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➤ **CULTURE:**  
The attitudes, values, customs, and behavior patterns that characterize a social group.

➤ **ETHNICITY:**  
A person's ancestry; the way individuals identify themselves with the nation from which they or their ancestors came.

**WHAT IS AFRICAN AMERICAN "CULTURE" OR "ETHNICITY"?**

Ethnicity

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**Who are African Americans?**

Black Americans are people (non - Hispanic) having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

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### Who are African Americans?

They are many different ethnic backgrounds that consist of:

- The Caribbean Culture
- The African Culture
- The American Black Experience



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### History

- Many were brought from Africa to the United States by force. Ripped from their native homeland, torn from their past, they had to leave all they knew behind-their families, languages, customs, and social groups.
  - The **Atlantic slave trade**: was the kidnapping and purchasing of people in and transport from West and Central Africa into slavery in the New World. Slavery, which as abolished in 1856.

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### History

- Folk-telling about their challenges in life usually substituting animals for themselves.
- **The Harlem Renaissance**
  - During the 1920's in New York City. This period of unprecedented black creative activity followed World War I, and the mass migration of many blacks from the rural South to the urban centers of the North.

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**Culture**

- Much of the culture depends on the particular country or region a person is from.
  - **Language:** Africa contains well over a thousand languages. It is not rare to find individuals there who fluently speak not only several African languages, but one or two European ones as well. There are four major language families native to Africa.
    - *Afro-Asiatic:*
      - Consist of 240 languages and 285 million people widespread throughout East Africa, North Africa, the Sahel, and Southwest Asia.

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**Culture**

- **Language Cont.:**
  - *Nilo-Saharan:*
    - Consists of more than a hundred languages spoken by 30 million people. Nilo-Saharan languages are mainly spoken in Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, and northern Tanzania.
  - *Niger-Congo:*
    - Majority of Sub-Saharan Africa and is probably the largest language family in the world in terms of different languages. A substantial number of them are the Bantu languages spoken in much of sub-Saharan Africa.

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**Culture**

- **Language Cont.:**
  - *Khoisan:*
    - About 50 and are spoken in Southern Africa by approximately 120 000 people. Many of the Khoisan languages are endangered. The Khoi and San peoples are considered the original inhabitants of this part of Africa.

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**Culture**

– Music and Dance

- The music of Africa is one of its most dynamic art forms.



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**Culture**

– Music and Dance

- Rhythms of sub-Saharan Africa, in particular west Africa, was transmitted through the Atlantic slave trade to modern samba, blues, jazz, reggae, rap and rock and roll.
  - **Samba:** Most popular in Brazil. It is a type of ritual music.
  - **Blues:** Vocal and instrumental form of music based on the use of the blue notes and a repetitive pattern that typically follows a twelve-bar structure.

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**Culture**

– Music and Dance

- Music Continues:
  - **Jazz:** It is a musical art form that originated in New Orleans around the 20th Century. Born out of a blend of African American musical styles with Western music technique and theory.
  - **Reggae:** Reggae is founded upon a rhythm style characterized by regular chops on the back beat, known as the *skank*. The beat is generally slower than that found in reggae's precursors, ska and rocksteady. Reggae is often associated with the Rastafari movement.

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**Culture**

– Music and Dance

- Music Continues:
  - **Rap:** A style of music which came into existence in the U.S. during the mid-1970s. It consists of intensely rhythmic lyrical form.
  - **Rock and Roll:** A supergenre of music that originated in the U.S. in the 1950s and quickly spread to the rest of the world. The heart of rock and roll is the rhythm, which is basically a boogie woogie blues, rhythm with an accentuated backbeat, almost always on snare drum.

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**Culture**

– Music and Dance

- Music and dance traditions of Africa are maintained by oral traditions and they are distinct from the music and dance styles of North Africa and Southern African.
- African dances are an important mode of communication and dancers use gestures, masks, costumes, body painting and a number of visual devices. With urbanization and modernization, modern African dance and music exhibit influences assimilated from several other cultures

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**Culture**

– Sports

- 53 African countries have football teams in the Confederation of African Football.
- South Africa will host the 2010 World Cup Tournament.
- A number of African nations, especially Ethiopia, Kenya, and Morocco, have fielded numerous world-class long-distance runners such as Abebe Bikila and Cosmas Ndeti.



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### **Family Values**

- Is a very important institution within the Black community.
- Nuclear families consist of husband, wife and children.
- Extended family consist of other relatives.
- Strong kinship bonds.
- Adaptability of family roles.
- Strong achievements orientations.



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### **Rituals and Religion**

- Africans profess a wide variety of religious beliefs, with Christianity and Islam being the most widespread.
  - Approximately 46.3% of all Africans are Christians and another 40.5% are Muslims and 11.8% are indigenous African religions.
- Animism (the belief in personalized, supernatural beings (or souls) that often inhabit ordinary animals and objects, governing their existence)and ancestor worship.



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### **Rituals and Religion**

- A traditional belief systems was the division of the spiritual world into "helpful" and "harmful"
  - Helpful spirits are usually deemed to include ancestor spirits that help their descendants, and powerful spirits that protect entire communities from natural disaster or attacks from enemies.
  - Harmful spirits include the souls of murdered victims who were buried without the proper funeral rites, and spirits used by hostile spirit mediums to cause illness among their enemies.

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### **Celebrations, Holidays and Traditions**

- Common holidays they celebrate such as, Easter, Christmas and New Years.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. (born on January 15, 1929) - National holiday celebrated on the third Monday in the month of January.
- Black History Month - The entire month of February.
- Kwanzaa
  - Is an African American and Pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community and culture. Celebrated from 26 December thru 1 January, its origins are in the first harvest celebrations of Africa from which it takes its name. (Not a lot of Black people celebrate this holiday.)

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### **Eating Habits**



- Revolve around food.
- Their food is known as "Soul Food."
- Many of these foods are rich in nutrients, as found in collard greens and other leafy green and yellow vegetables, legumes, beans, rice, and potatoes. Other parts of the diet, however, are low in fiber, calcium, potassium, and high in fat. With high incidence of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and obesity.
- Common ways for African-Americans to prepare food include frying, barbecuing, and serving foods with gravy and sauces. Home-baked cakes and pies are also common.

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### **Teaching and Learning Implications**

- To improve eating habits to a more healthier well balance meal.
- Some families may resist change because of family tradition.
- Implementation of good nutrition and exercise.
- Avoid stereotypes such as, all Black people enjoy the same foods and lifestyle.
- Children rearing and nursing common is performed by the grandparents if they are the head of the household.
- Breast feeding is less common with younger mothers. Instead they will give the baby cereal with formula because they think the he/she is hungry.

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