# Unit 1: Life stories

**Lesson 1: Getting started**

**Hung:** The topic for tomorrow's presentation is really interesting. Have you decided who to talk about, Quang?

**Quang:** Not yet. I'm still wavering between two famous people, Steve Jobs and Michael Jackson. I admire them both.

**Hung:** But who's had a greater impact on you?

**Quang:** I'm not sure … Steve Jobs's work stimulates my creativity and innovation, while Michael Jackson's music inspired me to learn to play a musical instrument. What do you think?

**Hung:** Well, both of them were very talented and influential, but I prefer Steve Jobs. I think Michael Jackson was a great dancer, but not an excellent singer. In his later years, his singing voice became weak and thin and wasn't as good as before.

**Quang:** I see. What about you? Who are you going to talk about?

**Hung:** Christine Ha.

**Quang:** You mean … the lady who won the US MasterChef trophy in 2012?

**Hung:** That's right.

**Quang:** I know your dream is to become a famous chef. Is that why you want to talk about her?

**Hung:** Yes. What's more, Christine is a blind chef and a gifted writer. She's very talented and determined. It was absolutely amazing to watch her use all the kitchen tools and prepare the dishes.

**Quang:** I agree. I remember how excited I felt when Christine was creating those great-looking dishes … and even anxious when the judges were tasting them. By the way, do you know where she was born? In Viet Nam or the US?

**Hung:** In California, but she was inspired by memories of her mum's cooking.

**Quang:** It seems you know quite a lot about her. Good luck with your presentation tomorrow!

**Hung:** The same to you!

**Lesson 4: Skills 1**

Larry Stewart came from humble beginnings. Born in Mississippi in 1948, he was brought up by his grandparents. In 1971, Larry found himself jobless and starving for several days. After a free meal given by a restaurant's owner, he vowed to help others whenever he could. Larry then moved to Kansas City, where he was fortunate enough to make money in cable television. He began helping the less fortunate in 1979, and stories of ‘Secret Santa' started to emerge from the city.

For over 26 years, he handed out thousands of dollars every Christmas to the needy in public places – without ever revealing his identity. The more he gave, the more stories of his generosity spread across the United States. Secret Santa became famous, yet still anonymous. He kept his identity hidden until 2006, when he was diagnosed with cancer, which later claimed his life. Since Larry Stewart's death in 2007, his example has inspired others to continue his mission of kindness and charitable work.

Born in 1988, Le Thanh Thuy was awarded the title ‘Ho Chi Minh City Outstanding Young Citizen' in 2006, a year before she passed away. As soon as Thuy started high school in 2003, she was diagnosed with bone cancer and doctors decided to amputate her leg to save her life. Thuy's repeated hospitalisations over four years did not stop her from helping other patients. Her dream was to initiate a fund to help young cancer patients. Whenever Thuy could move around, she organised different charity activities to relieve the young patients' pain. Thuy's meaningful work was welcomed and supported by the community. As a result, Thuy's Dream Programme was launched and is currently managed by The Tuoi Tre.  
The Tuoi Tre has continued to hold annual events to support her programme. The most important one is the Sunflower Festival, where children and their families get together and have fun. Gifts are given to the young patients, and the memory of Thuy is kept alive by her story about love and sharing.

# Unit 2: Urbanization

**Lesson 1: Getting started**

**Nam:** Hi, Lan!

**Lan:** Hello, Nam. Do you know if our Geography teacher has fixed the date for our presentation on urbanization?

**Nam:** It's next Friday. It's time we finalized the content. How long should we talk?

**Lan:** Well, it is recommended that the presentation be no more than 15 minutes. There is also a five-minute Q&A session.

**Nam:** Well, we'd better work together or we might not prepare well for it.

**Lan:** You're right. I think we should start with the definition of urbanization and perhaps mention some of its causes, such as lack of resources in rural areas and better work opportunities in urban areas.

**Nam:** I agree. But before we provide the definition, we should show some thought-provoking photos to illustrate urbanisation in our country. Visuals will grab the attention of our audience and keep people engaged.

