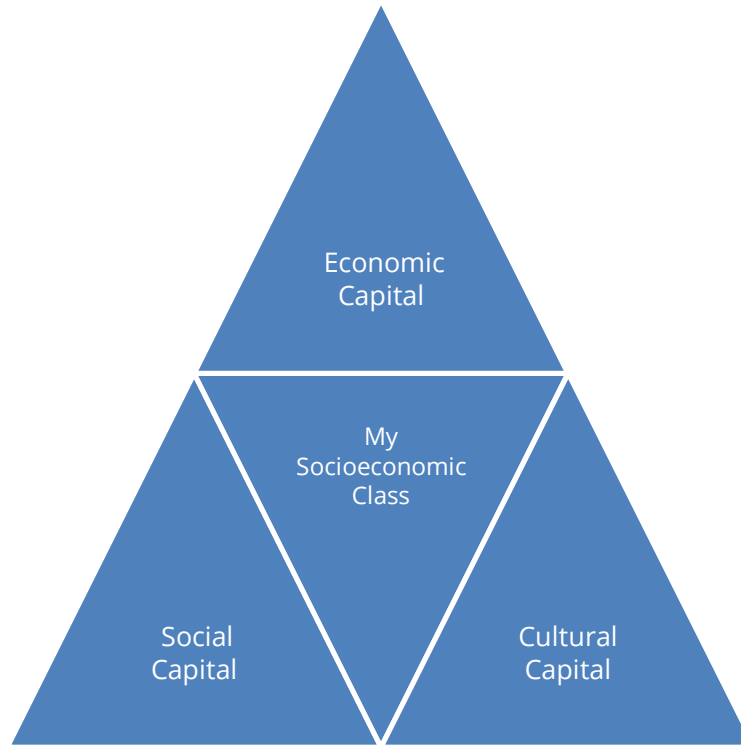
**Carol Gilligan** is an American feminist, ethicist, and psychologist best known for her theory on moral development and gender. She worked with Lawrence Kohlberg on establishing a theory of morality but gave special focus on how gender impacts our moral choices. Based on her research findings, boys have a justice perspective, while girls have a care and responsibility perspective when it comes to evaluating social situations. Gilligan also put special emphasis on ethics in her studies, particularly on ethical care and ethical relationships. She is a professor at New York University and a visiting professor at the University of Cambridge.



## Check Your Understanding

- A. Identify each statement if it is true or false.
1. Socioeconomic class refers to the category that groups people with similar economic, social, cultural, and political status.
  2. Prestige attached to one's educational attainment and occupation determines an individual's socioeconomic class.
  3. Socioeconomic class is synonymous with economic status.
  4. Economic, social, and cultural capital are interrelated and cannot be exchanged for one another.
  5. Hierarchy among socioeconomic classes propagates inequality among people in terms of acquiring resources and power to influence government.

B. Apply the concept of economic, social, and cultural capital in explaining your own socioeconomic class. Enumerate and discuss all the factors that determine your own class.



C. Could you think of some ways on how to minimize inequality among socioeconomic classes? Write them here and justify your answer with an explanation.

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## Putting Value

Have you experienced any inequality because of your socioeconomic class? Discuss these experiences with your classmates. Take turns to share your experiences. If you do not have any experience of inequality, look into the Philippine society and cite some of your observations about unequal power and resources. After this, reflect and discuss on the following questions:

- How do you feel upon hearing these experiences and observations?
- Do you believe that inequality among socioeconomic classes is inevitable? Why or why not?
- In your opinion, what would the Philippine society be like if distinctions between social classes did not exist?



## Lesson 3: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Ethnicity and Religion

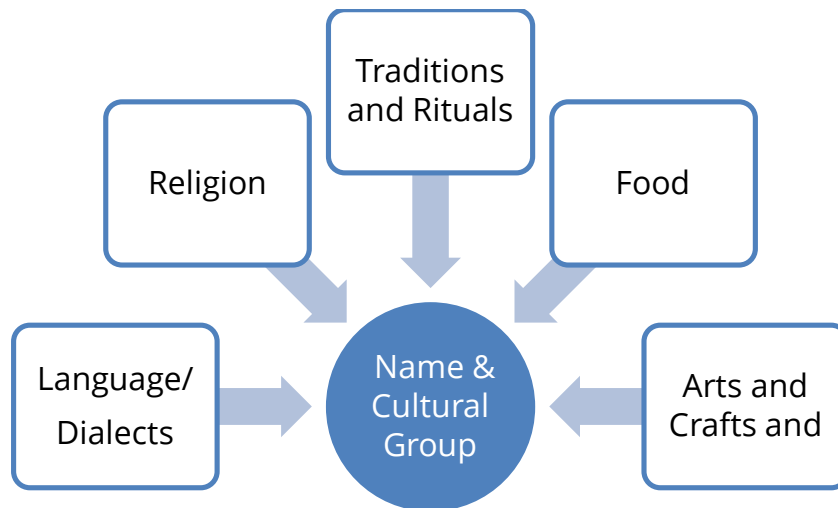
Being part of a culture in a way, makes us integrated with other people whom we share the same culture. However, identification in one also determines our differences from other cultures. In this lesson, we will analyze how culture sharing makes us the same, but also different from one another.



