



Introduction to culture

Learning Objectives

01

To understand some cultural terms and theories

02

To recognise characteristics of culture

03

To view other cultures with an open mind

04

To attempt to view other cultures through their perceptions rather than those of our own culture

05

To seek to better understand the actions of others who have been shaped by a different culture



Cultural Snapshot

Share Your Culture

Choose one meaningful item from your cultural background:

- A special object or tradition
- A phrase or saying
- A core value or belief

Explain why it's significant to you and your community



What Is Culture?

"What does 'culture' mean to you personally?"

"What cultural examples do you notice in your daily life?"

Think-Pair-Share Activity: Spend 3 minutes reflecting individually, then discuss with a partner for 4 minutes. We'll share insights with the class.



Defining Culture

The values, traditions, worldview, and social and political relationships that are created, shared and transformed by a group of people bound together by a common history, geographic location, language, social class, religion etc.

Culture isn't static—it evolves as communities adapt to new challenges, embrace innovations, and interact with other cultures.

Historical Roots

Shaped by centuries of shared experiences and collective memory

Multiple Influences

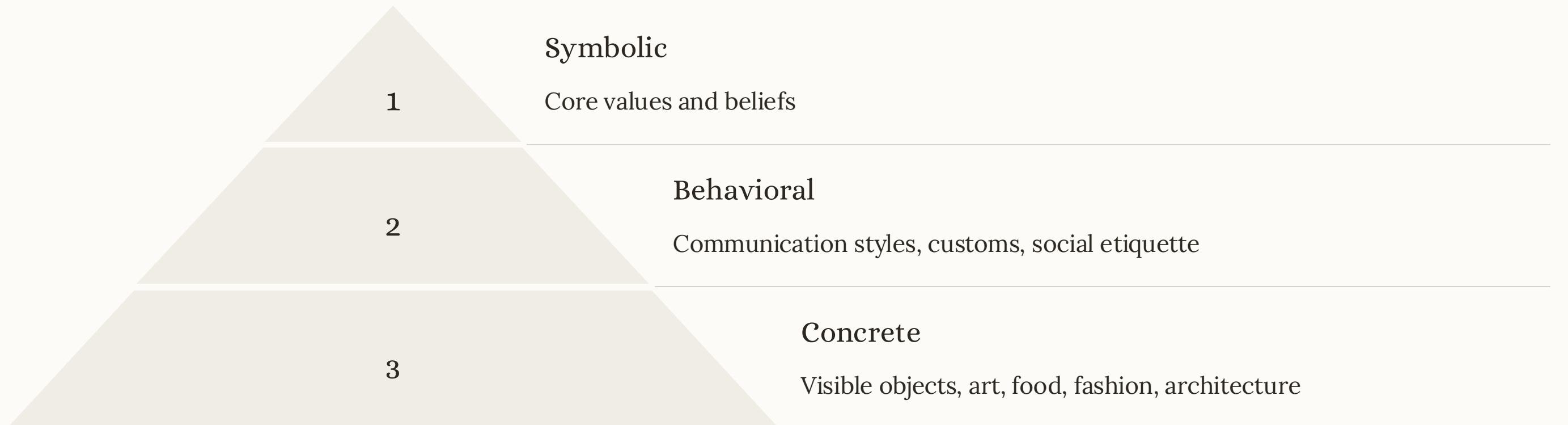
Language, religion, geography, social class, and historical events

Dynamic Process

Both learned from previous generations and transmitted to future ones

The Three Levels of Culture

Culture operates on 3 levels:



The concrete level is easiest to observe but represents only the tip of the cultural iceberg.

Essential Components of Culture

Every culture consists of interconnected components that work together to create a coherent system of meaning and behavior for its members.



Norms

Models of behaviour which tell us what is appropriate or inappropriate, what is right or wrong.



Values

They represent the standards we use to evaluate the desirability of things.



