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The term culture is used in a variety of contexts in our everyday lives, and is defined as the objects created by a society as well as the ways of thinking, acting and behaving in a society. As a sociology student it is important to understand various elements of culture.

In the following story, there is a variety of elements of culture. Think about how the material and nonmaterial culture presents itself within the story about Sarah.

“ Taking a break from studying around midnight, Sarah decided to drive to get coffee in her brand new convertible Mercedes. On her way to the coffee shop, while looking down to read an incoming text, she ran a stop sign on a neighborhood street and was pulled over by the police. In a thick Southern accent, the officer asked her for her driver’s license and insurance verification. As she was handing both to the officer, she realized she was wearing her spring break t-shirt with the words, “ I Survived Spring Break 2012.” Nervously, she blurted out, “ Officer, I am a college student, and I have been studying, and I have not been drinking, and I am just going to get coffee.” After receiving a ticket from the police officer she noticed her badge, which stated, “ Protect and Serve.” Her frustration quickly dissipated as she realized that the police officer was carrying out her duty to maintain public safety and her actions could have caused a serious accident. Contemplating the night’s event, she drove 10 miles under the speed limit the rest of the way to the coffee shop.”

Write an essay that will highlight your understanding of material and nonmaterial culture. Clearly define material and nonmaterial culture. Next, identify the elements of culture in the story. Your response should include an analysis of both the material and nonmaterial culture within the story.