### Starting Out

On a piece of paper, create a concept map, with your name and the cultural group with which you identify (e.g. *Tagalog, Ilocano, Ifugao, Kapampangan*, etc.) in the middle; and identify the

following characteristics of your cultural group: languages/dialects, religion, traditions and rituals, food, and arts and crafts. After which, answer the following questions below:



- What makes your cultural group unique from other cultural groups in the Philippines?
- Do you share some similar characteristics with other cultural groups? What are they?
- How does your being a member of a specific cultural group affect your life in general?



## Learn about It!

### Ethnicity, Ethnic Groups, and Race

An **ethnic group** refers to a specific group of people having certain similar characteristics and a distinct cultural identity, which distinguish them from other groups in the community or society. *Tagalog, Ilocano, Ifugao, and Kapampangan* are all examples of ethnic groups. While ethnic group refers directly to a category or collection of people, the term **ethnicity** is used to denote the shared culture of these groups, which includes cultural heritage, language or dialect, religion, traditions and rituals, norms, values, beliefs, and other practices. Having an ethnicity makes it easy for people to feel that they can identify with an ethnic group. In other words, the shared culture (or ethnicity) of a group of people is what solidifies their identity as

an

ethnic group. Interestingly, it is also ethnicity that enables an individual to separate and distinguish himself from other groups of which he is not part.

**Race** is a socially constructed category attributed to people who share the same biological traits or attributes. People's classification of race are usually based on physical characteristics like skin color, facial features, and hair texture and color. Some of the commonly known racial attributes are black, white, or Asian. It is important to remember that even though race is based on biological characteristics, the concept is still socially constructed. Meaning, it is still society that decides whether which physical characteristics are significant enough to get a label or name. Differentiating race and ethnicity is actually not that difficult since they have different bases. Race is constructed from biological characteristics while ethnicity is constructed from cultural traits.

**REMEMBER!**

Ethnic groups are collection of people while ethnicity refers directly to the collection of shared cultural characteristics. Race and ethnicity are both socially constructed; however, race is based on biological traits while ethnicity is based on cultural ones.

Another difference between the two is that race tends to be more unitary or singular, while ethnicities tend to be diverse. For example, different ethnicities like Russian, Irish, and Italian may belong to only one race which is white. However, there are also instances where one ethnicity could include more than one race. One example are the French. French people can be considered as one ethnic group since they share the same culture, practices and traditions; but members of this particular ethnic group include people with a white or black racial background.

### Ethnic and Ethnolinguistic Groups in the Philippines

The Philippines is undeniably a diverse country as it is home for more than a hundred ethnic or ethnolinguistic groups (i.e. ethnic groups with their own language). These groups possess different combinations of cultural characteristics, traditions, and practices. Majority of them

have already adjusted in an urban way of living, while others remain to be more in tune with their indigenous roots and heritage. In Cordillera alone, there are several ethnic groups such as the *Bontoc*, *Ibaloi*, *Ifugao*, *Ikalahan*, *Isneg*, *Itneg*, *Kalinga*, and *Kankanaey*. Majority of them have agriculture as the main source of living. This is due to their geographical location, in the mountains, which possess fertile lands appropriate for planting. Several more ethnic groups are located in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.



**Fig. 7.** Apo Whang-od: The Oldest *Mambabatok* (hand-poke tattooist) in Kalinga

Mawg64. July 28, 2016. *Whang-od tattooing*. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=50374688>



### What do you think?

Can you name other examples of ethnic or ethnolinguistic groups in the Philippines? What do you think is the reason for such a diverse collection of ethnic groups in our country?

## Religion in Ethnicity

Religion, as part of one's culture, can also be considered as one aspect of an individual's ethnicity. A **religion** is a set of beliefs and ritual practices related to symbols, which are considered as sacred. Ethnic groups may have different symbols, which they consider sacred; and the differences of these symbols also entail differences in how these symbols are expressed in a cultural group's belief system and rituals. These belief systems influenced how

people would interpret and interact with the world in which they live.

