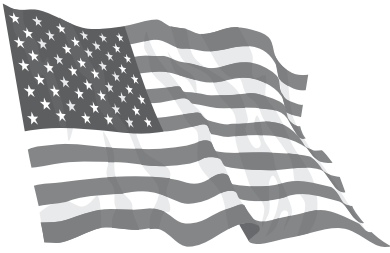


The Story of Independence

In 1607, English colonists first arrived in America. They had left England to find a better life, but they soon found themselves under British rule once again. They fought for independence for many years and finally, in 1776, a formal declaration of independence was written. On July 4th, the thirteen colonies voted in favour and the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The War of Independence had begun between the American colonies and their parent country. The Commander in Chief of the American Army at the time was George Washington. He led his people to freedom from the British eight years later and became America's first president in 1789.



Flag Facts

- The United States' flag is known as the *Stars and Stripes*.
- The flag has thirteen stripes. These represent the original thirteen colonies. The 50 white stars represent the states.
- The flag should never touch the ground or water.
- The flag is only usually flown during daylight. However, it may be flown at night if it can be seen with lights.
- If the flag is flown upside down, it means 'Help! I'm in trouble.'

Uncle Sam

In the War of Independence, Samuel Wilson provided meat for the United States Army. The boxes were marked 'US'. People understood this to mean 'from Uncle Sam Wilson'. *Uncle Sam* has been a symbol of the government since this time.

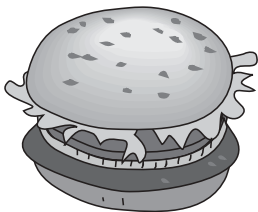


Party time

By the early 1800s, the tradition of parades, picnics, and fireworks was established as the way to celebrate America's birthday. Today, it's also a time to watch a game of baseball before a barbeque with family and friends.

All-American Edibles

No Independence Day celebration is complete without the following all-American edibles.



The hamburger

In the early 19th century, German immigrants brought a recipe for 'Hamburg Style Steak' to the United States. In 1948, Maurice and Richard McDonald opened their first shop in California and the modern-day hamburger was born. Today, Americans buy five billion burgers a year.

Coca-Cola

John Pemberton was a pharmacist from Atlanta. One day he was making a cure for headaches from coca leaves and cola nuts. When he accidentally added carbonated water, Pemberton decided to sell his creation as a drink rather than a medicine. That was in 1886.

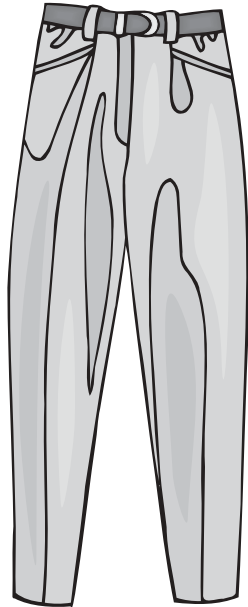
Chocolate Chip Cookies

The chocolate chip cookie was created in the 1930s. One day, restaurant owner Ruth Wakefield ran out of chocolate powder. She decided to break a chocolate bar into small pieces and add the pieces to the mixture instead.



American English

3. Can you match the words?



British English	American English
a. biscuit	1. cab
b. trousers	2. cookie
c. rubbish	3. gas
d. petrol	4. check
e. bill	5. vacation
f. taxi	6. movie
g. car park	7. parking lot
h. holiday	8. garbage
i. film	9. pants



4. In small groups discuss the questions.

- Have you ever visited the United States? Would you like to?
- How is the United States different from your country?
- Would you like to live in the United States?
- What other all-American items or images can you think of?
- What do you know about the origin of your country?
- What images and items represent your country?

Teacher's notes

Tasks

- To find out about US Independence Day and other American traditions by reading a text.
- To complete a puzzle using student's own knowledge and information from the text.
- To discuss related issues about the student's own country.

Preparation

One copy of worksheets A, B and C for each student.

Procedure

1. Elicit from the students the significance of 4th July in America. If necessary, tell the students that 4th July is American Independence Day and elicit or brainstorm a few facts about this and about the United States in general.
2. Give the students a copy of worksheet A and ask them to do the puzzle in (1). They could discuss their answers in pairs or small groups.
3. Give the students a copy of worksheet B and ask them to read the text to check their answers. This can be done individually or in pairs. Note that the clues do not follow the same order as the text.
4. Check the answers with the whole class.

Answers

1 burgers 2 cookie 3 thirteen 4 Philadelphia 5 water 6 Sam 7 stripes 8 eight 9 states
10 McDonald

Hidden name – George Washington, America's first President and leader during the War of Independence against the British.

5. At this point you could ask the students to read in more detail, underlining any vocabulary or language they do not understand. Then check this with the whole class. You could ask further questions to check comprehension. For example,
What does it mean if the American flag is flown upside down? When was Coca-Cola invented?
6. Give the students a copy of worksheet C. Ask them, working individually or in pairs, to do the British/ American English matching exercise. Ask students if they know any other American English words.

Answers

a2 b9 c8 d3 e4 f1 g7 h5 i6

7. The students then discuss, in pairs or small groups, the questions in (4). Ask the students to report back anything interesting from their discussions.

Websites

For more information about the United States and Independence Day and its celebrations, visit the following websites:

<http://www.holidays.net/independence/>

<http://wilstar.com/holidays/july4.htm>

<http://www.usis.usemb.se/Holidays/celebrate/independ.html>

<http://usacitylink.com/usa/>