

U.S. ARMY SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY (BNCOC)

T342 / CULTURAL AWARENES CONSIDERATIONS

OCT 04



**BNCOC**

**Stand Alone Common Core**

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**TRAINING SUPPORT PACKAGE (TSP)**

<b>TSP Number / Title</b>	T342 / CULTURAL AWARENESS CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Effective Date</b>	01 Oct 2004
<b>Supersedes TSP(s) / Lesson(s)</b>	None
<b>TSP Users</b>	600-BNCOC, Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course
<b>Proponent</b>	The proponent for this document is the Sergeants Major Academy.
<b>Improvement Comments</b>	<p>Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028, <i>Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms</i>. Completed forms, or equivalent response, will be mailed or attached to electronic e-mail and transmitted to:</p> <p align="center">COMDT USASMA ATTN ATSS DC BLDG 11291 BIGGS FIELD FORT BLISS TX 79918-8002</p> <p align="center">Telephone (Comm) (915) 568-8875 Telephone (DSN) 978-8875</p> <p align="center">E-mail: atss-dcd@bliss.army.mil</p>
<b>Security Clearance / Access</b>	Unclassified
<b>Foreign Disclosure Restrictions</b>	FD5. This product/publication has been reviewed by the product developers in coordination with the USASMA foreign disclosure authority. This product is releasable to students from all requesting foreign countries without restrictions.

**PREFACE**

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**Purpose**

This Training Support Package provides the instructor with a standardized lesson plan for presenting instruction for:

**Task Number**

**Task Title**

Explain Cultural Awareness Considerations

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**This TSP  
Contains**

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**CULTURAL AWARENESS CONSIDERATIONS  
T342 / Version 1  
01 Oct 2004**

**SECTION I. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA**

<b>All Courses Including This Lesson</b>	<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Version</u>	<u>Course Title</u>
	600-BNCOC	1	Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

<b>Task(s) Taught(*) or Supported</b>	<u>Task Number</u>	<u>Task Title</u>
		Explain Cultural Awareness Considerations

<b>Reinforced Task(s)</b>	<u>Task Number</u>	<u>Task Title</u>

**Academic Hours**      The academic hours required to teach this lesson are as follows:

	<u>Resident Hours/Methods</u>	
	2 hrs	/ Conference / Discussion
Test	0 hrs	/ Practical Exercise
Test Review	0 hrs	
<b>Total Hours:</b>	2 hrs	

<b>Test Lesson Number</b>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Lesson No.</u>
	Testing (to include test review)	N/A

<b>Prerequisite Lesson(s)</b>	<u>Lesson Number</u>	<u>Lesson Title</u>
	None	

**Clearance Access**      Security Level: Unclassified  
Requirements: There are no clearance or access requirements for the lesson.

**Foreign Disclosure Restrictions**      FD5. This product/publication has been reviewed by the product developers in coordination with the USASMA foreign disclosure authority. This product is releasable to students from all requesting foreign countries without restrictions.

<b>References</b>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>
	None			

**Student Study Assignments**

Before class--

- Read Student Handout 1- 3.
- Complete Practical exercise.

During class--

- Participate in classroom discussion.

After class—

- Review notes and lesson materials.

**Instructor Requirements**

1:16, SSG, BNCOG Graduate, ITC, and SGITC qualified

**Additional Support Personnel Requirements**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Man Hours</u>
None			

**Equipment Required for Instruction**

<u>Id Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Exp</u>
441-06 LCD PROJECTION SYSTEM	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
559359 SCREEN PROJECTION	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
5820-00-T81-6161 VCR	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
673000T101700 PROJECTOR, OVERHEAD, 3M	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
702101T134520 DELL CPU, MONITOR, MOUSE, KEYBOARD	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
703500T102257 DESKTOP/EPSON PRINTER	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
7110-00-T81-1805 DRY ERASE BOARD	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
7510-01-424-4867 EASEL, (STAND ALONE) WITH PAPER	1:16	1:1	No	1	No
SNV1240262544393 36 - INCH COLOR MONITOR W/REMOTE CONTROL AND LUXOR STAND	1:16	1:1	No	1	No

\* Before Id indicates a TADSS

**Materials Required**

**Instructor Materials:**

- TSP.
- VGTs: 23.

**Student Materials:**

- Advance sheet.
- Student Handouts 1- 3.
- Pen or pencil and writing paper

**Classroom, Training Area, and Range Requirements**

Classroom Instruction 1200 SF, 16 PN

**Ammunition Requirements**

<u>Id</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Exp</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt Qty</u>
None					

**Instructional Guidance**

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**NOTE:** Before presenting this lesson, instructors must thoroughly prepare by studying this lesson and identified reference material.

Before class--

- Read and study all TSP material and be ready to conduct the class.

During class--

- Conduct the class in accordance with this TSP.

After class--

- Collect all recoverable materials after the examination for this lesson.
- 

**Proponent Lesson Plan Approvals**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>
/s/ Santa Barbara, Robert A.	GS-09	Training Specialist	9 AUG 04
/s/ King, Phillip W.	GS-11	Course Manager, B/ANCOC	9 AUG 04
/s/ Bennett-Green, Agnes	SGM	Chief, B/ANCOC	9 AUG 04
/s/ Lemon, Marion	SGM	Chief, CMDD	9 AUG 04

**SECTION II. INTRODUCTION**

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion  
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)  
 Instructor to Student Ratio is: 1:16  
 Time of Instruction: 5 mins  
 Media: None

**Motivator**

**NOTE:** The training developer used material from the internet and unofficial military sources to develop this lesson as there is no formal doctrine at this time.

Deployments to foreign countries are part of the Army's mission as instruments of U. S. foreign policy. As instruments of that policy, all soldiers must be aware of the culture of these countries to avoid insulting or embarrassing situations that could lead to strained relations with local nationals. Such situations can make it more difficult or even impossible to accomplish the assigned mission. Awareness of cultural differences will help you maintain good relations with the local population.

**Terminal Learning Objective**

**NOTE:** Inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective requirements. At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:

<b>Action:</b>	Brief unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.
<b>Conditions:</b>	As a small unit leader in a company or battalion level unit.
<b>Standards:</b>	Briefed unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.

**Safety Requirements**

None

**Risk Assessment Level**

Low

**Environmental Considerations**

**NOTE:** It is the responsibility of all soldiers and DA civilians to protect the environment from damage.

None

**Evaluation**

None

**Instructional  
Lead-In**

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I want to read to you a statement taken from an article about the different customs of Southwest Asia (Saudi Arabia). “Never sit exposing the sole of your shoe or the bottom of your feet to an Arab as he will consider it an insult.”

This statement is a good example of how different American culture is compared to other cultures. The Army, like society, has a large ethnic and gender mix. This mix or differences are sometimes seen through skin color, language, attitudes, and mannerisms. As soldiers, we must develop an understanding and appreciation of cultural and intercultural relationships in order to maintain a strong fighting force.

To be effective you need to understand the concept of culture, be familiar with other cultures, and some of the social or cultural issues that affect individual and group behavior.

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**SECTION III. PRESENTATION**

**NOTE:** Inform the students of the Enabling Learning Objective requirements.

**A. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

<b>ACTION:</b>	Explain cultural awareness considerations.
<b>CONDITIONS:</b>	As a small unit leader in a company or battalion level unit.
<b>STANDARDS:</b>	Explained cultural awareness considerations.