One of the earliest recorded religions in society is animism among hunting and gathering societies in the pre-industrial world. Animism is the belief that spiritual forces reside in natural elements of the physical world (e.g. trees, oceans, wind). As result, such elements were considered sacred, which invoked veneration and respect for nature. The concept of 'God' and 'gods' eventually developed in horticultural and agricultural societies. In the contemporary world we live in now, innumerable religions are already established across the world, having different sets of beliefs, rituals, gods, and sacred symbols. Among the religions of today are: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shintoism.

**REMEMBER!**

Religion, as part of one's ethnicity, influence how a person would interpret and interact with the world around him. Some religions have one superior beings, others have more than one. Others only subscribe to spiritual beings (not superior ones).

### Social Implications of Diverse Ethnicities

As much as the concept of ethnicity propagates the idea of being one and the same with people whom you share cultural traits, it also strengthens differences among ethnic and cultural groups. In some cases, these differences may lead to conflict and issues. Each ethnic groups may develop prejudice and stereotypes about other ethnic groups. Prejudices are faulty generalizations about an entire group of people that is based on little or no evidence. Stereotypes are oversimplified assumptions that describe a whole ethnic group. Prejudices and stereotypes can either be positive or negative, although most are created to condemn members of other ethnic groups. One example is the overgeneralization that Muslims from Mindanao are terrorists. Such prejudice is created because terrorism and armed rebellion is associated with people living in Mindanao, which are mostly practice the Islam religion. These types of false judgments may instigate more intense conflict among different ethnic groups.



Differences among ethnic groups may also lead to **minority groups**, collective groups of people who are singled out, distinguished, and treated as subordinates or inferior by the dominant or majority group, because of their physical or cultural characteristics. Minority groups often experience different degrees of discrimination from the society in which they are a part of. Such discriminations and maltreatment are present in the Philippine society, as some business corporations evade the law in order to acquire ancestral lands of some ethnic tribes in the Philippines, to be transformed into business investments.

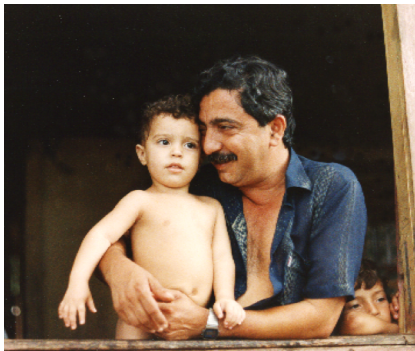


### Let's Analyze!

The Anti-Ethnic or Racial Profiling and Discrimination Act of 2011 is approved by the Senate which prohibits discrimination against race, ethnicities and religious affiliations, in terms of job opportunities, distribution of social services, and improvement of standards of living. In your opinion, how will this act ensure unequal treatment to members of ethnic groups? Can you evaluate the effectiveness of this act based on your observations about the current state of the Philippine society?



## History Maker



**Fig. 8.** Photo of Chico Mendes and his son, Sandino

Smith, Miranda. November 1, 1988.  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=12808236>

**Francisco Alves Mendes, Jr.** or commonly called as **Chico Mendes**, is a Brazilian labor activist and conservationist. He was known for his active work in protecting the interests of rubber tree tappers in a state in Amazon, and his call to preserve the Amazon Rainforest. He helped in establishing unions that work against the deforestation of the Amazon forests. He believed that preserving the forests and creating forest reserves will help peasants and indigenous communities, to sustain their lives. A number of awards was given to him as recognition for his efforts to protect the rights of natives and indigenous peoples in the land, as well as for protecting the environment. In December 1988, he was murdered at his home in Xapuri where he died on the spot.



## Check Your Understanding

- A. Identify each statement if it is true or false.
1. Ethnicity is constructed from biological traits while race is constructed from cultural characteristics.
  2. Ethnicity solidifies the cultural identity of ethnic groups.
  3. Ethnic groups are collections of people sharing the same cultural identity.
  4. There are more than a hundred ethnic and ethnolinguistic groups in the Philippines.
  5. Minority groups are usually subject to discrimination in societies.

B. How are minority groups discriminated in the Philippine society? Cite concrete examples.

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C. What are the advantages and disadvantages of having diverse ethnicities in a country such as the Philippines?

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## Putting Value

Appreciate your own cultural or ethnic group. What are you most thankful about being a part of such group? Why are you thankful about them? List down your answers and provide an explanation for each. Try to as specific as you can. Share and discuss your answers with your classmates. Reflect on the following questions below:

- What is the significance of ethnicity in your life?
- Do you have any ethnic differences among your classmates?
- How will you preserve your ethnicity and at the same time respect the ethnicity of others?



## Lesson 4: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Exceptionality/Non-Exceptionality

In the previous lessons, we discussed about social and cultural differences of members of society in relation to gender, socioeconomic class, and ethnicity and religion. Still, there are other factors that constitute social, cultural, and political differences among people. In this chapter we will tackle one which is not commonly known by many, exceptionality/non-exceptionality.



