Elements of Culture
1. Social Organization

- The way people are organized into small groups.

- **Family Patterns:** Through the family children learn how they are expected to act and what to believe.
Social Organization

- **Nuclear family:** married couple and children. Typical in the U.S.
- **Extended family:** Several generations living in one household: grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins.
- **Social classes:** rank people in order of status, depending on what is important to the culture (money, job, education, ancestry, etc.)
2. Customs and Traditions

- Customs and traditions can be rules of behavior.

- They can be customs, traditions, holidays, rules, or written laws.
3. Religion

- Answers **basic questions** about the meaning of life.
- **Supports values** that groups of people feel are important.

  - **Monotheism** is a belief in one god.
  - **Polytheism** is a belief in many gods.
  - **Atheism** is a belief in no gods.
4. Language

- All cultures have a spoken language.
- People who speak the same language often **share the same culture**.
- Many societies include a large number of people who speak different languages.
- Each language can have several **different dialects**.
5. Arts and Literature

They are the products of the human imagination and reflect the culture of a country/place.

- They help us pass on the culture’s basic beliefs.
- Examples: art, music, literature, and folk tales
People form governments to provide for their common needs, keep order within society, and protect their society from outside threats.

- **Definition of government:**
  1. Person/people who hold power in a society;
  2. Society’s laws and political institutions.
7. Economic Systems

- How people use limited resources to satisfy their wants and needs.

- Answers the basic questions: what to produce, how to produce it, and for whom.
8. History

- Every country has its own unique history.
- History shapes a country’s culture, beliefs, values, etc.