

3 CULTURE AND IDENTITY

STUDENT'S BOOK PAGES 24–25

conform /kən'fɔ:(r)m/ Verb

if you *conform*, you behave in the way that people expect you to behave

Collocates: conform to something

she doesn't conform to any stereotype | he came under a lot of pressure to conform when he was at school | they conformed exactly to the caring image of nurses that people hold

Noun: *conformity*

the rigid conformity of life in an office

• *se conformer*

dominate /'dɒmɪneɪt/ Verb

to *dominate* a situation means to be the most noticeable, important, or powerful person or thing there

several skyscrapers dominate the skyline | city boardrooms are still dominated by men | sports broadcasting is dominated by just two TV channels

Noun: *domination* | Noun: *dominance* |

Adjective: *dominant*

Golf has a long history of male domination | how do the politically dominant powers manage to maintain their dominance?

• *dominer*

hospitality /ˌhɒspɪ'tæləti/ Noun uncount

hospitality is friendly and welcoming behaviour towards visitors

the people are incredibly welcoming because hospitality is central to their culture | thanks for your warm and generous hospitality

Adjective: *hospitable* | Adverb: *hospitably* || Opposite –

Adjective: *inhospitable*

our hosts were very hospitable and friendly | my aunt Julia was a most inhospitable woman – I never even saw inside her front door

• *hospitalité*

level /'lev(ə)l/ Noun

a particular *level* is a position on a scale of size, importance, or quality

you can only relate to them on a superficial level | this course will help you take your language skills to the next level

• *niveau*

mickey /'mɪki/ Noun singular

if you *take the mickey* out of someone, you try and make fun of them by copying them or teasing them about something

Collocates: take the mickey out of someone

stop taking the mickey! | he was worried that they'd take the mickey out of him because of his new haircut

• *se ficher de quelqu'un*

mobility /məʊ'bɪləti/ Noun uncount

mobility is the ability to move around independently. *Social mobility* is the possibility for people to improve their living conditions and move from one social class to a higher social class through education and getting a good job

Collocates: social mobility | upward/downward mobility

such jobs offer little hope of upward mobility | free university education must be good for social mobility

Adjective: *mobile*

Collocates: socially mobile | upwardly/downwardly mobile
they worked hard to get their children educated and socially mobile

• *mobilité*

outlook /'aʊtˌlʊk/ Noun

your *outlook* is what you think about your present situation and how it is likely to develop in the future

Collocates: an outlook on life | a positive/negative outlook

people here have a very positive outlook | how would you describe your general outlook on life?

• *perspective*

relate /rɪ'leɪt/ Verb

if you *relate* to someone, you are able to understand how they think and can communicate with them

Collocates: relate to someone

humour is a key part of how people relate to each other | it's difficult to relate to my uncle because he's always talking about politics

Noun: *relationship*

Collocates: a good relationship (with someone)

I have a good relationship with my boss

• *rapprocher*

revolve around /rɪˈvɒlv əˈraʊnd/ Phrasal verb

if something *revolves around* something else, the second thing is very important and is the focus of attention for the first thing

most people's social life revolves around their extended family | the plot revolves around a young boy who prefers ballet to boxing | for 12 weeks my life revolved around revising for my exams

• **tourner autour**

secular /ˈsekjʊlə(r)/ Adjective

a *secular* society or tradition is one which does not involve any religion and is not controlled by any church

Collocates: a secular society

there are separate secular and religious courts | you can choose a secular or a religious school for your children | France is a secular state (the state does not have an official religion)

Verb: *secularise* | Noun: *secularisation*

universities have been secularised | the complete secularisation of Belgian society

• **séculaire**

superficial /ˌsu:pə(r)ˈfɪʃ(ə)l/ Adjective

something that is *superficial* is not very detailed and relies on the simplest and most obvious aspects of a situation. If a person or their behaviour is *superficial*, they do not think very hard about things and are not very sincere

people are polite to him, but he feels they're just a bit superficial | their relationship was rather superficial at first, but they later became firm friends | it had a superficial resemblance to a painting by Picasso

Adverb: *superficially* | Noun: *superficiality*

he smiled superficially, then turned his back and left the room | he disliked the superficiality and materialism of the modern world