### Starting Out

Imagine yourself preparing for school—fixing yourself, making some breakfast and snacks. You walk or ride a vehicle in order to get to your school. You arrive on time, and the usual school day starts. Now imagine doing all this, if you were blind. How will you cope? How will you manage doing all activities without your sense of sight? Is it easy? Is it difficult?



**Fig. 9.** A Blind Child

Mojalli, Almigdad/ Voices of America. January 10, 2016. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=46467305>

After doing the activity, answer and reflect on the following questions below:

- How do you determine who is considered disabled?
- How does a disability affect one's life?
- What are ways to cope with such conditions?



## Learn about It!

If you can observe your surroundings, you can probably recognize some people who are afflicted with some form of disability, which can either be physical or mental. These disabilities are considered one part of exceptionality/non-exceptionality.

### Disability, Exceptionality, and Non-Exceptionality

Blindness, as mentioned in the situation above, is only one of many possible disabilities that can be acquired by humans. **Disability** is a term that refers to a condition wherein the loss of physical functioning (e.g. hearing, and vision), or impairments in intellectual, social, and mental processes hinder normal growth and development of an individual. It can be seen in the activity above as sudden loss of vision would probably impair one's ability to perform necessary functions for development. For example, blindness could impede one's ability to read, which will have a negative effect to an individual's intellectual development.

The term exceptionality is more encompassing than disability. **Exceptionality** is a concept that describes how an individual's specific abilities and functioning—physical, intellectual, or behavioral— are different from the established normal or typical qualities. People who are described as exceptional may deviate higher or lower, from the norm. A child who has a superior intellectual ability can be classified as exceptional. In the same manner, children with disabilities (physical, mental, behavioral, or emotional) are also considered exceptional.



#### REMEMBER!

Exceptionality describes how some individuals' abilities deviate, positively or negatively, from the normal standards set by society.

Exceptionality may range from having extraordinary abilities (also called gifts or talents), such as in the realm of academics, arts, and music, to recognized disabilities such as learning disabilities (e.g. dyslexia, dyscalcula), developmental delays (e.g. intellectual disability, and autism), emotional and behavioral disorders, communication disorders (e.g. stuttering), hearing disabilities (deafness), visual impairments (e.g. lack or loss of vision/ blindness), and physical disabilities (e.g. orthopedic impairment, traumatic brain injury)

The concept of non-exceptionality is only used to differentiate between the exceptional ones and those that are considered normal or 'non-exceptional'.

### Labels and Status of the Exceptional

The concepts of exceptionality and non-exceptionality are also constructions of culture and society. This means that it is society that sets the definitions, and standards or criteria in determining who is exceptional and who is not. Labels are used in order for societal members to have a grasp of the different types of exceptionalities. Terms like 'gifted', 'talented', 'deaf', 'blind', and 'dyslexic' are only some of the labels used by people to refer to individuals possessing characteristics or ability of the exceptional.



#### What do you think?

What labels you and other people use to refer to people having exceptional abilities?

How do you think these labels affect their lives in general?

A repercussion of using labels is a greater chance for stereotyping, stigmatization, and discrimination. Labels may only seem to be harmless names; nevertheless, people can still attach connotations or different and varied meanings to them. Stereotypes or oversimplified assumptions may be formed to describe a group people having the same label. For example, all children with autism may be stereotyped as mentally challenged, when in fact, there are other cases of autism wherein some children have a specific ability in which they excel (e.g. superior memory, or superior skills in art or music).

Labels can also determine one's social status in society. Some labels about exceptionalities are socially acceptable and can even merit a high status in society, while some are stigmatized and met with the perception of having lower social status. A child who has a superior Intellectual Quotient may be labelled as 'genius' or 'prodigy' and may be well accepted by society, because of his perceived positive exceptionalities (that is, having a superior mental ability). On the other hand, a kid who is labelled as 'mentally retarded' may be viewed negatively by societal members, affecting his status in the society.

When these labels are attached with stigmas and stereotypes, people having such labels may be discriminated in society. Let us take an individual who has autism, as an example. When an individual who has autism decided to work in restaurants or coffee shops as a waiter or barista, do you think all restaurant or coffee shop owners will react positively to him? It is possible that other employers will immediately disregard him, especially if these employers have negative beliefs towards people with autism. As a result, the disable individual may not even have that much of a chance even from the start. However, we do not discount the possibility that other employers may accept him as a worker, especially in shops and stores that have programs for the differently abled.



