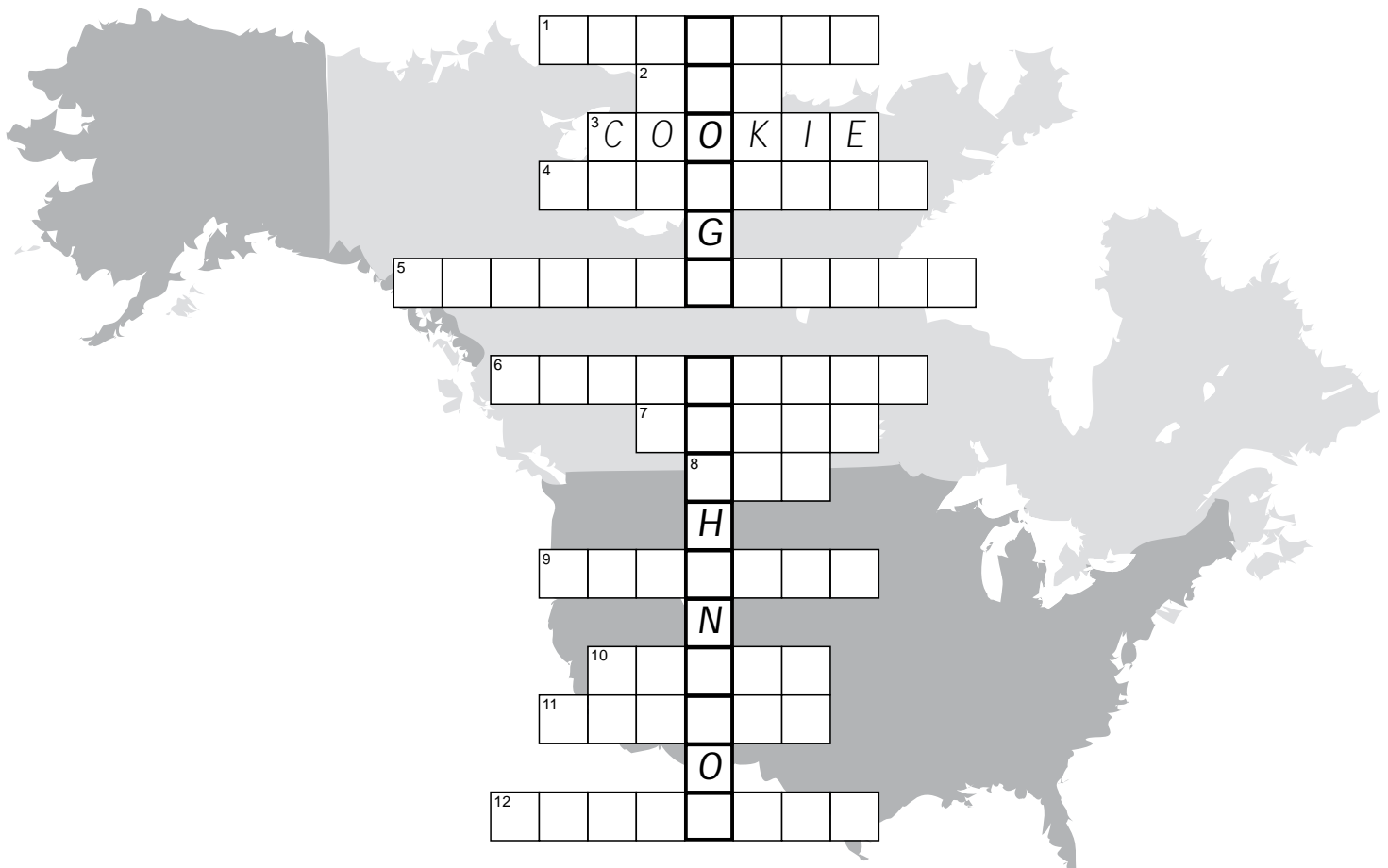


The United States

Land of the free, home of the brave

Independence Day is a national holiday in the United States of America. It commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

1. Look at the puzzle below. Complete as much of it as you can before you read the text. Find the name of an important person in American history in the centre boxes.



