Activity Answers

Unit 1: What is culture?

Activity 1 (page 5)

1 What view does Item A take on the genes versus culture debate?

MacInnes (1998) takes the view that it is culture, not genes, that explains why people behave in particular ways.

2 Look at Item B.

a) Why are the passengers reacting like this?

The reaction is based on gender stereotyping – the idea that 'piloting a plane' is 'man's work' and not something a woman is capable of doing – hence the passengers' panic when they realise a woman is flying the plane.

b) Is there any justification for their reaction?

MacInnes (1998) argues that there is no justification for a belief that certain types of work should be 'exclusively male or female'. If the behaviour of men and women was dictated by their genes we would expect to find men or women behaving in very similar ways both historically and across different cultures. Sociologically, this isn't the case: what people regard as 'normal behaviour' differs between cultures and evidence from our society suggests neither sex is 'biologically incapable' of doing any particular type of work.

Activity 2 (page 6)

How does the case of John Ssabunnya illustrate the importance of learned behaviour for human beings?

It illustrates the importance of learned behaviour in the following ways: **1 Communication:** Although John had learned to communicate with the monkeys, without human contact children do not 'naturally' learn human language. **2 Food/ diet:** John learned to eat what the monkeys ate; this suggests that the type of food we eat is culturally defined and learned. **3 Walking:** John did not walk on two legs, which suggests that doing so is a technique we need to learn. **4 Personal appearance:** John didn't wash or clothe himself when with the monkeys, which suggests that these are things we learn from belonging to a human culture. Once John was in a human environment, he developed the things we associate with 'being human' (to sing, laugh, talk, play, dress and walk). This suggests that it is only through learning to behave with others that we actually develop and display these characteristics.

Activity 3 (page 6)

What do these photographs suggest about culture and attitudes towards the body?

In terms of culture, the photographs demonstrate two things: **1 Diversity** *between* cultures (such as how much of the body is uncovered in public) and *within* cultures (different attitudes to male/female dress, uncovered flesh, and so on). **2 Flexibility:** Within a culture, the same rule may apply differently to men and to women. For example, while men may sunbathe topless on a family beach at Brighton, the same may not be true for women. The diversity and flexibility of cultural beliefs is seen in different **attitudes** to the body (covered and uncovered flesh): in Afghanistan, women have very little bare flesh on show whereas in Brighton the reverse is true (at least on the beach).

Activity 4 (pages 7–8)

1 What meanings does the symbol in Item A communicate?

A selection of 'general meanings' might include the following: **1 Political Union: National identity:** The flag is a way of representing the United Kingdom, while at the same time demonstrating three distinctive, different and at times separate national identities. It combines the individual flags of England, Scotland and Ireland. **2 Patriotism**: A flag is symbolic of a nation state and may create feelings of national pride, loyalty, devotion, and so on. **3 Cultural identity and difference**: 'The British' have a cultural identity that marks them out as 'different' to others.

2 a) Identify the values of the Cheyenne described in Item B.

Some values include: wealth should be given away; a giver should not expect an equal amount in return; prestige and respect for generosity are of greater value than wealth; bravery on the battlefield is more respected than killing an enemy; those who horde wealth for personal use are looked down upon.

2 b) How do they indicate that values vary from culture to culture?

We can contrast the values in Item B with the values in our society. British culture places a high value on personal wealth, which is also a source of prestige and respect. In terms of giving presents, we generally expect to receive something of a similar value – receiving something of lower value can be embarrassing; when giving to charity we don't expect anything in return.

3 Norms are important. Discuss briefly with reference to Item C.

Norms are rules about how people should behave in different situations – they guide our behaviour, create common ground for social interaction and set standards and boundaries for behaviour. These ideas can be seen in Item C in the context of norms governing personal space and the distance we like to keep between ourselves and others. When we break norms we lay ourselves open to punishment – in the cartoon the 'punishment' for not obeying the buyer's personal space norms is that he will not purchase the seller's Brazil nuts.

Activity 5 (page 10)

What evidence do Items A, B and C provide for a global culture?