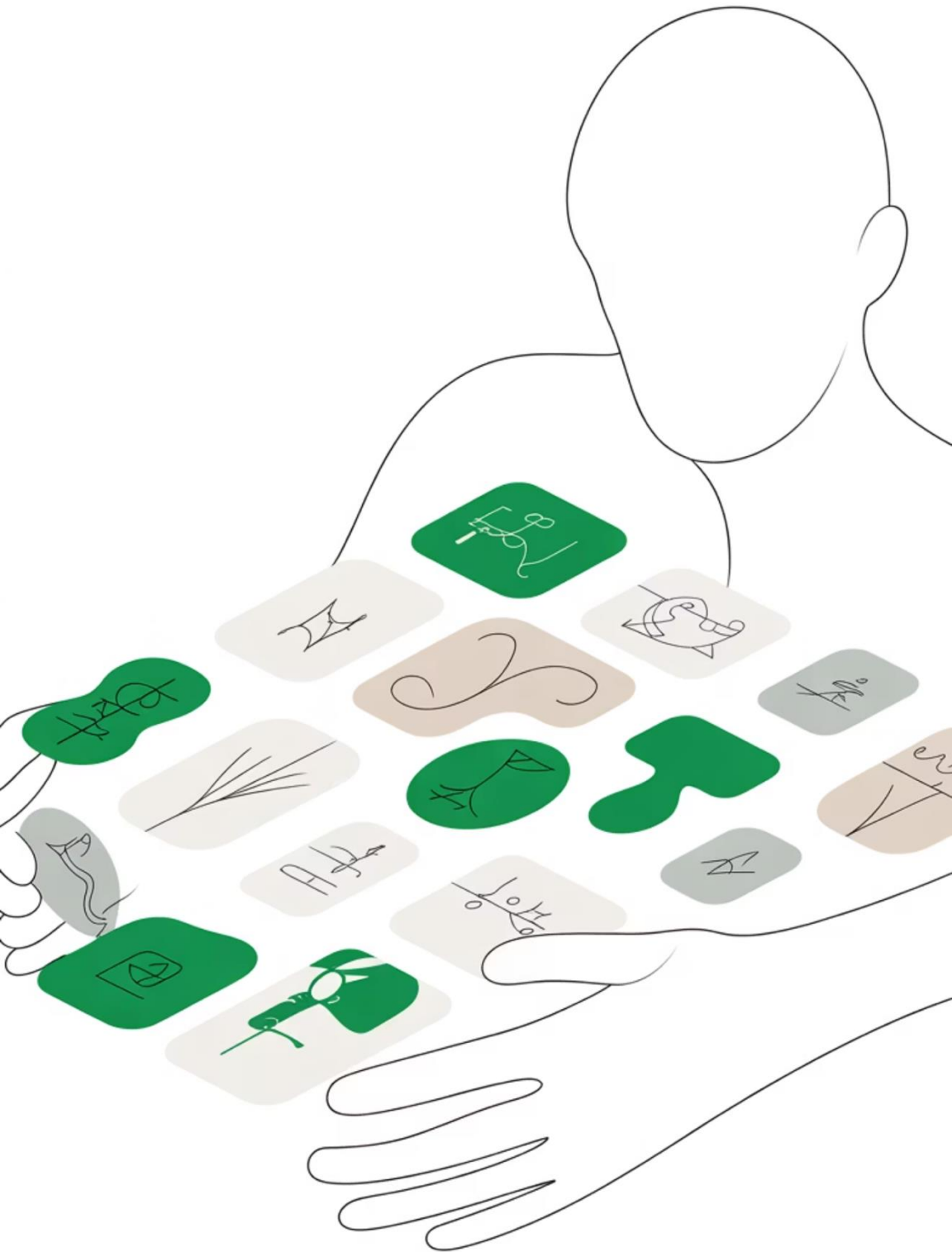
Language

Refers to a system of symbols that have specific meaning in a given society.



Social Trends

Elements that are short-lived social norms which people are expected to comply with.



Culture Mapping Activity

Create Your Cultural Map (10 minutes)

Design a visual representation of your cultural background that includes:

- Languages you speak or understand
- Core values that guide your decisions
- Important traditions and celebrations
- Social norms you follow
- Beliefs that shape your worldview

❏ After creating your map, share it with a partner or small group. Notice similarities and differences in how people represent their cultural experiences.

The Functions of Culture

Culture brings together the values of a society in a systematic manner

Culture provides a base for social solidarity

Culture provides a guideline for social structure

Culture provides a behavioural pattern

Culture gives a meaning and direction in individuals lives

Culture serves as a sort of trademark that distinguishes one society from another



How We Learn Culture



Imitation

We learn by observing and copying the behavior of family members, peers, and role models.



