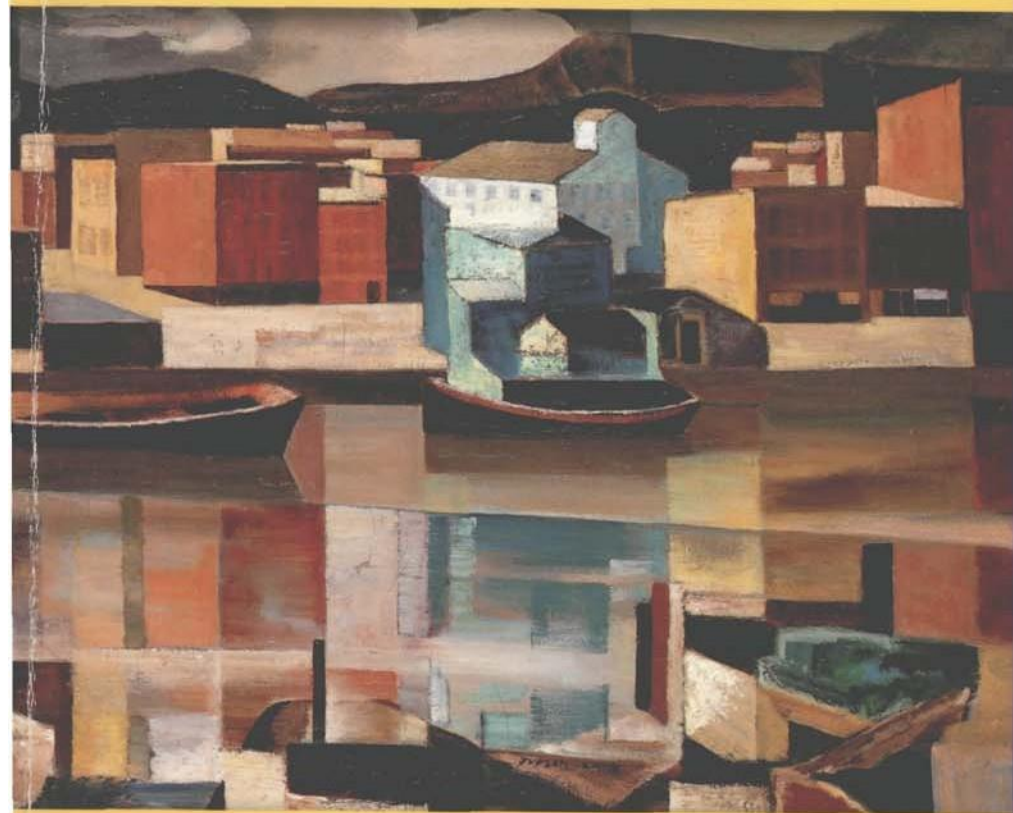


American Ways

An Introduction to
American Culture



THIRD EDITION

Maryanne Kearny Datesman

JoAnn Crandall

Edward N. Kearny

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American Culture

THIRD EDITION

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Maryanne Kearny Datesman

JoAnn Crandall

Edward N. Kearny



Dedicated to Lisa Kearny and Joseph Keyerleber

American Ways: An Introduction to American Culture, Third Edition

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TO THE TEACHER

What is “culture”? There are many definitions. Some would define it as the art, literature, and music of a people, their architecture, history, religion, and traditions. Others might focus more on the customs and specific behavior of a people. We have chosen to use a sociological definition of *culture as the way of life of a group of people, developed over time and passed down from generation to generation*. This broad definition includes every aspect of human life and interaction. However, it would be impossible to cover every facet of American culture in a single book. We have, therefore, taken a values approach to our discussion, focusing on the traditional mainstream values that have attracted people to the United States for more than two hundred years. After explaining how these traditional values developed, we will trace how they influence various aspects of American life.

Why a book on American culture? There are many reasons. Those of us who have worked with foreign students in American universities or who have taught English to students both here and overseas repeatedly encounter questions about life in the United States. These students are frequently confused or even mystified about American values, attitudes, and cultural patterns. Even those students who have mastered enough English to take courses in an American university often find that they do not understand the cultural rules well enough to be successful as students. Many of these rules can be understood only within the broader context of American cultural patterns.

It is not only students who need the kind of information presented in this book. Foreign businesspeople, visiting scholars or government officials, and even tourists find their time in the United States more satisfying when they understand the values that underlie American behavior patterns and institutions. Newly arrived immigrants and refugees adapt more easily to their new home when given a systematic introduction to their new country and its inhabitants.

For all of these reasons, *American Ways* is suitable for a wide audience. It has been used as a text in a number of programs for foreign students, including intensive English programs, short summer courses in the United States for foreign high school and college students, both quarter and semester courses at American universities, government programs for foreign visitors, and classes for immigrants. It has also been used in many different settings outside the United States, both as a text for students and as a reference guide—for U.S. Peace Corps volunteers, for example, and others who are teaching American culture.

What do we really learn when we study other cultures? First and foremost, we learn about our own. Until we are confronted by a different way of doing things, we assume that everyone does things the same way that we do, and thus our own culture—our values, attitudes, behavior—is largely hidden from our view. When we spend time analyzing another culture, however, we begin to see our own more clearly and to understand some of the subtleties that motivate our behavior and our opinions. By reading *American Ways*, students can begin to understand themselves and their own cultures better. To enhance this understanding, each chapter in the

book is followed by a series of exercises. Some of these exercises are specifically designed to encourage students to think about their own values or patterns of behavior and to compare them with what they are learning about or experiencing in American settings. We have also included a number of exercises to encourage students to interact with and talk with Americans. In these exercises we have provided a set of carefully structured questions that students can ask Americans. The answers they receive will help students form a composite picture of American beliefs and practices as they relate to education, business, government, sports, recreation, and so on.

Some of the chapter exercises provide students with an opportunity to explore more fully an idea that has been presented or to discuss ideas with other students. You may wish to assign different exercises to different students or to small groups of students and then ask them to share their findings and opinions with the class. If possible, small groups should include students from different countries so that in addition to learning about American culture and their own, they are also learning about other cultures.

Perhaps this is the real goal of a course about culture: to help us become more sensitive to cultural differences, and more accepting of them. However, there will always be aspects of another culture that we may not like, no matter how much we understand it. The objective of this book is not to persuade others to approve of life in the United States, but rather to help them understand it more fully.

About the Third Edition

In revising the content of this book, we concentrated on updating events that have occurred since the second edition was published in 1997. The issues surrounding multiculturalism continue to be of great importance as the cultural diversity of the United States continues to increase. Indeed, estimates are that by the mid-2000s, the United States will be *majority minority*. That is, the majority of Americans will be from minority groups. The traditional group of white Americans of European descent will be in the minority. Already this is the situation in the largest school systems in the country. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to describe the American culture, and it is uncertain whether the traditional mainstream culture will continue to be the dominant culture in the future. In the third edition of this book, the basic conceptual framework of *traditional* values remains the same. However, it is not clear how future generations will interpret or change them. Chapter 12 has been completely rewritten to focus more clearly on what is happening to traditional American values and on the challenges the United States faces after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Originally we envisioned this book primarily for use in English language courses designed to prepare students to study in American universities. We believe students in those courses need experience presenting information and voicing their personal opinions to others; they should be encouraged to make both oral and written reports and participate in debates and formal discussions. We have written many exercises that suggest appropriate topics and activities. The third edition also includes other exercises that can be used to help students become more effective in American universities. For example, some exercises provide instruction on how to identify and organize academic information into main ideas and supporting details; others focus on skimming and scanning. There is also much more attention to vocabulary in this edition, including

some exercises on collocation. Answers to the exercises, additional teaching tips, and graphic organizers can be found in the Teacher's Manual.

We have been delighted to hear from many teachers about creative ways they have used *American Ways*—not only in courses that introduce American culture, but also in courses focusing on cross-cultural communication, listening/speaking, reading/writing, academic preparation, and even literature. Teachers have used the values framework to design courses where students could explore ways in which the values appear in American literature or current events, for example, focusing on materials the teacher developed from other sources and presented in addition to the text.