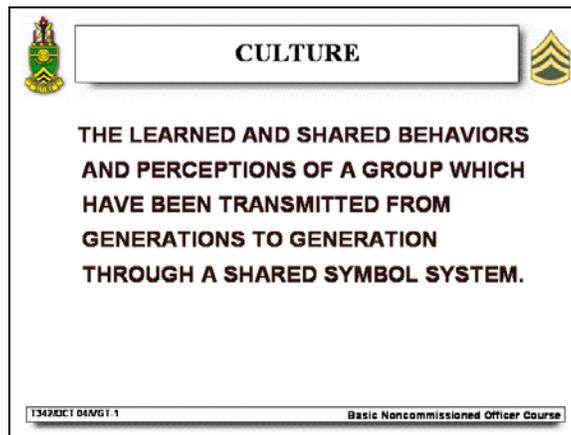
1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Discuss the key elements of culture.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion  
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)  
 Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16  
 Time of Instruction: 45 mins  
 Media: VGT-1 thru VGT-3

**NOTE:** Refer students to PE-1. Use the questions to stimulate the group discussion. Select different students to give their answers to questions 1 through 5. Allow them to briefly discuss any disagreements or differences of opinion they may have. Use the solution to the PE on page C-6 to verify the students' answers are correct.

**NOTE:** You may use VGT-1 through VGT-3 as an aide after the students have given their answers.

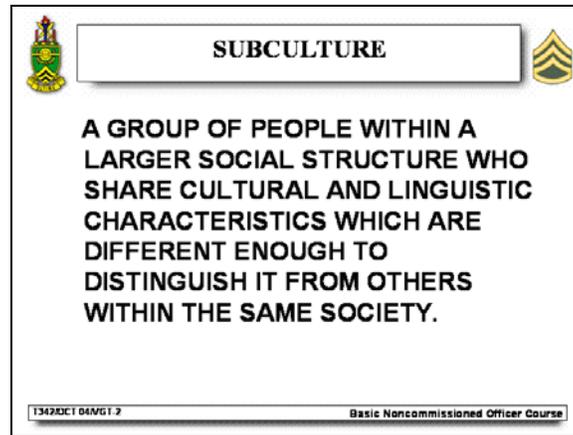
**SHOW VGT-1, CULTURE**



The definition of culture is the learned and shared behaviors and perceptions of a group which get transmitted from generation to generation, through a shared symbol system. You learn your culture from others. You are not born with culture.

**REMOVE VGT-1**

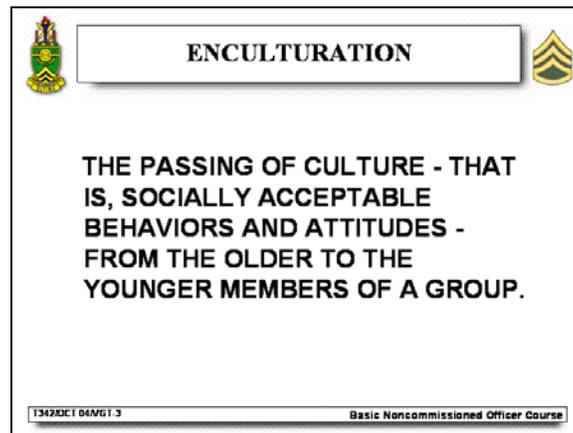
**SHOW VGT-2, SUBCULTURE**



A subculture is a group of people within a larger social structure who share cultural and linguistic characteristics which are different enough to distinguish it from others within the same society.

**REMOVE VGT-2**

**SHOW VGT-3, ENCULTURATION**



Enculturation is the passing of culture from one generation to the next and consists of behaviors and attitudes that are socially acceptable with members of a group.

**REMOVE VGT-3**

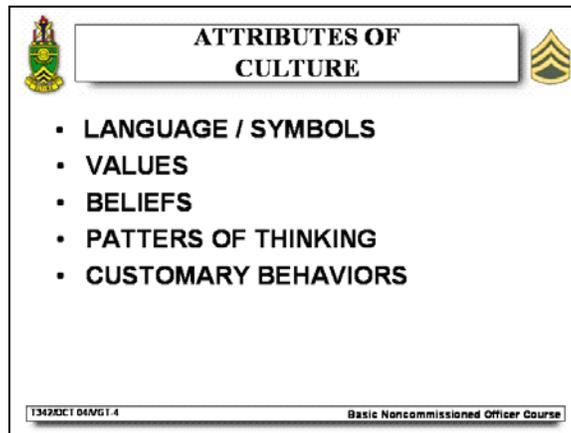
2. Learning Step / Activity 2. Discuss the attributes of culture.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion  
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)  
 Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16  
 Time of Instruction: 45 mins  
 Media: VGT-4

**NOTE:** Refer students to PE-1. Use the questions to stimulate the group discussion. Select different students to give their answers to questions 6 through 11. Allow them to briefly discuss any disagreements or differences of opinion they may have. Use the solution to the PE on page C-6 to verify the students' answers are correct.

**NOTE:** You may use VGT-4 as an aide after the students have given their answers.

**SHOW VGT-4, ATTRIBUTES OF CULTURE**



Let us now look at the five attributes of culture. The five attributes are language or symbols, values, beliefs, patterns of thinking, and customary behaviors.

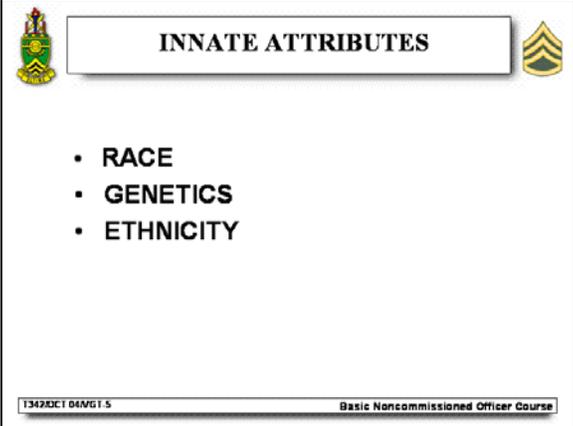
**REMOVE VGT-4**

3. Learning Step / Activity 3. Discuss the innate attributes of culture.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion  
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)  
 Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16  
 Time of Instruction: 45 mins  
 Media: VGT-5

**NOTE:** Refer students to PE-1. Use the questions to stimulate the group discussion. Select different students to give their answers to questions 12 through 15. Allow them to briefly discuss any disagreements or differences of opinion they may have. Use the solution to the PE on page C-6 to verify the students' answers are correct.

**NOTE:** You may use VGT-5 as an aide after the students have given their answers.

**SHOW VGT-5, INNATE ATTRIBUTES**


**INNATE ATTRIBUTES**

- RACE
- GENETICS
- ETHNICITY

134200CT 04/VGT.5 Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

It is important to realize that certain attributes some people may perceive as being cultural are, in fact, innate.

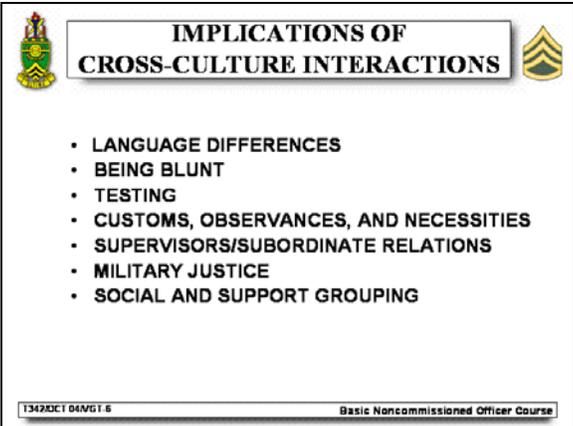
**REMOVE VGT-5**

4. Learning Step / Activity 4. Discuss the implications of cross-culture interactions.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion  
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)  
 Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16  
 Time of Instruction: 45 mins  
 Media: VGT-6

NOTE: Refer students to PE-1. Use the questions to stimulate the group discussion. Select different students to give their answers to questions 16 through 19. Allow them to briefly discuss any disagreements or differences of opinion they may have. Use the solution to the PE on page C-6 to verify the students' answers are correct.

