

Writing: Cultural change

5.16 Vocabulary for writing Defining culture

A Understanding vocabulary in context

1. Read the web article. Look up the **hyperlinked** words in a dictionary. What does each word mean in this context? What related forms does the dictionary list?
2. Write answers for each question about your culture.

How can we define 'culture'?

If you were asked to describe a particular culture, what areas would you focus on? You might write about the food and the types of music, or you could explain the religion and the government. Many disciplines study different cultures – sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, biologists, historians, etc. – but different disciplines define different **aspects** of culture, and use them to assess cultural change and development. Some theorists name 10 or 12 aspects while others **restrict** the list to 5 or 6.

Here are some possible aspects. When you study a culture, use the questions for each aspect to guide your research.

Beliefs
What do people believe in? How do they **worship**? To what extent is religion central to everyday life?

Values
What are the most important principles of the culture?

Government
Who are the **rulers**? Who selects the rulers? How are the rulers **monitored**?

The economy
Is it growing or declining? What are the laws on property **ownership**?

Social organization
How many people are in the average family? What are the **domestic** arrangements, e.g., who is powerful in the family?

Technology
What **impact** does technology have on urban life? What about **rural** life? Is it a driving force for change in the culture? Can people **access** the Internet?

Education and the arts
What percentage of people are **literate**? When do children go to school and how long for? How do people spend their free time?

- access (n)
- affect (v)
- as a result
- as stated above
- aspect (n)
- belief (n)
- current [= at the moment]
- domestic (adj)
- driving force
- due to
- economy (n)
- effect (n)
- efficiency (n)
- estimate
- evidence (n)
- extremely (adv)
- government (n)
- growth (n)
- impact (n)
- influence (v)
- limited (adj)
- monitor (v)
- ownership (n)
- restrict (v)
- ruler [= person in charge]
- rural (adj)
- significantly (adv)
- social organization
- technological (adj)
- technology (n)
- the economy
- to what extent
- usage (n)
- values (n pl)
- with reference to
- worship

B Producing correct forms

Cover the text above and the list on the right. Rewrite each word with the correct spelling.

1. aspekt	aspect
2. acess	
3. beleif	
4. valus	
5. socail	

6. economy	
7. inpact	
8. rurel	
9. litterate	
10. wershup	

5.17 Real-time writing

Technology and cultural change – Africa

A Previewing vocabulary

Study each sentence. Then complete the noun phrase with a similar meaning.

1. People own mobile phones. Mobile phone ownership ...
2. People use mobile phones. Mobile phone
3. People can access the Internet. Internet
4. Usage has grown. The of usage ...
5. Phones affect social organization. The of phones social organization ...
6. UN officials monitor elections. The
7. The technology was introduced. The
8. The Internet has arrived. The

B Gathering information

1. Read the assignment. What is Veblen’s thesis?
2. Study the student notes opposite.
 - a. What technological change is discussed?
 - b. Which area of the world is focused on?
 - c. Which aspects are focused on?
3. Look at Table 1. Find three interesting pieces of information.

C Noticing discourse structure

Study the Discussion essay on the opposite page. What type of information is in each paragraph?

Para 1	<u>introduction</u>
Para 2	
Para 3	
Para 4	
Para 5	
Para 6	

D Writing the essay

1. Read each paragraph. Complete the final sentence. Refer to the notes for information. Label each paragraph.
2. Find suitable endings below. Compare them with your endings.

... have also used mobile phones for the monitoring of elections in rural areas.	
... I will reach a conclusion.	<u>1</u>
... in Kwa Zulu in South Africa, women can use SMS messaging to report domestic violence.	
... is due to greater efficiency in communications for small businesses.	
... there is no evidence that mobile phones have changed beliefs or values in this part of the world.	

3. Complete the final paragraph. Summarize the information in the essay.

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Many theorists, including Veblen (1857–1929), believe that technology is the driving force in cultural change.

To what extent have technological advances caused cultural change in the world recently?

Discuss the impact of one particular change in the last ten years, with reference to some aspects of culture in one area of the world.



Table 1: *Mobile and Internet usage in Africa*

	mobiles (est. 2008)	Internet (est. 2010)
usage (millions)	376	110
% of population	60	11
growth	550% (2003–2008)	2,357% (2000–2010)

data published by Nielsen Online , ITU, WWW, and other trustworthy local sources

Technological change = intro. of the mobile phone to parts of rural Africa.

