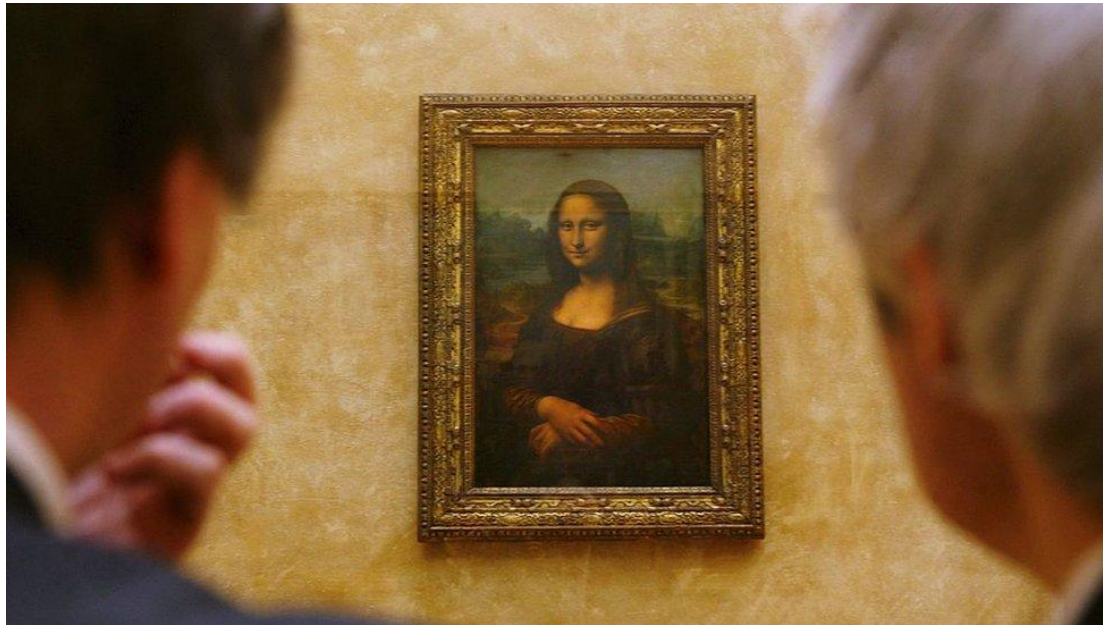


# Steps to Understanding Culture



Mona Lisa  
by Brenda M. Weber  
Behind kaleidoscopic eyes  
there's no mystery there that lies.  
She's the one to see it all  
from her position on a wall.  
We look for something in her smile,  
We stand to study her awhile,  
Her face of beauty that we seek.  
What would she say if she could speak?  
Is her beauty, oh, so rare?  
Was Mona just a maiden fair?  
Is she a mirror image of me?  
Is that what I'm supposed to see?  
Mona's portrait on the wall —  
A combination of us all.  
There's a touch of someone there  
in the beauty of her hair.  
That hint of prism in her eyes  
makes her appear to be so wise.  
The playful curvature of her lip  
On her cheeks can dance a quip.  
She's a beauty this Mona Lisa  
but so is the Leaning Tower of Pisa.  
What is the mystery there that lies  
Behind kaleidoscopic eyes...?

В калейдоскопе твоих глаз  
Не может скрыться лживый сказ.  
Твой взгляд всех видит нас сейчас,  
Ты смотришь со стены на нас.  
Стоим мы, глядя на портрет,  
В улыбке ищем мы секрет.  
Нас манит девы красота.  
О, чтоб она сказать могла,  
Когда б уста свои открыла?  
О, так ли красота её редка?  
И кем же, Мона Лиза, ты была?  
Служанкою прелестной или синьориной?  
А может, она — отраженье мое?  
Ловлю черты я сходства на портрете.  
Скажите, в чём же таинство её,  
Или в ней образ всех людей на свете?  
Есть что-то в нежной прелести её волос,  
А блик загадки, спрятанный во взгляде,  
О мудрости ее нам говорит.  
Изгиб игривый губ, румянец на щеках  
горит.  
О, как прекрасна Мона Лиза!  
Сравнится с ней лишь башня Пизы.  
Но что ж за тайна спрятана от нас  
В калейдоскопе её глаз?