Conditioning

Through rewards and punishments, both formal and informal, we learn which behaviors are approved or discouraged.



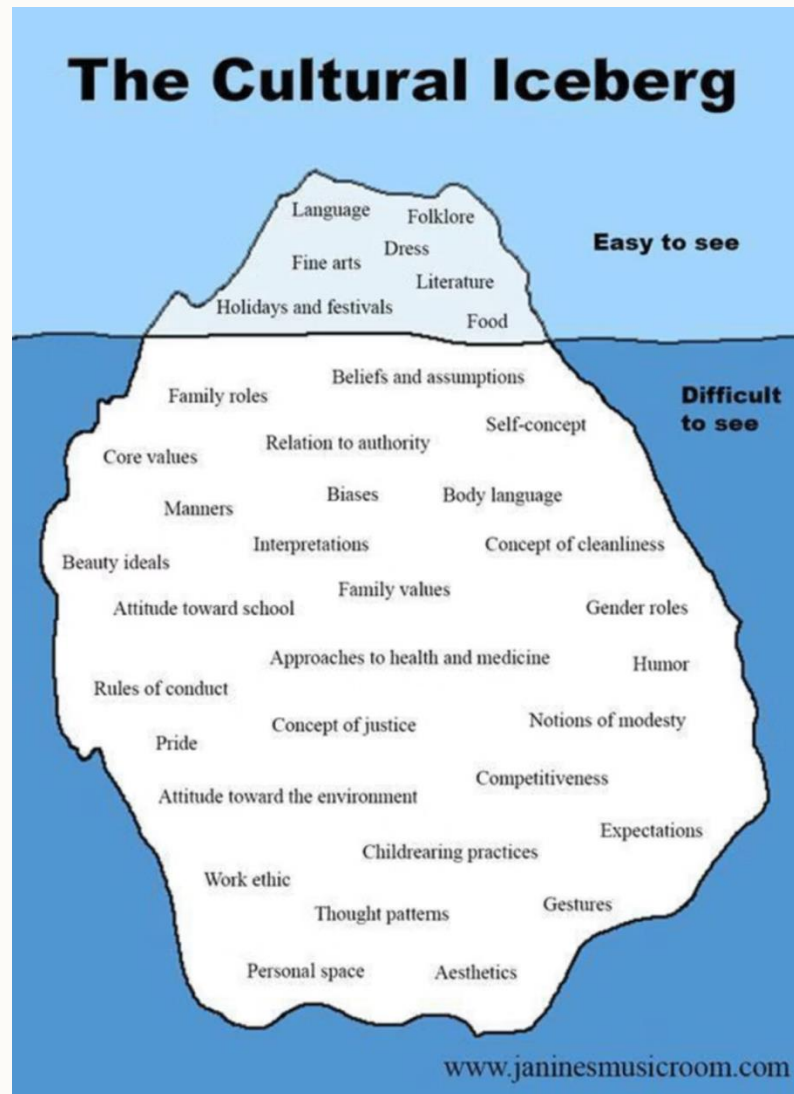
Indoctrination

Formal learning through education, religious instruction, and explicit teaching.

Which of these three learning mechanisms has most significantly shaped your own cultural understanding?

Hall's Cultural Iceberg Model

In 1976, Edward T. Hall developed the iceberg analogy of culture.



The external, or conscious, part of culture is what we can see is and the tip of the iceberg and includes behaviours and some beliefs.

The internal, or subconscious, part of culture is below the surface of a society and includes some beliefs and the values and thought patterns that underlie behaviour.

This model explains why cultural misunderstandings often occur even when people appear to share similar surface-level practices. True cultural competence requires understanding invisible elements of culture.

Culture's Impact on Global Business

Why is cultural awareness critical for success in international business?

Personal Reflection Exercise

"How has culture shaped my values and worldview?"

Class Discussion

Volunteers can share particularly interesting insights or surprising discoveries about their own cultural influences with the larger group.



Class activity

beliefs:

karmic response : good to good
bad to bad

Languages:

Old Russian, Russian, Ukrainian

Values:

trust, open hands, integrity

Celebration:

Ivana Kupala - campfire

Flowers on the ^{test} of hands
water

Warms

Never pass through the porch