**NOTE:** You may use VGT-6 as an aide after the students have given their answers.

**SHOW VGT-6, IMPLICATIONS OF CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTIONS**


**IMPLICATIONS OF  
CROSS-CULTURE INTERACTIONS**

- LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES
- BEING BLUNT
- TESTING
- CUSTOMS, OBSERVANCES, AND NECESSITIES
- SUPERVISORS/SUBORDINATE RELATIONS
- MILITARY JUSTICE
- SOCIAL AND SUPPORT GROUPING

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**REMOVE VGT-6**

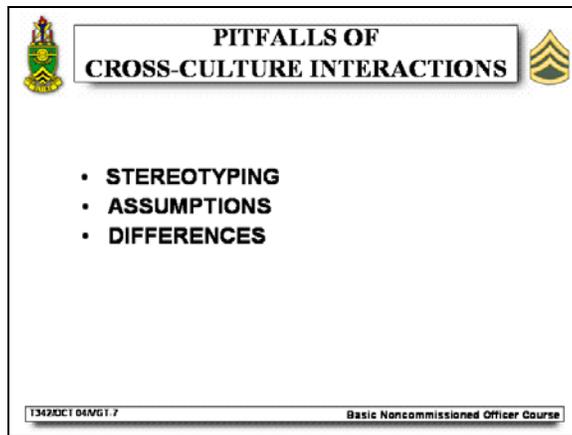
5. Learning Step / Activity 5. Discuss the pitfalls of cross-culture interactions.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion  
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)  
 Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16  
 Time of Instruction: 45 mins  
 Media: VGT-7

NOTE: Refer students to PE-1. Use the questions to stimulate the group discussion. Select different students to give their answers to questions 20 through 25. Allow them to briefly discuss any disagreements or differences of opinion they may have. Use the solution to the PE on page C-6 to verify the students' answers are correct.

NOTE: You may use VGT-7 as an aide after the students have given their answers.

**SHOW VGT-7, PITFALLS OF CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTIONS**



REMOVE VGT-7

**B. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

<b>ACTION:</b>	Explain cultural awareness considerations for Southwest Asia.
<b>CONDITIONS:</b>	As a small unit leader in a company or battalion level unit.
<b>STANDARDS:</b>	Explained cultural awareness considerations for Southwest Asia.

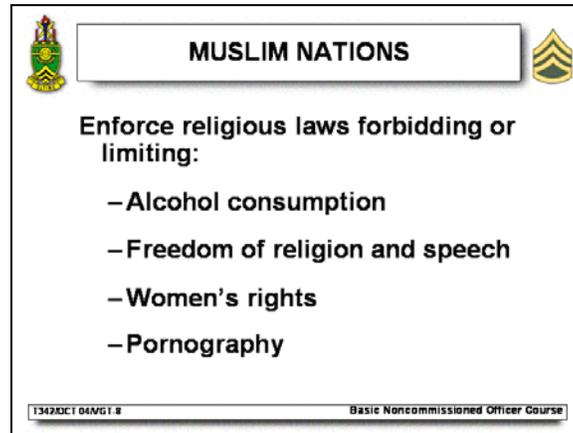
1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Southwest Asia Cultural Considerations

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion  
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)  
 Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16  
 Time of Instruction: 45 mins  
 Media: VGT-8 thru VGT-23

Since the end of the Gulf War in 1991, the United States has maintained a substantial, semi-permanent military presence in SWA. In addition to the usual hardships and stresses encountered during overseas deployments, (foreign

language, austere living conditions, separation from family members, etc.), soldiers face the challenge of working in countries with vastly different cultures than the United States.

### **SHOW VGT-8, MUSLIM NATIONS**



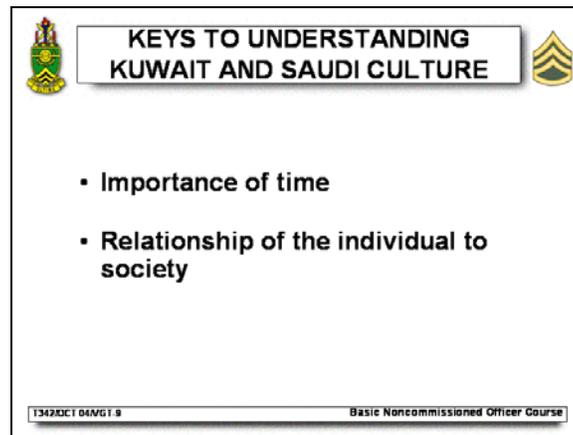
Most countries in SWA are Muslim nations with governments that enforce religious laws forbidding or limiting such things as alcohol consumption, freedom of religion and speech, woman's rights, and pornography. Individuals abstain from alcohol consumption for religious group identity; hence alcohol is illegal in most SWA countries. Understanding the importance of traditions and group harmony, culture helps to explain the difference between the role and status of the women in these countries and in the United States. For example, women are not allowed to vote in either Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, and women are not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia. But this is not problematic in cultures that have decided women should play a submissive role in the interest of group harmony.

### **REMOVE VGT-8**

It is important for our soldiers to understand that there are differences in roles and rules between cultures on the basis of communication patterns. In most SWA cultures, information in a message is encoded in the physical context or in a culturally prescribed set of rules, roles, and status. Their high-context cultures are generally

more formal; communication is not specific and is more ambiguous. As we discussed

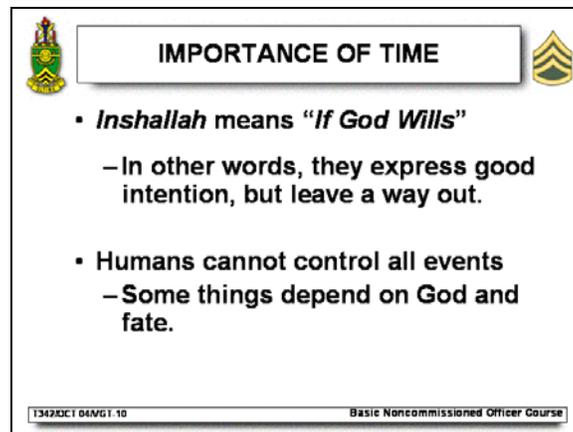
**SHOW VGT-9, KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING KUWAIT AND SAUDI CULTURE**



All societies develop their values that influence day-to-day interactions. There are two areas that are key to understanding most SWA' culture. The first is the importance of time and the second is the relationship of the individual to society.

**REMOVE VGT-9**

**SHOW VGT-10, IMPORTANCE OF TIME**



When we look at the importance of time, Muslims have a term, *Inshallah*, which means, "If God Wills." Humans do not control all events; some things depend on God and fate. Therefore, while they mean well by their intentions, they leave a way out in the event something does not happen. Change is not necessarily associated with progress and high-value is placed on tradition. In contrast, Americans tend to equate change with progress and traditions have limited value for a future-oriented society.

**REMOVE VGT-10**

With respect to the individuals' role in society, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia for example, are considered collective cultures. That is, the group is elevated over the individual and group harmony is sought over individual needs. The focus is on the extended group, such as a racial or religious group. Let us review some individual Kuwait and Saudi Arabia values as they relate to society.

**SHOW VGT-11, RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIETY**



### RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIETY



- A person's dignity, honor, and reputation are of paramount importance.
- They often view honor and shame as collective, i.e., pertaining to the entire group or family.
- It is important to always act in a manner that will make a good impression on others.
- Loyalty to family takes precedence over personal needs.
- Social class and family background are the major determinants of one's personal status.
- The next most important are individual character and achievement.