The Book at a Glance

Purpose

- To increase students' awareness and understanding of the cultural values of the United States, their own country, and, we hope, other countries
- To provide interesting cross-cultural activities for small group and class discussions, and topics for oral presentations, research, and writing projects

Level

High intermediate to advanced. The vocabulary level is in the range of 3,000 to 4,000 words, with emphasis on the Academic Word List.* (See page 285.)

Grammatical structures are not controlled, although an effort has been made to avoid overly complex patterns.

Content

Information about traditional basic American values, where they came from, and how these values affect various institutions and aspects of life in the United States, for example, religion, business, government, race relations, education, recreation, and the family.

Types of Exercises

Pre-reading activities, vocabulary work (including collocation exercises), comprehension questions on both main ideas and details, topics for discussion, values clarification, questions for Americans, suggestions for research and oral reports, ideas for pair work and group projects, proverbs, people watching and experiments, understanding polls and the media, Internet activities, writing topics, and suggested books and movies.

Use of Text

- To orient students to American culture
- To foster cross-cultural communication
- To promote reading, writing, and discussion

* For details on the development and evaluation of the AWL, see Coxhead, Averil (2000) A New Academic Word List. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(2): 213–238.

For more information about the AWL and how to use it, visit the Internet site <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/lals/research/awl/>

- To encourage conversation
- To serve as a conceptual framework and accompany other cultural materials focusing on literature, the media, current events, and so on

About the Authors

Maryanne Kearny Datesman is the author of several ESL reading texts. She has taught ESL and administered programs at Western Kentucky University and American University, and she has taught also at Georgetown University. In Kentucky, she established and administered a private language school and directed programs for refugees. She was co-founder of Kentucky TESOL and is a former president of WATESOL.

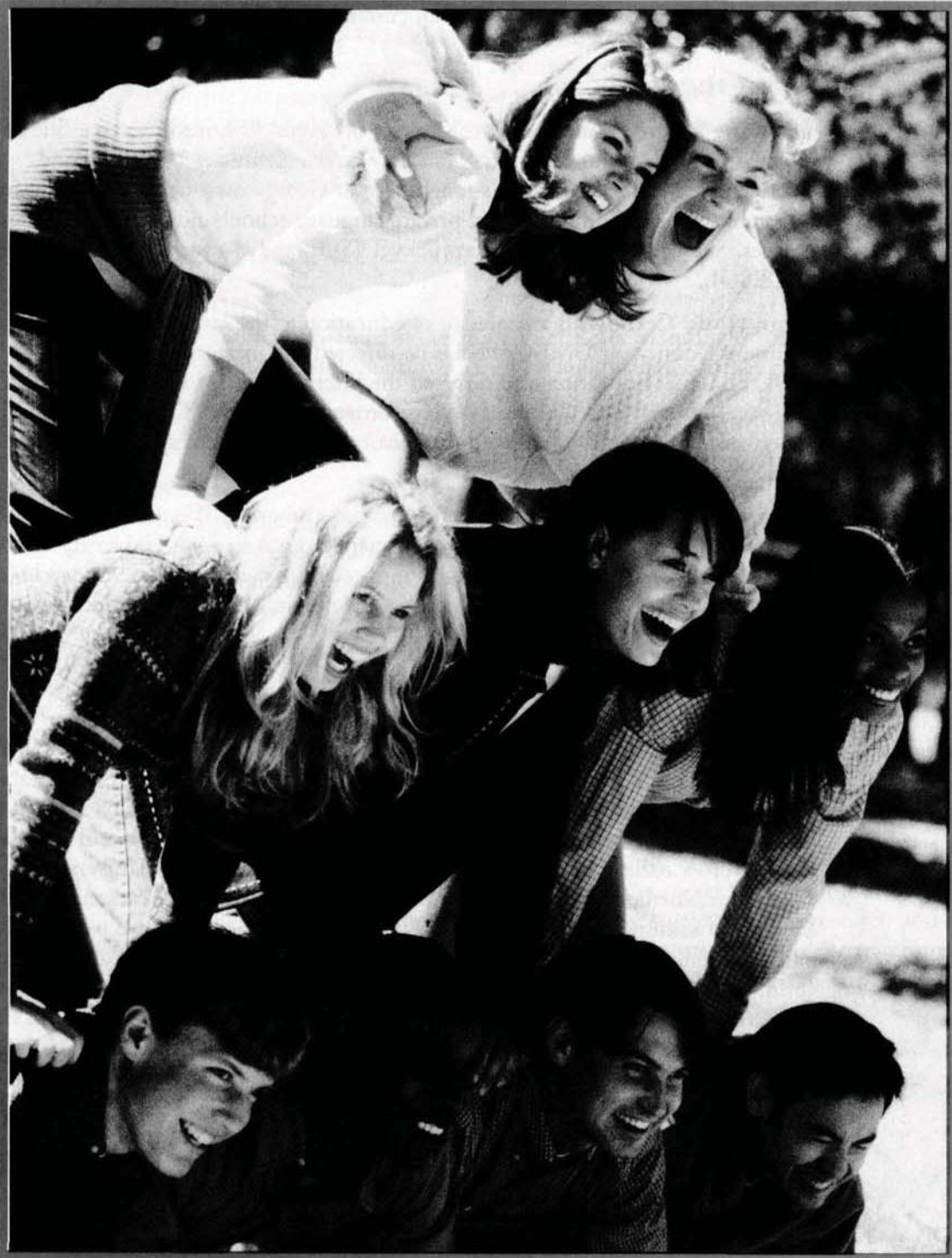
JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall is a professor of education at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. At UMBC she has co-directed the master's program in ESOL/Bilingual Education and directed the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Language, Literacy and Culture. She is a former president of TESOL and AAAL (American Association for Applied Linguistics) and a frequent speaker at national and international conferences.

Edward N. Kearny is professor emeritus of government at Western Kentucky University. He earned his Ph.D. in government from American University in 1968. He also holds a bachelor's degree in economics and a master's degree in psychology, and he has written a number of books and articles on American politics.

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M. K. D.
J. A. C.
E. N. K.



American mosaic: beyond the "melting pot"

INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants. Years of study have convinced me that the real job is not to understand foreign culture but to understand our own.

Edward T. Hall (1914–)

BEFORE YOU READ

Preview Vocabulary

A. Every chapter of *American Ways* contains many words from the Academic Word List (AWL).^{*} Notice the AWL words in italics as you work with a partner to discuss the following questions.

1. If a country has great *ethnic diversity*, would you expect to find many people who speak different languages and have different customs?
2. Could planning a visit to another country *motivate* someone to learn a foreign language?
3. Should *immigrants* be required to learn the language of their new country before they become citizens?
4. How could you learn about the customs and *traditions* for a holiday in another country?

^{*}See page 285 for an explanation of the AWL and how to use it. Some of these words are key to understanding the chapter reading.

5. If there are more people in the United States who speak English than Spanish, which is the *dominant* language in the United States?
6. Is the climate of a country a *significant factor* in the daily lives of the people? Why?

B. There are five AWL words in the quotation by Edward T. Hall at the beginning of the chapter. Read the quotation and find the words with the following meanings. Write each word next to its meaning.

- _____ 1. made someone think that something is true
- _____ 2. shows something that was hidden
- _____ 3. ideas, beliefs, and customs
- _____ 4. work
- _____ 5. people who are taking part in an activity

Preview Content

A. Before you read the chapter, think about what you know about the "culture" of a country. Work with a partner and answer the questions.

1. What is the culture of a country? If someone asked you to describe your country's culture, which of these would you mention?

art	dance	holidays
beliefs	food	houses
cities	geography	literature
climate	government	music
customs	history	

Anything else? _____

2. Do you agree with the quotation by Edward T. Hall? Do people really not understand their own culture? What aspects of a country's culture are the hardest to understand?

