

Oxford Primary Social Studies



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Oxford Primary Social Studies

Knowing My Region



Pat Lunt

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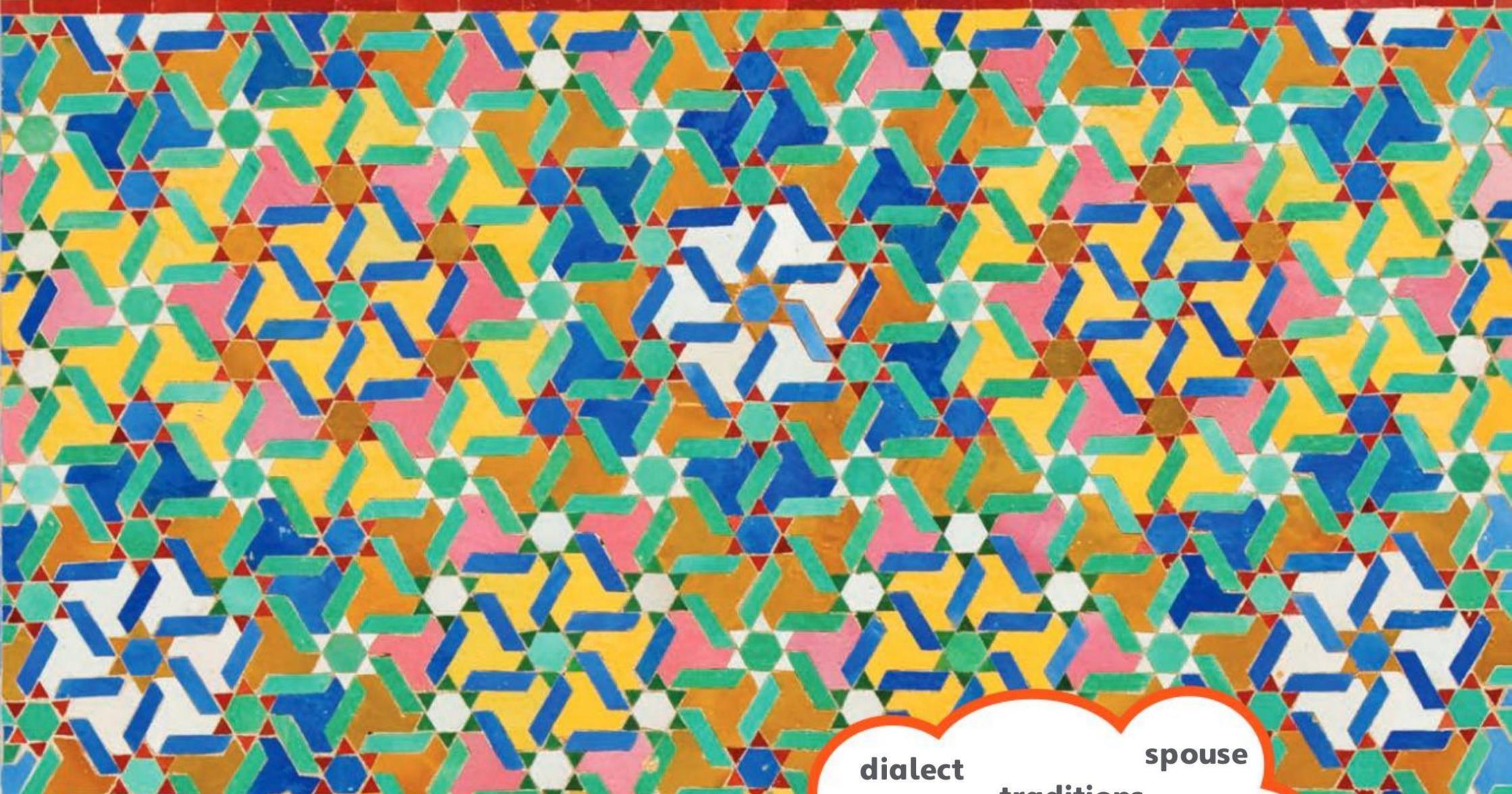
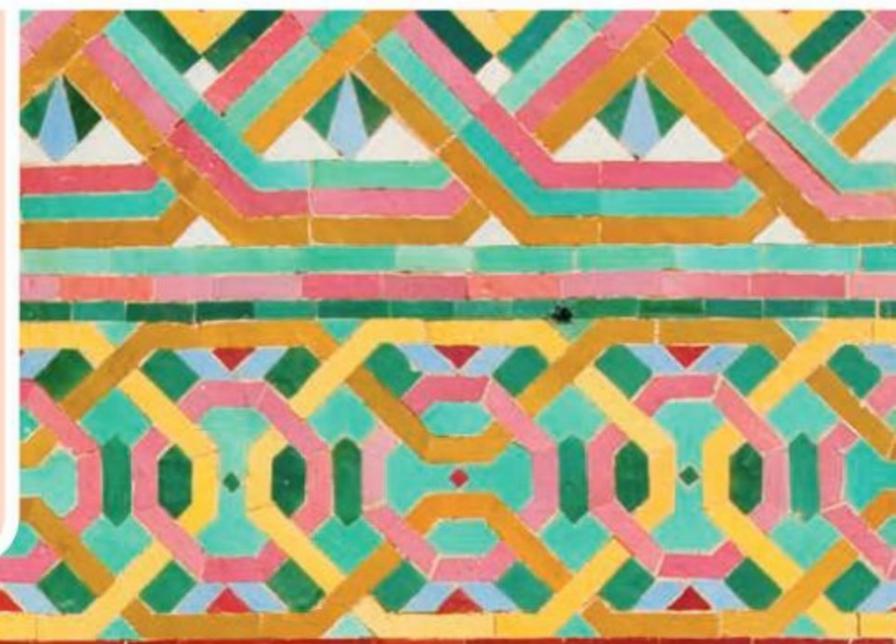
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1 Culture and identity

