Ethnography Exercise

The anthropological method of ethnography, which is the description of the daily lives of people within a culture, obtains information about a culture by interviewing key informants and also by participant observation. A key informant is someone who can give information about their culture. Children absorb cultural values and norms through observation and imitation of adult behavior. These values and norms remain implicit, not in conscious awareness, but greatly influence and guide behavior. Thus each person is to some extent a carrier of their culture, and so can function as a 'key informant' of their culture. Pretend you are an anthropologist and you are interested in learning all you can about implicit culture (and if possible, its intersection with class and gender). Interview your partner using the questions below and any others you can think of, and make notes if you wish.

1. What does your partner like and dislike about her/his cultural background/s?

2. What are some common sayings from that culture/s that express some often implicit or unarticulated cultural values?

3. Interview your partner about her/his ancestors' history and cultural background/s.