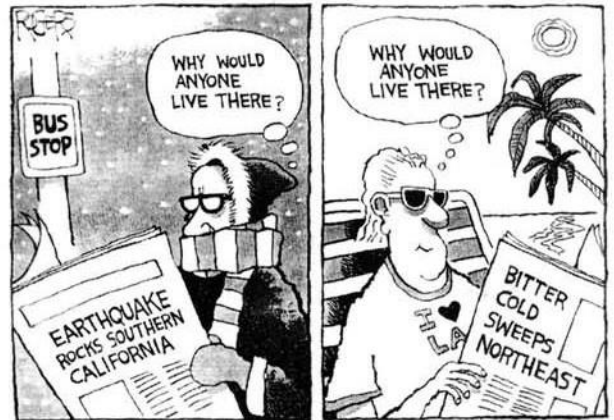
B. Look at the pictures, charts, and graphs in this chapter, and read the headings. Then predict three topics you think this chapter will discuss.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Life in the United States

- 1 People are naturally curious about each other, and when we meet people from different countries, we want to know many things:
- What is life like in their country?
 - What kind of houses do they live in?
 - What kind of food do they eat?
 - What are their customs?
- 2 If we visit another country, we can observe the people and how they live, and we can answer some of these questions. But the most interesting questions are often the hardest to answer:
- What do the people believe in?
 - What do they value most?
 - What motivates them?
 - Why do they behave the way they do?
- 3 In trying to answer these questions about Americans, we must remember two things: (1) the immense size of the United States, and (2) its great ethnic diversity. It is difficult to comprehend the size of the country until you have tried to travel from one city to another. If you got in a car in New York and drove to Los Angeles, stopping only to get gas, eat, and sleep, it would take you four or five days. It takes two full days to drive from New York to Florida. On a typical winter day, it might be raining in Washington, D.C., and snowing in New York and Chicago, while it is warm enough to swim in Los Angeles and Miami. It is not difficult to imagine how different daily life might be in such different climates, or how lifestyles could vary in cities and towns so far apart.

- 4 The other significant factor influencing American life—ethnic diversity—is probably even more important. Aside from the Native Americans who were living on the North American continent when the first European settlers arrived, all Americans came from foreign countries—or their ancestors did. (Incidentally,¹ some Native Americans are still members of separate and distinct Indian nations, each with its own language, culture, traditions, and even government.) In the 1500s, Spain established settlements in Florida, California, and the Southwest, and France claimed large territories in the center of the North American continent. But from the 1600s to the birth of the United States in 1776, most immigrants were from northern



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¹ incidentally: by the way

Europe, and the majority were from England. It was these people who shaped the values and traditions that became the dominant, traditional culture of the United States.

A Nation of Immigrants

5 **I**n 1815, the population of the United States was 8.4 million. Over the next 100 years, the country took in about 35 million immigrants, with the greatest numbers coming in the late 1800s and the early 1900s. Many of these new immigrants were not from northern Europe. In 1882, 40,000 Chinese arrived, and between 1900 and 1907 there were more than 30,000 Japanese immigrants. But by far the largest numbers of the new immigrants were from central, eastern, and southern Europe. The new immigrants brought different languages and different cultures to the United States, but gradually most of them assimilated² to the dominant American culture they found here.

6 In 1908, a year when a million new immigrants arrived in the United States, Israel Zangwill wrote in a play,

America is God's Crucible,³ the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming. . . . Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American!

7 Since Zangwill first used the term *melting pot* to describe the United States, the concept has been debated. In Chapter 8 we consider this issue in more detail, and trace the history of African Americans as well. Two things are certain—the dominant American culture has survived, and it has more or less successfully absorbed vast numbers of immigrants at various points in its history. It has also been changed over time by all the immigrant groups who have settled here.

8 If we look at the immigration patterns of the 1900s, we see that the greatest numbers came at the beginning and at the end of the century. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, there were as many as 1 million new immigrants per year, so that by the 1910 census, almost 15 percent of all Americans had been born in another country. In 1921, however, the country began to limit immigration, and the Immigration Act of 1924 virtually closed the door. The total number of immigrants admitted per year dropped from as many as a million to only 150,000. A quota system was established that specified the number of immigrants that could come from each country. It heavily favored immigrants from northern and western Europe and severely limited everyone else. This system remained in effect until 1965, with several exceptions allowing groups of refugees from countries such as Hungary, Cuba, Vietnam, and Cambodia into the United States.

9 The immigration laws began to change in 1965 and the yearly totals began to rise again, from about 300,000 per year in the 1960s to over a million per year in the 1990s. By the end of the century, the United States was admitting more immigrants than all the other industrialized countries combined. In addition to the legal immigration, estimates were that illegal immigration was adding more than a half a

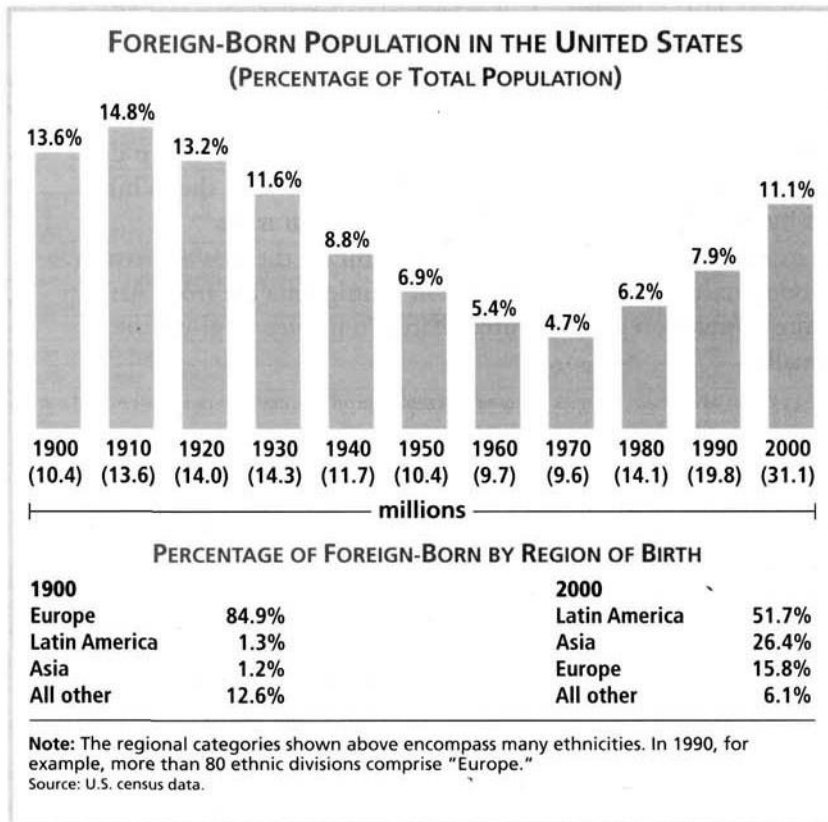
² **assimilated:** became part of a country or group and were accepted by other people in it

³ **crucible:** a container in which substances are heated to a very high level

million more per year. Changes in the laws that were intended to help family reunifications⁴ resulted in large numbers of non-Europeans, creating another group of new immigrants. By the late 1900s, 90 percent of all immigrants were coming from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia.

