II. **Summary 01: Culture and the evolution of mass communication
Please read carefully the summary of the section of Chapter 1 titled "Culture and the evolution of mass communication" and answer the multiple choice questions that follow.**

One of the ways to grasp the influence of media is to look at it within the context of culture. The term Culture, when spelled with a capital C, is generally used to describe art, forms of expression like music or paintings that provide enlightenment or insight. The term culture, when spelled with a small c, can represent the entire spectrum of the way people express themselves at particular historical times, including art, beliefs, customs, games, technologies, traditions, and institutions. It also encompasses modes of communication, the process of creating symbol systems that convey information and meaning. Culture is made up of the products a society makes and the processes that create those products. It can be defined as the symbols of expression that groups and societies use to make sense of daily life and to articulate their values. Mass media — the cultural industries and channels of communication — can then be seen as the distributors of culture. The history of mass media can be traced through five main eras: oral, written, print, electronic, and digital. The last three phases feature the development of mass communication: the process of delivering cultural messages to large and diverse audiences through media channels. Oral and written communication begin the dialogue. The oral and written eras spanned many centuries, from around 1000 B.C. to the mid-fifteenth century. In nearly all early societies, poets, teachers, and storytellers passed along knowledge through word of mouth. As societies progressed, the written word developed and changed the way people communicated. In the beginning, only the ruling classes used the written word, giving them yet more power over the working class. Much like current media pundits arguing the merits of new technology, philosophers debated over the value of the written word, and how it may overshadow the oral tradition. Many felt that the written word might distract from the merits of oral debates and lessons.
Printed communication spreads the word. Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press and movable type in the fifteenth century, which would transform the printed word from a luxury only afforded to the rich into the first mass medium. In addition, the advent of the printing press allowed for mass production and mass marketing. The printing press possessed three new elements that made this possible: (1) duplication (machine copying) replaced hand-copying manuscripts; (2) duplication could rapidly produce many copies; and (3) faster copying reduced the cost of each book, making books more affordable for less affluent people. These three innovations paved the way for the Industrial Revolution assembly-line production and modern capitalism. The printing press also paved the way for major cultural changes because it allowed for the mass transmittal of information on a multinational level, fostering feelings of nationalism. The print era also facilitated a more centralized nation-state type of government. However, just as the print revolution fostered a feeling of a larger community, it also encouraged individual thought as literacy rates rose and as mass-produced pamphlets, magazines, and books made more ideas available. The printing press challenged the values of tribal life, fostered the modern idea of individuality, and allowed people to make up their minds for themselves.
Electronic and digital communication bring immediacy to the message. The appearance of the telegraph in America in the 1840s marked the transition from a print-based society to an informational era. The telegraph separated communication from transportation, made messages instantaneous, made information a commodity that could be bought or sold, and made it easier for governmental and business agencies to coordinate operations. The telegraph was an omen of future technological developments, including the phone and fax machines. The arrival of television as an important new mass medium marked the beginnings of the electronic era in the 1950s and 1960s. The quick appearance of technology like touch-tone phones, fax machines, and the Internet signaled the shift to the digital era of communication. Digital technologies make use of binary numbers to reduce sound, images, and text into a series of ones and zeros. The current digital era is marked by a nearly free flow of information. Technology has progressed so quickly that governments and businesses are not able to place a strict control over information.
Media convergence comes of age. Rather than abruptly changing, the electronic and digital eras have blended into one another. Media convergence is the term that refers to this blending of media, specifically the appearance of older media forms on new media outlets. Newspaper articles or radio programs available on the Internet are examples of media convergence. This convergence can also be seen in the blurring of the different eras of communication. Oral traditions appear again in the form of instant messaging services, and the written word appears in online publications.

Channeling older media types through new media outlets is called \_\_\_\_\_.
a. electronic sharing
b. media accommodation
c. digital processing
d. media convergence

Culture is made up of \_\_\_\_\_.

