Your family or community shares traditions. Traditions are part of **culture**. Culture is the way people live. The language you speak is part of your culture. So are the clothes you wear and the food you eat. The holidays and festivals you celebrate are part of your culture, too. Let’s find out about the cultures of Peru, Tunisia, Ukraine, and India.

**Word Watch**

**Culture** is the way of life of a group of people. It includes traditions, language, beliefs, food, music, and art.
In school, María learned that long ago people came from Spain to Peru. They ruled the country. These people spoke Spanish. Their language became an **official language**. That’s why most people in Peru speak Spanish.

Before the Spanish came, **Indigenous people** spoke several different languages. Today some people still speak these original languages. Two of these original languages are **Quechua** (KET-shwa) and **Aymara**. These languages are also official languages in Peru.

Spanish people brought the Roman Catholic religion to Peru. Today, many **Peruvians** are Roman Catholic.

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**Here AND There**

In Peru, some Indigenous children learn their **ancestors’** language and stories from parents and grandparents. In Canada, some Inuit and First Nations children also learn their own languages and stories from family. Why is this important?

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These **Quechua** girls are wearing traditional clothes.
These people are doing a dance called the Marinera.

**Customs and Traditions**

When María’s family lived on the farm, her parents wore traditional clothes. Her father wore a woven vest and woollen pants. Sometimes he wore a cape called a poncho. Her mother wore a blouse, a shawl, and a colourful skirt called a *pollera*. Today her parents do not wear traditional clothes, but many Peruvians in the village still do.

María’s Uncle Julio is a musician. He plays with a dance group. They travel around and play at festivals. Her uncle plays a guitar called a *charango*. María likes it when he plays his guitar and sings.

A Peruvian Custom

If you visit María’s house, everybody will shake hands and say “Buenos días!” That means “good morning.”

This boy is playing a traditional instrument called a *quena*.

**Think About It**

- How are languages in Peru connected to the past?
- What are three customs or traditions in María’s life?
My favourite festival is Carnival. My friends and I throw buckets of water at everybody! We also have a tree set up in the square. It is decorated with fruit and gifts. We dance around it and chop it down. Then we get the fruit and gifts. This tradition is called yunza.

At Christmas, we have a manger scene in our house. I help decorate our house with lights. At midnight, we eat our supper and watch fireworks. We have a cake called paneton. It has pieces of fruit in it.

My favourite food for festivals is pachamanca. It is a special dish of meat and corn. It is cooked in a hole in the ground. It’s so good!

María, Peru
Llama Saves the People
A Folktale from Peru

There once was a llama who became very sad. He ate nothing and grew thinner and thinner. At last, his master asked him what was wrong. The llama said a great flood was coming. Unless everyone climbed to the very top of the great mountain called Willka Qutu, they would be drowned. Frightened, his master agreed.

When the llama and his master’s family got to the top of the mountain, they found all kinds of creatures already there. Soon, the sea overflowed its shore. The water rose until everything was covered—except the peak of Willka Qutu.

After five long days, the water went down. The llama and the family and all the other creatures went down the mountain. Life on earth began again. And that is how the llama saved the people from drowning.
Celebrating Culture in Tunisia

Some of Ahmed’s ancestors were people called Berbers. Their language was called Berber, too. Later on, people from Arabia came. They were Muslim. Their religion was Islam. The Berbers mixed with the Arabs and accepted Islam as their new religion. People in Tunisia started to use the Arabic language. It became the official language.

Long after the Arabs came, France took over Tunisia. French became a second language. Today, Tunisia is independent.

A mosque is where Muslims gather together. They pray and learn. At the mosque, they also celebrate different festivals.

Most people in Tunisia are Muslims. Some Christians and Jews also live in Tunisia.
Some Tunisians wear traditional clothes. Ahmed’s grandmother wears a two-piece dress called a fouta and blousa. When she goes out, she wears a veil over her hair and body.

Ahmed’s grandfather wears a large robe called a djebba. Ahmed’s parents wear traditional clothes when they go to a wedding or other ceremony.

Last summer, Ahmed’s cousin Yasmine got married. On the wedding day, carloads of people rode through the city. They honked horns, played flutes, and beat drums. Yasmine dressed in silk clothes of silver and gold. She wore beautiful jewellery.

A Tunisian Custom

If you met Ahmed, he would greet you with the words “ass’lama.” That means “peace be upon you.”

Word Watch

People from Tunisia are called Tunisians. Customs and other things from Tunisia are called Tunisian.

TRY THIS

Draw a picture of what you think Yasmine’s wedding would have been like.

Tunisian jewellery
During the Muslim month of Ramadan, my parents fast during the day. That means they don’t eat or drink anything from sunrise until sunset. I don’t fast because I am too young. After sunset, we eat a big meal.