• **superficiel**

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benefit /ˈbenɪfɪt/ Noun

a *benefit* is something that is good or useful that you get from something. In some countries, *benefits* are payments of money made to people who are unemployed or too ill to work

Collocates: be/live on benefits

he thinks people on benefits are just lazy | one of the benefits of working from home is that you don't waste time travelling twice a day

Verb: *benefit* | Adjective: *beneficial*

we believe the new policy will benefit everyone, not just the rich | regular exercise is beneficial to health

• **allocation**

break down /breɪk ˈdaʊn/ Phrasal verb

to *break down* a barrier or something else that is stopping people from living and working together means to remove it

it's the women who are pushing the government to do more to break down barriers | we need to do more to break down the prejudices that still exist in society

• **briser**

grasp /ɡrɑːsp/ Verb

if you *grasp* something that is difficult to understand, you finally understand it after making an effort

Collocates: grasp the meaning of something | grasp the significance of something

sorry – I hadn't grasped all that | he didn't grasp my meaning to start with | after grasping the basics of counting to ten, children are ready to move on to simple addition

Noun: *grasp*

it requires a firm grasp of legal language

• **saisir**

harsh /hɑː(r)ʃ/ Adjective

something that is *harsh* is unkind and cruel

it's a bit harsh to say he's lazy. I think he's just very tired | the speech drew harsh criticism in the local newspaper | they argued over his harsh treatment of her mother

Adverb: *harshly*

he was harshly critical of the proposal

• **dur**

hypocrite /ˈhɪpəkɹɪt/ Noun

a *hypocrite* is someone who pretends to have certain beliefs and principles that they do not really have

she accused the prime minister of being a hypocrite | we all know he was a hypocrite and a liar

Adjective: *hypocritical* | Adverb: *hypocritically* |

Noun: *hypocrisy*

that's a rather hypocritical statement, given what he said before the election | he voted against the pay rise, then hypocritically accepted it | the sheer hypocrisy of the president is unbelievable

• **hypocrite**

misinterpret /ˌmɪsɪnˈtɜː(r)pɹɪt/ Verb

if you *misinterpret* what someone has said, you don't understand them properly and think they meant something very different

have you ever misinterpreted something? | you've completely misinterpreted the text | he was accused of deliberately misinterpreting the evidence

Noun: *misinterpretation*

it was a serious misinterpretation of my words

• **mal comprendre**

root /ru:t/ Noun

the *roots* of a plant are the long parts that go under the ground and that help transport food from the ground into the plant. People's *roots* are the places and communities where they originally came from

what concerns me is that people lose touch with their roots | I took my mother back to Croatia to rediscover her childhood roots

- **racine**

short- /ʃɔ:(r)t/ Prefix

short- is sometimes used at the beginning of words to mean that not enough of something is present or provided. For example, if a company is *short-staffed*, it does not have enough workers. If someone feels *short-changed*, they believe that they have not been given everything that they had been promised or that they had paid for

it wasn't as if they were short-staffed | the island trip lasted only two hours, leaving most of the tourists feeling short-changed

- **court**

understate /ˌʌndə(r)'steɪt/ Verb

if you *understate* something, you talk about it as if it is less important than it really is. Something that is *understated* is not very obvious

he was actually understating things when he said there was a disagreement – it was a fierce argument | while we don't want to understate the importance of exams, we don't want to overstate it either | the figures understate the true cost of the health service

Adjective: *understated* | Noun: *understatement* || Opposite – Verb: *overstate*

a few simple, understated pieces of jewellery | to say he likes food is a serious understatement

- **minimiser**

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absence /'æbs(ə)ns/ Noun

the *absence* of something or someone is the fact that they are not present somewhere

Collocates: the absence of someone or something | in the absence of something or someone

during my absence, they bought a new desk for my office | in the absence of rain, most of the plants faded and died

Adjective: *absent* | Noun: *absentee*

Collocates: an absent parent/father/mother | absent from somewhere

Walter was noticeably absent from the meeting | an absentee voter (someone who sends their vote in by post instead of coming to vote in person)

- **absence**

appliance /ə'plaɪəns/ Noun

an *appliance* is a piece of equipment, usually electrical, that you use in your home, such as a washing machine, hair dryer, cooker, etc.