1. products and process of a society
b. mass media of a society
c. art and literature
d. high and low art forms

The printing press was invented by \_\_\_\_\_.
a. Gutenberg
b. Weaver
c. Gordon
d. Laxwell

The printing press \_\_\_\_\_.
a. fostered nationalism
b. encouraged tribal life
c. discouraged individualism
d. all of the above

Which of the following is not an era of mass communication?
a. oral
b. written
c. commercial
d. print

**Summary 02: Mass media and the process of communication. A linear model of mass communication
Please read carefully the summaries of the section of Chapter 1 titled "Mass media and the process of communication" and "A linear model of mass communication" and answer the multiple choice questions that follow.**
One of the earliest and most basic ideas about how mass media work is seen in the linear model of mass communication. In this model, there is a sender, a mass media message, a channel, and a receiver: senders (the authors, producers, and organizations) transmit mass media messages (programs, texts, images, and sounds) through a mass media channel (newspapers, books, radio, television, radio, the Internet, etc.) to a large group of receivers (readers, viewers, citizens, and consumers). In addition, this model may include gatekeepers (such as editors, producers, or other media managers), who act as message filters. The process sometimes includes feedback, messages sent back to the senders by the receivers, which can include online polls and letters to the editor. The linear model, however, does not take into account several factors that are usually present in communication, such as how the receiver decodes the message.

A cultural approach and the stories media tell
Beyond the simple linear model, it is important to look at the cultural context of media messages. Individuals and societies bring diverse meanings to messages — based on factors such as gender, age, educational level, ethnicity, and occupation — that affect how they perceive information and the media. Although a message may have a specific intention, an audience has its own set of values and ideas that it will use to judge and interpret the meaning. Audiences seek messages that reflect their own ideas and values, which is known as selective exposure. At its most significant level, mass media can influence an entire society or nation's perception of events: In this century, media coverage helped people understand the magnitude and tragedy of the World Wars, television coverage in the 1950s and 1960s of the Civil Rights movement helped transform the ways that many white people viewed the problems and aspirations of African Americans, and coverage of the O. J. Simpson trial stirred public discussions of legal reform and domestic abuse.

The impact of media in everyday life
Just as scholars in ancient Greece debated the merits of art forms, current scholars, parents, and even media outlets themselves debate the impact of media on our culture. The ancient Greek scholar Plato created what became known as the classical view on art: Art should instruct and uplift people but not glorify evil. Other classical thinkers believed that art should imitate life. In our time, the effects of media messages continue to prompt debate; for example, Elvis Presley's television appearances in the 1950s caused public outcry against his "lascivious" hip movements. Today, advancements in technology, particularly the Internet, have allowed culture to grow and spread quickly, causing public outcry over the quality and content of information and messages available. By 2002, debates raged about violence, pornography and suggestive content, and concentrated advertising in the media. Yet research has seldom demonstrated that media cause society's major problems, so the question remains: Do we blame the media? Parents, teachers, and religious leaders? Economic and social issues? These are difficult questions, but it is clear that a responsible citizenry must attend to diverse media messages that are too often taken for granted.

An individual who filters the messages that are produced is the \_\_\_\_\_.
a. opinioneer
b. editor
c. director
d. gatekeeper

Feedback can include \_\_\_\_\_.
 a. editorials
 b. interviews
 c. letters to the editor
 d. all of the above

Selective exposure refers to the practice of \_\_\_\_\_.
 a. audiences seeking out messages similar to their own values
 b . sending media only to certain regions in the United States
 c. advertisers targeting specific demographics
 d. none of the above

In the linear model of communication, a television program is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
a. medium
b. mass
c. message
d. maker

In the linear model of mass communication, senders do NOT include \_\_\_\_\_.
a. producers
b. directors
c. corporations
d. films