The items illustrate a global culture in three main ways: **1 Worldwide recognition**: Hollywood films (Item A) are sold around the globe, musicians (Item B) perform in many different countries and musical genres (such as hip-hop, Item C) have a worldwide fan base. **2 Global audience**: All three items suggest a global audience for products (films and music), cultural icons (50 Cent) and musical tastes (hip hop). **3 Cultural icons**: Rap stars (Item B) are recognised around the globe, not just in their home countries.

Unit 2: Socialisation

Activity 6 (page 12)

What types of socialisation apply to the people in these photographs?

1 Soldiering involves **anticipatory** socialisation (new recruits will have some idea (from the media for example) about 'army life'); **re-socialisation**, in that 'civilians' have to learn the different rules (such as killing an enemy on the battlefield) that apply to army life; **secondary** socialisation is the process whereby these different rules are learned (from people like army officers).

2 Marriage involves **anticipatory** socialisation because the people involved will have some advance knowledge of what the process involves; wedding officials play a secondary socialising role by leading the couple through the service; marriage itself involves a form of **re-socialisation** (the partners must learn to adjust to their new situation).

Activity 7 (page 13)

1 What ways do parents have of 'making their children conform'?

Parents set examples for their children to follow as well as teaching various types of acceptable behaviour. In terms of sanctions, parents use both rewards for acceptable behaviour and punishments for unacceptable behaviour.

2 In what ways does Item B support Furedi's views?

Item B supports the idea of a change in the role of parents, from one of 'care and stimulation' to that of 'protection from danger' in three ways: **1** Micro-chipping reflects parental anxiety about 'where their children are' – so the ability to track them at all times is attractive. **2** Furedi suggests 'paranoia' exaggerates the risk of harm and parents are encouraged to adopt ever-more extreme forms of 'protection' for their children. **3** Some children's charities argue that parents are overreacting – the chances of a child being abducted are small.

Activity 8 (page 14)

What do you think these pupils are learning from the activities shown in the photographs?

The photographs suggest things that pupils learn through secondary socialisation. In 'pledging allegiance' children are learning about the culture of their country (e.g. what it values) and the doing so also tells children about their national identity (that they are American). As a result, they learn that they are part of a wider society. They are also learning about different cultural identities (such as the existence of different ethnic groups – the class is one of mixed ethnicity).

'Play' involves mixing with peers, as equals, and through it children learn norms (treating others properly), negotiation skills and social roles – such as being a friend to someone. They may also be learning about different ethnicities through playing together.

Activity 9 (page 15)

1 What do Items A and B reveal about peer groups?

Item A reveals that peer groups are an important source of help and advice ('I can talk to my friends about things'), partly because their members often have shared experiences. In some ways this reflects an independence from parents that is starting to prepare children for adult roles. Item B reveals the kinds of intense peer pressures that surround teenagers and which can, on occasions, lead them into criminal behaviour.

2 Why do you think *Friends* is so popular with young people?

Friends represented a peer group with which young people could identify. The friends came from a range of family backgrounds with a variety of different experiences, (such as being raised by a transvestite father). Young people could also identify with things like family problems, the formation of relationships within the peer group and how to relate to different people in different ways (as a friend, lover, etc.). *Friends* also reflected the kinds of peer pressure (the arguments, the pressure to conform) often experienced by young people.

Activity 10 (page 17)

1 What are the key features of socialisation into McJobs?

For Ritzer (2002), key features of socialisation into McJobs include learning to perform simple tasks in a predictable manner, acting and responding to each customer in the same way, and learning that initiative is neither required nor encouraged.

2 Why might these skills be less useful in other kinds of jobs?

In jobs where work isn't standardised, repetitive and predictable such skills are not going to be useful. If an employee needs to be able to respond to customers' individual needs and requirements, understand when things are going

wrong, and use their initiative in dealing with unforeseen problems, they require a different set of skills.