**Lan:** That's a great idea. I'll start looking for some interesting images. What about the body of our presentation? We have a lot of information …

**Nam:** Yes, there's a lot to say, but I suggest that we focus on its advantages and disadvantages.

**Lan:** I agree. We should also provide some examples.

**Nam:** Yes, this will help listeners to understand our points better.

**Lan:** Our Geography teacher also advised that we talk about issues that are familiar and important to our classmates.

**Nam:** So, do you think we should stick to urbanisation in Viet Nam?

**Lan:** Well, this should be the main part as our audience will be very interested in knowing more about it, but we could also mention urbanisation in well-known places like the UK and USA where most of the population now lives in urban areas.

**Nam:** Yes, it's important that we talk about how developed countries have solved the urbanisation problems and propose some solutions to those in Viet Nam.

**Lan:** That would be interesting, but it would make our presentation too long. ]We shouldn't overload people with information or else they'll just switch off. We could instead mention some solutions and government initiatives in the conclusion.

**Nam:** Well, is it really necessary that we include new information in the conclusion? We should just summarize the main points.

**Lan:** OK, but we still need to do some research on the solutions. People may ask us during the Q&A session.

**Nam:** I agree. So, shall we start creating the PowerPoint slides then and …?

**Lesson 4: Skills 1**

Urbanisation is the process by which urban areas grow bigger as more and more people leave the countryside to live in towns and cities.  
Before the 1950s, urbanisation mainly occurred in more economically developed countries (MEDCs). Rapid urbanisation happened during the period of industrialisation in Europe and North America in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A lot of people left their home villages for urban areas hoping to find jobs in the rapidly expanding industries in big towns and cities. Since 1950s urbanisation has become slower in most MEDCs. Now, some of the biggest cities are losing population because people go back to live in rural areas. This is known as counter-urbanisation.  
Since 1950, urbanisation has grown rapidly in LEDCs (Less Economically Developed Countries) in Asia, Africa and South America. Between 1950 and 1990, while the urban population in LEDCs doubled, the increase was less than half in developed countries.  
There are various causes of urbanisation in LEDCs. Here are some major ones. First, people migrate to urban areas on a massive scale due to lack of resources in rural areas. Second, small farmers find it harder to make a living not just because of bad weather conditions such as drought, floods, or storms, but because they can't compete with large agricultural companies. These are considered ‘push' factors.  
People living in rural areas are also ‘pulled' to cities, which are known to be places of financial centres, services, wealth and opportunities. Believing that the standard of living in urban areas will be higher than in rural areas, many people come to the city seeking their fortune.  
Today, about half of the world's population lives in urban areas. Urbanisation has provided job opportunities, higher incomes and better access to health facilities and education. The urban population will continue to grow and it is expected that its proportion will increase to 70% by 2050.

# Unit 3: The green movement

**Lesson 1: Getting started**

**Kevin:** Hey, why are you both wearing green T-shirts?

**Mai:** Aren't they cool? We are launching the Go Green campaign this week.

**Maria:** We want to promote a green lifestyle in our entire neighbourhood.

**Kevin:** A green lifestyle? You mean a lifestyle that is friendly to the environment?

**Mai:** That's right. We believe that the conservation and preservation of natural resources and habitats should be part of technological and economic development. This will help to delay any dangerous climate change …

**Maria:** And save our planet for future generations.

**Mai:** Exactly! Green technology uses renewable resources that are never depleted. It also creates eco-friendly products.

**Maria:** Some of the participating schools have also decided to use green cleaning products, which are safer since they do not release harmful chemicals into the environment.

**Kevin:** It sounds interesting, but I'm still not sure how students like me can contribute to your campaign.

**Mai:** You can start by simply checking for mould and mildew, and cleaning surfaces with natural products such as vinegar, lemon juice or olive oil. Find out any hazardous chemicals are used for cleaning at your school and start campaigning for their disposal and replacement with eco-friendly products.

**Maria:** Chemicals can affect the air quality and cause health problems like asthma and skin rashes. You can also organise cleaning days to remove any clutter and keep airﬂow pathways clear in your household or school.