134200CT 04VGT.11
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

America on the other hand, is an individualistic society that values individual autonomy. In other words, the rights of the individual take priority.

**REMOVE VGT-11**

Again, since most of our armed forces' deployments are to SWA, we will review a series of slides pertaining to the culture of that area of the world. You can find a quick reference guide of common do's and don't's in Student Handout 2.

**SHOW VGT-12, BELIEFS AND VALUES**



**BELIEFS AND VALUES**



- Basic Arab Self-Perceptions:
  - Everyone believes in God, acknowledges His power, and has some religious affiliation.
  - Devotion to God is one of the most admirable characteristics in a person.
  - There should be no separation between church and state.
  - Established religious beliefs and practices are important and they reject liberal interpretations that threaten them.

134200CT 04MGT.12
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-12**

**SHOW VGT-13, FRIENDS & STRANGERS**



**FRIENDS & STRANGERS**



- The Concept of Friendship:
  - Friendships start and develop quickly.
  - Not just those people whose company they enjoy, but also have a duty to give help and grant favors.
- Introductions
  - Quickly determine social status.
    - Give a considerable amount of information about themselves and their family.
    - "influence networking" (Westerners pay attention – a great way to establish contacts!).

134200CT 04MGT.13
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-13**

**SHOW VGT-14, FRIENDS AND STRANGERS (CONT)**



### FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Personal Friendships
  - Should see each other often.
  - Value conversation and long discussions.
  - Will extend many invitations – while it is acceptable not to maintain them at the same pace, it is considered rude for Westerners not to reciprocate.

134200CT 04MGT.14
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-14**

**SHOW VGT-15, FRIENDS AND STRANGERS (CONT)**



### FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Business Friendships
  - Do not operate well as merely "business colleagues"
  - Prefer a lot of outside socialization
  - A good personal relationship = successful business.
  - Set aside a few minutes for light conversation at the beginning of meetings
  - Westerners should wait for them to switch to business

134200CT 04MGT.15
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-15**

**SHOW VGT-16, FRIENDS AND STRANGERS (CONT)**



### FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Noncommittal answers are a common complaint made by Westerners.
  - A positive response is merely a declaration of intention and an expression of goodwill.
- "Do this for my sake" attached to a request for a favor implies indebtedness.

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Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-16**

**SHOW VGT-17, FRIENDS AND STRANGERS (CONT)**



### FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Criticism
  - There are no words in Arabic meaning "constructive criticism" – they take all criticism very personally, so it is important to phrase it carefully.
  - Do not give criticism in front of others.
  - Begin with the good points and be sure to include your high regard for them as an individual.

134200CT 04MGT.17
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

Arabs are more conservative with their opinions and actions than most Americans. This is an important element of daily activity and you must remember it when dealing with them. They do not deal well with criticism, even constructive criticism; so keep your opinions to yourself.

**REMOVE VGT-17**

**SHOW VGT-18, FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)**



### FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Intermediaries
  - *Wafra* refers to a person with influence who serves to represent another.
  - In situations of conflict, it is particularly important to utilize an intermediary for whom the person you are in conflict with will hold in high regard.
- Reciprocal Favors
  - Never openly refuse a friend's request.
  - Oral promise has its own value as a response.

134200CT 04NGT.18
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-18**

**SHOW VGT-19, FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)**



### FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Reciprocal Favors Example:
  - Situation - An Egyptian did a favor for a Western professor working in Egypt (**finding him an apartment, etc**). Later, he called on the professor for help in getting a graduate fellowship. The professor replied that there was no point in trying, because the Egyptian's grades were not high enough to be competitive.
  - Solution - By Arab practice, the professor should have made helpful gestures, such as researching schools. The Egyptian would have graciously accepted the professor's regrets when he did not get a fellowship, because the professor would have at least shown an acknowledgment of their friendship.

134200CT 04NGT.19
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-19**

**SHOW VGT-20, GETTING PERSONAL**



**GETTING PERSONAL**



- On the whole, most Westerners feel that Arabs get too personal, too quickly.
- **Personal Questions**
  - Arabs like to discuss money, including questions about salary.
  - If unmarried or childless, Arabs might openly ask why.
- **Sensitive Subjects**
  - Two favorite Arab topics of conversation are religion and politics.

• **NOTE: Both can be risky.**

134200CT 04MGT.20
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-20**

**SHOW VGT-21, GESTURES**



**GESTURES**



- Men use gestures more than women.
- Less educated people use gestures more than well-educated people.
- Moving the head slightly back and raising eyebrows = **no**.
- Moving the head back and chin up = **no**.
- Moving chin back slightly and making a clicking sound with the tongue means = **no**.
- After shaking hands, placing the right hand to the heart or chest means respect or sincerity.

134200CT 04MGT.21
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**NOTE:** Have the students discuss the information on the VGT.

**REMOVE VGT-21**

**SHOW VGT-22, GESTURES (CONT)**



### GESTURES (CONT)



- Right hand out, palm downward, and move as if brushing something away = **go away**.
- Right hand out, palm downward, moving it up and down slowly = **quiet down**.
- Right hand out, palm upward, and opening and closing = **come here**.
- Right hand out, palm upward, closing hand half-way and holding it = **give it to me**.

134200CT 04MGT.22
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**REMOVE VGT-22**

**SHOW VGT-23, GESTURES (CONT)**



### GESTURES (CONT)



- Right hand out, palm upward, touching thumb and fingertips together and moving hand up and down = **calm down; be patient**.
- Right hand out, palm downward, then quickly twisting the hand to be palm upward = **What? Why?**
- Holding right forefinger up and moving it from left to right quickly several times = **never**.
- Thumbs up with right hand = **very good; I am winning**.

134200CT 04MGT.23
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

**REMOVE VGT-23**

Cultures in SWA may have different viewpoints and ways of conducting business than Americans. The cultural differences pose significant challenges that can, as we have discussed here today, cause stress and anxiety. Since the Arabic and American cultures are so different, finding a point of shared meaning is imperative. To be successful in dealing with these differences, leaders must conduct training to adequately explain the cultural reasons behind these rules (that they are required to obey) prior to deployment to these countries. No matter how alien it may appear, every culture works. Understanding the reasons behind the cultures you encounter while serving in SWA will lessen their uncertainty, hence your anxiety and stress levels.

**SECTION IV. SUMMARY**

Method of Instruction: <u>Conference / Discussion</u> Technique of Delivery: <u>Small Group Instruction (SGI)</u> Instructor to Student Ratio is: <u>1:16</u> Time of Instruction: <u>5 mins</u> Media: <u>None</u>
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**Check on Learning**


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Determine if the students have learned the material presented by soliciting student questions and explanations. Ask the students questions and correct misunderstandings.

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**Review / Summarize Lesson**


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Today, soldiers and DA civilians must be more aware and sensitive to cultural differences. To ensure continued success and a good working environment, DA personnel should share and discuss differences during training and other appropriate unit or command forums. The purpose of this training is to provide an opportunity for understanding the diversity that exists between ourselves and the people of other countries. Everyone must learn not to see cultural differences as negative or undesirable, but as a prerequisite to valuing differences.

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**Transition to Next Lesson**


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None

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**SECTION V. STUDENT EVALUATION**

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**Testing  
Requirements**

**NOTE:** Describe how the student must demonstrate accomplishment of the TLO. Refer student to the Student Evaluation Plan.

None

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**Feedback  
Requirements**

**NOTE:** Feedback is essential to effective learning. Schedule and provide feedback on the evaluation and any information to help answer students' questions about the test. Provide remedial training as needed.