In this unit you will learn:

- why families are important
- to understand your own identity
- how to write a self-assessment and a report
- to make accurate drawings and plans
- about the cultures of our region and their many different features.



? What features of cultures from the past can you think of?

dialect
 festivals
 passport
 suburbs
 spouse
 traditions
 modernisation
 urbanisation
 values

1.1 The importance of family

In this lesson you will learn:

- to create a family tree
- why families are important to individuals and society
- to understand how communities are formed.

Family relationships

A family is formed from a group of people who are related 'by blood' or through marriage. People in this group are known as 'kin' and the relationships they have are called 'kinship'.

Blood relationships are those between people who can trace a direct line of ancestors or descendants. A young person is related 'by blood' to his or her parents and siblings, aunts and uncles, grandparents and great-grandparents. The blood relatives of an older person would include his or her children, nieces and nephews, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

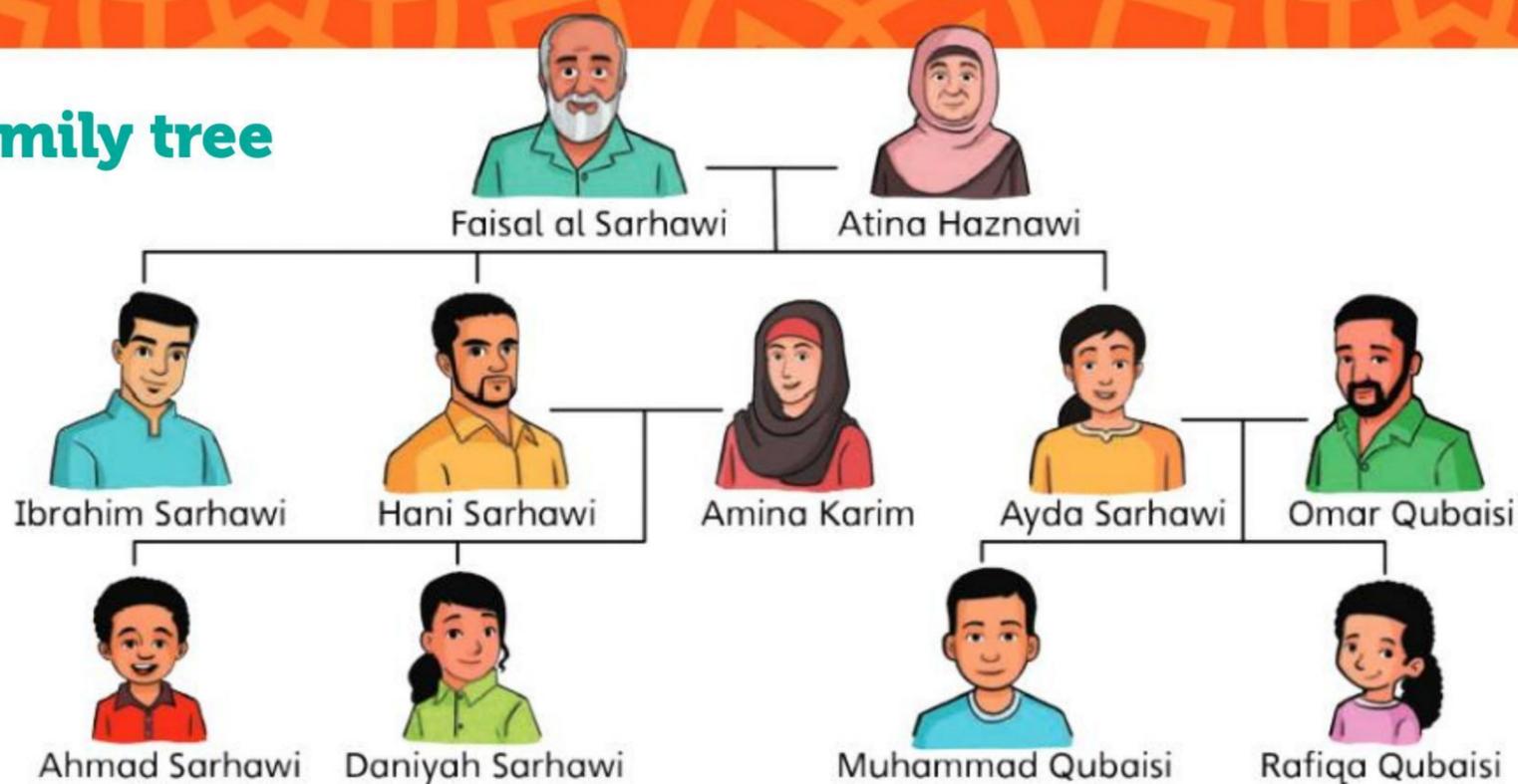
When a member from one family marries a member from another family then those two families are related 'by marriage'. The people in these families are known as 'in-laws'. The parents of a person's **spouse** are parents-in-law. If a person's spouse has brothers and sisters these will be brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law.