### Let's Analyze!

In 2016, the website [daretohiremenow.com](http://daretohiremenow.com) was introduced by Unilab Foundation's Project Inclusion. This aims to provide an avenue for PWDs (Persons with Disability) to look for employment opportunities that match their skills and abilities. Unlike conventional recruitment that places high value to one's educational attainment, the project ensured that the hiring process will be based mainly on skills and abilities that can match what employers need in their company. In your opinion, what do projects like this say about the state of PWDs in the Philippines?

The possibility of stereotypes, stigmas, and discrimination against exceptional people may be promoted by labels attributed to them. However, we cannot still deny that such labels still have a significance since they establish who needs further care and attention by society. Whether gifted or disabled, society must ensure that exceptional people will receive benefits from “individualized assistance, support, accommodations in schools and community settings”, in order to advance their developments. In addition, laws and legislations that support their acceptance and inclusion to the society are essential. Establishment of organizations that cater to the needs of the exceptional must also be a priority.



### History Maker



**Fig. 10.** Photo of Esther Vergeer  
December 28, 2009.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9000784>

**Esther Vergeer** is a retired famous wheelchair tennis player from the Netherlands. She lost the ability to use both her legs and feet, when she underwent a nine-hour operation near her spinal cord. During her rehabilitation years was she able to pick up sports such as basketball, volleyball, and tennis. She was considered to be the most renowned wheelchair tennis player in the world, from 1999 until 2013. From 2000-2012, she acquired seven medals for her achievement in the Paralympics.





## Check Your Understanding

A. Identify each statement if it is true or false.

1. The concept of exceptionality is more encompassing than the concept of disability.
2. A mental ability (or intellectual quotient) significantly higher than what is normal constitutes exceptionality.
3. Stigmas are positive connotations attached to a label.
4. Stigmas and stereotypes may lead to discrimination against exceptional people.
5. Exceptionality can either be positive or negative deviations from the normal standards.

B. How do exceptional qualities, disabilities, and labels affect the social status of an exceptional individual in a society? Provide concrete examples.

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C. Can you think of other tangible ways to help exceptional people attain individual development? Who should be involved in these undertakings?

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## Putting Value

Imagine yourself having a family member—a sibling, mother, father, or grandparents—who are afflicted with some form of disability, may it be physical, mental, emotional, or social. How do you think your life would be having someone in your family who is disabled? What will you do to take care of them and protect them from stigmas, stereotypes, and discrimination, coming from non-exceptional people in your neighborhood? Feel free to discuss this with a partner classmate.



## Lesson 5: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Nationality

A nation is a large group of people with autonomous status and has its own government. They usually own a specific territory called states or nation-states. In the last lesson of this unit, we will discuss about how nations and nation-states are related to people as social actors or members of society.



### Starting Out

In your class, form a group with 5-7 members each and answer the question: “What makes me a Filipino?”. You can put any factor or aspect that comes to your mind. Do not limit your answers to physical or cultural characteristics. Discuss with your groupmates and write your answers on a piece of paper. As a group, you take turns to share your answers to the whole class. After which, answer and reflect on the following questions below?

- How do you determine one’s nationality?
- What is the function of having a nationality?



## Learn about It!

### Definitions of Nationality

What is nationality? It is a term that has been defined and redefined by different perspectives that it now becomes difficult to look for its definition. One definition is related to ethnicity, which defines nationalities as groups of people sharing the same cultural characteristics (called ethnic groups), which aim to gain or regain their own autonomy to establish their own state. We will deviate from this definition and subscribe to another definition of nationality.

**Nationality** may simply be defined as a person's belonging to a specific nation or nation-state. In contrast with the former definition mentioned above, this definition of nationality does not consider similar cultural characteristics as determinants of one's nationality; rather it places high value to one's membership and allegiance to a particular country for the determination of one's nationality. This distinguishes our definition of nationality from a separate concept of ethnicity. To further have a grasp on this idea, let us consider our nationality in the Philippines.

As discussed from previous lessons in this unit, we know that the Philippines is home for more than a hundred ethnic groups representing the same amount of ethnicities. The shared culture among these groups—their language, religion, traditions, and practices—strengthens the group's ethnicity. However, these cultural characteristics does not determine their nationality, but rather their membership to a nation-state. As far as nationality is concerned, we are all Filipinos because we are all part of only one Filipino nation.



#### REMEMBER!

Nationality is a much broader concept than ethnicity. Several ethnic groups or ethnicities are possible to only have one similar nationality.