None

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**VIEWGRAPHS FOR LESSON 1: T342 version 1**

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Enabling Learning Objective A

VGT-1, Culture

**CULTURE**

**THE LEARNED AND SHARED BEHAVIORS  
AND PERCEPTIONS OF A GROUP WHICH  
HAVE BEEN TRANSMITTED FROM  
GENERATIONS TO GENERATION  
THROUGH A SHARED SYMBOL SYSTEM.**

**T342/OCT 04/VGT-1****Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course**

VGT-2, Subculture



## **SUBCULTURE**



**A GROUP OF PEOPLE WITHIN A LARGER SOCIAL STRUCTURE WHO SHARE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS WHICH ARE DIFFERENT ENOUGH TO DISTINGUISH IT FROM OTHERS WITHIN THE SAME SOCIETY.**

T342/OCT 04/VGT-2

Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

VGT-3, Enculturation



## ENCULTURATION



**THE PASSING OF CULTURE - THAT IS, SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES - FROM THE OLDER TO THE YOUNGER MEMBERS OF A GROUP.**

T342/OCT 04/VGT-3

Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

VGT-4, Attributes of Culture



## **ATTRIBUTES OF CULTURE**



- **LANGUAGE / SYMBOLS**
- **VALUES**
- **BELIEFS**
- **PATTERNS OF THINKING**
- **CUSTOMARY BEHAVIORS**

T342/OCT 04/VGT-4

Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

## VGT-5, Innate Attributes



## INNATE ATTRIBUTES



- **RACE**
- **GENETICS**
- **ETHNICITY**

## VGT-6, Implications of Cross-Cultural Interactions



## **IMPLICATIONS OF CROSS-CULTURE INTERACTIONS**



- **LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES**
- **BEING BLUNT**
- **TESTING**
- **CUSTOMS, OBSERVANCES, AND NECESSITIES**
- **SUPERVISORS/SUBORDINATE RELATIONS**
- **MILITARY JUSTICE**
- **SOCIAL AND SUPPORT GROUPING**

T342/OCT 04/VGT-6

**Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course**

VGT-7, Pitfalls of Cross-Cultural Interactions



## **PITFALLS OF CROSS-CULTURE INTERACTIONS**



- **STEREOTYPING**
- **ASSUMPTIONS**
- **DIFFERENCES**

T342/OCT 04/VGT-7

Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

Enabling Learning Objective B

VGT-8, Muslim Nations



## MUSLIM NATIONS



**Enforce religious laws forbidding or limiting:**

- Alcohol consumption**
- Freedom of religion and speech**
- Women's rights**
- Pornography**

T342/OCT 04/MGT-8

Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

VGT-9, Keys to Understanding Kuwait and Saudi Culture)



## **KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING KUWAIT AND SAUDI CULTURE**



- **Importance of time**
- **Relationship of the individual to society**

T342/OCT 04/MGT-9

**Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course**



## IMPORTANCE OF TIME



- ***Inshallah* means “If God Wills”**
  - In other words, they express good intention, but leave a way out.
- **Humans cannot control all events**
  - **Some things depend on God and fate.**

## VGT-11, Relationship to Society



## RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIETY



- A person's dignity, honor, and reputation are of paramount importance.
- They often view honor and shame as collective, i.e., pertaining to the entire group or family.
- It is important to always act in a manner that will make a good impression on others.
- Loyalty to family takes precedence over personal needs.
- Social class and family background are the major determinants of one's personal status.
- The next most important are individual character and achievement.



## BELIEFS AND VALUES



- **Basic Arab Self-Perceptions:**
  - Everyone believes in God, acknowledges His power, and has some religious affiliation.
  - Devotion to God is one of the most admirable characteristics in a person.
  - There should be no separation between church and state.
  - Established religious beliefs and practices are important and they reject liberal interpretations that threaten them.

## VGT-13, Friends and Strangers



## FRIENDS & STRANGERS



- The Concept of Friendship:
  - Friendships start and develop quickly.
  - Not just those people whose company they enjoy, but also have a duty to give help and grant favors.
- Introductions
  - Quickly determine social status.
    - Give a considerable amount of information about themselves and their family.
    - "influence networking" (Westerners pay attention – a great way to establish contacts!).

## VGT-14, Friends &amp; Strangers (Cont)



## FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Personal Friendships
  - Should see each other often.
  - Value conversation and long discussions.
  - Will extend many invitations – while it is acceptable not to maintain them at the same pace, it is considered rude for Westerners not to reciprocate.

## VGT-15, Friends &amp; Strangers (Cont)



## FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- **Business Friendships**
  - Do not operate well as merely "business colleagues"
  - Prefer a lot of outside socialization
  - A good personal relationship = successful business.
  - Set aside a few minutes for light conversation at the beginning of meetings
  - Westerners should wait for them to switch to business

## VGT-16, Friends &amp; Strangers (Cont)

**FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)**

- Noncommittal answers are a common complaint made by Westerners.
  - A positive response is merely a declaration of intention and an expression of goodwill.
- "*Do this for my sake*" attached to a request for a favor implies indebtedness.



## FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Criticism
  - There are no words in Arabic meaning "constructive criticism" – they take all criticism very personally, so it is important to phrase it carefully.
  - Do not give criticism in front of others.
  - Begin with the good points and be sure to include your high regard for them as an individual.

## VGT-18, Friends &amp; Strangers (Cont)



## FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- Intermediaries
  - *Wafra* refers to a person with influence who serves to represent another.
  - In situations of conflict, it is particularly important to utilize an intermediary for whom the person you are in conflict with will hold in high regard.
- Reciprocal Favors
  - Never openly refuse a friend's request.
  - Oral promise has its own value as a response.



## FRIENDS & STRANGERS (CONT)



- **Reciprocal Favors Example:**
  - **Situation** - An Egyptian did a favor for a Western professor working in Egypt (**finding him an apartment, etc**). Later, he called on the professor for help in getting a graduate fellowship. The professor replied that there was no point in trying, because the Egyptian's grades were not high enough to be competitive.
  - **Solution** - By Arab practice, the professor should have made helpful gestures, such as researching schools. The Egyptian would have graciously accepted the professor's regrets when he did not get a fellowship, because the professor would have at least shown an acknowledgment of their friendship.

## VGT 20, Getting Personal



## GETTING PERSONAL



- On the whole, most Westerners feel that Arabs get too personal, too quickly.
  - **Personal Questions**
    - Arabs like to discuss money, including questions about salary.
    - If unmarried or childless, Arabs might openly ask why.
  - **Sensitive Subjects**
    - Two favorite Arab topics of conversation are religion and politics.
- ***NOTE: Both can be risky.***



## GESTURES



- Men use gestures more than women.
- Less educated people use gestures more than well-educated people.
- Moving the head slightly back and raising eyebrows = **no**.
- Moving the head back and chin up = **no**.
- Moving chin back slightly and making a clicking sound with the tongue means = **no**.
- After shaking hands, placing the right hand to the heart or chest means respect or sincerity.

## VGT-22, Gestures (Cont)



## GESTURES (CONT)



- Right hand out, palm downward, and move as if brushing something away = **go away**.
- Right hand out, palm downward, moving it up and down slowly = **quiet down**.
- Right hand out, palm upward, and opening and closing = **come here**.
- Right hand out, palm upward, closing hand half-way and holding it = **give it to me**.