Unit 3: Self, identity and difference

Activity 11 (page 19)

1 How would symbolic interactionists explain the experience of the journalist in Item A?

An explanation would focus on three main areas. **1 The self**: Following the operation the journalist's 'perception of self' changed, based on an assessment of how he looked and 'presented himself to the world'. **2 Social interaction**: Symbolic interactionists argue that our identity emerges through interaction and this idea is reflected by the journalist when he speculates on whether his friends would have wanted his friendship if they hadn't known him prior to his operations. His friends, he felt, 'were responding to who I was before the operation'. The final area is suggested by the previous two in the sense of **3 The changing self** – the idea that our identity can change with the passage of time and expressed by the journalist when he notes 'I was not me anymore'.

2 In what ways are the identities of the boys in Item B likely to change?

The boys are undergoing a rite of passage and their identities are likely to change as a result. Their social identity changes as they move from 'childhood' to 'adulthood', which is likely to change their personal identity; the boys' sense of self is likely to change as the people around them (both adults and children) start to interact with them differently on the basis of their new (adult) identity.

Activity 12 (page 21)

What do Items A, B and C suggest about identity in postmodern and late society?

In terms of **postmodernity**, Items A and B suggest that we can choose from a wide range of images and styles to suit and express our chosen identities. A key concept illustrated by each item is choice – the idea that identities can be freely chosen rather than imposed by things like tradition. Item C, in particular, expresses the idea that, in a time of rapid social change, 'the self is no longer fixed' and people can 'try out' a range of different identities. In addition, winning 'a year's worth of free identity' suggests the fragility and precariousness of new identities since they can be easily adopted and discarded.

In terms of **late modernity** choice and individualisation are apparent in Items A and B – choosing a new identity 'off the shelf' (Item A) or creating your own sense of style (Item B). This, in turn, supports the idea of social reflexivity – people are reflecting on who they are, how they behave and how they present themselves to the world. In Item B, for example, identity becomes a project on which women work, using things like clothing and perfume as props.

Activity 13 (page 22)

1 What identities are being projected in these photos?

Item A projects both a religious (Christian) identity and a subcultural (biker) identity, Item B a youth subcultural (Goth) identity and Item C (gay/lesbian) sexual identities.

2 Explain why these photos represent identity politics.

Identity politics describes 'conflicts and struggles' over identity, something frequently based on ideas of 'difference' and the 'right to be different'. Each item represents a group expressing this right and, in so doing, presenting a challenge to other, powerful, groups. In Item A, 'Bikers for Jesus' present a challenge to conventional notions of 'a Christian', while in Item C gays and lesbians are celebrating their sexuality and difference, thereby presenting a challenge to conventional forms of sexuality. In Item B, Goth subcultural identities celebrate their difference while also presenting a challenge to conventional notions of youth.

Unit 4: Age and identity

Activity 14 (page 24)

What 'identity' of youths is suggested by each of these items?

Item A suggests an identity based around youths being seen as 'wild', out-of-control and dangerous. For the 'top policeman' this identity is a 'fact of nature' – such children are 'born wild'. Item B suggests a different identity, that of conventional youth having family-orientated values and a strong social conscience. This identity sees youths as an asset to society – they are ambitious, hard-working, respectful and caring. Item C presents two contrasting pictures; on the one hand there are 'criminal youth'. On the other, there are youths concerned about preventing violence; the protest is both demanding help from adults to break the cycle of violence and suggesting ways to achieve this. Finally, Item D suggests a (female) identity of youth that is overly concerned about physical appearance and its relationship to personal happiness.

Activity 15 (page 25)

What do these items suggest about how the people in the pictures see old age?

The items suggest two things. **1** They suggest that those pictured have a **positive** view of old age, which reflects the idea that 'the elderly' are not incapable of doing things, like running marathons or forming a pop group, more usually associated with youth. **2** They suggest that those pictured are refusing to 'wear the mask of old age' (Featherstone and Hepworth, 1989) by not conforming to negative, ageist stereotypes.