Collocates: domestic/household appliances | a modern appliance

the kitchen was well-equipped with modern appliances | a shop selling domestic appliances

- **appareil**

bizarre /bɪ'zɑ:(r)/ Adjective

something that is *bizarre* is very strange and unusual

by a bizarre coincidence, Prokofiev and Stalin died on the same day | the idea of eating a chocolate ant sounds bizarre | she was wearing a bizarre dress made out of towels

Adverb: *bizarrely*

even more bizarrely, my father danced with my maths teacher

- **bizarre**

chore /tʃɔ:(r)/ Noun

chores are the things people have to do regularly around the house, like cleaning, cooking, and washing clothes.

Some people refer to a task that they have to do but that they do not enjoy as a *chore*

Collocates: household chores | do the chores

we do the chores on Saturday mornings | changing the battery in my phone is a real chore

- **corvée**

clamp /klæmp/ Noun

a *clamp* is a piece of equipment that you use to hold something very steady while you are working on it, or to hold two things together very firmly

hold the two pieces together with a clamp until the glue dries | I used a clamp to hold the wood while I was cutting it

Verb: *clamp*

then another frame is clamped tightly to the first frame

- **pince**

cosy /'kəʊzi/ Adjective

if a place is *cosy*, it is warm, comfortable, and relaxing

it was warm and cosy by the fire | make yourself cosy and I'll bring you a cup of tea | if you want to create a cosy atmosphere in a small room, go for darker colours

Adverb: *cosily* | Noun: *cosiness*

we sat cosily round the fire | the thick curtains provided additional cosiness and privacy

- **douillet**

disgust /dis'gast/ Noun

disgust is a feeling of strong dislike for something very unpleasant

Collocates: express disgust | in disgust | to someone's disgust

*she reacted with a mixture of confusion and disgust | he expressed his disgust at the idea of drinking
nake's blood*

Verb: *disgust* | Adjective: *disgusted* | Adverb: *disgustedly* |
Adjective: *disgusting* | Adverb: *disgustingly*

Collocates: be thoroughly disgusted | utterly disgusting
*it disgusts me to think he got out of prison so soon | Lewis had
become thoroughly disgusted with his neighbours' behaviour |
the food was utterly disgusting*

• dégoût

draughty /'dra:fti/ Adjective

if an indoor place is *draughty*, there is cold air that blows through gaps in doors and windows

a lot of the houses are cold and draughty | it's too draughty in here – I'm going upstairs to bed

Noun: *draught*

I could feel a draught around my feet

• plein de courants d'air

flush /flʌʃ/ Verb

to *flush* a toilet means to pull the handle that sends water down into the pan to carry away all the waste

he's only five and sometimes forgets to flush the toilet | I could hear the sound of the toilet flushing upstairs

• tirer la chasse d'eau

normality /nɔ:(r)'mæləti/ Noun uncount

normality is a situation when everything happens in the usual and expected way

definitions of normality vary across time and across different countries | things returned to normality after the holidays ended

Adjective: *normal*

it's quite normal to be nervous before an exam

• normalité

pad /pæd/ Noun

a *pad* is a piece of thick, soft material that you use to protect something

a knee pad | I wear shin pads when I play football (to protect the part of my legs below the knees)

Adjective: *padded*

a bag with a padded shoulder strap

• protection

plug /plʌg/ Noun

a *plug* is an object that you use to block the pipe in a sink or bath and keep the water in. When you take the *plug* out, the water can flow away

she pulled the plug out and watched the water drain away | a bath plug

• bouchon / bonde

puzzled /'pʌz(ə)ld/ Adjective

if you are *puzzled*, you are slightly confused because you do not properly understand something and you wonder what the actual truth is

Collocates: a puzzled look/expression/voice

people were puzzled when I said I lived in a basement flat | she sounded rather puzzled | we were all puzzled about the ending of the film

Verb: *puzzle* | Adjective: *puzzling*

the mystery has puzzled scientists for centuries | I got a rather puzzling email from my brother

• perplexe

rinse /rɪns/ Verb

if you *rinse* something, you run clean water over it to get rid of soap or dirt from it

make sure you rinse the glasses to get the soap off | wash the tools with soapy water, then rinse