## GESTURES (CONT)



- Right hand out, palm upward, touching thumb and fingertips together and moving hand up and down = **calm down; be patient.**
- Right hand out, palm downward, then quickly twisting the hand to be palm upward = **What? Why?**
- Holding right forefinger up and moving it from left to right quickly several times = **never.**
- Thumbs up with right hand = **very good; I am winning.**

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**Appendix B - Test(s) and Test Solution(s) (N/A)**

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### Appendix C

#### PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1

<b>Title</b>	CULTURAL AWARENESS CONSIDERATIONS						
<b>Lesson Number / Title</b>	L342 version 1 / CULTURAL AWARENESS CONSIDERATIONS						
<b>Introduction</b>	None						
<b>Motivator</b>	None						
<b>Terminal Learning Objective</b>	<p><b>NOTE:</b> The instructor should inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective covered by this practical exercise.</p> <p>At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;"><b>Action:</b></td> <td>Brief unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Conditions:</b></td> <td>As a small unit leader in a company or battalion level unit.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Standards:</b></td> <td>Briefed unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Action:</b>	Brief unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.	<b>Conditions:</b>	As a small unit leader in a company or battalion level unit.	<b>Standards:</b>	Briefed unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.
<b>Action:</b>	Brief unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.						
<b>Conditions:</b>	As a small unit leader in a company or battalion level unit.						
<b>Standards:</b>	Briefed unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.						
<b>Safety Requirements</b>	None						
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Low						
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	None						
<b>Evaluation</b>	At the end of the lesson discussion you will compare your answers with the solution sheet provided by the instructor.						
<b>Instructional Lead-In</b>	None						
<b>Resource Requirements</b>	<p><b>Instructor Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution to Practical Exercise 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen or pencil and writing paper.</li> <li>• Practical Exercise 1</li> <li>• SH-1 thru SH-3.</li> </ul>						
<b>Special Instructions</b>	Students receive this practical exercise during in-processing. Students must read the reading assignment and complete the practical exercise prior to class. Students must bring the completed exercise and reading assignments to class.						

**Procedures**

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QUESTION 1: What is the definition of "culture"?

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QUESTION 2: You are born with culture.

- a. True
- b. False

QUESTION 3: What is the definition of "subculture"?

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---

QUESTION 4: List three examples of subcultures within the United States.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTION 5: What is the definition of "enculturation"?

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QUESTION 6: What are the five attributes of "culture"?

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTION 7: Social principles, goals, or standards held or accepted by a given culture are which type of attribute?

- a. Language
- b. Values
- c. Beliefs
- d. Patterns of thinking
- e. Customary behaviors

QUESTION 8: Patterns of behaving that represent the norms for a culture are which type of attribute?

- a. Language
  - b. Values
  - c. Beliefs
  - d. Patterns of thinking
  - e. Customary behaviors
-

**Procedures,  
continued**

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QUESTION 9: What is the process and method that individuals use to transmit their beliefs, perceptions, and values?

- a. Language
- b. Values
- c. Beliefs
- d. Patterns of thinking
- e. Customary behaviors

QUESTION 10: What is the method by which we reach conclusions, make deductions, and solve problems?

- a. Language
- b. Values
- c. Beliefs
- d. Patterns of thinking
- e. Customary behaviors

QUESTION 11: What are judgments or expectations that an individual might have about certain things?

- a. Language
- b. Values
- c. Beliefs
- d. Patterns of thinking
- e. Customary behaviors

QUESTION 12: Race, genetics, and ethnicity, as a group, are known as \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Cultural attributes
- b. Enculturation
- c. Primate attributes
- d. Cross-culture indicators
- e. Innate attributes

QUESTION 13: An attribute of culture is "race."

- a. True
- b. False

QUESTION 14: Culture is inherited.

- a. True
- b. False

QUESTION 15: \_\_\_\_\_ is a characteristic that distinguishes a group by race, religion, national origin, language, or some combination of these categories.

- a. Ethnic identity
  - b. Race
  - c. Culture
  - d. Ethnicity
  - e. Genetics
-

**Procedures,  
continued**

---

QUESTION 16: List six implications of cross-culture interactions.

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) \_\_\_\_\_
- (6) \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTION 17: "Bottom line up front," is a quality that is acceptable by most cultures.

- a. True
- b. False

QUESTION 18: What are the three pitfalls to cross-cultural interactions?

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTION 19: "Individuals with heavy accents are not intelligent" is an example of (an) \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Assumption
- b. Type casting
- c. Difference
- d. Stereotyping

QUESTION 20: "All Americans love guns" is an example of (an) \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Assumption
- b. Type casting
- c. Difference
- d. Stereotyping

QUESTION 21: A complex extension of our prejudices and negative prejudgments are defined as \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Assumption
- b. Type casting
- c. Difference
- d. Stereotyping

QUESTION 22: Person, groups, events, or issues that we believe typify or conform to an unvarying pattern or manner that lacks any individuality are defined as \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Assumption
  - b. Type casting
  - c. Difference
  - d. Stereotyping
-

**Procedures,  
continued**

---

QUESTION 23: Stereotypes are always negative.

- a. True
- b. False

QUESTION 24: "All secretaries are women" is an example of (an) \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Assumption
- b. Type casting
- c. Difference
- d. Stereotyping

QUESTION 25: Who first quoted, "We should not judge individuals by "the color of their skin but by the content of their character"?"

- a. Abraham Lincoln
- b. John F. Kennedy
- c. Thurgood Marshal
- d. Martin Luther King Jr.

**Feedback  
Requirements**

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None

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**SOLUTION TO  
PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1**

QUESTION 1: What is the definition of “culture”?

Culture is the learned and shared behaviors and perceptions of a group that have been transmitted from generation to generation through a shared symbol system.

Ref: SH-2, p 2-1, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph

QUESTION 2: You are born with culture.

b. False

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-1, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph

QUESTION 3: What is the definition of “subculture”?

Subculture is a group of people within a larger social structure who share cultural and linguistic characteristics that are different enough to distinguish them from others within the same society.

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-1, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph

QUESTION 4: List three examples of subcultures within the United States.

- (1) Hispanics
- (2) Asians
- (3) Europeans

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-1, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph

QUESTION 5: What is the definition of “enculturation”?

Enculturation is the passing of culture from one generation to the next and consists of behaviors and attitudes that are socially acceptable with member of a group.

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-1, 6<sup>th</sup> paragraph

QUESTION 6: What are the five attributes of “culture”?

- (1) Language
- (2) Values
- (3) Beliefs
- (4) Patterns of Thinking
- (5) Customary Behaviors

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-2 and 2-3, 1<sup>st</sup> Paragraph

QUESTION 7: Social principles, goals, or standards held or accepted by a given culture are which type of attribute?

b. Values

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-2, paragraph “b.”

QUESTION 8: Patterns of behaving that represent the norms for a culture are which type of attribute?

e. Customary behaviors

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-3, paragraph "e."

QUESTION 9: What is the process and method that individuals use to transmit their beliefs, perceptions, and values?

a. Language

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-2, paragraph "a."

QUESTION 10: What is the method by which we reach conclusions, make deductions, and solve problems?

d. Patterns of thinking

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-2, paragraph "d."

QUESTION 11: What are judgments or expectations that an individual might have about certain things?

c. Beliefs

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-2, paragraph "c."

QUESTION 12: Race, genetics, and ethnicity, as a group, are known as \_\_\_\_\_?

e. Innate attributes

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-3 and 2-4, paragraphs "a." "b." and "c."

QUESTION 13: An attribute of culture is "race."

b. False

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-3, paragraph "a."

QUESTION 14: Culture is inherited.

b. False

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-3, paragraph "b."

QUESTION 15: \_\_\_\_\_ is a characteristic that distinguishes a group by race, religion, national origin, language, or some combination of these categories.

d. Ethnicity

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-3, paragraph "c."

QUESTION 16: List six implications of cross-culture interactions.

- (1) Language differences
- (2) Being blunt
- (3) Public documents
- (4) Customs, observations, and necessities
- (5) Supervisor/subordinate relations
- (6) Social and support groups

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-4 and 2-5, paragraphs "a.-e."