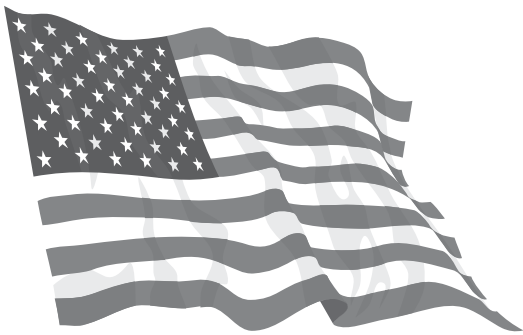
1. Americans buy almost five billion of these every year.
2. It was a tax on this which began the final fight for independence.
3. American English for *biscuit*. *Cookie*
4. The number of colonies at the time of independence.
5. The city where the Declaration of Independence was signed.
6. Traditional entertainment on Independence Day.
7. The American flag must never touch this.
8. He is America's favourite uncle.
9. The American flag is the *Stars and _____*.
10. The length in years of the War of Independence.
11. Fifty of these are represented by the stars on the American flag.
12. The brothers who opened their first shop in 1948.

2. Check your answers and complete the puzzle by reading worksheets B and C.

The Story of Independence Day

In 1607, English settlers first arrived in America. They had left England to escape religious persecution and to find a better life, but they soon found themselves under British rule once again. As they had no representation in England and no say in how they were governed, the colonists fought for independence for many years. The turning point came in 1767 when the British government placed a tax on all the tea entering America. Protests grew and, in 1773, a number of colonists boarded English merchant ships and threw 300 chests of tea into Boston Harbour. This became known as the Boston Tea Party and the first steps on the road to freedom had been taken.

In 1776, a formal declaration of independence from Britain was composed and on July 4th a vote was taken. Nine of the thirteen colonies voted in favour and the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The War of Independence had begun. 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 went on to become 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 in the upper left corner represent the states.
- It is thought that white represents purity, red is for valour and blue symbolises justice.
- The flag should never touch the ground or water.
- The flag is only usually flown during daylight. However, it may be flown for 24 hours if illuminated during darkness.
- If the flag is flown upside down, it signals distress.

Uncle Sam

Who exactly is Uncle Sam? It is believed he was named after Samuel Wilson, who during the War of Independence provided large quantities of meat for the United States Army. The boxes were stamped 'US' and it was thought to mean 'from Uncle Sam Wilson'. Uncle Sam has been a symbol of the government ever since.

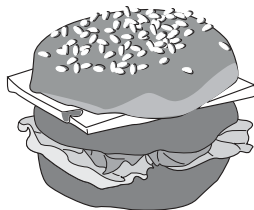
Party time

The first Independence Day celebration took place the year after the Declaration of Independence. 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 fly the American flag and watch a game of baseball before finishing the day with a barbeque with family and friends.



All-American Edibles

No Independence Day celebration would be 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 almost five billion burgers a year. This accounts for seventeen percent of all meals eaten outside the home.

Coca-Cola

John Pemberton was a pharmacist from Atlanta, Georgia. In 1886, while developing a cure for headaches, he mixed coca leaves and cola nuts. When carbonated water was accidentally added, Pemberton decided to sell his creation as a drink rather than a medicine. Pemberton was in desperate need of money and he sold his rights to the formula in 1887. He died penniless a year later.

Chocolate Chip Cookie

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



American English

3. Match the British English words on the left with their U.S. equivalents.

British English	American English
a. biscuit	1. sidewalk
b. trousers	2. cookie
c. pavement	3. vacation
d. rubbish	4. gas
e. petrol	5. check
f. bill	6. cab
g. taxi	7. parking lot
h. car park	8. movie
i. lift	9. garbage
j. holiday	10. elevator
k. crisps	11. pants
l. film	12. chips

4. In small groups discuss the questions.

- Have you ever visited the United States? Would you like to?
- How does the United States differ 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? Did it gain independence from another country?
- Does your country have a national day of celebration?
- What is the biggest celebration in your country? How do you celebrate?
- What images and items best represent your country?

Teacher's notes

Tasks

- To find out about U.S. 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 this in pairs or small groups.
3. Give the students a copy of worksheets B and C 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 tea 3 cookie 4 thirteen 5 Philadelphia 6 fireworks 7 water 8 Sam 9 stripes
10 eight 11 states 12 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 was the Boston Tea Party?
How did Uncle Sam originate?
Which sport do people traditionally watch on Independence day?
When was Coca-Cola invented?
6. Ask the students, working individually or in pairs, to do the British / American English matching exercise.

Answers

a2 b11 c1 d9 e4 f5 g6 h7 i10 j3 k12 l8

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/>