




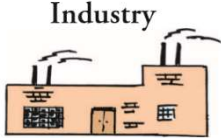


# CULTURE and the PERSIA ACRONYM


*Culture, definition: the total of ways of living that characterize a group of people*



People throughout history—no matter when or where they lived—have had six human concerns, expressed in six basic questions. Their answers—in different times and places—have created different kinds of **political, economic, religious, social, and intellectual** pursuits in their **area**, the sum of which is their culture.

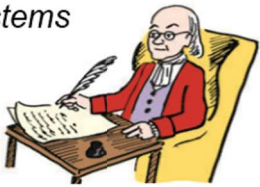

The PERSIA acronym is handy for sorting out the ways people organize their lives in a society—for understanding their CULTURE. Below are some (but not all) of the ways people have answered the six questions through centuries of history.



<b>P</b>	<b>Stands for:</b> Political
	<b>Guiding Question:</b> Who is in charge?
<p><b>Look for:</b> The political characteristics of the society or time period being examined. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Structure of the government</i></li> <li>• <i>Significant wars, conflicts, and treaties</i></li> <li>• <i>Major movements, revolutions and rebellions</i></li> <li>• <i>Role of the Courts; important laws</i></li> <li>• <i>Important leaders or changes in leadership</i></li> <li>• <i>Rights of the people and role in government</i></li> <li>• <i>Loyalty to/popular support of leader(s)</i></li> </ul>	
	

<b>E</b>	<b>Stands for:</b> Economics
	<b>Guiding Question:</b> How do we make a living?
<p><b>Look for:</b> Economic activity of the society or time period being examined. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Major industries/types of agriculture</i></li> <li>• <i>Types of jobs, labor systems (such as slavery)</i></li> <li>• <i>Gender roles</i></li> <li>• <i>Levels of technology</i></li> <li>• <i>Role of the Government</i></li> <li>• <i>Levels of international trade</i></li> <li>• <i>Wealth distribution</i></li> </ul>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Agriculture</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Trades and Professions</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Industry</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Commerce</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Trades and Professions</p> </div> </div>	

<b>R</b>	<b>Stands for:</b> Religious Influences
	<b>Guiding Questions:</b> What do we believe?
<p><b>Look for:</b> How people in the society or time period being examined demonstrate faith. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Holy books</i></li> <li>• <i>Beliefs/teachings</i></li> <li>• <i>Definition of Sin/salvation</i></li> <li>• <i>Interpretation related to morality (right/wrong)</i></li> <li>• <i>Attitude about conversion and the role of missionaries</i></li> <li>• <i>Impact on interactions within society</i></li> </ul>	
	

<b>S</b>	<b>Stands for:</b> Social Influences
	<b>Guiding Question:</b> How do we treat each other?
<p><b>Look for:</b> How members of the society or time period interact with one another. For example:</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Social classes – authoritarian (based on slavery or servitude), deference (based on rank), or egalitarian (based on equal rights under the law)</i></li> <li>• <i>Family system –patriarchal, matriarchal</i></li> <li>• <i>Gender relations – role of men, women, and children</i></li> <li>• <i>Entertainment</i></li> <li>• <i>Lifestyles</i></li> </ul>
	

<b>I</b>	<b>Stands for:</b> Intellectual Influences and The Arts
	<b>Guiding Questions:</b> How should we learn and express ourselves?
<p><b>Look for:</b> The traditional or standard educational level of the society and advancements or innovations during the time period, as well as how the thoughts and feelings of the people were reflected through artistic expression. Areas to be explored include:</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Education systems</i></li> <li>• <i>Math/science</i></li> <li>• <i>Philosophy</i></li> <li>• <i>Technology or inventions</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Writing and literature</i></li> <li>• <i>Art and music</i></li> </ul>	
	

<b>A</b>	<b>Stands for:</b> Area – Geographic Influences
	<b>Guiding Questions:</b> How shall the land shape us? How shall we shape the land?
<p><b>Look for:</b> How the physical geography of the place being examined impacted the people or time period being studied. For example:</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Location</i></li> <li>• <i>Physical characteristics</i></li> <li>• <i>Natural resources</i></li> <li>• <i>Influence of geography on the movement of people and ideas</i></li> <li>• <i>Impact of human activities</i></li> </ul>
	

As you work to analyze the components of an era, keep the following in mind:

Some people, events, or objects may seem to belong to more than one category. That's OK! Either include the item in several sections or try to determine the category from which the item arose.

Keep an eye out for connections between categories. An innovation in one area often leads to advances in others, or setbacks in one area may negatively impact the others.

Determining which categories that dominated a particular time period is an important tool for comparing different eras or cultures.