Unit 5: Disability and identity

Activity 16 (page 27)

1 How can Items A and B be seen as an example of identity politics?

Identity politics describes 'conflicts and struggles' over identity and this, in turn, is frequently based on the idea of 'difference' and the 'right to be different'. In Item A, the deaf couple see their child's deafness as a cause for celebration of the fact that they belong to a cultural minority. Although 'being deaf' is often seen as a spoiled identity, the couple have rejected the negative stereotype and present deafness not as 'disability' (something that needs to be fixed) but as a different kind of ability – 'Our language is so colourful, so alive'. Item B represents a form of identity politics because the physically impaired individual is protesting against being treated as a second-class citizen and claiming the same rights as the able-bodied.

2 In what way is Item C an example of disability rights?

Item C illustrates the idea that 'the right to be different' doesn't mean that the disabled should be discriminated against. However, by expressing this right the disabled present a challenge to other, powerful, groups (such as, in this instance, farmers). This is an example of disability rights in the sense that one identity group – wheelchair users – are arguing for the same civil rights as non-disabled people.

Unit 6: Ethnic identities

Activity 17 (page 29)

1 How might awareness of the history of slavery influence the identity and ethnic awareness of Black Britons?

'Identity' involves thinking about 'who you are' and, equally importantly, how you came to be who you are. Thus, in the case of Black Britons a knowledge and awareness of the history of their ethnic group is likely to be important – especially when it involves being sold into slavery. This shared sense of history helps to create an awareness of difference, cultural traditions and unique ethnic background.

2 How can Items B and C be seen as examples of Black identity and culture?

Item B notes the contribution made by James Brown to both Black culture (as the inspiration for various modern Black musical forms) and Black identity. As the inventor of the phrase 'Say it Loud – I'm Black and I'm Proud', Brown contributed to the development of Black consciousness (awareness of the importance of a Black identity) and pride in Black culture and identity.

The carnival (Item C) is an example of expressive culture in that it demonstrates the richness of Black cultural art, music, theatre, dress, and so on, in the UK. This, in turn, impacts on Black identity because, as Alexander (1996) demonstrated, certain aspects of Black culture (e.g. dress, music and language) are symbolic markers, which make Black identities unique and instantly recognisable.

Activity 18 (page 30)

How do these items illustrate that Muslim identities in the UK include aspects of the old and the new?

Female modesty has traditionally been an important aspect of Muslim identity; many Muslim girls cover their bodies from head to toe using a burka. Item A identifies the problem that British swimming costumes are considered immodest by Muslim girls. 'The new' is represented by a compromise – the 'burkini' ('burka' + 'bikini') allows Muslim girls to retain their modesty when swimming.

Item B illustrates how 'the new' (children playing with a 'skimpily dressed Barbie doll') meets 'the old' (traditional ideas about female modesty) resulting in a compromise (the Razanne doll), which allows Muslims to uphold female modesty while allowing their children to play with the kinds of toys enjoyed by non-Muslim children.

Activity 19 (page 31)

Using these items, suggest why some people might be reluctant to adopt a White English identity.

Identity is not just based on ethnicity – it also involves ideas like social class and traditions. Thus, when 'White English identity' becomes associated with pursuits (such as Henley Regatta, Royal Ascot or hunting with hounds) that are broadly seen as belonging to the rich/upper classes, this aspect of English identity may be rejected by those who are neither wealthy nor upper class. Secondly, many White people may not regard the list of 'achievements' in Item A as part of their identity.

Activity 20 (page 33)

In what way do these items represent 'hybrid' identities?

Hybrid identities result from the way people combine different ethnic styles. Item A illustrates this with its fusion of musical styles – bhangra (itself a blend of Indian folk music and Western pop) and hip hop – to create a unique musical style and identity. Item B illustrates a different form of fusion. Salima Dhalla feels that her identity is a unique mix (hybrid) of ethnicities (Asian, English, Welsh and East African) to which is added social class (a middle-class school), different styles (e.g. Western clothes) and an Eastern name. Item C illustrates hybrid identities in terms of the way one ethnic group (White youths) adopt aspects of another group (Jamaican patois) to produce something new and different – 'Blinglish'.

Unit 7: National and global identities

Activity 21 (page 35)

What do these items suggest about community cohesion?