QUESTION 17: "Bottom line up front," is a quality that is acceptable by most cultures.

- b. False

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-4, paragraph "b."

QUESTION 18: What are the three pitfalls to cross-cultural interactions?

- (1) Stereotyping
- (2) Assumptions
- (3) Differences

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-5 and 2-6, paragraph "a.-c."

QUESTION 19: "Individuals with heavy accents are not intelligent" is an example of (an) \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Assumption

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-6, paragraph "b."

QUESTION 20: "All Americans love guns" is an example of (an) \_\_\_\_\_?

- d. Stereotyping

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-6, paragraph "a."

QUESTION 21: A complex extension of our prejudices and negative prejudgments are defined as \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. Assumption

Ref: SH-2, p.2-6, paragraph "b."

QUESTION 22: Person, groups, events, or issues that we believe typify or conform to an unvarying pattern or manner that lacks any individuality are defined as \_\_\_\_\_?

- d. Stereotyping

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-5, paragraph "a."

QUESTION 23: Stereotypes are always negative.

b. False

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-6, paragraph "a."

QUESTION 24: "All secretaries are women" is an example of (an) \_\_\_\_\_?

d. Stereotyping

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-6, paragraph "a."

QUESTION 25: Who first quoted, "We should not judge individuals by "the color of their skin but by the content of their character"?"

d. Martin Luther King Jr.

Ref: SH-2, p. 2-6, paragraph "a."

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**HANDOUTS FOR LESSON: T342 version 1**

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This appendix contains the items listed in this table--

<b>Title/Synopsis</b>	<b>Pages</b>
SH-1, Advance Sheet	SH-1-1
SH-2, Student Reading Assignment	SH-2-1 thru SH-2-8
SH-3, Do's and Don't's	SH-3-1 and SH 3-2

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## Student Handout 1

### Advance Sheet for T342

**Lesson Hours** This lesson consists of two hours of small group instruction.

**Overview** This lesson will teach you some of the cultural differences that set different groups of people apart. These differences can cause strained relationships that could adversely affect accomplishment of the mission. Awareness of cultural differences will ensure a smooth working relationship between you and the local national population.

**Learning Objective** Terminal Learning Objective (TLO).

<b>Action:</b>	Brief unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.
<b>Conditions:</b>	As a small unit leader in a company or battalion level unit.
<b>Standards:</b>	Briefed unit personnel on cultural awareness considerations.

**ELO A** Explain cultural awareness considerations.

**ELO B** Explain cultural awareness considerations for Southwest Asia.

**Assignment** The student assignments for this lesson are:

- Read Student Handouts 1-3.
- Complete practical exercise.

**Additional Subject Area Resources** None

**Bring to Class** You must bring the following materials to class:

- All reference material received.
- Pencil or pen and writing paper.

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## Student Handout 2

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This student handout contains seven pages of reading material .

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## Student Handout 2

Cultural diversity has always been an integral part of American history. American culture has always been diverse because America, except for Native Americans, consists of immigrants from every part of the world. Although most immigrant groups upon arrival in America experienced isolation and separation, they eventually learned to assimilate into their new surroundings while still managing to maintain their ethnic and racial identities, speaking their own native tongues, and practicing their own values and beliefs. Exposure to various cultural practices here in our native land should make us especially aware of the need to be sensitive to other cultures abroad.

The definition of culture is the learned and shared behaviors and perceptions of a group that are transmitted from generation to generation, through a shared symbol system. You are not born with culture. You learn your culture from others. Language, American eagle, flag, money, National Anthem, and the Lincoln Memorial are just a few examples of shared symbols.

Culture is not stationary; it is fluid and continues to evolve. Take, for example, the significant changes we have seen with the family structure, particularly the changing role of women. The traditional role of women in the 1950s was that of a homemaker or housewife. Today's society, however, tends to undervalue the role of a housewife in favor of a two-income household. As society continues to evolve and technology transforms our way of life, other cultural changes lie ahead.

A subculture is a group of people within a larger social structure who share cultural and linguistic characteristics that are different enough to distinguish them from others within the same society. Examples include Hispanics and Asians in the United States, and Sunni Muslims, Shite Muslims, and Kurds in Iraq, etc.

The military is a good example of a subculture, having its own patterns of thinking, feeling, believing, and especially its use of language. For example, our extensive use of acronyms and technical terms separates us from the civilian community. Using acronyms like "CTT," "APFT," and terms like "failure to repair," "Article 15," and "HOOAH" are specific to the military. Anyone outside of this group or subculture would probably experience some confusion.

Enculturation is the passing of culture from one generation to the next and consists of behaviors and attitudes that are socially acceptable with members of a group. Take, for example, how we learn basic table manners, such as when to say “please” or “thank you” or when to excuse ourselves from the dinner table. These are behaviors that we pass down from generation to generation. For example, if children grow up hearing negative comments about different races or ethnic groups, they are more likely to have those same attitudes as an adult.

There are five attributes of culture. They include language or symbols, values, beliefs, patterns of thinking, and customary behaviors.

a. **Language.** Language is the process and method by which individuals transmit their values, beliefs, and perceptions. Learning and sharing using Army language is how soldiers assert their membership in the Army culture. We learn nonverbal behaviors that are also a part of the language. We learn such signals as voice inflections, eye contact, and hand gestures that we associate with the language of a given culture.

b. **Values.** Values are social principles, goals, or standards held or accepted by a given culture. Values are also part of an individual's moral judgment system, how they determine right from wrong. Sometimes people express their cultural values through language; for example, phrases like “the American way”, “the American dream”, or mottoes like “duty, honor, and country” reveal a set of values, and in this case, distinctly American values.

c. **Beliefs.** Beliefs are judgments or expectations that a person might have about certain things. They are very similar to and closely related to someone's values. We often use a belief to express how one might see the truth in the rest of the world. When a larger group holds the same beliefs, we perceive that group as being part of the same culture. When a large group of people hold the same beliefs, then a culture is born. Some of the beliefs we share in our society may be freedom of speech or religion.

d. **Patterns of Thinking.** Patterns of thinking are ways we reach conclusions, make deductions, and solve problems. People from different cultures may use different patterns of thinking to reach solutions to different problems. Because of this, it is likely that soldiers from different cultures will have different ways of thinking about the world around them. Some cultures may rely more on logic and straight deduction, while others may use more intuitive methods, for example, using emotion and feeling

to reach a conclusion. The way a person thinks is also a learned trait. It is part of the culture or socialization process.

e. **Customary Behaviors.** Customary behaviors are patterns of behaving that represent the norms for a culture. Some customary behaviors have a direct and rational link to values and beliefs of the culture and are necessary for the health and well-being of its members. Other attributes, such as dress, appearance, religion, special customs, and social courtesies are more or less subcategories of this and the attributes of culture already discussed. Customary behaviors may also vary from society to society. For example, a certain religious background may play a factor in how a person views abortion. Another example is when someone from a small town walks down the street and meets someone. You may say "Hello." However, if you're from a large city, and you walk down the street saying "Hello" to everyone you pass; they might think you're strange. When you're on the subway you keep your eyes down, or you read the advertisements above the seats. You avoid looking directly at anyone. You learn each of these attributes as you grow up. You are not born with them at birth.

