

Lesson 1

Big and Beautiful?

UNIT 1 CULTURE

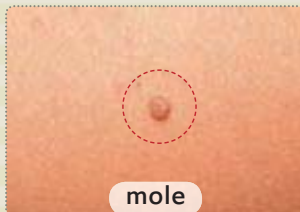
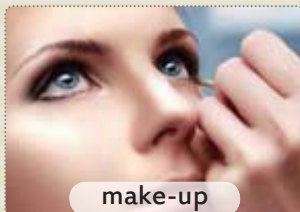
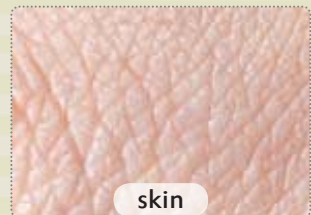
Target Vocabulary



- 1 industry [ˈɪndəstri] (n.) 工業；企業；行業
- 2 rural [ˈrʊrəl] (a.) 農村的；田園的
- 3 tradition [trəˈdɪʃən] (n.) 傳統
- 4 obese [oʻbis] (a.) 過胖
- 5 calorie [ˈkæləri] (n.) (熱量單位) 卡；卡路里；大卡
- 6 prospect [ˈprɒspekt] (n.) 〔複〕 (成功的) 可能性；前景；前途
- 7 generation [ˌdʒenəˈreɪʃən] (n.) 世代；一代；同時代的人
- 8 couscous [ˈkus,kus] (n.) 蒸粗麥粉 (北非菜名)
- 9 will [wɪl] (n.) 意願
- 10 diabetes [ˌdaɪəˈbitɪz] (n.) 糖尿病
- 11 modern [ˈmɒdən] (a.) 現代的；現代化的



Vocabulary Tool Kit



Big and Beautiful?



Sheila Simmons

Reporter

Weight loss has become a multi-billion dollar **industry**¹ in many parts of the world. But in **rural**² western Africa, where **tradition**³ values **obese**⁴ women, many young Mauritanian girls are force-fed (also known as *gavage*¹) to become more attractive to men. While many women across the globe count **calories**⁵, skip dessert, and pay for expensive gym memberships, ten percent of Mauritanian women are overeating to **pack on the pounds**², all in the name of beauty.

“A thin woman feels like bones. A fat woman feels soft. It is interesting and exciting. When a woman is big, it shows that she is well taken care of because her family can afford to feed her a lot,” says 25-year-old male Mohammed M’ Barek. “It is tradition. It is our culture.”

A recent study suggests that this custom is dying out. While over one-third of Mauritanian women over-ate to improve marriage **prospects**⁶ a **generation**⁷ ago, only about 10 percent continue to engage in the practice. Many of these young girls are sent to “fat farms” to consume foods high in

calories, such as **couscous**⁸ and cow and goat’s milk, to gain weight. For many, it is against their **will**⁹. It is not uncommon for girls to be woken up in the middle of the night to eat and to be punished for refusing to eat.

“I don’t want my daughter to die young.”

“A fat woman . . . is interesting and exciting.”



▲ young Mauritanian woman



▲ Only Mauritanian girls participate in *gavage*.

“This tradition is old-fashioned. Obesity is known to cause many health issues such as **diabetes**¹⁰ and heart disease. I don’t want my daughter to die young,” said the mother of a nine-year-old girl who will not be sent to one of many “fat farms” in rural Mauritania along with some of her friends.

“**Modern**¹¹ Mauritanian women want to eat normally and be healthy, not be force-fed.”

¹ 法文，指強飼。

² 增胖。

A Reading Skill: 問問題

報紙文章通常會有一定的格式。瞭解報紙文章的撰寫方式，可以幫助讀者找出文章的重要訊息。一般來說，文章的第一段會提供整篇文章**最重要的資訊**。另一個可以幫助讀者找出重要資訊的方式，就是透過下列五個「W」問題：

五個「W」問題：

Who	... is the story about?
What	... is the story about?
Where	... does the story take place?
When	... does the story take place?
Why	... is this happening?