Cultural change - five aspects:

<u>aspect</u>	<u>points</u>	<u>effect</u>
1. beliefs	no evidence	X
2. values	" " (most mob. phones not have int. access - see Table 1)	X
3. soc. org.	some evid., e.g., Kwa Zulu (S.A.) = wom. use SMS to report dom. viol.	✓
4. gov.	some evid., e.g., 1. Zimbabwe = send SMS re. gov. act; Freedom Fone calls back 2. UN officials use mobile to monitor elections in rural areas	✓✓
5. econ.	mobile usage: 10% growth = + 0.6% econ. because: 1. employment - masts, phones, cards 2. more efficient business	✓✓✓

conclusion

beliefs and values = no eff.;
govern. and econ = sign. eff.;
soc. org = may be import. in the future?

To what extent have technological advances caused cultural change in the world recently? Discuss the impact of one particular change in the last ten years, with reference to some aspects of culture in one area of the world.

In this essay, I am going to look at the impact of the mobile phone on culture in rural Africa in the last ten years. I will look at six aspects of culture and consider whether the mobile phone has changed each aspect in rural Africa. I will focus on the following aspects: beliefs, values, social organization, government, and the economy. Then _____

Research has shown that mobile phones with Internet access have changed beliefs and values in parts of the world. However, at the moment, most mobile phones in rural Africa do not have Internet access, as can be seen in Table 1. As a result, perhaps, _____

The usage of mobile phones with Internet access in the West has also changed many aspects of social organization. As stated above, however, at the moment mobile phone usage in rural areas of Africa is restricted to voice calls and SMS. The effect on social organization therefore has been small, but some current projects may have an effect in the future. For example, _____

There is some evidence that mobile phones are affecting government in rural areas. In Zimbabwe, for example, people can send a text message to Freedom Fone. The organization calls back and the caller gives local news without having to pay for the voice call. UN officials _____

Finally, the economy. Researchers have estimated that a 10 per cent rise in mobile phone ownership leads to an extra 0.6 per cent growth in the economy of the area. Some of this growth is related to the mobile phones themselves, because phone companies employ people to put up the masts, sell the phones and the phone cards. Some of it _____

It is clear that the mobile phone has produced a certain amount of cultural change in rural Africa. _____

5.18 Learning new writing skills

The Discussion essay

A Reviewing vocabulary

- Complete each fixed phrase with one word.
 - As a result, ...
 - As can be in Table 1, ...
 - As above, ...
 - In essay, ...
 - It has been that ...
 - It is that ...
 - Research has that ...
 - There is some that ...
- What kind of information will come next?

B Identifying a key skill

Read the *Skills Check*.

- What is the thesis in the essay title?
- How many sections can a Discussion essay have?
- In the essay in Lesson 5.17:
 - How many aspects support the thesis? What are they?
 - How many aspects do not support the thesis? What are they?

C Practising the new skill

- Study the essay titles below. What is the thesis in each case?
- Think of some points *for* and some points *against* each thesis.
- What is your personal opinion?
 - 'Grammar tests show the language ability of second-language learners.'** Discuss this statement with reference to your experience of language learning.
 - To what extent is decision-making inside families a cultural issue?**
 - Some marketing theorists believe that the location of a business decides whether it will be a success in the market. To what extent is this true of service industry businesses?
 - People are responsible for global warming. Discuss.
 - Inglehart (2000) suggests that developed countries 'show the future' to less developed countries. To what extent is this true, in your opinion?



Skills Check

Essay type 5: Discussion

One type of essay gives you a thesis and asks you to discuss it.

Example:

Many theorists, including Veblen (1857–1929), believe that **technology is the driving force in cultural change.**

To what extent have technological advances caused cultural change in the world recently?

= Is it true that technology causes cultural change?

Discussion essay questions often limit the scope of the essay in some way.

Example:

Discuss the impact of **one** particular **change** in the **last ten years**, with reference to **some aspects of culture** in **one area of the world.**

Highlight the key words to ensure that you answer the essay question correctly.

One writing plan for a **Discussion** essay is:

- **introduction**, including **thesis** and **aspects** of the issue, e.g., the elements of a culture such as beliefs, values, etc.
- **each aspect in turn** with evidence **for** or **against** the thesis
- **conclusion** – which is supported by the evidence **for** or **against**

5.19 Grammar for writing Long subject noun phrases; *also*

We often need to put a lot of information into subject noun phrases. 26

S (noun phrase)				V	O/C
head word	phrase 1	phrase 2	phrase 3		
1. The effect	on social organization			has been	small.
2. A 10 per cent rise	in the ownership	of mobile phones		leads to	an extra 0.6 per cent growth.
3. The use	of mobile phones	with Internet access	in the West	has changed	many aspects ...