Noun: *rinse*

give the plates a rinse

• rincer

rip /rɪp/ Verb

if you *rip* something made of cloth or paper, you tear it so that it becomes damaged

he ripped his trousers on the door handle | she ripped the envelope open | the nail ripped a hole in my sleeve

Adjective: *ripped*

ripped jeans are still fashionable

• déchirer

scope /skəʊp/ Noun uncount

the *scope* of something is its range and the limits that are placed on it

Collocates: limit/narrow/reduce the scope of something | widen/broaden the scope of something | outside/beyond the scope of something

I didn't have an oven, which somewhat reduced the scope of my cooking | they widened the scope of the investigation

• portée

scrub /skrʌb/ Verb

to scrub something means to clean it by rubbing hard, usually with water and a brush

your clothes can be washed and scrubbed in here | I had to scrub the pan for ages to get it clean | I swept and scrubbed and cleaned the windows

Noun: scrub

give your hands a good scrub to get the dirt off

• **frotter**

stick /stɪk/ Verb

if you stick something somewhere, you put it there. *Stick* is an informal word in this meaning

I'm just going to stick the pie in the oven | she stuck the note in her handbag and dashed out of the house | just stick the books on that shelf over there

• **mettre**

sweep /swi:p/ Verb

if you sweep a surface such as a floor, you use a brush to push the dirt and dust together in order to clean it

I need to sweep the floor before the visitors arrive | sweep the broken glass onto this bit of newspaper | let me sweep the dust up before you wash the floor

• **balayer**

take for granted /ˌteɪk fə(r) 'grɑ:ntɪd/ Phrase

if you take something for granted, you assume that it is true or that it will happen or continue without thinking about it very much. If you take someone for granted, you expect them to do things for you but you do not ask or thank them properly

we often take it for granted that our way of life is obviously sensible and normal | I've offered to help, but I don't want to be taken for granted

• **considérer comme acquis**

thread /θred/ Verb

thread is long, thin pieces of cotton, silk or wool, used to make cloth or sew pieces of cloth together. If you thread a needle, you put the thread through the small hole at one end of the needle so that it is ready for you to start sewing

I can't thread this needle without my glasses | here, can you thread the needle for me while I look for my bag | thread the cotton through the needle

• **enfiler**

tub /tʌb/ Noun

a tub, or a bathtub, is a large container which you can fill with water and use as a bath

the bathroom has a white tub and black and white walls | a metal tub which you could put in front of the fire

• **baignoire**

utility /ju:'tɪləti/ Noun uncount

utility is the quality of being useful. *Utilities* are services such as gas and electricity that come into people's homes. In a house or flat, the utility room or utility area is where people have a washing machine, dryer, and other household equipment

there's a sink and a washing machine in the utility area | the utility room is just off the kitchen

• **service**

wring /rɪŋ/ Verb

if you wring out a wet piece of cloth, you squeeze it very hard with your hands in order to force out as much water as you can

he wrung out his wet socks and put them on the radiator | wring it out and wipe the table carefully

• **essorer**

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assumption /ə'sʌmpʃ(ə)n/ Noun

an assumption is a belief that something is true, although the belief is not based on any evidence

Collocates: make an assumption

you should read the report before making false assumptions | we took the decision to stay at home on the assumption that it would rain all weekend

Verb: assume | Conjunction: assuming

she didn't answer the door, so I assumed she was out | assuming your estimate is right, we should set off before 6 in the morning

• **supposition**

autonomy /ɔ:'tɒnəmi/ Noun

autonomy is the power to make your own decisions without getting permission from a more important authority

local councils were given greater autonomy in planning matters | they support the idea of regional autonomy

Adjective: autonomous | Adverb: autonomously

the port has its own autonomous administration | it is very difficult for companies to act autonomously in an increasingly global world

• **autonomie**

bug /bʌg/ verb

if something bugs you, it makes you annoyed and slightly angry

what's bugging you? | what really bugs me is that she thinks I've got lots of money | it's always bugged me that my brother has a bigger bedroom

• **énervé**

cling /kɪŋ/ Verb

to *cling* to something means to hold it tightly. If you *cling* to an idea or belief, you continue to firmly believe it even though it is not true or useful any more

they cling on to this idea of a unified national culture | the world has changed, but he still clings to the past | you just need to cling to the one idea that you'll succeed