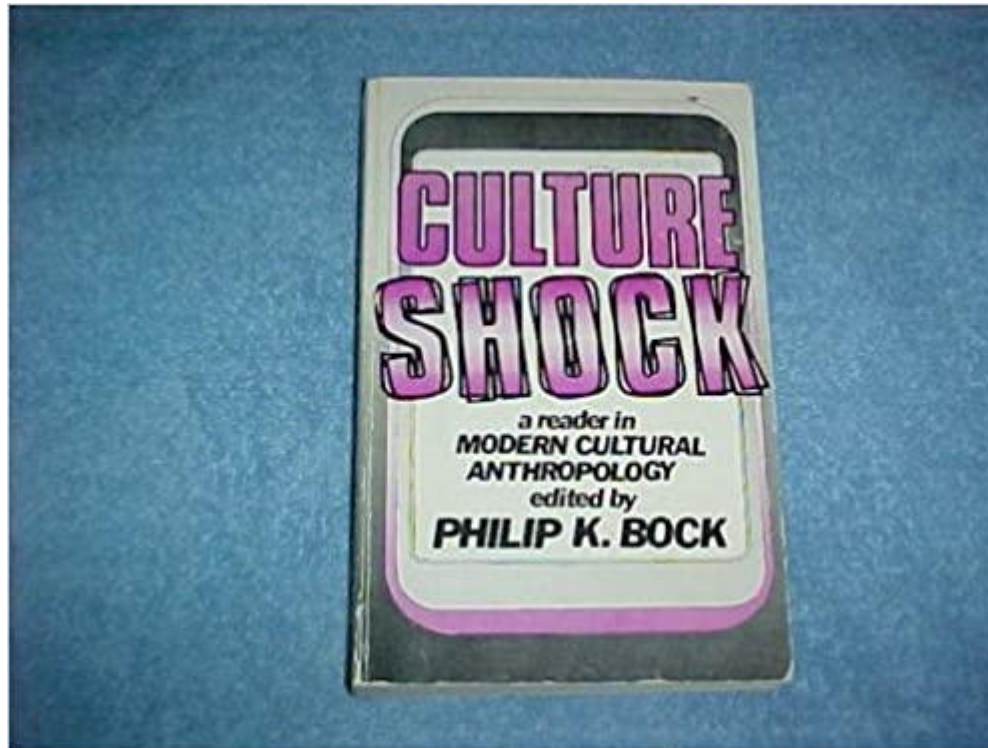
**B.** Answer the questions.

- 1) In the situation described in the poem where is the poet and what can she see around her?
- 2) Whose are the “kaleidoscopic eyes”?
- 3) How do you understand the line “Mona’s portrait on the wall — a combination of us all”?
- 4) Why does the poet first say that the Mona Lisa sees the mystery behind human eyes but finishes the poem by asking “What is the mystery there...?”
- 5) Why do people create art?



**A.** Work in pairs or in small groups and decide which of the following are not part of culture.

- 1) music, literature and other arts
- 2) countries and continents
- 3) the way we see the world and ourselves
- 4) people's ideas and beliefs
- 5) human mind and body
- 6) our way of behaviour
- 7) our values
- 8) the language we speak
- 9) our customs, traditions and habits
- 10) rules and laws by which people live in community
- 11) the environment in which we live
- 12) the clothes we wear



**B.** It's not easy to define culture. A man called Philip Bock once said: "Culture is what makes you a stranger when you are away from home." How can you comment on it?

# Study the vocabulary

- A. constant** ['kɒnstənt] — постоянный  
**diverse** [daɪ'vɜ:s] — разнообразный, отличный  
**estimate** ['estɪmeɪt] — оценивать  
**refer** [rɪ'fɜ:] — 1) иметь отношение; 2) ссылаться, отсылать  
**reflect** [rɪ'flekt] — 1) отражать(ся); 2) размышлять  
**reveal** [rɪ:vɪl] — обнаружить; проявить, раскрыть  
**shape** [ʃeɪp] *n* — форма  
**shape** *v* — формировать  
**value** ['vælju:] *n* — ценность  
**value** *v* — ценить  
**no matter** — не важно, всё равно  
**in spite of something** — несмотря на

**Constant**  
**Diverse**  
**Estimate**  
**Refer**  
**Reflect**  
**Reveal**  
**Shape**  
**Value**  
**No matter**  
**In spite of something**





match

**A.** Match the words and their definitions and make up sentences with them.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 1) shape    | a) to form an opinion of the value, quality, size or cost of something |
| 2) constant | b) to influence the way a person or a situation develops               |
| 3) diverse  | c) to describe something or to be about something                      |
| 4) estimate | d) to think about something carefully and seriously                    |
| 5) refer    | e) to let something become known                                       |
| 6) reflect  | f) continuous or regular over a long period of time                    |
| 7) reveal   | g) to consider someone or something to be important                    |
| 8) value    | h) very different from each other                                      |



- 6 Read the text and complete it with the phrases that follow (a—h). There is one phrase you don't have to use.

