



Speaker 1: One aspect of this course is to broaden your cultural literacy. Each culture has a foundation of knowledge based on some assumptions about what the wide body of the population is familiar with. For example, in a recent novel that I read, *White Oleander* by Janet Fitch, there was a reference to Bauhaus architecture and Ben-Day dots. While understanding these terms were not essential to the novel, they did add a richness to the storytelling. The author included them because an educated reader would be able to form a better mental picture of what the author was describing.

If you pay attention in this course, you too will know what Bauhaus architecture and Ben-Day dots look like. Cultural literacy can also give you a better way to categorize and make comparisons by reference. I'm acutely aware of this because I spend so much time with my husband's relatives, as well as my husband, who grew up in Iran. I will catch myself making references out of my cultural background from well-known films in televisions, books, folk stories and legends, and then I'm realizing, "They haven't got a clue what I'm talking about."

For example, I will sing a short phrase like, [singing] "Hi ho, hi ho." Now, among my age set and cultural background, many will know that tune and will know that it's the dwarfs from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* going back to work at the mines. They would also know that the rest of the tune is, [singing] "It's back to work we go." Watch for this and see how many times you find yourself referencing cultural icons.

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