In most societies there are special rules about the relationships that people who are closely related can have. In Islam, a woman is only allowed to take off her hijab in the presence of certain people, known as her *maharim*. There are special rules, too, about the people a particular individual is allowed to marry.



◀ When people marry they become members of one another's family and are related by marriage.

A family tree



▲ A family tree is a special diagram that shows how individual members of a family are related.

The family in society

The family has many important roles in society. It is a social unit in which people experience love and acceptance. The family gives its members a feeling of belonging and it helps them to create their sense of identity.

The family also offers help and guidance as children develop their own personalities, characteristics and attitudes. It is also generally understood that parents are responsible for the socialisation of their children. This means that parents should teach their children about the society they live in and about the kind of behaviour that the society expects. Part of socialisation is learning about the culture and customs of a society and about the values that are understood to be important.

Individuals in a family learn to relate to people of different ages. As families live and mix together, the range of people in a person's experience grows and so they develop skills and attitudes that will help them in the wider society.



▲ Children learn many things from their parents and older relations, including expectations about behaviour.

Activities

- 1 Describe relationships shown in the family tree that involve grandparents and grandchildren, nieces and nephews, uncles and aunts and in-laws.
- 2 Work in a group to discuss things you have learnt from your family.

1.2 Your identity

In this lesson you will learn:

- to understand how you develop a sense of identity.

Your identity as an individual

In a sense, your identity is simply *who you are*. Some official documents, such as a **passport**, are a ‘proof’ of your identity. This means the document proves that you are the particular person who you say you are. Such a document will state your given names and your family name, and this is ‘who you are’.

In another sense, your identity is not simply about who you say you are but the person that you *think* you are. This part of your identity is based on your qualities and characteristics and the way you relate to other people. You might see yourself as someone who is kind or quiet, lively or adventurous. You may also think that you are confident, shy or friendly when relating to other people.



▲ It may not be so easy to answer the question, ‘Who do you think you are?’

Your identity as part of a group

Part of your personal identity comes from belonging to a family. This is why you have a surname or family name. People also often share a group identity or common identity with other people, and this becomes part of who they are too.

Identifying with other people can be based on the fact that people are from the same ethnic groups. This is the group of people who share a common national or cultural heritage. People from the same nation often share similar ideas about how society should operate and how people should behave.

People with a common culture often share things, such as styles of dress and cooking, language, beliefs and behaviour. A member of that group therefore identifies him or herself as being part of that culture.



▲ The Maasai people of East Africa identify strongly with their cultural group.

