

Culture Across Borders

Trace how cultural characteristics connect and divide regions.

WG.1.c “analyzing how cultural characteristics, including the world’s major languages, ethnicities, and religions, link or divide regions; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each language, religion, or ethnicity named in the passage. Write L beside evidence that it connects people or regions, and D beside evidence that it can divide people or limit connections.

Networks and Boundaries

- ① Culture can make a region feel connected even when national borders differ. Across much of Latin America, Spanish is widely spoken, so people in many countries can share news, music, and business without translation. Portuguese-speaking Brazil is different linguistically, yet it also participates in many Latin American cultural networks. A shared language does not erase local identities. Indigenous languages, such as Quechua and Guaraní, remain important to communities and can connect people across more than one country.
- ② Religion can also link places. Islam connects Muslims around the world through beliefs, holidays, and pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Arabic is important in Islamic worship, but most Muslims do not speak Arabic as a first language. In Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population, people speak Indonesian and many local languages. This example shows that religious regions and language regions may overlap, but they do not have the same boundaries. People can belong to both networks at once.
- ③ Ethnicity can cross political borders as well. Kurdish people live mainly in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria, and Kurdish languages and traditions create connections among many communities. However, state borders, government policies, and differences in dialect can limit contact or create disagreements about political goals. Cultural characteristics can also divide within a country when groups are treated unfairly or compete for power. Geography students should avoid assuming that every person in an ethnic, language, or religious group thinks alike.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 How does Spanish link much of Latin America, according to the passage?

2 What fact about Indonesia shows that religious regions and language regions do not always have the same boundaries?

3 Name two factors that can limit contact among Kurdish communities in different countries.

4 According to paragraph 3, what two conditions can divide people within one country?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose a world region that is not named in the passage. Write exactly three sentences that name a language, religion, or ethnicity in that region, explain one way it links people, and explain one possible way cultural differences can divide people or limit connections.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each language, religion, or ethnicity named in the passage. Write L beside evidence that it connects people or regions, and D beside evidence that it can divide people or limit connections. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Spanish link much of Latin America, according to the passage?	Spanish lets people in many countries share news, music, and business without translation.
2	What fact about Indonesia shows that religious regions and language regions do not always have the same boundaries?	Indonesia has the largest Muslim population, but its people speak Indonesian and many local languages rather than Arabic as a first language.
3	Name two factors that can limit contact among Kurdish communities in different countries.	Any two: state borders, government policies, and differences in dialect.
4	According to paragraph 3, what two conditions can divide people within one country?	Groups may be treated unfairly or compete for power.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In East Africa, Swahili helps people in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda communicate. This shared language links trade and travel across borders. However, people may use different home languages and identify with different ethnic groups, which can limit communication or create separate local identities.

Accept accurate examples that clearly explain both a cultural link and a possible division or limit on connections. Students should not suggest that all members of a language, ethnic, or religious group have identical beliefs or experiences.