## Acquisition of One's Nationality

Nationality can be acquired in different ways. Since there is no universal law about such, it now becomes a prerogative or right of the state to determine who its nationals are. With this, it is clear the way of obtaining one's nationality will be dependent on the recognized and enacted nationality law in a particular state. There are two nationality laws that can be implemented by states: *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli*. In *jus sanguinis* (translated as "right of blood"), nationality and citizenship is determined by the parent's nationality. The Philippines implements this nationality law in determining its citizens. A child of two Filipino parents is born in the Philippines, the child will also be Filipino. In the same way, an American national giving birth to a child in the Philippine lands, passes its nationality to the child by virtue of *jus sanguinis*. One other nationality law that is commonly used by many states is *jus soli*. In *jus soli* (translated as "right of soil"), one's nationality is determined by the territory or land in which the child is born. The United States of America employs this type of nationality law, which means that everybody who is born in USA, regardless of their parent's nationalities, will be claimed by the American government as American nationals.



### What do you think?

How do you determine a child's nationality if he or she was born in a different country?

Another way of obtaining nationality is through naturalization, which is a legal process of acquiring citizenship and nationality from a different state. Both the Philippines and United States use naturalization to change nationalities of foreigners from their country.

## Political Jurisdiction of Nation-States over Nationals

Nationality also establishes the legal relationship between an individual and its state. When a person is regarded as a legal member of one particular nation-state, he becomes mandated to be under the nation-state's laws and regulations. The political jurisdiction of a state over its nationals enables it to pursue and investigate nationals who may or may not be associated to

any criminal action. As nationals have the responsibility to adhere to such rules and regulations, nations themselves also have a responsibility, which is to protect all of its nationals. These rights and responsibilities are binding regardless of the state in which a state member currently resides. This means that a person who is a member of a particular state is still mandated to follow its rules even if he is currently not residing in his own country's territory. In the same manner, the state's responsibility to protect its citizens, transcends national borders to also include state members who are currently living in different countries.



### Let's Analyze!

There are cases of people having a dual nationality or multiple citizenship. These are people who have claims to belong in not just one, but two (or more) nations. This nature of nationality allows the two involved states to claim nationality or citizenship of the person separately. They are also capable of imposing political jurisprudence to the individual having multiple nationalities. Based on the situation, what do you think is the implication of having multiple nationalities to the political jurisdiction of parties involved? How is it beneficial? How is it not?

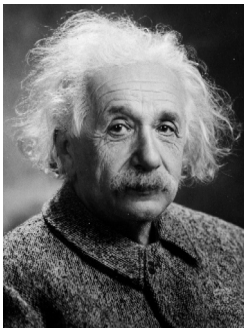
The concept of nationality is most important in the international platform, because it somehow regulates nationals, regardless of their current locations across the world. By defining who is a member of a particular nation, a state will have some form of hold towards all its citizens. This is very relevant in the Philippines as we are a country of migrants. Since many Filipinos are working and living in different parts of the world, labelling them as Filipino nationals will make it easier for the Philippine government to determine who should be protected. Agencies like the Philippine embassies, and consulates are established to help fulfill this responsibility of the state toward its members.

States also have the capacity to extend their protection to people of other nationalities when the need arises. The concept of political asylum allows a person to assume the host nation's

nationality in order to afford the same protection being given to original nationals. Political asylum is usually granted to people who are persecuted by their own states, because of their ethnicity, nationality, religion, race, and other factors.



### History Maker



**Fig. 11.** Photo of Albert Einstein  
 Accessed March 9, 2018.  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=925243>

**Albert Einstein** is a theoretical physicist who was known for his development of the theory of relativity. He taught in different universities across Europe in the early years of his career. However, during 1933, when he was visiting in the United States, Adolf Hitler rose to power in Germany. For fear of being persecuted because of he is Jewish. He decided to stay in the USA and became a refugee (like a political asylum seeker). Eventually, he became an American citizen and taught to different universities in the US. He died in the same country which protected him from his own state, in 1955.

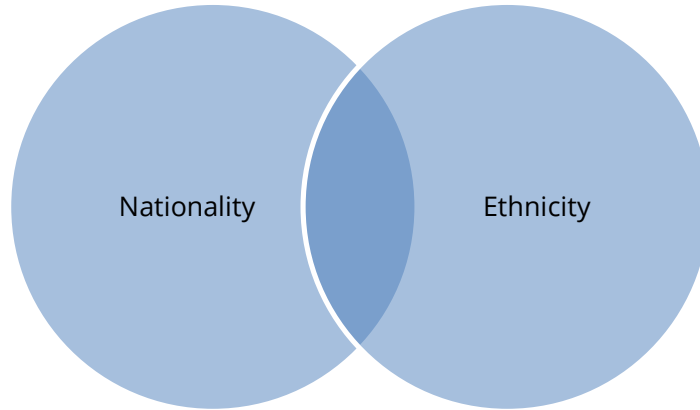


## Check Your Understanding

A. Identify each statement if it is true or false.

1. Nationality is only the same as the concept of ethnicity.
2. The concept of nationality is most useful in handling international dealings between different countries.
3. The Philippines implements *jus soli* in determining nationalities of people in its state.
4. The state has a responsibility to protect its nationals no matter where they are.
5. Political asylum are granted to people who are persecuted by their own states.