**Summary 03: Surveying the Cultural Landscape. Culture as a skyscraper
Please read carefully the summaries of the section of Chapter 1 titled "Surveying the Cultural Landscape" and "Culture as a skyscraper" and answer the multiple choice questions that follow.**

 In the twentieth century, critics and audiences created hierarchy of culture. High culture, including ballet, classical music, art museums, classical literature and the like, is generally identified with "good taste" and has been generally supported by highly educated people and those with money. Low culture, including such forms as rock music, comic books, and talk shows, is seen as the culture of the "masses," that is., pop culture. Many critics are concerned with the effect of popular culture on the youth, believing that it may dull their imaginations and undermine their ability to judge good art from bad. Another concern with low culture is that it may exploit classic works of art and literature — for example, the pop culture translations of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein into horror movies and the TV show The Munsters. Unlike classic works, elements of pop culture do not often last long. The argument is that pop culture is fleeting and of little substance; it follows rather than dictates public taste. In television, this is known as LOP, or least objectionable programming — bland programming that won't challenge or surprise typical viewers. Another concern with pop culture is that is it driving out all higher forms of culture. The commercialism that pop culture promotes may be affecting democratic reasoning as well. People are distracted by products and lose sight of societal issues. Sometimes called the "Big Mac" theory, this suggests that people are hooked on the ideas of pop culture and do not wish or know how to make cultural distinctions.

Culture as a map
A map is a useful way to picture the complex aspects of culture. A map can show the wide variety of tastes of individuals, highlighting main highways and familiar urban centers but also including side roads and smaller towns. Culture can then be examined outside of a high-low hierarchy. Often, when new cultural ideas emerge, critics call for a return to the "good old days," a "better past" when they perceive things were better. This is a common response to new and threatening forms of culture. Along these lines, audiences often enjoy the comfort of what is already familiar, such as reading books repeatedly or TV shows with repetitive plot lines. At the same time, audiences sometimes seek the new and revolutionary media forms that may still reference older books, shows, persons, or jokes that strike a familiar chord in audiences.

Shifting values in modern culture
In the rapid convergence of media, cultural boundaries are blurring. The strict line between entertainment and information is being lost, and new ways of exploring and sharing information are being used. The path of cultural values is commonly divided between the modern period (from the Industrial Revolution) and the postmodern or contemporary period. The complex idea of modernization generally refers to the development of the industrial technology that allowed businesses to become larger, products more valuable and, all in all, society to become more commercial and more technologically advanced. Cultural responses to modernization - such as Huxley's Brave New World (1932) and Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times (1936) - often focus on the dehumanizing aspect of technology: alienating people from one another, fostering greed, and encouraging bureaucracies that oppress rather than help people. Four of the major values of a modern society are celebrating the individual, believing in rational order, working efficiently, and rejecting tradition.

Shifting values in postmodern culture
Our contemporary society can be seen as a postmodern one. Although difficult to describe, the postmodern era is marked by four values: opposing hierarchy, diversifying and recycling culture, questioning scientific reasoning, and embracing paradox. Opposition to hierarchy refers to challenging the sometimes arbitrary lines between high and low culture, fact and fiction, art and commerce, and information and entertainment; examples include TV infomercials, films such as Fargo (1996) that fuse the comic and tragic, and musicians such as Madonna who champion oppressed groups while becoming wealthy global icons of consumer culture. Postmodern culture also borrows heavily from cultural markers of the past. Rap artists sample old R&B hits while classic books and even older TV shows are made into films. The break from scientific reasoning blames such thinking for modern bureaucratic problems and is an attempted move back to a community-based society that predated the modern era. For example, online communities restore oral traditions as people seek ways to avoid feelings of alienation that mark the contemporary age. Although some postmodern cultural forms embrace technology, technology brings paradox to society; it often eliminates jobs and physically isolates people, yet conversely it can draw people together for discussions and interaction.