### What Is Culture?



The word “culture” has many different meanings. For some people it is a term that can be referred to music, visual arts<sup>1</sup> and literature. For others culture includes knowledge, beliefs, values, morals, laws, customs and traditions and different patterns<sup>2</sup> of human behaviour. They are learnt by members of social groups and (1) ... . Thus culture helps civilizations to survive.

Culture reveals itself through its products like our written languages, buildings, works of art and other man-made objects. Archaeologists find broken pots, (2) ... . These artifacts<sup>3</sup> reflect the culture of the civilizations which used them. But culture is more than that. Through culture we understand what is acceptable and what is not, (3) ... . It helps to estimate our actions, to socialize; it shapes our personalities, teaches us rules of behaviour.

Culture is a collective phenomenon and cannot exist in a single individual, (4) ... . Being an important part of every society, it creates a feeling of belonging and togetherness.

Every society has a different culture, which gives it identity and makes it unique.

When people speak of Italian, Russian or Japanese culture, they are referring to the shared language, traditions and beliefs that set each of these peoples apart<sup>4</sup> from others. In most cases, (5) ... do so because they acquired it as they were raised by parents and other family members who have it.

In spite of the vast diversity, there are certain elements of culture that are universal, (6) ..., no matter where they live. For example, all people use a language consisting of a limited set of (7) ..., all people use age and gender to classify people (baby, teenager, senior citizen, man, woman etc), all people make jokes and play games, all create art.

Culture is constantly changing, and each generation brings something new to its development. Moreover, different cultures have a tendency to exchange certain cultural elements.

- a) those who share your culture
- b) which makes them similar to each other
- c) what is good and what is bad
- d) it is shared by people
- e) sounds and grammatical rules
- f) passed down through generations
- g) they are shared by all cultures around the world
- h) tools, jewelry and other things

<sup>1</sup> visual arts [vɪʒuəl 'ɑ:ts] – изобразительное искусство

<sup>2</sup> pattern ['pætn] – модель, образец

<sup>3</sup> artefact (artifact) ['ɑ:tɪfækt] – артефакт, т. е. предмет, объект, созданный много лет назад и имеющий историческое значение

<sup>4</sup> to set somebody apart – разделять

8

Match the words in the two columns and complete the sentences with the word combinations.

- |              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1) shaped    | a) her good taste       |
| 2) diverse   | b) to this information  |
| 3) reveal    | c) of land              |
| 4) refer     | d) the plasticine       |
| 5) reflect   | e) the time of the trip |
| 6) constant  | f) my secret            |
| 7) value     | g) backgrounds          |
| 8) estimated | h) talking              |

1) We ... carefully, we knew it wouldn't take longer than two hours and a half. 2) Your ... will make the teacher angry. 3) The boy ... into the figure of a dog. 4) The pupils in the class come from ... . 5) Mary's clothes always ... . 6) I was careful not to ... again as I didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings. 7) Don't ... to anybody: let it be between you and me. 8) The ... in this area has gone up in recent years.

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Read the text "What Is Culture?" (Ex. 6) again and write out of it the English equivalents for the following:

1) для одних людей... для других...; 2) модели человеческого поведения; 3) помогает цивилизациям не исчезнуть; 4) культура проявляется; 5) предметы, созданные руками человека; 6) что принято, а что нет; 7) формирует наши личности; 8) чувство принадлежности и общности; 9) в большинстве случаев; 10) они воспитывались родителями; 11) пользуются категориями возраста и гендера; 12) обмениваться определёнными элементами своих культур.

**6**

Complete the text with the derivatives of the words on the

### Is Culture Limited to Humans?

There is a (1) ... of opinion whether or not we are the only animal that creates and uses culture. The answer to this question depends on how culture is defined. If the term is used (2) ... and understood as a complex of (3) ... behaviour patterns, then it is clear that we are not alone in creating and using culture. Many other animal species teach their young what they themselves learned to survive. This is (4) ... true of the chimpanzees and other relatively (5) ... apes and monkeys. Wild chimpanzee mothers typically teach their children about food, plants and social rules within their community. As teenagers they acquire (6) ... skills from adults. This (7) ... is not put into their brains at birth. They learn these behaviour patterns just as humans do.

- 1) difference (разница);
- 2) broadly (широком);
- 3) learned (усвоенных);
- 4) especially (особенно);
- 5) intelligent (умным);
- 6) hunting (охотничьим);
- 7) knowledge (знание).