We could write the same information in two or more very short sentences:

1. Mobile phones affect social organization. This effect has been small.
2. Mobile phone ownership rises 10 per cent. This leads to an extra 0.6 per cent growth.
3. People have used mobile phones in the West. Some of these phones have Internet access. This has changed many aspects of social organization.

But very short sentences are not good style in academic English. You must learn to make longer noun phrases.

A Making long subject noun phrases

Write each set of sentences as a single sentence with a long subject noun phrase.

1. The mobile phone arrived in rural Africa. It has had a significant impact.
The arrival of the mobile phone in rural Africa has had a significant impact.
2. The Internet is used for social networking. This is changing behaviour.
3. The company has developed new products. These products should help the company to make higher profits.
4. Carbon is released from the oceans. This carbon contributes to CO₂ in the atmosphere.
5. Greenhouse gases raise the global temperature. This may cause sea levels to go up.
6. The company was relocated to the south coast. This was responsible for the increase in sales.
7. Information is stored in short-term memory for a few seconds. This is necessary for a person to be able to use it.
8. There are small changes in the tilt of the Earth. These happen at regular intervals. They change the climate significantly.

We sometimes want to link information in a sentence to previous information. We can use *also*. 27

Phone calls	are	<i>also</i>		expensive.
People			send	text messages.
Phones	are		affecting	government.
The Internet	is		used	for social networking.
Technology	has		changed	social organization.
Education	may		influence	beliefs.

Where does *also* go in sentences with:

- *be*?
- one-word verbs, e.g., present simple?
- verbs with an auxiliary, e.g., *is*, *has*?
- verbs with a modal, e.g., *may*, *should*?

B Using *also* in sentences

Add *also* to all of your sentences in Exercise A.

Example: 1. *The arrival of the mobile phone in rural Africa has also had a significant impact.*

5.20 Applying new writing skills

The Internet and cultural change

A Reviewing vocabulary and grammar

There are mistakes of vocabulary and grammar in each sentence. Rewrite the sentences correctly.

1. I am going to consider the impact from the mobile phone in Africa in the recent ten years.
2. I look at several aspects of a culture.
3. I will consider has the mobile phone been changed each aspect.
4. There are no evidences that the mobile phone has not changed beliefs and values.
5. Therefore, the effect of social organization have been small.
6. Some now projects may have also an effect in the future.



B Thinking and organizing

Study the assignment.

1. Brainstorm the aspects.
2. Make notes into the diagram below.

Social Sciences Department

'The Internet has been the greatest technological change of the last 50 years. It has changed culture all over the world.'

To what extent do you agree with this statement with regard to cultural change in your country or area in the last ten years?

country or area name

technological change

aspects of culture

evidence for or against

The Internet

beliefs values social organization government the economy

C Writing

Write the essay. Remember:

- Write an introduction.
- Deal with each aspect in turn.
- Write a conclusion which follows from the information in the essay.
- Use the present perfect to talk about changes.
- Link related points with *also*.

D Editing and rewriting

Exchange drafts with a partner and mark his/her work with ?, S, G or P. Read your marked essay and correct the points. Write the essay again.



The Igorot of the Philippines

The Inuit of Greenland

The Masai of East Africa

A Activating ideas

1. What do you know about the cultures shown in the photographs and their customs?
2. What are the similarities and differences between these cultures?
3. What impact has technology had on these societies?

B Gathering and recording information

Study the assignment. Do research and make notes on each point on the handout.

C Preparing a presentation

1. Work in pairs. Exchange notes and make comments.
2. Prepare to give a talk about the culture. Use slides and/or visuals to illustrate your points.

D Listening to a presentation

Work in groups. Make notes to answer these questions about each talk you listen to.

- What variations from your culture are there?
- What aspects are similar to your culture?
- What aspects overlap with each other?

E Writing

Choose one of the following based on your notes from Exercise C.

- Make a poster presentation of the culture. Illustrate key points and headings with photos, etc.
- Write an article about the way the culture will develop in the future.
- Explain one particular aspect or custom which you found interesting.

Faculty of Social Sciences

Assignment

Select a culture and research several aspects, e.g., beliefs, government, etc.

Give a presentation to the group, focusing on the following:

- reasons for selecting this culture
- aspects focused on for research
- change and development during the past ten years
- possible future developments