At the end of the month is Eid ul-Fitr (I-dul-FITTRE). This is my favourite festival. On that evening, everybody waits until the new moon appears in the sky. Once the moon appears, we start our feast. We eat many kinds of food. I wear new clothes, and I get presents from my parents. Last year, I got a model boat. Sometimes my aunts and uncles give me money. I am saving to buy a new bike.

Mouled is another festival I like. It celebrates the birthday of the prophet Muhammad. People gather in mosques to pray. At night, I help decorate the streets with lanterns. Then I play with my friends.

Ahmed, Tunisia

Think About It

Ahmed celebrates many festivals.

• Why do you think these festivals are important to people in Tunisia?
Jha sold bright red caps called *shashia stambuli*. One day he fell asleep under a tree. Monkeys came and stole Jha’s caps. When Jha woke up, he was shocked to see the monkeys wearing red caps! Jha waved his arms and begged the monkeys to give back the caps. But the monkeys just imitated him. Angrily, Jha threw his own cap on the ground. The monkeys did the same. Then Jha quickly picked up all his caps.

Sometime later, Jha’s donkey was stolen. Jha remembered how he had tricked the monkeys. He decided to trick the thieves. He cried, “Give me back my donkey, or I will have to do what my father did!” This frightened the thieves, so they returned the donkey. Then they asked Jha what his father had done.

“He bought another donkey,” replied Jha.
Irena speaks Ukrainian. For many years, Russia ruled Ukraine, and the people had to speak Russian. Then Ukraine became independent. Today, Ukrainian is the official language.

Like most Ukrainians, Irena’s family belongs to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Their church is very big, and it has a gold dome on top of it. At home, Irena’s mother hangs icons in one corner. They are small sacred paintings.

Some Catholics, Muslims, and Jews also live in Ukraine.
Did You Know?

Добрий день!

This is how you write “good day” in Ukrainian. Ukrainian words are written using a different alphabet.

Customs and Traditions

Irena’s cousins Yuri and Anna belong to a traditional dance group. Yuri wears a linen shirt and trousers, a sleeveless vest, and a coloured sash. He is proud of his beautiful red leather boots. Anna wears a skirt, apron, blouse, vest, and sash. She loves her headdress of flowers and ribbons. All the clothes are covered with colourful embroidery.

Irena and her family greet guests with a loaf of bread and a little mound of salt. The bread represents good health and riches. The salt represents protection from harm.

Ukrainian music is often played on traditional instruments. The bandura has strings you pluck.

Think About It

Clothes and music are part of a person’s culture.

- What clothes are part of your culture? What music is part of your culture?
Ukrainians make two kinds of Easter eggs. *Krashanky* are hard-boiled eggs dipped in dye. People eat these eggs. *Pysanky* are eggs that are decorated with colours and patterns. People keep these eggs as decorations.

**TRY THIS**

Research designs for Ukrainian Easter eggs. Learn what some of the symbols and colours mean. Draw and colour a large egg with a border design and a symbol on it.

**In My Own Words**

Easter is our biggest festival. We call it *Velykden*. We make Easter eggs and put them in decorated baskets with other foods. We take the basket to church on Easter Sunday. The priest blesses our food. After church, we eat all the food for breakfast.

We also celebrate Christmas. On Christmas Eve, it’s my job to put a candle in the window. That’s so strangers will know they are welcome. We have twelve meatless dishes for supper. We sing carols. Last year, I sang carols with other children. My family goes to church at midnight.

*Irena, Ukraine*
Long ago, a little girl named Kateryna lived with her grandfather in a village. One year, winter came very early. The wind howled, and the snow piled up in drifts. When Kateryna and her grandfather went out, they found dozens of tiny golden birds trapped in the snow. They rescued them and carried them home. The villagers helped them take care of the birds. It was like having bits of sunshine indoors in the dark of winter.

Spring came. The birds fluttered against the windows, begging to be set free. Sadly, the villagers let them go.

On Easter morning, the people found beautiful patterned eggs in the grass. The birds had left a gift to thank them! Ever since, Ukrainians always decorate *pysanky* for Easter.
Ravi’s teacher told him that the Dravidians were the first people to live in India. Later, other people came from the north. In time, their language became Hindi. The Dravidians moved south. They were the ancestors of the Tamil people who live in southern India today.

Most people in India speak Hindi. Ravi’s family speaks Hindi, too. Hindi is the official language. There are many other languages in India. Many Indians also speak English.

Ravi’s family and many other Indians belong to the Hindu religion. There are also Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains, Christians, and Buddhists in India.

This is a temple. Hindus pray in a temple.
Customs and Traditions

Ravi’s grandmother wears a sari. A sari is a long piece of cloth. She winds it around her like a skirt and drapes it over the front of her body. The end of the cloth goes over her hair. Underneath she wears a blouse.

Ravi’s father wears a dhoti. It’s a piece of cloth tied at the waist and tucked into pleats from the front to the back. The dhoti is cool to wear in hot weather, and it’s easy to wash.