Developing your identity

Your identity as a member of a family or as a person from a particular country is fixed. Your attitudes, qualities and characteristics are not. These parts of your personal identity continue to develop as you grow older but they are influenced by many things, including your family, your friendship groups and your culture.

Parents pass on traditions, customs, values and other aspects of culture to their children, which they hope will help them to be good members of society.

Children also need to learn to think for themselves, especially as they experience other influences from outside the family, for example through peer groups, television or the internet. It is important to be aware of the influences around you and to know how you will react to them, because not all of them are helpful.

Did you know?

Some surveys suggest that many people in modern societies watch between 25 and 35 hours of television each week, which is longer than some people work.



▲ What influences do you think there are on people as they think about their identity?

Activities

- 1 Make a personal profile which explains who you think you are in terms of your cultural and national identity.
- 2 Identify and discuss the groups you belong to and how each one influences you.

1.3 Thinking skills

In this lesson you will learn:

- to identify different thinking skills
- to identify and assess personal capabilities

As your identity develops, you begin to form your own opinions. You can think about what is right or wrong, whether something is fair or not, and which things in life are truly important to you. You also develop personal skills and capabilities that will help you learn and interact with others.

Managing yourself

Everyone thinks, feels and reacts in particular ways at different times. Understanding how we react and behave in different situations helps us to decide if these reactions or behaviours

are helpful or not. Understanding these aspects of our personality helps us to make the most of any situation.

Knowing your strengths lets you make the most of them. Identifying areas that need improvement helps you to set goals for improvement and to focus on achieving them.

Managing yourself is also about understanding how you organise your time and plan out the things that need to be done. It is important to remember that everyone organises and plans in different ways and you should find the right way for you.



Dealing with information

Learning to deal with information is an important skill because we receive so much information every day. We should know how to find out the information we need, how to decide what information is useful, how best to record the information, and how to make use of it.



▲ There is a huge amount of information available today. We have to learn how to pick out what we need.

Thinking

Thinking is obviously a part of dealing with information. Thinking helps decide what information you need and how to get it. Critical thinking helps you to evaluate the information you have: is it true, is it a fact, or is it simply someone's opinion? Thinking also helps you to decide how any new information fits with information you already have, and what you might be able to do with the new information. It also helps when you have to make decisions.

Creative thinking helps you to make connections between different pieces of information, and to come up with solutions to problems.

Activity

Write a self-assessment that describes some of your strengths and areas for development. Think about:

- subjects in school where you feel more and less confident
- how well you cope when facing new challenges
- situations when you react well and situations when your reactions are not so helpful
- whether you are able to persevere with something difficult
- whether you use effective methods to find information
- how well-organised you think you are
- whether you can think creatively and come up with new ideas or solutions to problems.

1.4 Our cultural heritage 1

In these lessons you will learn:

- why we study the past
- about the development of the culture of the countries of the Arabian Gulf.

Why study the past?

A culture is the way of life of a people, shown in the activities, beliefs and practices of the population. These are often based on very long-standing traditions and values from the past. Our lives are greatly influenced by the culture in which we live, so it is good to understand how it is formed.

We study the past to help us understand why we live the way we do in the present. When we study the cultures of the past we can see how they have helped to create the culture we live in today. We are able to find parts of our past that should be valued and celebrated. Understanding our cultural heritage also helps us to decide which modern influences on our culture are positive and which are not.

History

History is the study of the past and it tells us about things that have happened in the past.

The primary sources for understanding history are the objects, documents and creative works that people have left behind. The objects might be simple things such as arrowheads or pieces of pottery.

They can be the ruins of a single building or the remains of a great city. The documents might be lists of treasures received by a great king or the accounts of a grain trader in an ancient port. Creative works are works of art, many of which reveal important information about life at the time when they were created.



- ▲ What does this piece of pottery from Ancient Greece tell us about life in those times?

Historians use all this evidence to provide clues that help them put together a picture of what life was like in the past.

Why are there different cultures?

We all belong to one race which is called the human race. In the distant past people moved to live in different parts of the world. Differences between these people and the way they lived came about because of the conditions created by the **climate** in the various different places to which they moved. These affected the kind of food that was available, the sorts of houses the people needed to build, and the clothes they needed to wear.

As the different groups lived together they created their own languages and exchanged ideas. They developed different ways of living, with some people working as farmers, fishermen and craftspeople and others becoming traders, government officials and leaders. Others created works of art, told stories, sang songs and invented dances that reflected their experiences.



▲ How would life have developed for people who lived in this kind of environment?