The idea of community cohesion – and the policies developed to create a more cohesive national identity – rests on the assumption that it's possible to create over-arching loyalties and identities that can be shared by different ethnic groups (while allowing each to retain their cultural traditions). The items show one way that this can be achieved through people of different ethnicities seeing themselves as having a common country (England), showing loyalty to that country (in Mr Patel's case by supporting the England football team and in Christine Ohuruogu's case by competing for England) and adopting some of the common symbols of that country (such as the George Cross).

One problem here is that there may be no agreement about how we define identities like 'English' and no agreement about how symbols of national identity are interpreted. In Item A, for example, Mr Patel's interpretation is different to that of football supporters or racists – while for the former the English flag is a symbol of cohesion, for the latter it is a symbol of separateness (a symbol of White identity)

Activity 22 (page 35)

To what extent do you think this list defines Englishness?

Although we can define 'Englishness' in terms of these values, outlooks and unspoken rules (they may be real and meaningful to many people), to do so assumes three things: **1** that everyone who is 'English' shares these ideas (thereby ignoring the cultural variations in our society); **2** that those who don't share these ideas are 'not English' (which involves defining 'Englishness' in terms of crude national stereotypes; **3** that it is possible to identify values and rules that define 'Englishness' in a way that is somehow fixed and unchanging; the past, in this respect, is not always a reliable guide to the present.

Activity 23 (page 37)

1 State why the view expressed in Item A is an example of exclusive nationalism.

Exclusive nationalism involves three main ideas, each of which appears in Item A: **1** the maintenance of tight national boundaries by excluding immigrants (the threat presented by 'large waves of immigrants who resist absorption'); **2** a mean-minded hatred of 'foreigners' (protection from 'rabid dogs', 'foreign dictatorship', etc.) and **3** an intense dislike of European 'interference' in British political and economic affairs ('Sadly, the Channel no longer protects us from Brussels' bureaucrats').

2 Explain why Item B seems to display a spirit of inclusive nationalism.

Inclusive nationalism involves three main ideas, each of which is suggested by the picture of children from different ethnic groups (Item B): **1** there are no tight boundaries surrounding membership of the British nation; **2** there is a willingness to include ethnic minorities in the national community; and **3** each child has full civic rights.

Activity 24 (page 38)

In what ways do Items A and B reflect the influence of globalisation?

Under the influence of globalisation a number of things may occur. There is a flow of goods, culture and fashions between nations. In Item B, for example, music, television, clothing and food are all heavily American-influenced. In this respect there may also be a trend to cultural uniformity (both in Item B, in terms of English children who dress, talk and behave 'like Americans' and also Item A, where companies like McDonald's sell the same product in the same way around the globe). There is evidence of cultural hybridity (glocalisation) in Item A in that the Indonesian staff are wearing a 'local adaption' of the normal McDonald's uniform.

Unit 8: Gender identities

Activity 25 (page 40)

What do these items tell us about the nature/nurture debate?

If gender was a biological category determined by our 'nature', then we would expect to see all males, for example, displaying the same kind of behaviour at all times and in all societies. Item B provides one example of how this is not the case – the New Guinea men look and behave very differently from men in our society. Item A provides further evidence that gender is shaped by 'nurture' – the cultural environment into which one is born and raised. Gender socialisation in Tchambuli society produces women who display characteristics ('shaven heads, unadorned, determinedly busy about their affairs') that could easily be associated with men in our society, whereas Tchambuli men behave in ways sometimes associated with women in our culture (such as being 'highly strung and fickle' and interested in gossip).

Activity 26 (page 41)

How do the items illustrate the process of gender socialisation?

Item A illustrates this process by explicitly stating a list of 'rules for dating' that are different for boys and girls. Item B, on the other hand, illustrates the idea that gender socialisation is not always explicitly taught; both boys and girls learn from experience, by watching and copying others, and so on.

Activity 27 (page 42)

What do the items tell us about changes in attitudes to gender?

Item B tells us a number of things, not the least being that attitudes to gender – such as appropriate behaviour for males and females – changes over time. A majority of both men and women, for example, now reject the idea of 'traditional' male and female work/family roles. Nearly two thirds of men and women, for example, disagree with the idea of 'a woman's place being firmly in the home'. Item A tells a slightly different story, as it suggests what Mac an Ghaill (1994) has called a 'crisis of masculinity' – the idea that where women are increasingly doing jobs traditionally performed by men. This results in men feeling insecure about both their role and their identity. One consequence of this might be a desire to see a return to 'traditional' gender roles ('I wish she'd just go back to the housework…').

