Elements of Society

I. How society is organized
   A. Social classes
      1. Groupings of people based on rank or status depending on wealth, land, ancestors, or education
      2. Difficult to move from one class to another in some cultures
   B. Kinds of families
      1. Nuclear family is a mother, father, and children; common in developed nations such as U.S., Australia, Germany
      2. Extended family includes several generations and their wives or husbands and children; extended families are less common as rural people move to cities

II. Language
   A. A basis for culture
      1. People learn their culture through language
      2. Language reflects the things important in a culture
      3. Language preserves shared ideas and traditions

III. Religion
   A. Cultural influence
      1. Religion is important in every culture
      2. In some countries, more than one religion is followed; other countries follow one religion
      3. Religion can help people make sense of the world and guide people’s behavior
      4. Religious beliefs vary
      5. Religions have prayers, rituals, important places and times