**Kevin:** Well, I can't wait to join your campaign. Are there any green T-shirts left?

**Lesson 4: Skills 1**

Nowadays we know a lot about the link between carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions and global warming. However, we seem to be unaware of one very dangerous pollutant, soot, also called black carbon.  
**1.** c. The origin of soot  
Soot comes from the incomplete combustion of coal, oil, wood and other fuels. In other words, diesel engines, vehicle exhaust pipes, farming machines, construction equipment, or simply fires in grills, fireplaces, and stoves are potential sources of soot. It appears in our daily life and can easily aﬀect every one of us.  
**2.** a. Soot and global warming  
Soot like all black things absorbs sunlight and heats up the atmosphere. According to recent research, it is the second most damaging greenhouse gas after CO2, and twice as harmful to the climate. Although black carbon remains in the atmosphere for no more than seven days, it is particularly damaging to frozen areas. Soot emissions might be responsible for the quick melting of the Arctic. Controlling black carbon can help to slow down global warming.  
**3.** b. The effect of soot on human health  
Soot does not only have an impact on global warming and climate change, but is also unhealthy. A soot particle is very tiny–smaller than dust and mould, and about 1/30 the width of a human hair. It can easily go into our bloodstream and lungs via the nose and throat. As a result, breathing in the tiny particles can cause asthma attacks, heart disease, bronchitis and many other respiratory illnesses.  
**4.** d. Ways to reduce soot emissions  
Large quantities of man-made soot enter the atmosphere every year. The effects are most damaging regionally, especially in South and East Asia, Latin America and parts of Africa. In developing countries, reducing soot emissions can be achieved by replacing traditional stoves with clean, alternative fuel cookers and heaters. Installation of filters to remove black carbon from diesel vehicles can also reduce soot. Changing to electric or hydrogen vehicles will also reduce the impact on the environment.  
In conclusion, reducing black carbon will have immediate benefits in slowing down global warming and the melting of the Arctic snow and ice. It would also prevent many soot-related deaths and illnesses.

# Unit 4: The mass media

**Lesson 1: Getting started**

**Lan:** Nam, just look around. All the people I see are on their smartphones or tablet PCs.

**Nam:** Yeah. Maybe they are chatting, sending messages or searching for news. I don't see many people reading print newspapers.

**Lan:** Remember Minh? He said his dad had reduced the number of subscribed print newspapers and magazines.

**Nam:** I'm not surprised! Everyone in his house can now read the news on their digital devices.

**Lan:** Did you mean Minh's grandpa can read online newspapers?

**Nam:** Yeah. He had already started using the computers in the local library to access the Internet when Minh's dad bought him a tablet PC four months ago.

**Lan:** That's interesting! Great to see that more and more older people are beginning to use new technologies.

**Nam:** Well, my grandparents and most of their friends still read print newspapers, listen to the radio, watch TV or DVDs. I think they may find it challenging to learn how to use the Net.

**Lan:** I agree, but they can always find someone to walk them through the process. I think the problem is that many older people may not understand the benefits of online information.

**Nam:** Yes, but once they start using the Internet they can also connect with friends and family members any time.

**Lan:** That's right. The benefits are enormous! I'd be lost without my social networking sites. It would be impossible for me to do my school projects without the Internet.

**Nam:** Personally, I think you are addicted to social media and rely too much on the Internet. You can still use other media such as print newspapers, magazines and books, or radio and television for different purposes.

**Lesson 4: Skills 1**

The mass media are means of communication, such as books, newspapers, recordings, radio, movies, television, mobile phones and the Internet, that can reach a large audience.  
Although the first printed books had appeared long before in China, the term *‘mass media'* we use today was coined with the creation of print media, which started in Europe in the Middle Ages. This is also considered the first example of mass media due to the large number of readers then.  
Since the mid-twentieth century new technologies have been developed, which helped to diversify mass media and make them an inseparable part of our lives. The role of the mass media is not only to entertain and amuse the masses. Its most important role is to provide information and news about events in different parts of the world as they occur. Educating people about their rights and responsibilities is another function of mass media.  
Until recently, mass media forms were classified into six categories according to the sequence of their advent: print, recordings, cinema, radio, television and the Internet. Each form has its own characteristic content types, creative artists and business models. In the early 21st century, with the explosion of mobile communication technology, the mobile phone has emerged as a new and unique media channel. Video and computer games have also developed into a mass media form.  
The Internet and mobile communication is now the most popular means of receiving information and interacting with people through email, instant messaging, apps, search engines, blogs, social networks and other services. Most print and broadcast media have a presence on the web by having video adverts or Quick Response Codes (QR Codes) that link to specific websites.  
Each form of mass media has had an important impact on society, for example, books have helped people to educate themselves while newspapers have recorded daily events. Magazines were the first visual medium before the advent of television, which together with radio, brought entertainment and news programmes into people's homes. However, all these media had to change and adapt to the advent of the Internet and Digital Media Age. New digital media forms are more personal and social as they allow people to connect with each other, collaborate and share information and personalize their experiences.