B. What are the differences between ethnicity and nationality? What are their similarities? Write them down into the diagram below.



C. Can you evaluate the Philippine's effectiveness in protecting its nationals? Cite concrete examples to justify your answer.

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### **Putting Value**

Imagine yourself in a situation where you are being persecuted by your own state. How will you feel about it? What would you do? Do you think you can get some help from other states? Why do you think so? Ponder through these questions with a classmate.



## Real-world Challenge

Read and perform the following tasks in the GRASPS situation. Make sure to also read the rubrics for the activity.

**Goal:**

- Your task is to create a diary or journal entry about yourself.
- The goal is to identify your own social and cultural background using the concepts of gender, socioeconomic class, ethnicity and religion, exceptionality/non-exceptionality, and nationality.
- The challenge is to explain how these factors influence different aspects of your life.

**Role:**

- You are a writer trying to figure out how the characteristics mentioned above affects your life in society.

**Audience:**

- The target reader is your teacher.

**Situation:**

- The context you find yourself in is in your office while investigating.

**Product/Performance and Purpose:**

- You will create a diary/journal-type article that analyzes gender, socioeconomic class, ethnicity and religion, exceptionality/non-exceptionality, and nationality, which exposes how these characteristics affects your social, cultural, and political life as well as others'.

**Standards & Criteria for Success:**

- Your work will be judged by the following standards on the next page.



	Criteria	Beginning (0-12 points)	Developing (13-16 points)	Accomplished (17-20 points)	Score
Presentation	Content (Focus on details are clearly evident; it is clearly related to the topic.)				
	Organization (Logical progression of details; clear transitions between ideas.)				
	Conventions (spelling, mechanics, grammar and usage)				
Task-specific	Analysis (in-depth analysis and good application of concepts)				
	Knowledge (shows in-depth understanding of the topic discussed)				
Total Score:					



## Society and I: Self-Check

Check	I can...
	<i>explain how gender affects society.</i>
	<i>differentiate between nationality and ethnicity.</i>
	<i>discuss how gender, socioeconomic class, ethnicity, nationality, and exceptionality/non-exceptionality contribute to variations of people's cultural, social, and political lives.</i>
	<i>appreciate what I learned and see its application to the real world.</i>

### Reflect

*I find \_\_\_\_\_ the most interesting because \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I got \_\_\_ checks because \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I need to improve on \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I need to practice \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.*