Activity 28 (page 44)

What do the items tell us about changing gender identities?

The items tell us that gender identities in our society can overlap. In Item A, for example, Norman is a man who cross-dresses; he wears clothes that are considered appropriate for women in our society but not for men. In Item B, the reverse is true – the female bodybuilders have developed their bodies in ways that our society sees as masculine rather than feminine. We could, therefore, refer to the emergence of new forms of gender identity – new masculinities (such as men who want to dress like women) and new femininities (muscular women) – and a growing flexibility in gender behaviour, for example, where both men and women are able and willing to experiment with gender identities. This may reflect a general blurring of male-female identity differences; as Wilkinson (1997) suggests, people want to flirt with both their masculine and feminine sides.

Unit 9: Class identities

Activity 29 (page 46)

What do Items A, B and C suggest about class identities and differences?

The items suggest that each social class has its own sense of identity, created and maintained in two ways. Firstly, class identities involve values, tastes and preferences, lifestyles and habits that, according to Bourdieu (1984), are particular to that class. In Item A, for example, opera is a cultural pursuit largely enjoyed by the upper classes, whereas greyhound racing is enjoyed mainly by the lower classes. Secondly, class identities are maintained by contrasting our social class ('us') with people from other classes ('them'). This class consciousness is demonstrated in Item B where middle-class home owners objected to the Monk family moving to their estate ('The Monks and us are different types of people').

Item C illustrates the idea of 'difference' and separation as a source of class identity more brutally in its portrayal of the 'upper classes' hunting 'chavs' (a label given by some to lower-class youths) as if they were animals.

Activity 30 (page 48)

1 How is attendance at the sort of events shown in Item A connected to social closure?

In these examples 'social closure' refers to the idea that the upper class is largely 'closed' to entry to all but children of that class. Members of other (lower) classes are excluded because they lack the shared culture that creates a network of links and contacts that is difficult for non-members to penetrate. One way that social closure is encouraged – through social and leisure activities – is illustrated by Item A. Events such as grouse shooting and Royal Ascot give members of the upper class the opportunity to meet, mix and develop contacts amongst themselves. In addition, such events provide opportunities to socialise younger members by introducing them to exclusive social events that provide and reflect a distinctive upper-class lifestyle.

2 Compare the lifestyle and values of Richard Branson (Item B) with those of more traditional members of the upper class.

The lifestyle of traditional members of the upper class, according to Roberts (2001), is based around social and leisure activities that both provide a sense of 'aristocratic tradition' and 'real class'; in addition, it is through these activities that important connections and contacts are made. These, in turn, are related to both work and the accumulation of wealth. Branson's lifestyle inverts this situation; work is the central activity in his life and his social and leisure activities are 'brief interruptions in his normal way of life'. In other words, he uses social and leisure activities as a form of relaxation away from work whereas for the traditional upper classes these activities are central and integral to their normal way of life.

These different lifestyles, therefore, reflect different values. For the traditional upper classes, a high value is placed on leisure, with 'work' as a secondary consideration. Through leisure activities and attendance at public schools and prestigious universities (the 'old boy network'), valuable social and working contacts can be made. For Branson, the reverse is true; a high value, as Rojek (2000) notes, is placed on work with leisure being something to be enjoyed as a benefit of being successful. In addition, the values of the traditional upper class reflect an aversion to 'risk taking' – their lifestyles revolve around trying to ensure, as Scott (1982) notes, the social cohesion of their class (through, for example, social closure practised through intermarriage). Values here, as Rojek (2000) discovered, are conservative – based on the importance of tradition, authority and 'breeding' and reflecting a desire to 'preserve the historical traditions and customs of British society'. For Branson, on the other hand, undertaking 'risky ventures' is an important part of his lifestyle and values.