When the family visited Ravi’s aunt and uncle in Delhi, they all went to see traditional dancing. Now Ravi’s sisters want to be dancers, too.

Indian Custom

Indians say “namaste” when they want to show respect to someone they meet. They also bow their heads at the same time.

Think About It

Ravi says “namaste” to adults as a sign of respect.

- What customs do you have that show respect for others?
Holi is my favourite festival. It’s in March. We buy coloured powder called *gulaal* (GU-LAAL) and mix it with water. We dab the *gulaal* on each other’s faces. We also spray each other with water! But we don’t spray the adults, just our friends. It is all very messy, and everybody has fun.

*Raksha Bandhan* is a family festival. It’s about how brothers should protect their sisters. My sisters love it! I have to give them presents. They pray that I will have a long life. They make me bracelets out of ribbon or thread.

*Ravi, India*

*Diwali* is the festival of lights. People place clay oil lamps on windows, doors, balconies, roofs, everywhere possible. They light firecrackers in the evening. They go to the temple to pray for blessings. Then they have a feast. There are lots of sweets.

For festivals and other occasions, some people in India decorate elephants in bright colours.
Ram Saves Sita

An Indian Myth

Long, long ago, Prince Ram lived in a forest with his beautiful wife, Sita. One day Ram went hunting. While he was gone, a wicked king passed through the forest. He captured Sita and took her away to his palace on an island. The birds and animals of the forest told Ram what had happened. A wise, tricky monkey god named Hanuman became his friend and helper.

They led an army of monkeys to the shore. Then the animals made a bridge, and Ram crossed over to the island. There was a big battle. Ram defeated the wicked king and rescued Sita. When they got home, Ram was crowned king of his kingdom. He was a great and good king.

Each year, people in northern India have a festival that celebrates the return of Ram.
What They Say

Culture is how people live. It includes beliefs and traditions. Understanding our culture helps us understand who we are. Who we are is part of our identity.

Each of the four countries in this book has more than one culture. So does Canada. Let’s hear what these children have to say about different cultures.

My Quechua Friend

When we lived in the mountains, I used to walk to the market with my mother. I met a girl there. Her name was Koya. She didn’t speak much Spanish. That’s because she spoke Quechua. But we still had fun. We played hide-and-seek all over the market. And now I know a few words in Quechua. One word is yanasa. It means “friend.”

María, Peru

Tunisians Together

Most people in my country speak Arabic. But that doesn’t mean we are all Arabs! My father says our family is Arab and Berber. Berbers still live in the mountains. The Bedouin are different. They live near the desert and move around with their animals. People have different ways of living, but we’re all Tunisians.

Ahmed, Tunisia
Our Crossroad

My teacher says Ukraine is like a crossroad. In the past, people came here from different countries. People of different cultures still live here. My mother’s best friend is Hungarian. My father likes to tell about the band he played in when he was young. He says not everyone spoke Ukrainian, but they still made cool music together!

Irena, Ukraine

A Great Team

Uncle Sanjay took me to a cricket game. The members of the Indian team came from different states in India. The captain of our team was from Bengal. One player was a Tamil from southern India. A batsman came from the west. It was a great team. It’s funny how we are all different but still the same.

Ravi, India

Think About It

• How are people in the children’s countries the same?
• How are people in these countries different?
Take Jot Notes

How can you make a report about life in these four communities?

• First read the information. It may be in this textbook. Or, it may be in another book, in a magazine, on the Internet, or on a CD.

• Then take notes. Just write the important words that help you remember the information. Short notes like these are called jot notes.

• Write your jot notes in a book. That way, you don’t lose them.

• You can also write your jot notes on a sticky. Post the sticky on the page where you find the information.

TRY THIS

Turn to pages 44 and 45. Choose one child. Reread the information. Write one or two important words from each sentence. Use these jot notes to tell a partner about this child.
Show What You Know!

Make a Collage
In this chapter, you have read about many festivals in Peru, Tunisia, Ukraine, and India. Choose one of these countries. Find pictures of the festivals in that country. Make a collage showing the different festivals.

Write a Postcard
Imagine one of the children in this chapter is going to visit you in the winter. Create a postcard showing a winter activity the two of you could enjoy together. On the back of your postcard, write a note telling about the activity. Tell about the outdoor clothes your friend will need to wear.
Quality of life is the sense of happiness you feel about your life. It is also how safe and healthy you feel.

Traditions and customs help people remember the past. They also help people keep their identity. Celebrations bring people together to enjoy something special.

Write a Report

Choose one of the countries in this unit. Read about daily life in that country in Chapter 1. Read about traditions and festivals in that country in Chapter 2. As you read, make jot notes.

Use your notes to write a report about life in that country. Illustrate your report with clip art or pictures from the computer.