Critics fear that popular culture will \_\_\_\_\_.
 a. eclipse high culture
 b. exploit classic works
 c. distract students from serious literature
 d. all of the above

Which of the following places the media in hierarchical order from highest to lowest culture?
a. Beethoven's 5th Symphony, Six Feet Under, Beyonce, the WWF
b. Six Feet Under, Beethoven's 5th Symphony, the WWF, Beyonce
c. Six Feet Under, Beyonce, Beethoven's 5th Symphony, the WWF
 d. The WWF, Beyonce, Six Feet Under, Beethoven's 5th Symphony

Which of the following is NOT a value of a modern society?
 a. celebrating the individual
 b. believing in rational order
 c. working efficiently
 d. embracing tradition

Which of the following is a value of the postmodern society?
 a. supporting hierarchy
 b. diversifying and recycling culture
 c. accepting scientific reasoning
 d. rejecting paradox
Low culture can also be referred to as \_\_\_\_\_.
 a. fine art
 b. commercialism
 c. pop culture
 d. none of the above

**Summary 04: Critiquing Media and Culture**

 **Please read carefully the summary of the section of Chapter 1 titled "Critiquing Media and Culture" and answer the multiple choice questions that follow.**

To accurately interpret the media, we might look at the wide range of issues generated by culture, from the storytelling in the mass media to the global influences of media industries on the consumer marketplace. We should also move toward a critical perspective. This includes a thorough understanding of cultural and historical context. We must imagine culture as more complex than as shown by the high-low model and get outside of our own preferences.

Media literacy and steps in the critical process
The critical process allows us to view culture not only from a critical perspective (knowledgeable interpretations and judgments) but also a tolerant one (appreciating a diverse variety of cultural products and processes). Ideally, culture should be judged without consideration for our personal likes and dislikes and the understanding that information and knowledge are not the same thing.

Developing a critical perspective involves five stages: description, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and engagement.
· Description: paying close attention, taking notes, and researching the subject under study. This involves examining the media closely, looking for recurring ideas or themes, noting from what perspective a particular account is given, figuring out what is missing from media accounts, and considering other ways to tell a given story.
· Analysis: discovering and focusing on significant patterns that emerge from the Description stage.
· Interpretation: asking and answering the "What does that mean?" and "So what?" questions about one's findings. Here you determine the meanings of the patterns you have analyzed.
· Evaluation: arriving at a judgment as to the value of the subject that involves subordinating one's personal taste to the critical assessment resulting from the first three stages. Here, you make critical, informed judgments.
· Engagement: taking some action that connects our critical perspective with our role as citizens to question our media institutions, adding our own voice to the process of shaping the cultural environment.

Benefits of a critical perspective
Examining media within the context of a critical perspective allows us to recognize both the strengths and weaknesses of media culture. The media can be a force for change, encouraging democratic tendencies. Yet it can also act against democratic tendencies, reinforcing commercial culture. Here is another example of how our postmodern, contemporary society cannot be simply categorized. To balance these aspects of media culture, we must recognize the links between cultural expression and daily life and monitor how well the mass media serve democratic practices. Our goal, then, is to become more critical consumers and engaged citizens and thus be able to better influence the relationships among mass media, democratic participation, and our cultural landscape.

Place the following steps in the critical process in the correct order.
a. description, evaluation, analysis, engagement, interpretation
b. description, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, engagement
c. engagement, analysis, interpretation, description, evaluation
d. description, evaluation, engagement, interpretation, analysis

Analysis involves \_\_\_\_\_.
a. looking for recurring ideas
b. identifying patterns
c. determining the meanings of the subject
d. judging the subject's value

The third stage of the critical process is \_\_\_\_\_.
a. analysis
b. description
c. evaluation
d. interpretation

A critical process allows a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ view on media.
a. cynical
b. objectionable
c. biased
d. none of the above

During the evaluation step of the critical process, you determine \_\_\_\_\_.
a. the relative quality of the subject
b. patterns
c. the meanings of the subject
d. why the subject matters