

Name: _____

Date: _____

Americanization

Since the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, many Americans are confused. Why would anyone hate us? The answer may partly lie with how America is perceived in many parts of the world.

The United States is the world's richest nation. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union more than a decade ago, America is the only military superpower. America is a model for tolerance, diversity, and democracy. Nevertheless, many people disagree with American values.

In traditional cultures with low crime and a strong family structure, many people around the world see America as a violent, permissive society. In his book *Jehad vs. McWorld*, Benjamin Barber argues that the culture of the United States and other western nations has replaced the traditional values of some societies.

Young people around the world are wearing western clothes, listening to western music, and adopting western attitudes.

In 1873, Jules Verne wrote an adventure story titled "Around the World in Eighty Days." Today it is possible to circle the globe in less than a day. People who were once isolated from one another are now part of a global community. Through television and the Internet, we have instant access to almost any part of the world. With that access comes a responsibility to understand other people and cultures. By learning about and understanding one another, we can hope that the citizens of the world can develop a sense of tolerance and respect for one another.

Answer in Complete Sentences

*1. Why does Benjamin Barber contend that many people in traditional societies are unhappy with the culture of the United States and other western nations?

*2. Most people believe that some western values are good, while others are bad. On balance, do you believe western values are good or bad?

*3. Do we have a responsibility to learn about other people and cultures?

*A higher order learning question. Any reasonable answer will be accepted.