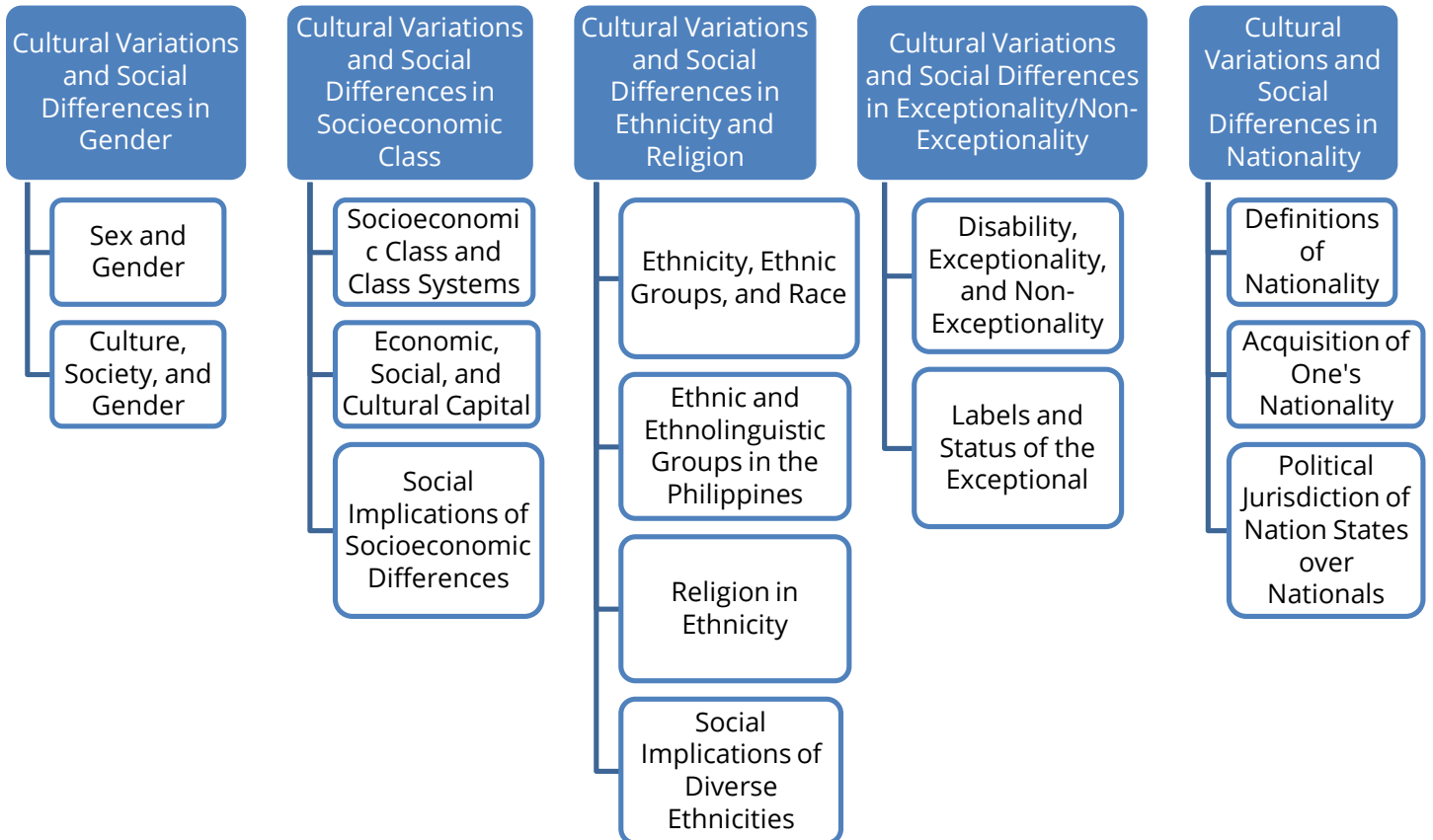
*I plan to \_\_\_\_\_.*



## Wrap Up

- Gender is a product of how society adapted to the conditions of their social and natural environment.
- Gender organizes society and help determine division of labor and social functions.
- The wealth and prestige that is attached to each socioeconomic class determines an individual's level of influence and power in society.
- Socioeconomic classes also determine one's ability to satisfy basic needs.
- Differences in ethnicity and religion give way to the rise of conflict among ethnic groups, and discrimination against minority groups.
- Labels is used to refer to exceptional people have different positive or negative connotations, stereotypes, and stigmas, that may affect one's social status in society.
- The concept of nationality is very much important in the national platform since it assures that every national member will be protected, regardless of their current locations in the world

## Introduction: The Understanding of Culture, Society, and Politics





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## Answers to Check Your Understanding

### Lesson 1: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Gender

#### Part A.

1. True
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. False

### Lesson 2: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Socioeconomic Class

#### Part A

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True

### Lesson 3: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Ethnicity and Religion

#### Part A

1. False
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. True

### Lesson 4: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Exceptionality/Non-Exceptionality

#### Part A

1. True
2. True
3. False

4. True
5. False

## Lesson 5: Cultural Variations and Social Differences in Nationality

### Part A

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. True



## Glossary

**Cultural Capital** – the combination of knowledge, behaviors, and skills that an individual has acquired to demonstrate once cultural competence and in turn, determine one’s social status in society

**Disability** – a condition wherein the loss of physical functioning (e.g. hearing, and vision), or impairments in intellectual, social, and mental processes hinder normal growth and development of an individual

**Economic Capital** – financial and material resources that an individual possesses

**Ethnic Groups** – a specific group of people having certain similar characteristics and a distinct cultural identity, which distinguish them from other groups in the community or society

**Ethnicity** – shared culture of these groups, which includes cultural heritage, language or dialect, religion, traditions and rituals, norms, values, beliefs, and other practices

**Exceptionality** – describes how an individual’s specific abilities and functioning—physical, intellectual, or behavioral— are different from the established normal or typical qualities

**Gender** – encompasses all the social, cultural, psychological characteristics that a culture assigns to males and females

**Gender Role** – culturally-assigned tasks and activities to sexes

**Economic Capital** – financial resources that an individual possesses

**Minority Group** – a group of people who is singled out, distinguished, and treated as subordinates or inferior by the dominant or majority group, because of its physical or cultural characteristics



**Nationality** – a person's belonging to a specific nation or nation-state

**Race** – a socially constructed category attributed to people who share the same biological traits or attributes

**Religion** – a set of beliefs and ritual practices related to symbols, which are considered as sacred

**Sex** – biological differences that distinguishes humans and other animals into two main categories: male and female

**Sex- Gender System** – tells us how gender and gender roles are a product of one's biological sex

**Social Capital** – a collection or a network of an individual's social relations with people that may be of help in the future

**Socioeconomic Class** – a category that groups people with the similar economic, social, cultural, and political status