It is important to realize that certain attributes some people may perceive as being cultural are, in fact, innate.

a. **Race.** Race is not an attribute of culture although people often believe and act as though it was. Race is the division of humans that has sufficient and constant inheritable traits that identify separate groups. All human beings belong to the same species. There is no racial group so different from another to constitute separate or distinct specie. There are more similarities between races than there are differences. We do not define culture by race since we learn attributes of culture. Remember that we learn culture. We do not learn race.

b. **Genetics.** Culture is not present at birth and we do not inherit it through genes. Children who do not have human contact will have no concept of values or beliefs nor will they assume the social needs of other human beings.

c. **Ethnicity.** Culture is not an issue of ethnic identity. We define ethnicity as those characteristics that distinguish a group by race, religion, national origin, language, or some combination of these categories. An ethnic group is a segment of the population that possesses common characteristics and closely identifies with a cultural heritage significantly different from the general population. Ethnicity

can influence how a person learns the culture, but we do not learn ethnicity or ethnic identity as a part of culture. However, we must be sensitive to the fact that many soldiers and civilians will behave as though their ethnicity defines who they are, what they value, or what they believe. For example, an Italian living in Italy may be different from an Italian living in urban New York. While they share the same ethnic identity, it may be the only thing they have in common.

The Army has individuals from many cultures. When we do not understand the interaction between individuals, it has negative implications on the soldier and the unit. Misunderstandings between soldiers, if not resolved, can lead to other more serious problems. In units, it can lower morale and impact on unit readiness.

The six implications of cross-culture interactions are as follows:

a. **Language differences.** Differences in the way individuals speak can oftentimes affect other people's perceptions of them. For example, individuals with heavy accents may experience negative reactions from others based on a false assumption, the assumption that they are not intelligent.

b. **Being blunt.** Oftentimes, people label individuals who are direct and to the point as "being blunt". While being direct and to the point may be an appreciated quality in our culture, especially in our military where we advocate "bottom line up front," other cultures may find this quality impolite or even rude. This can cause serious confusion and a communication breakdown. An article illustrating this point appeared in a Saudi newspaper. The point of the article implies that "American frankness is always too direct and misunderstood as criticism."

c. **Public Documents.** Many people have to complete most public documents or take tests in "English only". This can be especially challenging to non-native speakers. While some forms and documents are available in multi-lingual versions, (i.e. driving tests), most business licenses and permits are not (i.e. tax forms, health permits, etc.). Furthermore, depending on where you grew up, your early life experiences can also hinder your ability to understand various forms, even if you are a native speaker.

d. **Customs, observances, and necessities.** We must also be sensitive to other culture's customs and observances. An example is when someone wants to go on leave to attend an uncle's funeral. They go to their supervisor requesting leave and the supervisor response is, "Well it's only your uncle. What's the big deal? I could understand if it was your mother, father, or sister." Many cultures

consider aunts and uncles as part of the immediate family or extended family and are much more important than in other groups. One example includes religious holidays in which we recognize Jewish holidays and give time off to celebrate. However, there are many other religions that have holidays that we do not recognize.

e. **Supervisor/subordinate relations.** To be an effective leader requires the leader to possess “people (leadership) skills”. An informed leader knows that some behaviors are not a sign of disrespect or ignorance, but a part of that individual’s culture. An excellent example of this is in some cultures it is disrespectful to make direct eye contact with your superiors. However, in our society, if you look down while your supervisor is talking to you, (s)he would perceive it as a sign of weakness, guilt, or a lack of trust.

f. **Social and support groups.** While it is rather common to see people of like race, ethnicity, or religious beliefs interacting in groups, the reason for this is not so much because of their prejudice as it is their preference to interact with others who share similar beliefs and common interests -- people who are like them. There is nothing wrong with interacting with groups who have common interests. A good example of this is when the NCO club has Latin night. More than likely you will see more Hispanics present. However, the common interest that brought this group together is Latin music, not the fact that they are Hispanic. Who do you think might attend on country night? Is it normal? Yes it is normal. The important thing is that you do not avoid these groups altogether because of prejudices.

All soldiers, whether or not they are leaders, need to be aware and sensitive to different cultures. You should treat everyone with dignity and respect. It is not only the right thing to do legally, but the right thing to do morally.

There are three pitfalls that cause misunderstanding between individuals of different cultures. They are stereotyping, assumptions, and differences.

a. **Stereotyping.** We define stereotyping as a person, group, event, or issue that we think typifies or conforms to an unvarying pattern or manner that lacks any individuality. This tends to happen to all groups at one time or another. Walter Lipman, who was an American journalist earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, said “Stereotyping is basically developing classes of pictures in our head that are basically negative and essentially incorrect.” For example, consider the following stereotypes:

- All redheads have short tempers.
- All nurses are women.
- All tall people like basketball.

Some stereotypes, however, are not always negative, but embrace the positive qualities of a certain group like musical talent, ambition, or intelligence (i.e. all Asians are smart and are especially good at math). While stereotypes tend to have an element of truth, they are incomplete and misleading because individuals need to be seen for who they are as individuals. We should not judge individuals by “the color of their skin but by the content of their character” (Martin Luther King Jr.).

b. **Assumptions.** Assumptions are a complex extension of our prejudices and stereotypes. Making assumptions about others has similar characteristics to stereotyping, but may have a very different affect on people during cross-cultural interactions. We frequently associate stereotypes with negative prejudgments. Assumptions based on stereotypes are suppositions or acts of supposing something is true based on erroneous or incomplete information. Assumptions based on prejudices or stereotypes can create expectations that have both negative and positive perceptions. These assumptions can blind people to what someone is saying or doing and can cause a self-fulfilling prophecy. Consider the following examples:

- A person who displays a rebel flag is a bigot or a racist.
- Americans are generally considered to be friendly, generous, and tolerant, but also arrogant, impatient, and domineering.
- Asians are shrewd and alert, but reserved.
- People with strong foreign accents are untrustworthy because they are aliens, etc.

Clearly, some people who display the rebel flag are not bigots or racist; not all Americans are friendly, generous, or arrogant; and not all Asians are shrewd. If you assume you know what a person is like, and don't look at each person as an individual, you are likely to make errors in your estimates of a person's character.

c. **Differences.** The Army is like a salad bowl, composed of a variety of ingredients: tomatoes, lettuce, olives, cucumbers, etc. While all these ingredients work together to make a delicious salad, each

ingredient maintains its own identity. We as leaders need to appreciate those differences in our dealings with other people.

Since the majority of our armed forces deploy to Southwest Asia (SWA), we will use that region of the world to discuss cultural differences in detail during the next hour of instruction.

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### **Student Handout 3**

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This student handout contains one page of material depicting dos and don'ts when dealing with Arabic persons.

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## DO'S AND DON'TS

### DO

- Sit properly without slouching.
- Greet males with a handshake.
- Accept hospitality (beverage, etc) after the second time offered.
- Be polite.
- Attempt to use a few Arabic terms- it shows respect.
- Stand when a female, new guest, elderly, or high-ranking person enters a room.
- Feel free to return a hug or a kiss from an Arab
- Give a gift if one is received.
- Accompany a guest outside a door or gate when they leave.
- Try the different foods if offered.
- Understand their dedication to their religion.
- Arrive on time-not early.
- Look for subtle or double meaning in answered questions. Arabs will rarely say no as it is a sign of weakness and disrespect.

### DON'T

- Slouch or sit with one leg over the other.
- Expose the bottom of your foot or shoe to a person-it is an insult.
- Use the OK hand gesture-it is obscene.
- Offer something or eat with your left hand.
- Shake a female's hand unless she offers it first.
- Ask an Arab to take off his headgear.
- Lean on walls or put your hands in your pockets when talking.
- Initiate a hug or a kiss to an Arab person.
- Try to convert an Arab to your religion.
- Move away from an Arab if he invades your personal space-it's their way.
- Show impatience or lose your temper.
- Ask personal questions about family members, especially females.
- Eat or smoke in public during their holy periods when they are fasting.
- Display religious items.
- Talk about politics.

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