10 In the twenty-first century, the numbers of new immigrants have begun to approach the percentages of the early twentieth century. By the year 2000, more than 11 percent of all Americans were foreign born, born in another country. Some states had even higher percentages of foreign-born residents:

- California, over 26 percent
- New York, over 20 percent
- New Jersey, Florida, and Nevada, each over 15 percent
- Arizona, Illinois, and Texas, each over 12 percent

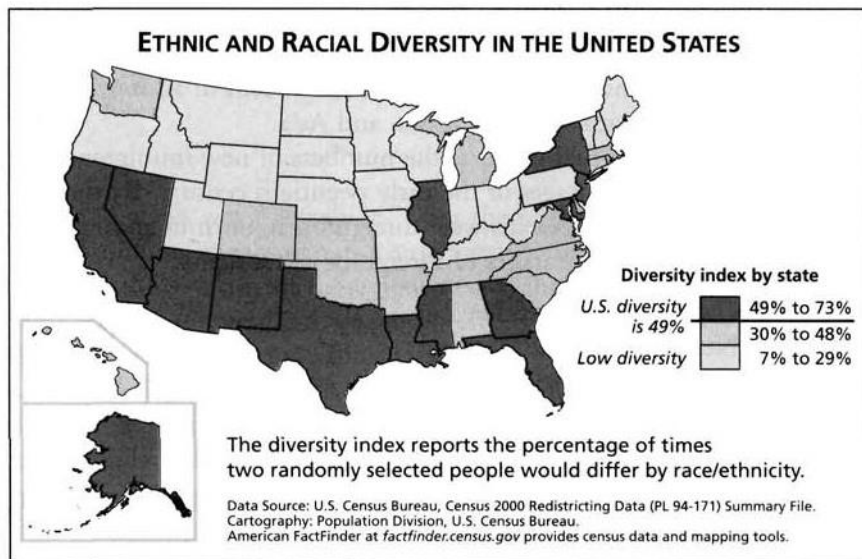


11 The twenty-first-century immigration patterns are continuing to change the color and the ethnic mix of the American population. First, the percentage of white Americans of European descent⁵ is growing smaller. Few Europeans are immigrating to the United States now, and many of those who came in the early 1900s have died. Their descendants have married Americans with ancestors from other countries, and many of these second- and third-generation immigrants no longer think of themselves as Irish or German or English.

⁴ reunifications: the joining of the parts of something together again

⁵ descent: family origins, especially in relation to the country where one's family came from

12 Second, more than half of all the new immigrants are from Latin America, resulting in large concentrations of Spanish speakers around the country, particularly in California, Florida, Texas, Arizona, and other southwestern states. Hispanics now represent the largest minority in the United States, larger than the number of African Americans. Recognizing the influence of this new minority, in 2001 President George W. Bush became the first president to give his weekly radio speech in Spanish, in honor of Cinco de Mayo⁶ (May 5), a festival celebrating Mexican heritage.⁷ Later that year, the White House website began to include Spanish translations of presidential news.



13 The immigrants from Asian countries are also contributing to the new American mix. Today, more than one-quarter of all first-generation immigrants are from Asia. As the minority, nonwhite population of the United States continues to grow, the white majority grows smaller.

Cultural Pluralism in the United States

14 **O**ne of the critical questions facing the United States today is what role new immigrants will play in their new country. To what degree will they choose to take on the traditional American values and culture? How much will they try to maintain their own language and cultural traditions? Will they create an entirely new culture based on some combination of their values and those of the traditional American culture?

15 Historically, although the children of immigrants may have grown up bilingual and bicultural, for a number of reasons many did not pass on their language and culture. Thus, many grandchildren of immigrants do not speak the language of the old country and are simply American by culture. However, in parts of the country with established communities that share a common language or culture, bilingualism⁸ and biculturalism continue. This is particularly true in communities where new immigrants are still arriving. In California, for example, the test for a driver's license is given in thirty different languages. In general, cultural pluralism⁹ is more accepted in the United States today than it was in the first half of the twentieth century, and many of the school systems have developed bilingual programs and multicultural curricula.

⁶ **Cinco de Mayo**: a traditional Mexican holiday that honors the Mexican army's victory over an invading French force at Puebla, Mexico, in 1862

⁷ **heritage**: the traditional beliefs, values, and customs of a family, country, or society

⁸ **bilingualism**: the ability to speak two languages equally well

⁹ **cultural pluralism**: the principle that people of different races, religions, and political beliefs can live together peacefully in the same society

16 The census of 2000 recognized the increase in the diversity of the American population. There were many racial and ethnic categories to choose from, and for the first time it was possible to select more than one category.*

CENSUS 2000 SUMMARY: DIVERSITY OF THE AMERICAN POPULATION		
SUBJECT	NUMBER	PERCENT
RACE		
Total population	281,421,906	100.0
One race	274,595,678	97.6
White	211,460,626	75.1
Black or African-American	34,658,190	12.3
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,475,956	0.9
American Indian	1,865,118	0.7
Alaska Native	97,876	0.0
Both American Indian and Alaska Native	1,002	0.0
American Indian or Alaska Native, not specified	511,960	0.2
Asian	10,242,998	3.6
Asian Indian	1,678,765	0.6
Chinese	2,432,585	0.9
Filipino	1,850,314	0.7
Japanese	796,700	0.3
Korean	1,076,872	0.4
Vietnamese	1,122,528	0.4
Other Asian category	1,061,646	0.4
Two or more Asian categories	223,588	0.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	398,835	0.1
Native Hawaiian	140,652	0.0
Samoan	91,029	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	58,240	0.0
Other Pacific Islander category	99,996	0.0
Two or more Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander categories	8,918	0.0
Some other race	15,359,073	5.5
Two or more races	6,826,228	2.4
Two races including Some other race	3,001,558	1.1
Two races excluding Some other race, and three or more races	3,824,670	1.4
Two races excluding Some other race	3,366,517	1.2
Three or more races	458,153	0.2
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	281,421,906	100.0
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	35,305,818	12.5
Mexican	20,640,711	7.3
Puerto Rican	3,406,178	1.2
Cuban	1,241,685	0.4
Other Hispanic or Latino	10,017,244	3.6
Not Hispanic or Latino	246,116,088	87.5
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	281,421,906	100.0
One race	274,595,678	97.6
Hispanic or Latino	33,081,736	11.8
Not Hispanic or Latino	241,513,942	85.8
Two or more races	6,826,228	2.4
Hispanic or Latino	2,224,082	0.8
Not Hispanic or Latino	4,602,146	1.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1, Matrices P3, P4, PCT4, PCT5, PCT8, and PCT11.

*For the 2000 census, people were allowed to check as many ethnic and racial categories as they wished. This chart is the U.S. government's presentation of the very complicated census information that resulted. The chart reflects the difficulties in determining ethnic and racial identities of Americans. For further information, visit the government website www.census.gov.

17 On the one hand, many Americans try to maintain their ethnic heritage and their cultural traditions. On the other hand, the number of interracial marriages is increasing, and the majority of young people believe it does not matter which race they marry. Some have called this the “Tiger Woods effect,” referring to the U.S. golfer who became at the same time the first African American and the first Asian American to win the Masters Golf Tournament. Tiger Woods says he is “Cablinasian”—a mixture of Caucasian (white), black, Indian, and Asian. By the middle of the century, the nation will probably no longer have a white majority; some say the color of most Americans will be more like beige, or light brown, as a result of the mixing of races and ethnic groups. Already, many of the nation’s largest cities are “majority minority.” This means more than half of the population are members of minority groups.

18 In the United States, people have become very sensitive to the language used to describe racial and ethnic groups, and they try to be politically correct, or “P.C.” For example, some black Americans prefer the term *African-American* instead of *black* to identify with their African heritage. The terms *Native American* and *American Indian* are both used by those



“Cablinasian” Tiger Woods with his parents

native to the North American continent. Some Spanish speakers prefer to be called *Latinos* (referring to Latin America) instead of *Hispanics* (referring to Spain), while others prefer to be identified by their country of origin (*Cuban-American* or *Cuban*, *Chicano*, *Mexican-American* or *Mexican*, etc.). Since the census uses a variety of terms, we will also use the terms *white*, *Native American* or *American Indian*, *black* or *African-American*, and *Hispanic* or *Latino*.