Activity 31 (page 51)

Use the cartoons to spot the differences between the 'traditional' and 'new' working class.

Differences between the 'old' and the 'new' working class involve areas like: **1 Work**: A shift, for men, away from heavy industries, factory work and manual labour towards 'high-tech (skilled technical) work', for example, the 'Micro Electronics' company pictured in the cartoon. **2 The home**: Family life for the new working class is home-centred and private ('privatism'); for their traditional peers, men often socialised outside the home – with their (male) workmates (e.g. 'in the pub', as the cartoon suggests). The new working class are more likely to socialise 'as a family' by going out for meal together (the 'trendy bistro'), and home is a less crowded and quieter place than for their traditional peers – as the two cartoons clearly show. This difference is reflected in **3 Changing gender roles**: For the traditional working class, men were the main breadwinners with women generally being full-time housewives (the wife shown ironing). For the new working class, gender role differences are less pronounced – women are now more likely to work outside the home and men take more responsibility for housework and childcare (the husband feeding the baby). **4 Community**: While the traditional working class tended to form close-knit communities with a wide circle of friends and frequent visits from extended family members (e.g. the grandmother depicted), this is not true of the new (privatised) working class. **5. Materialism**: Life was generally harder for the traditional working class, with less money to spend on the types of consumer goods (cars, televisions, and so on) relatively common amongst the new working class. **6. Leisure**: For the new working class, hobbies and recreational activities (sports such as golf indicated by the set of clubs) are central to their lifestyle and are used to define their sense of identity; for the traditional working class, male identity centred on the workplace and female identity the home.

Activity 32 (page 52)

1 Argue the case that the behaviour in Item B:

a) is caused by the culture and values described in Item A.

The argument here is that the underclass display the behaviours portrayed in Item B **because** of the culture and values they have been socialised into within the family. In this respect, for writers such as Murray, if the 'new rabble' prefer to live off crime or welfare benefits rather than work, then the kinds of behaviours seen in Item B will be a consequence of this cultural lifestyle. In other words, things like violence, drunkenness, children with discipline problems, crime and drug abuse are caused by the culture and values listed in Item A.

b) creates the culture and values described in Item A.

The argument here is that the children of an underclass are raised and socialised in a situation of social disadvantage. The underclass, cannot be blamed for behaving in the way they do because they have been 'socially excluded' (through things like unemployment and poverty) and the values and behaviours they develop (Item A) are a consequence of this exclusion. Such behaviours (alcohol and drug use) are attempts to cope with social disadvantage and exclusion. When Dean and Taylor-Gooby (1992) argue that the underclass share the same mainstream social values as everyone else, they're suggesting that when such people are denied the opportunity to do things like work to earn money, they turn to criminal means, such as drug-dealing, to earn an income.

2 Use Item C to argue that the poorest do not have separate values from the rest of society.

If the poorest had separate values from the rest of society we would not expect to see the values expressed by the single mother in Item C. Judith Gardam expresses values of love, compassion and feelings for others and wants to improve both her own life and that of her children through education (by attending college part-time). In these respects, her values are those of mainstream society.

Unit 10: Leisure, consumption and identity

Activity 33 (page 56)

1 How would the class domination Marxist model explain Item A?

This model explains global sporting events in terms of the idea that a ruling class (such as oil-rich sheikhs) exploit people in two ways. **1 Economically:** Item A notes the exploitation of workers doing long shifts for low wages and squalid conditions in order that Dubai's ruler can, through sport, improve the region's image and encourage tourism. The ruling class also take huge profits from leisure – people not only pay to watch sport, they also buy sport-related products. **2 Politically**: For Marxists, entertainment and leisure are 'mindless time-fillers' from which a ruling class indirectly benefit because they distract people from the reality of their exploitation.

