

CultureGrams Frequently Asked Questions



Updated April 2008

Q. Who writes CultureGrams?

A. Each World Edition report is written by a native or long-term resident of the country in coordination with a CultureGrams editor. Writers are selected for their education, knowledge of a national language, experience with different regions and socioeconomic groups, recent residency in the country, and access to current information. Once an acceptable draft is prepared, independent reviewers (also natives or long-term residents) with similar qualifications but varying backgrounds provide additional perspectives and insights before the new text is submitted to a CultureGrams editor for final editing and publication.

The Kids Edition reports are written by CultureGrams editors, but with extensive input from reviewers. These contributors meet the same qualifications as the World Edition writers. The Provinces Edition reports are also written by CultureGrams editors and reviewed by qualified Canadian residents. The States Edition reports are also written by CultureGrams editors and submitted to state historical societies and tourist boards for review.

Q. What countries are covered in the World Edition?

A. The World Edition includes more than 200 country-specific reports. These provide complete coverage of every sovereign country recognized by the United Nations, plus several foreign dependencies.

Q. Why are some countries included in the Kids Edition, but not others?

A. The Kids Edition is a relatively new product and we are adding new texts each year. At present 82 countries are represented. The countries included are chosen because 1) they are among those most requested by teachers and schools, and 2) they reflect a diversity of regions and cultures around the world.

Q. What countries have recently been added to CultureGrams?

A. In 2008, New Caledonia and Vatican City were added to the World Edition. Andorra, Brunei, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville (Republic of the Congo), Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominica, Maldives, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, San Marino, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, and Vanuatu were added in 2007. Countries added to the Kids Edition in 2008 were Iceland, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Laos. Afghanistan, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Iraq, Mozambique, Panama, Poland, and Ukraine were added in 2007.

Q. How often do you update CultureGrams?

A. The World and Kids editions of CultureGrams are updated annually and released in August. Each report is updated with the latest statistics and government leaders, and

approximately one-fifth of the reports in the CultureGrams series is reviewed by independent reviewers (native or long-term residents) annually, ensuring that every report in the series is revised on a five-year cycle. The States and Provinces editions are also updated annually by CultureGrams editors.

Q. What sources do you use for your statistics?

A. Most statistical information (e.g., population, adult literacy, infant mortality, life expectancy) presented in the World and Kids editions of CultureGrams comes from either the Human Development Report, published by the United Nations Development Programme, or the CIA World Factbook. Statistics from other sources (such as a government ministry) may be used on occasion. In the States Edition, statistics come from the U.S. Census Bureau. In the Provinces Edition, statistics come from Statistics Canada and the Census of Canada. With the exception of the statistics, virtually all of the information in the CultureGrams series is provided by our network of writers and reviewers.

Q. What are the differences between the print and online editions?

A. The printed edition of the CultureGrams World Edition is a leading reference for concise, reliable, and up-to-date information in 25 cultural categories. This edition also includes an appendix, which features a 4,000-word glossary and data tables listing national capitals, population and area, and development data for each country.

The online version of the World Edition, part of the CultureGrams Online Database, has all of the same content as the printed edition. The Online Database also includes the Kids, States, and Provinces editions, which are written for upper elementary school students and teachers. These editions contain engaging cultural, geographical, and historical information on 82 countries, each of the 50 states (plus the District of Columbia), and each of the 13 Canadian provinces and territories.

The CultureGrams Online Database also features:

- photo gallery with hundreds of images
- citation generator
- downloadable slideshows
- downloadable and streaming videos
- build-your-own sortable data tables and graphs
- five recipes for each country
- short biographies of five to ten famous people for each country
- printable detail and outline maps
- color flag images and flag outlines
- sound files providing national anthems and country name pronunciation
- state bird sound files
- world time feature
- distance calculator
- currency converter
- teaching activities
- list of national curriculum standards met by CultureGrams
- keyword searching ability throughout entire product
- printable PDF files of each CultureGrams text
- text-only reports (to meet all level-one guidelines of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act)

Q. If I am a foreign language teacher, how can I know in which countries my language is official, prominent, or spoken by a significant minority of the population?

A. Arabic: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen

English: American Samoa, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Dominica, Fiji, The Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia, Montserrat, Namibia, Nauru, New Zealand, Nigeria, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, U.S. Virgin Islands, Vanuatu, Zambia, Zimbabwe

French: Algeria, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo-Brazzaville (Republic of the Congo), Congo-Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Djibouti, France, French Polynesia, Gabon, Guinea, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Monaco, Morocco, New Caledonia, Niger, Rwanda, St. Lucia, Senegal, Seychelles, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Vanuatu

German: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Namibia, Switzerland

Portuguese: Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe

Spanish: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela

Russian: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan