Groups Within Groups

How shared practices and public norms shape group identities

S.2.7 "Define and explore the characteristics of subcultures and countercultures."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the shared practices of each group, then circle any words that show whether the group follows or challenges a town norm. Use your marks to decide what kind of group each one is.

Two Groups in Alder

1. In the fictional town of Alder, most residents share a public culture: they shop at the same stores, attend town events, and know the same local rules. Within a larger culture, smaller groups can develop their own shared activities, words, values, or customs. Such a group is a subculture, even when its members still take part in everyday town life. A counterculture is a subculture that openly challenges an important belief or practice in the larger culture. A group does not become a counterculture just because its hobby seems unusual. Its members' relationship to a wider norm matters.

2. Every Saturday morning, Alder's birders meet beside the pond. They record which birds they see, compare notes about migration, and use terms such as "field mark" for a clue that helps identify a bird. New members learn to watch quietly so they do not disturb nesting animals. The group also joins the town's spring fair and follows the same park rules as everyone else. Some residents find the birders' dawn meetings strange, but the birders do not ask the town to give up a widely shared habit or belief. They simply share a focused interest.

3. Another Alder group, the Free Exchange Network, meets at the community center each month. Members trade usable clothes and household goods without charging money. They also teach neighbors how to mend torn fabric and fix broken lamps. Many Alder residents buy new things to keep up with trends, even when their older things still work. Network members openly argue that buying new goods should not be a measure of success. They ask local stores to offer repair services instead of encouraging frequent replacement. Members still follow town rules and attend public events, but they work together to change a common expectation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What two shared practices make Alder's birders a subculture?

2. Which common habit does the Free Exchange Network challenge, and how does it challenge it?

3. Why is the Free Exchange Network a subculture as well as a counterculture?

4. A classmate calls the birders a counterculture because they use unusual words. What evidence from the passage shows that this claim is not supported?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a group in a fictional community that is different from both groups in the passage. In four sentences, name a common norm, describe two shared group practices, classify the group as a subculture or counterculture, and explain how it relates to that norm.

ANSWER KEY

Groups Within Groups

HIGH SCHOOL · S.2.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the shared practices of each group, then circle any words that show whether the group follows or challenges a town norm. Use your marks to decide what kind of group each one is. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two shared practices make Alder's birders a subculture?	**They record birds they see and compare notes about migration. They also use shared terms and practice quiet observation.**
2	Which common habit does the Free Exchange Network challenge, and how does it challenge it?	**It challenges buying new things to keep up with trends by trading usable goods, teaching repairs, and asking stores to offer repair services.**
3	Why is the Free Exchange Network a subculture as well as a counterculture?	**Its members share practices and a belief about buying new goods, making it a subculture. They openly challenge a common expectation, making it a counterculture.**
4	A classmate calls the birders a counterculture because they use unusual words. What evidence from the passage shows that this claim is not supported?	**The birders use their own terms, but they do not ask the town to give up a widely shared habit or belief. Unusual words alone do not make a group a counterculture.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In my fictional town, most families drive even when a trip is less than a mile. The Walk-to-School Crew wants residents to make fewer short car trips. Its members walk to school together and map safe routes for other students. This group is a counterculture because it openly challenges the town's driving habit and asks neighbors to change it.

Accept other passage-supported practices in question 1 and other accurate examples of the Network's actions in question 2. For Part 3, the classification must match the group's stated relationship to the wider norm.