19 In spite of all this diversity, there is still a tie that binds Americans together. That tie is a sense of national identity—of being an American. Incidentally, when citizens of the United States refer to themselves as Americans, they have no intention of excluding people from Canada or Latin American countries as residents of the American continents. There is no term such as *United Statesians* in the English language, so people call themselves *Americans*. Thus, what is really a language problem has sometimes caused misunderstandings. Although citizens of Latin American countries may call the people in the United States *North Americans*, to many people in the United States this makes no sense either, because the term *North American* refers to Canadians and Mexicans as well as citizens of the United States. (NAFTA—the North American Free Trade Agreement, for example, is a trade agreement among Canada, the United States, and Mexico.) The word *American*, then, is used in this text as the nationality of the people who live in the United States of America.

Making Generalizations About American Beliefs

20 **W**hat, then, can we say about Americans? What holds them together and makes them feel American? Is it possible to make generalizations about what they believe? It is, but we must be cautious about generalizations. As we talk about basic American beliefs, we must remember that not all Americans hold these beliefs, nor do all Americans believe these things to the same degree. The ways in which some Americans practice their beliefs may also differ, resulting in a great variety of lifestyles. What we attempt to do is to define and explain the traditional, dominant cultural values that have for so many years attracted immigrants to the United States.

21 Throughout this book we will be drawing on the wisdom of a famous observer of the American scene, Alexis de Tocqueville. Tocqueville came to the United States as a young Frenchman in 1831 to study the American form of democracy and what it might mean to the rest of the world. After a visit of only nine months he wrote a remarkable book called *Democracy in America*, which is a classic study of the American way of life. Tocqueville had unusual powers of observation. He described not only the democratic system of government and how it operated, but also its effect on how Americans think, feel, and act. Many scholars believe that he had a deeper understanding of traditional American beliefs and values than anyone else who has written about the United States. What is so remarkable is that many of these traits of the American character, which he observed nearly 200 years ago, are still visible and meaningful today.

22 Another reason why Tocqueville's observations of the American character are important is the time when he visited the United States. He came in the 1830s, before America was industrialized. This was the era of the small farmer, the small businessman, and the settling of the western frontier. It was the period of history when the traditional values of the new country were being established. In just a generation, some forty years since the adoption of the U.S. Constitution, the new form of government had already produced a society of people with unique values. The character traits Tocqueville describes are the same ones that many Americans still take pride in today. He, however, was a neutral observer and saw both the good and the bad sides of these qualities.

23 This is a book about those traditional basic American beliefs, values, and character traits. It is not a book of cold facts about American behavior or institutions,¹⁰ but rather it is about the motivating forces behind the people and their institutions. It is about how these traditional basic beliefs and values affect important aspects of American life: religion, business, work and play, politics, the family, and education.



Immigrants who have just been sworn in as new American citizens

¹⁰ **institutions:** large organizations, especially ones dedicated to public service

- 24 We invite you to participate in this book. We will describe what many Americans think and believe, but you will have an opportunity to test these descriptions by making your own observations. As you read about these traditional basic values, think of them as working hypotheses¹¹ which you can test on Americans, on people of other nations, and on people of your nationality. Compare them with your own values and beliefs and with what is most important in your life. Through this process, you should emerge with a better understanding not only of Americans, but also of your own culture and yourself. It is by studying others that we learn about ourselves.

AFTER YOU READ

Understand Main Ideas

Academic English organizes information into main (or most important) ideas and supporting details. That is, there are usually three or four major points presented, and the rest of the information serves to explain or support these main ideas:

- First main idea
Supporting details
- Second main idea
Supporting details
- Third main idea
Supporting details

When reading academic English or listening to a lecture, it is important to recognize the main points. The introduction focuses your attention on the topic. Then the main points are presented, and the conclusion reminds you of one or more central ideas. Noticing the headings in a text will help you figure out the main points the writer is presenting.

Check the predictions that you made on page 2 before reading the chapter. Then answer these questions about the main ideas.

1. What are two important factors that affect life in the United States?
2. What is the heading for the section that discusses the history of immigration in the United States?
3. What is cultural pluralism?

¹¹ **hypotheses:** ideas that are suggested as an explanation for something, but that have not yet been proven to be true

4. What is the main idea of the section headed *Making Generalizations About American Beliefs*?
5. What relationship is there between the quotation at the beginning of the chapter, the introduction (first two paragraphs), and the conclusion (paragraphs 23 and 24) of the reading?

Understand Details

Write *T* if the statement is true and *F* if it is false according to the information in the chapter.

- ___ 1. One factor affecting lifestyles in the United States is the different climates.
- ___ 2. American Indians all speak the same language.
- ___ 3. The dominant American culture was established by immigrants who came from southern Europe.
- ___ 4. Throughout the history of the United States, more immigrants have come from English-speaking countries than any other countries.
- ___ 5. Zangwill believed that immigrants would lose their native cultures and become something different when they came to the United States.
- ___ 6. All immigrants want to assimilate to the U.S. culture completely; they have no desire to maintain their own culture.
- ___ 7. U.S. immigration policy has stayed the same for the last 100 years.
- ___ 8. The English language has no adjective for *United States* and therefore uses the term *American* to refer to its people.
- ___ 9. It is not possible to make generalizations about what Americans believe because they are so different.
- ___ 10. Many of the characteristics of Americans which Alexis de Tocqueville observed in the 1830s are still true today.

Improve Your Reading Skills: Scanning

In order to become a good reader in English, your reading speed and techniques should vary according to your purpose. For example, you may look down a page (or over several pages) to find a particular piece of information—a number, a date, a place, or the time a movie begins. This type of *reading for a specific fact* is called **scanning**.

Read the questions below. Scan the reading to find the specific information you need to answer each question.

1. Which states have the largest numbers of immigrants?

2. In what year did Alexis de Tocqueville come to visit the United States?

3. In 1910, what percentage of the U.S. population was foreign born?

4. What was the total U.S. population according to the 2000 census?

5. In what year did Israel Zangwill write a play in which he used the term *melting pot*?

6. What does *Cablinasian* mean, and who made up this word?

Talk About It

Work in small groups and choose one or more of the following topics to discuss.

1. How would you compare the size and ethnic diversity of your country with that of the United States? What are some of the challenges that size (large or small) and diversity (great or limited) present to a country?
2. Should a country have immigration quotas based on country of origin? Should immigrants become citizens? Should countries allow “guest workers” (people who work there temporarily)?
3. How would you describe the average person in your country and what he or she believes?
4. Do you think people all over the world are basically the same or basically very different?

Build Your Vocabulary

Use Context Clues There are several types of context clues that will help you guess the meaning of words you do not know. By looking at the words around an unfamiliar word, you may be able to figure out its meaning. See the four kinds of context clues on the next page. In the examples, the vocabulary words are in boldface. The context clues are in italics.

1. The word may be defined in the sentence. Sometimes the definition is set off by commas or dashes. Other times it is not.

EXAMPLE: There is still a tie that binds Americans together. That tie is a sense of national **identity**—*of being an American.*

EXAMPLE: A **quota** system was established that *specified the number of immigrants that could come from each country.*

2. There may be a synonym used in the same sentence.

EXAMPLE: Native Americans belong to *separate* and **distinct** Indian nations, each with its own language, culture, and even government.

3. There may be a comparison or contrast with a word (or a phrase) more familiar to you.

EXAMPLE: As the **minority**, nonwhite population of the United States continues to grow, the white *majority* grows smaller.

4. The sentence may give an example that helps you figure out the meaning.

EXAMPLE: Tocqueville, however, was a **neutral observer** and *saw both the good and bad sides of these qualities.*

A. Use the context clues to figure out the meaning of the boldfaced words in the sentences above. Then write the correct word next to its definition.

- _____ 1. a limit on the number allowed
- _____ 2. a group of people whose race is different from that of most people in a country
- _____ 3. someone who observes without expressing an opinion
- _____ 4. the qualities a group of people have that make them different from other people
- _____ 5. clearly different or separate

B. Now fill in the blanks with some of the boldfaced words above to complete the paragraph.

What qualities give people a national _____₁? Do they have to have characteristics that are _____₂ from those of other countries? The people who are part of a _____₃ group may feel they have a set of characteristics that differ from those of the majority in their country.