- **s'accrocher**

commerce /'kɒmɜː(r)s/ Noun uncount

commerce is the business of buying and selling things

web commerce has been growing steadily (using the internet to buy and sell things) | the city is a centre of government, commerce, and industry

Adjective: *commercial* | Adverb: *commercially*

the district is split between residential and commercial use | the first commercially available 3D printer (the first one that anybody could buy)

- **commerce**

conflicted /kən'fɪktɪd/ Adjective

if two ideas or beliefs *conflict*, they cannot both be true at the same time. If someone is *conflicted*, it is difficult for them to make a decision because there are two strong but different reasons for them to make two opposite decisions

the only time I feel vaguely conflicted about my identity is when Pakistan play England at cricket | I have found myself deeply conflicted on this issue | he was conflicted over how to vote

Verb: *conflict* | Noun: *conflict* | Adjective: *conflicting*

test results conflicted with the predictions made earlier | there is a conflict between having freedoms and having limitations

- **en contradiction**

diverse /daɪ'vɜː(r)s/ Adjective

a *diverse* number of things includes many different sorts

the place she lives in is very racially diverse | the university offers courses covering a diverse range of subjects

Noun: *diversity* | Verb: *diversify*

the quality and diversity of the restaurants in the city is amazing | the EU is attempting to diversify its energy supply (make sure it gets its energy from several different places)

- **divers**

elite /ɪ'liːt/ Noun

the *elite* are people with special skills, education or money who are able to have power and influence in society. *Elite* groups of people or things are considered to be the best of their kind

Collocates: a ruling/wealthy/educated elite

it's the ruling elite who get the benefits | a member of the political and educated elite

Adjective: *elite*

the Free University of Berlin is one of Germany's elite universities

- **élite**

retain /rɪ'teɪn/ Verb

if you *retain* something, you keep it over a period of time

he retains a sense of his family roots | she had insisted on retaining control of the company | this information will be retained for up to three years

Noun: *retention*

the project ensured the retention of 50 jobs

- **garder**

static /'stætɪk/ Adjective

something that is *static* does not move or change over time

our identities aren't fixed or static | most of the website is static content, but the homepage changes every Monday | membership of the organisation has remained static for a few years

- **statique**

tight /taɪt/ Adjective

tight controls over something are very strict

we're on a very tight budget (we have to control what we spend very carefully) | security outside the parliament building was very tight

Adverb: *tightly* | Verb: *tighten*

many people think the banks should be more tightly controlled | should they tighten gun control laws?

- **serré / strict**

PHRASES WITH *THING*

it's no big thing: if you say of a situation that it's *no big thing*, you mean that it is not as big a problem as someone might think

you shouldn't have bought me flowers, it was no big thing, honestly. You'd have done the same for me, I'm sure

not the done thing:

if you say that something is *not the done thing*, you mean that it is not socially acceptable

and then he lit a cigarette before we left the dinner table – really not the done thing!

chance would be a fine thing:

if you say *chance would be a fine thing*, you mean that a nice or desirable situation that you are talking about is unlikely ever to happen

as if I could afford a holiday in January as well as August – chance would be a fine thing!

the furthest thing from my mind:

if you say that something was *the furthest thing from your mind*, you mean that you were not thinking about it at all because you were concentrating on other things

the furthest thing from my mind right now is the weather in San Francisco

first thing in the morning:

first thing in the morning means very soon after you get up

I go for a run first thing in the morning, then shower, have breakfast, and get the train to work

the sort of thing:

if you describe something as being *the sort of thing* that makes you glad to be alive, or *the sort of thing* that makes life worth living, you mean that you are talking about one example of a situation that has a particular effect on you

watching them smile when they realise they've understood something is the sort of thing that makes me proud to be a teacher

(what) with one thing and another:

you say *what with one thing and another* when you want to say that there are several factors involved in a situation and you cannot give details about all of them

I didn't get any sleep at all last night, what with one thing and another

one thing led to another:

if you say that *one thing led to another*, you mean that something that happened was not planned but you did not want to stop it developing

we met at a conference, and one thing led to another and now we've been married for three years