2 How would a) mass society and b) pluralist models explain Item B?

a) Mass society models see people leading 'empty and superficial' lives, mainly because of the poor quality of popular culture, which includes reality TV programmes like *Big Brother*. Leisure and entertainment is designed to appeal to the largest possible (mass) audience, which means that it has to be unchallenging and generally of low quality. Audiences, in this model, are seen as passive consumers of mass-produced trivia.

b) Pluralist models interpret something like reality TV in a different way. They see such forms of entertainment as part of a general package of popular culture – both different types of programming (current affairs, drama, etc.) and different

types of leisure. These models see leisure and entertainment in two ways: firstly, in terms of an active audience having the freedom to make choices about what to watch or do; and, secondly, in terms of there being a wide variety of leisure and entertainment choices available to audiences.

3 How would the postmodern model explain Item C?

One characteristic of postmodern models is the idea that people, according to Taylor and Cohen (1992), actively seek choice, novelty and diversity – and one way to do this, as evidenced by Item C, is through exotic holidays. These represent 'new landscapes': such holidays were not available to the mass of the population in the past and they represent new and different experiences. In the case of Item C, this involves travelling to a different country and experiencing, first-hand, the lifestyles and cultures of different ('exotic') peoples.

Activity 34 (page 57)

Show how these items suggest that the distinction between 'real' and 'virtual' worlds is becoming blurred.

Improvements in computer technology have created opportunities for the development of online communities and identities that mirror those in 'the real world'. In other words, it is possible for people to participate in virtual (computer-generated) communities in ways that are similar to their participation in real-world communities. In Item C, for example, it's possible to 'live' in a virtual world in much the same way that people live in the real world – up to and including 'marrying' someone. In this respect, the distinction between 'real' and 'virtual' may become blurred (to the extent, in Item A, of a husband suing for divorce in the real world on the basis of something that happened in the virtual world). Item B suggests the possibility of further blurring with the idea that it's possible to create a multitude of different personalities and identities – to be 'whoever you want to be' – in the virtual world in much the same way that you can create an avatar tailored precisely to whatever perception of yourself you want to project (Item C). The item suggests that blurring is likely to become extensive as people use virtual worlds for 'the development, discovery and expression' of their 'real world' identity. In other words, people will start to use the virtual world as a means of testing and exploring who they are in the real world.

Activity 35 (page 58)

1 Explain why Item A is an example of a status distinction.

The item distinguishes between different 'types of people' on the basis of their 'different standards of behaviour'. A distinction is made between two groups who might attend the Royal Opera – those who wear T-shirts, shorts and trainers and those who do not – on the basis of their status (the first group are considered lower in status than the second).

2 Why is Item B so critical of shopping?

The item reflects a radical model of consumer culture by suggesting that shopping, like religion, serves an ideological purpose for capitalism. People 'worship' in the 'new cathedrals' (shopping malls), follow rituals and are offered 'paradise on earth' through their purchase and consumption of goods. Furthermore, shopping is like an addictive drug (opium) whose qualities serve to 'reconcile people to capitalism' (making them more likely to accept an exploitative economic system). People are seduced into believing that their lives will be happier if they buy the latest goods and services – but this happiness is shallow (like a drug, once the effects have worn off, the user needs their next (consumer) fix). Bartholomew refers to shopping as a 'new religion' – something that suggests it is used, by capitalism, to replace an older form that no longer has the power to reconcile people ideologically to capitalism.

3 What do Items C and D tell us about creativity and individuality in consumer culture?

A postmodern model of consumer culture is one where lifestyles are shaped by the individual choices people make. In this respect, people can be **creative** about what they wear, eat, drink, and so on, and **individual** in terms of the ability to arrange these things into a 'unique lifestyle' – a process that places great value on individual diversity.

However, Items C and D suggest this model overstates things. Where people are faced with a wide range of consumption choices, they experience uncertainty over whether they are making 'the right choices', hence the appearance of 'consumer experts' such as those in Item C – people who instruct others in the 'right' and 'wrong' fashion choices. Item D takes this idea further by suggesting that what appears to be 'individual choice' and 'creativity' is, in fact, nothing of the sort. Although people may no longer strictly conform to (1950s) ideas about consumption, they are still being guided by things like the media (magazines, experts, and so on) and, consequently, make much the same sort of 'choices' as those made by the mass of the population. In other words, the items are suggesting that 'creativity' and 'individuality' are by no means as widespread and significant as the postmodern model suggests.