第一個段落通常會回答：

How	... is this happening?
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Re-read the first paragraph of the reading passage and complete the chart below.

Who?
What?
Where?
When?
Why?
How?

B Word Study: 同義字

英文裡有非常多的同義字，所以形成了大量的詞彙。**同義字**指具有相同或相近意思的其他單字或片語。作者在寫作時通常會使用同義字，以增加文章的變化性。在第7頁的文章中，即包含了許多同義字，包括：

fat, big, and obese tradition and custom eat and consume

- 1 Write synonyms for the adjectives in the chart below. You may use a thesaurus (dictionary of synonyms) to help you. Circle the words/synonyms that should only be used in informal contexts.

word	synonym 1	synonym 2	synonym 3
happy	content	joyful	pleased
sad			
smart			
stupid			
pretty			
ugly			
strong			
weak			

- 2 Use synonyms found in the **Word Box** to fill in the blanks.

Word Box	1 Jessica prefers <u>modern</u> (contemporary) furniture in her home.
refused	2 People across the _____ (world) share some of the same ideals for beauty.
modern	3 It is _____ (rare) for there to still be snow on the ground in May.
punished	4 If you want to keep _____ (fit), don't eat junk food.
healthy	5 The student was _____ (reprimanded) for starting a fight at school.
uncommon	6 Maria _____ (declined) the job offer.
globe	

C Exercises

1 Reading Comprehension



- 1 According to the study mentioned in the article, ***gavage*** in Mauritania
- a. is on the rise
 - b. continues to be an issue for most women
 - c. is not as popular as it once was
 - d. is a widely practiced tradition
- 2 The woman quoted in the article
- a. believes fat farms are okay, but she doesn't want her daughter to go
 - b. wishes her daughter could go, but she's too young
 - c. believes it is unhealthy for women to overeat
 - d. is happy her daughter's friends are going to a fat farm
- 3 The man quoted in the article
- a. thinks women are healthier and stronger when they are obese
 - b. believes women are more attractive when they are obese
 - c. thinks that both thin women and women who are obese are equally attractive
 - d. thinks fat farms are good for families who can't afford to feed their daughters
- 4 Which statement is true?
- a. One-third of the women in Mauritania currently engage in overeating.
 - b. The young girls at fat farms are only allowed to stop eating when they sleep.
 - c. Overeating can prevent a number of diseases.
 - d. The majority of women in Mauritania are not force-fed.
- 5 Many health care professionals disagree with force-feeding. Which statement best supports this?
- a. Obese women have a higher risk of developing health issues.
 - b. Thin women do not have to worry about having problems with their health.
 - c. Mauritanian women should start skipping dessert.
 - d. It is better to be overweight than underweight.

2 Target Vocabulary

Use the words in the box below to complete the sentences. You may have to change the endings of some of the words.

• rural	prospect	calorie	will
• diabetes	generation	industry	couscous

- 1 The health food is constantly growing.
- 2 Margaret attended piano lessons against her to please her mother.
- 3 My uncle was diagnosed with at his last doctor's appointment.
- 4 Many families choose to raise their children in communities.
- 5 How many are in one slice of pizza?
- 6 Most people from my grandmother's are unfamiliar with new technology.
- 7 Jane says the of finding a job in the field aren't very high.
- 8 I think I'll make instead of rice to serve with the chicken.

3 Critical Thinking

- 1 What might be some of the challenges young girls in Mauritania face when being sent to a fat farm against their will?
- 2 Imagine a young Mauritanian girl asks you for advice on whether or not she should begin *gavage*. What advice would you give her?
- 3 What are some beliefs you would assume a Mauritanian man has if he supports the force-feeding of young women?
- 4 What are some of the pressures women and/or men in your culture have faced throughout history to meet standards of beauty?