More AWL Words Test your knowledge of these additional AWL words in the reading by doing the puzzle below. First match the AWL words with their definitions. Then find the AWL words in the puzzle and circle them. Words may run horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or backwards.

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|---|
| <u> d </u> | 1. aspect | a. a large organization, especially one dedicated to public service |
| _____ | 2. category | b. to start something that will continue |
| _____ | 3. concept | c. to be different |
| _____ | 4. debate | d. one part of an idea that has many parts |
| _____ | 5. establish | e. to continue in spite of difficulties |
| _____ | 6. estimate | f. group of things that all have the same qualities |
| _____ | 7. hypothesis | g. to judge by calculating and guessing |
| _____ | 8. incidentally | h. one of a kind |
| _____ | 9. institution | i. an idea |
| _____ | 10. survive | j. an explanation not yet proven |
| _____ | 11. unique | k. a discussion of different opinions |
| _____ | 12. vary | l. by the way |

N N F B E S T A B L I S H F L
 S I S E H T O P Y H O D B A V
 M M L U N I Q U E V Z U I Z I
 R E C E Y D E M P T R A B L U
 I P U C Q G G M H V E J J Z N
 W V S U R V I V E I Z G G O Y
 Y L L A T N E D I C N I I R E
 I I M R K T T N Z O S T O T E
 Q Y V X M S B T M G U G A W T
 D F Y K X A O Y O T E M M F A
A S P E C T O E I T I N N E B
 H N P R O P Y T A T K I U X E
 U V S U N K S C S S E K X A D
 I D G O D N V E V A R Y K N V
 Z F V R I T P E C N O C U J W

Understand Prefixes Recognizing the meaning of a prefix, a group of letters added to the beginning of a word (or its root), will also help you guess the meaning of a new word. For example, the prefix *re-* means *again* (*reunification*) and the prefix *mis-* means *wrong* (*misunderstand*).

Each of the boldfaced words in the sentences below has a prefix. Identify the prefix and write its meaning. Use a dictionary, if necessary.

EXAMPLE: Before the 1960s, the majority of immigrants to the United States were Europeans, but changes in immigration laws resulted in large numbers of **non-Europeans**.

Prefix: non Meaning: not

1. Estimates were that in addition to legal immigration, **illegal** immigration was adding more than a half a million more people per year.

Prefix: _____ Meaning: _____

2. In some parts of the country with established communities that share a common language or culture, bilingualism and **biculturalism** continue. Cultural pluralism is more accepted now than in the first half of the twentieth century, and many of the school systems have developed bilingual programs and **multicultural** curricula.

Prefix: _____ Meaning: _____

Prefix: _____ Meaning: _____

3. People may migrate to another location in order to find work. While many people **immigrate** to the United States each year, very few Americans choose to **emigrate** to another country to live.

Prefix: _____ Meaning: _____

Prefix: _____ Meaning: _____

4. In the census of 2000, there were nineteen racial categories to choose from. The number of **interracial** marriages is increasing . . . and the majority of young people believe it does not matter which race they marry.

Prefix: _____ Meaning: _____

Word Partners Certain words and phrases tend to go together in English, for example, *ethnic diversity* or *traditional values*. This is called **collocation**. Learning these word partners will increase your ability to use new words correctly and help you express yourself as native speakers do.

Read the sentences below. Then match the adjectives on the left with their noun partners on the right. Use the collocations to complete the sentences.

- | | | |
|----------|-------------------|----------------|
| <u>c</u> | 1. established | a. immigrants |
| _____ | 2. significant | b. culture |
| _____ | 3. neutral | c. communities |
| _____ | 4. industrialized | d. pluralism |
| _____ | 5. legal | e. hypotheses |
| _____ | 6. dominant | f. countries |
| _____ | 7. cultural | g. factor |
| _____ | 8. working | h. observer |

1. In parts of the country with established communities that share a common language, bilingualism continues.
2. Tocqueville was a _____ who saw both the good and bad sides of the American character traits.
3. Ethnic diversity is a _____ affecting American life.
4. Think of the traditional values in this book as _____ that you can test against your own observations.
5. The United States now takes in more _____ each year than all other _____ combined.
6. When several cultures exist together successfully in a society, there is _____.
7. The _____ in the United States is becoming less white in the twenty-first century.

Ask Americans

Interview several Americans of different ages (if possible) and ask them to complete the following statements. If there are no Americans to interview, you can ask other international students or your classmates.

1. Americans are _____.
2. They like _____.
3. They don't really like _____.
4. They act _____.
5. Most Americans believe in _____.
6. The United States is a country where _____.
7. The average American is _____.
8. Americans today are worried about _____.
9. The most important thing in life to most Americans is _____.

Think, Pair, Share

Think about the following questions, and write down your answers. Then discuss your answers with a partner and share your answers with another pair of students.

1. How would you define *culture*? Look at several dictionaries to find definitions and read the first paragraph of the introduction to this book.
2. What do you think are the most important aspects of your native culture?
3. Complete the statements in the previous exercise (*Ask Americans*) about your own country and share your answers. For example: People from my country are _____.

Understand Polls

Conducting opinion polls is very popular in the United States. A newspaper, a magazine, a TV station, or a professional polling organization asks a representative group of Americans several questions to determine what their opinions are about a given topic. The pollsters choose men and women of different ages, occupations, and races in the same proportion that these groups are found in the population. Sometimes, however, a random sample is taken which picks people by chance.



Polls are especially popular around election time because everyone wants to know which candidate is ahead in the race and what the voters think about the key issues of the campaign. There are three well-known polling organizations that measure public opinion on a variety of topics: Louis Harris and Associates, the Roper Organization, and Gallup International Research Institutes.

There have been a number of polls on the topic of sport-utility vehicles (SUVs) in the United States. SUVs are extremely popular with Americans, even though they are more expensive to drive because they generally do not get good gas mileage. Polls show that one reason for their popularity is that owners of SUVs feel that they and their families are safer in these large vehicles than they would be in other cars. However, studies have shown that SUVs may roll over more easily and may therefore be more dangerous than people originally thought. The Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety organization asked the Harris polling organization to survey attitudes about the safety of SUVs and other vehicles. One of the questions was "The next time you purchase a new vehicle, would you like to see information posted on a window sticker about the likelihood of a rollover, or would you not like to see that information on a window sticker?"

HOW KEY GROUPS FEEL ABOUT THE IDEA OF POSTING INFORMATION ON THE WINDOWS OF ALL NEW CARS INDICATING THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE VEHICLE TO ROLL OVER			
	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
	%	%	%
NATIONWIDE	83	14	3
By Region			
South	88	9	3
East	86	12	2
Midwest	79	17	4
West	77	18	5
By Race/Hispanic			
Non-Latino Black	93	6	1
Latino	91	8	1
Non-Latino White	80	16	4
By Gender			
Women	87	8	5
Men	79	19	2
By Annual Household Income			
\$25,000 or less	90	8	2
\$25,001-\$50,000	83	13	4
\$50,001-\$100,000	82	15	3
\$100,000 and over	71	23	6
By Vehicle Ownership			
SUV	84	12	4
Pick-up truck	83	15	2
Other passenger car	83	13	4
Van	82	15	3

Source: Survey of the Attitudes of the American People on Highway Safety, conducted for Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety by Louis Harris Research Group, Inc., June 2004

