Rubric for blog posting

Defining Culture: A History Teacher's Perspective (Ch. 1)

Title satisfying one out of the three good-title requirements (concise?)   70

Two of the statements are not sufficiently clear and/or to-the-point   60

All statements are grammatically accurate and easy-to-follow   100

Average earned = 76

Culture is one of the major themes of history and is one of the ways historians differentiate various groups. When I taught world history, I always asked my students how they define culture. As a class, we usually agreed that culture is a set of shared beliefs and behaviors. Based on what I learned in Tuesday night's class, I would like to elaborate on that basic definition by combining Quinn (1991) and Palmer's (1996) separate definitions. Taken together, I believe an accurate definition of culture is, "the shared understandings, traditional knowledge, and changing attitudes about beliefs, behaviors, and values that are sometimes, but not always, expressed in language."

I believe the key term in any definition of culture, though, is "shared." If an aspect of culture is not widely held by many members of a society, it will not become a part of that society's accepted norms. And although not everyone within a culture shares all the same beliefs, most people do. There are certain characteristics that distinguish ancient cultures from modern ones and Western cultures from Eastern ones. There are even cultural differences among the regions of a single country. In the United States, for example, there are beliefs and behaviors that are more common in the South than in the North. We mentioned a few of these in class, such as the Southern tendency to smile and wave at strangers, which would not be culturally acceptable above the Mason-Dixon line. Overall, the cultural beliefs of one society are what help to separate them from another society -- regardless of any positive and/or negative effects. I'm interested to learn more about how culture and language interact and affect these differences.

Comment [DK1]: Support this statement

Comment [DK2]: Namely?

Comment [DK3]: What do you mean?