# Unit 5: Cultural identity

**Lesson 1: Getting started**

**Mr Brown:** Hello everybody. Hope you're all working on your essay on cultural identity. Do you have any questions?

**Van:** Yes. I'm not quite sure about how people express their cultural identity.

**Mr Brown:** That's an interesting question. Can anyone give some examples?

**Lam:** I think people can do that through the language they speak, the food they eat and … certain styles of clothing. For example, some people still wear their traditional costumes so they can preserve their national identity.

**Mr Brown:** That's right. It can also be expressed by beliefs and cultural practices.

**Yumi:** Do you mean people's religious beliefs, music activities and festivals?

**Mr Brown:** Correct. Any other questions?

**Lam:** I wonder … why people need to protect their cultural identity.

**Yumi:** You live here, in your motherland, so you can't see why this is important. But for me, a Japanese living in Viet Nam, it's essential to understand my family history and traditions.

**Van:** Interesting. Are your parents both Japanese, Yumi?

**Yumi:** Yes, but they've been living here for twenty years, and they're afraid that my sister and I are becoming less and less familiar with our traditions.

**Lam:** So how do you maintain your culture?

**Yumi:** Well, we wear kimonos on special occasions and celebrate Japanese festivals such as the cherry blossom festival. We also eat *sushi, sashimi* and *udon* noodles. At home we speak Japanese only.

**Van:** Do you often go back home?

**Yumi:** I've been to Kyoto four or five times to visit my grandparents. But to tell you the truth, I don't know whether Viet Nam or Japan is really my home. My parents are from Japan, but I was born and grew up here.

**Mr Brown:** I'd be interested to read about your experiences in Viet Nam in your essay, Yumi. OK, just to remind you that the essays are due next Wednesday and late submissions won't be accepted.

**Lesson 4: Skills 1**

There are various studies on cultural identity. Cultural identity is usually understood as the identity or feeling of belonging to a group that has its own culture. Individuals usually define themselves by cultural identifiers such as nationality, ethnicity, location, history, language, gender, beliefs, customs, clothing and food.

It is suggested that cultural identity develops in three stages. The first stage, known as unexamined cultural identity, occurs during childhood, when culture is taken for granted.

Cultural ideas and values provided by families, communities or the media are easily accepted without much critical thinking. In the second stage, called the *cultural identity search*, teenagers may become more curious, and willing to explore, analyze and compare their beliefs with other cultures. When people develop a clear sense of cultural identity, know which social group they belong to and feel satisfied with their cultural identity, they reach the final stage called *cultural identity achievement.*

Living in their own country, people can easily acquire and maintain their cultural identity because they are fully exposed to different aspects of their native culture. They inherit their ancestors' history, knowledge, language, beliefs, values, and customs, which have been passed from one generation to the next one. However, people often do not confine themselves to one culture. In the age of globalization, access to the Internet and the media provides instant contact with many cultures. A person's cultural identity may be influenced by certain aspects of other cultures. When people move to a new culture, they may react differently. Some people feel a strong urge to keep their cultural identity, so they continue speaking their language, cooking their food, wearing their traditional clothing, and celebrating their festivals. They also insist that their children and grandchildren maintain their cultural identity. On the other hand, there are people who choose to abandon their heritage culture and assimilate into the new culture of the majority.

Yet, there are people who integrate into the new cultural environment while keeping their own cultural identity and flexibly adjusting to the different aspects of the new culture.