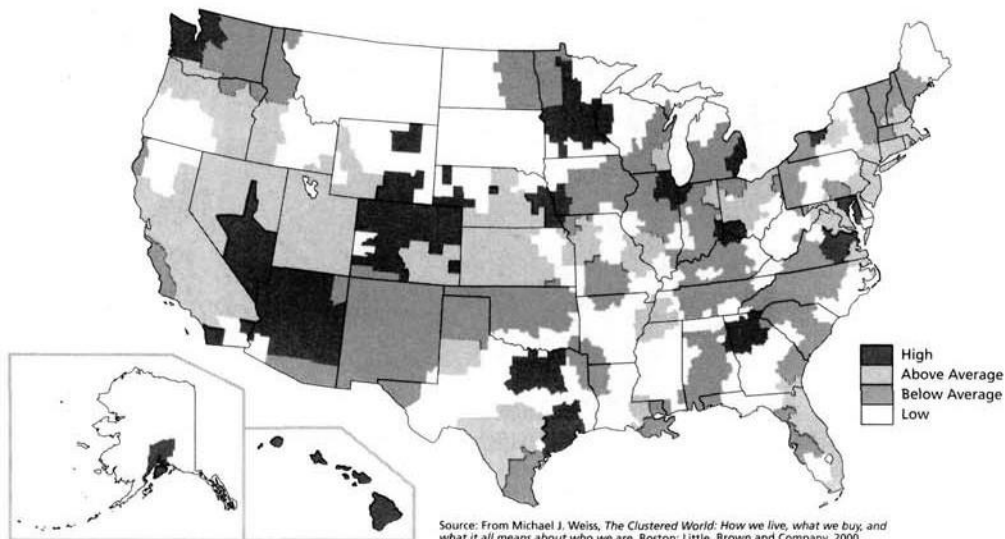
Examine the poll results and answer the following questions.

1. Who thinks it is more important to have the rollover information on a window sticker—men or women?
2. According to this poll, do you think people who own SUVs are much more concerned about rollovers than those who own other vehicles?
3. Are Americans who live in the West more or less interested in rollover stickers than people who live in the South?
4. Which ethnic/racial group appears most concerned about the danger of rollovers?
5. Which socioeconomic group appears the least concerned—those who make the least money, or those who make the most?

Many Americans who own SUVs have a lifestyle that is child-centered. In his book, *The Clustered World: How We Live, What We Buy, and What It All Means About Who We Are*, Michael J. Weiss describes sixty-two distinct American lifestyles, or clusters of behavior. The cluster with the highest percentage (3 percent) is called “Kids & Cul-de-Sacs.” —

It's not uncommon for parents to put in fifty miles a day carpooling their kids to after-school karate classes, piano lessons, and soccer practices. Residents are twice as likely as average Americans to own minivans and sport-utility vehicles. For leisure, these Americans are more likely than the general population to throw barbecues, watch videos, and play board games. . . . A typical Saturday night involves pizza and videos with the kids.

KIDS & CUL-DE-SACS LIFESTYLE



People Watching

Different countries have different rules for personal space, that is, when people touch, how close they stand when they are speaking to one another, how close they sit, how they behave on elevators, etc. The rules for personal space sometimes differ according to how well people know each other. They are usually not consciously aware of these rules, but they may become very uncomfortable if the rules are broken and their space is entered without permission. You can discover the rules by observing people interacting and also by testing or breaking the rules to see how other people respond.

Conduct two experiments about personal space. Follow these steps.

1. Read the rules for personal space below.
2. Make your own observations of people. Write your observations in a journal. It may be helpful to work in pairs: One person tests the rules while the other observes and records what happens.
3. Experiment with the rules. Write the responses you receive.
4. If you are not in the United States and if you do not have an opportunity to observe Americans, you may still learn from these experiments by watching people in your own country or by observing Americans in movies or TV shows.



People in line try to avoid touching each other.

First Rule: When they are in a crowd, Americans have a bubble of space around their bodies which is about an inch thick. This bubble of space must not be broken by a stranger. If American strangers touch each other accidentally, they mutter an apology such as “Pardon me,” “Excuse me,” “Oh, I’m sorry,” or just “Sorry.”

Observation: Watch people in a crowd, standing in line, waiting in a group, or passing on a street or in a hallway. Who is touching whom? What does their relationship appear to be? What happens when people touch accidentally? How does the person touched respond? What does the one who has broken the other’s bubble do? Record gestures, facial expressions, emotional responses, and words exchanged.

Experiment: See how close you can stand to someone in a crowd without touching him or her. Try breaking someone’s bubble of space with a very light touch of your elbow or arm. What is the person’s response? (*Warning:* This may provoke an angry response!)

Second Rule: When standing in elevators, Americans usually face the door, speak quietly, and try to avoid touching one another. If a stranger enters an elevator where there is only one other person, he or she will stand on the opposite side of the elevator. As more people get on the elevator, they occupy the corners first and then try to disperse themselves evenly throughout the available space.

Observation: Observe people in elevators. Which direction are they facing? If you are alone in an elevator and someone comes in, where does that person stand? As more people enter the elevator, where do they stand? Do the people talk to one another? How loudly do they speak? Do strangers touch? What happens in a crowded elevator when someone in the back has to get off?

Experiment: Get on an elevator where there is only one person and stand next to that individual. What is the person's reaction? In an elevator where there are a number of people, turn and face the group with your back to the door. How do the people react? Have a conversation with someone in a crowded elevator and don't lower your voice. How do you think people feel about this? Note their facial expressions.



People in an elevator avoid eye contact.

Use the Internet

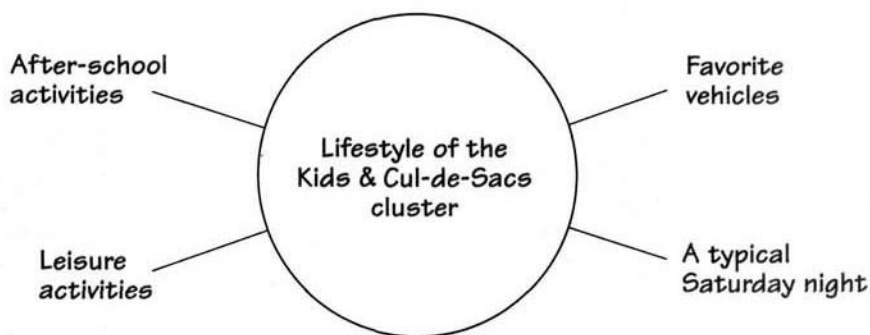
Harris Polls are usually scientific polls, but they also conduct informal weekly polls online. These informal weekly polls only reflect the views of the people who happen to visit their website and answer the poll questions. You can participate in their weekly poll.

Visit the Harris Polls website at www.harrisinteractive.com and click on the *Weekly Poll* link. Then answer the question and see how others voted.

WRITE ABOUT IT

- A. Choose one of the following writing topics. Then write a short composition about it. To organize your thoughts, use a graphic organizer to write down your ideas before you begin your composition.**

EXAMPLE: If you were describing the American Kids & Cul-de-Sacs lifestyle (see page 19), your graphic organizer might look like this.



1. Think about why SUVs are popular with Americans who have a Kids & Cul-de-Sacs lifestyle. Reread the poll on page 18. Would you want to own an SUV? Explain why or why not.
2. How do you and your family spend leisure time together?
3. Where are three places that you would want to take someone visiting from another country?
4. Choose a folktale from your culture. Retell the folktale in English and explain why you think this tale is representative of your culture.



- B. Use the Internet to look for information about your country's or another country's census or population characteristics. Use a search engine such as www.google.com or www.yahoo.com to help you find information. Be sure to include the URL (the uniform resource locator), which is the address of the website. Do the following searches and write a report about what you find.**

1. census + _____ (a country)
2. "population characteristics" + _____ (a country)

Note: You must use quotation marks (" ") when one of the terms you are searching for has more than one word.

Books to Read

Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio*—Published in 1919, this literary masterpiece explores the hidden passions of ordinary lives in a small American town.

John F. Kennedy, *A Nation of Immigrants*—President Kennedy, himself the grandson of Irish immigrants, discusses how old immigrant traditions mix with the new experiences of immigrants starting life over in America.

O. E. Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie*—The classic story of a Norwegian pioneer family's struggles as they try to make a new life on the American frontier.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*—A classic account of Thoreau's experiment of simple living in a cabin on the shore of Walden Pond in the 1840s.

Michael J. Weiss, *The Clustered World: How we live, what we buy, and what it all means about who we are*—Drawing on census data, market surveys, and interviews, the author explores how people spend their time and money in America and throughout the world.

Movies to See

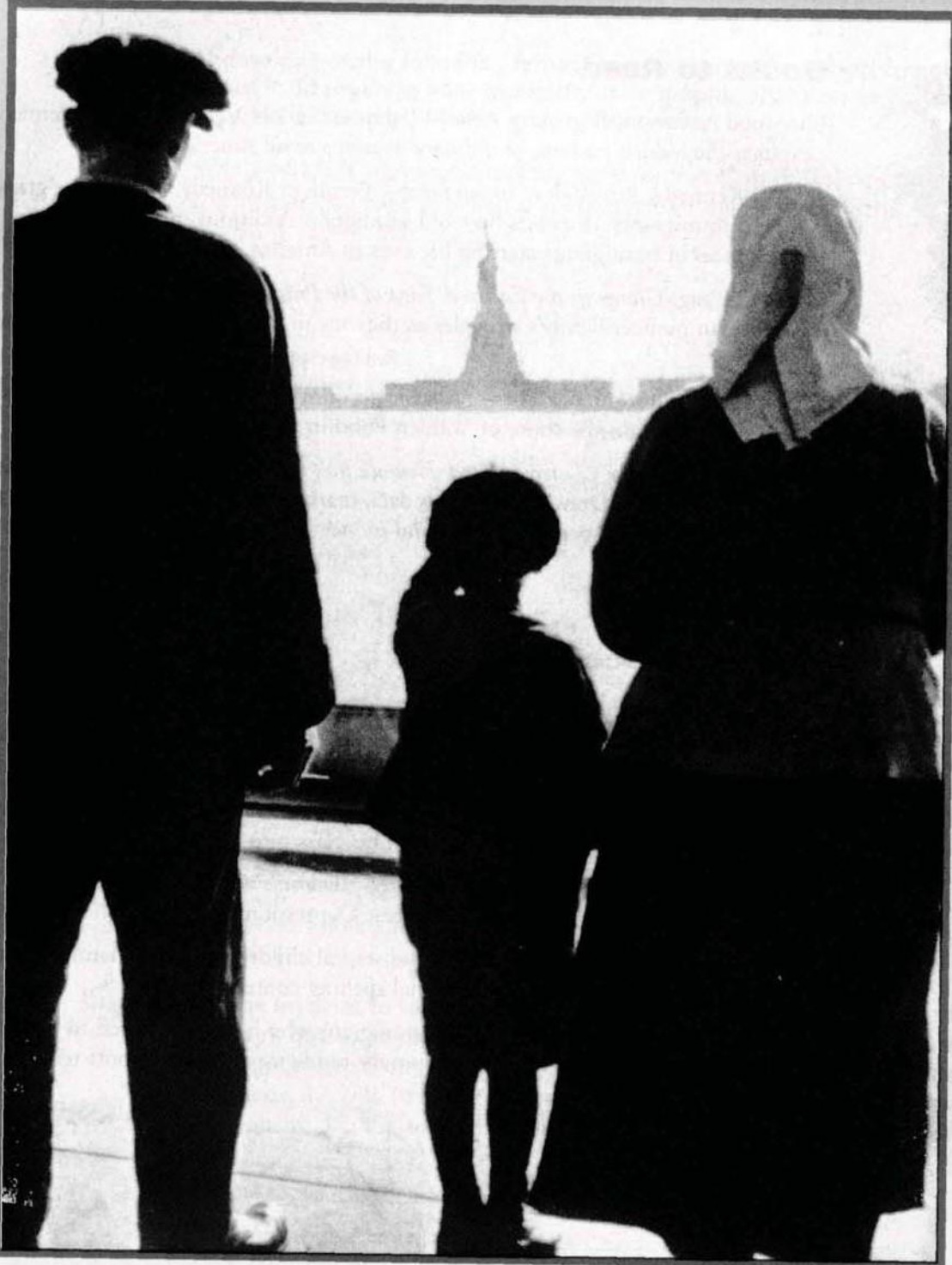
La Bamba—Based on the true story of Ritchie Valens, a young 1950s rock and roll singer who rose to fame from poverty and brought the Latin American influence to his hit songs.

School of Rock—A “wannabe” rock star in need of cash pretends to be a substitute teacher at a prep school and tries to turn his class into a rock band.

Seabiscuit—The true story of an undersized racehorse whose surprising victory lifted the spirits of a nation trapped in the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Spellbound—A documentary that follows several children and their families as they prepare for and compete in the national spelling contest.

The Terminal—An eastern European immigrant who is not permitted to enter the United States decides to take up temporary residence at a JFK airport terminal.



Immigrants seeking a new life in the "Land of Opportunity"

TRADITIONAL AMERICAN VALUES AND BELIEFS

CHAPTER 2

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

The Declaration of Independence (1776)

BEFORE YOU READ

Preview Vocabulary

A. Here are some key AWL words in this chapter. Look at their definitions. Put a check next to the words you already know.

- ___ 1. *individual* one person, considered separately from the group
- ___ 2. *achieve* to succeed in getting the result you wanted
- ___ 3. *benefit* something that gives advantages or improves life in some way
- ___ 4. *reliant* being dependent on someone
- ___ 5. *constitution* a set of basic laws and principles that a democratic country is governed by
- ___ 6. *ethical* relating to principles of what is right and wrong
- ___ 7. *resources* a country's land, minerals, or natural energy that can be used to increase its wealth

- _____ 8. *status* social or professional rank or position in relation to others
- _____ 9. *welfare* money paid by the government to people who are very poor, sick, not working, etc.
- _____ 10. *foundation* a basic idea or principle

B. Work with a partner. Complete each question with a word from the preceding list. Then answer the questions.

1. Why would the _____ of a country forbid titles of nobility?
(titles such as “princess” or “sir”)
2. If there are no titles of nobility, how does a society recognize people with high social _____?
3. Which do you think is more important to Americans, the well-being of the group or the _____?
4. What do immigrants have to do to _____ success in their new country?
5. What are some of the natural _____ found on the North American continent?
6. What _____ does a person get from being self-_____?
7. When would it not be _____ to compete with someone?
8. What country provided the language and the _____ for the political and economic systems of the United States?
9. What problems might cause a person to need _____?

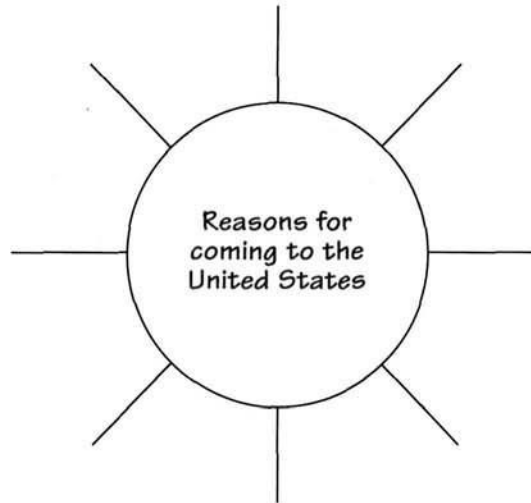
C. Read the quotation from the Declaration of Independence at the beginning of the chapter, and find the words with the following meanings. Write each word next to its meaning.

- _____ 1. the act of trying to achieve something in a determined way
- _____ 2. easily noticed or understood; obvious
- _____ 3. that cannot be taken away from you
- _____ 4. given a good quality

Preview Content

A. Before you read, preview the chapter by looking at the illustrations and reading the headings and the captions under the pictures. Work with a partner and discuss these questions.

1. What is the main idea of the quotation at the beginning of the chapter?
2. What are some of the reasons people want to come live in the United States? Use this graphic organizer to write down your ideas. Are any of these ideas similar? If so, draw lines connecting them.



3. What is the "American Dream"? (Hint: Give a one-sentence summary of the ideas you wrote for question #2.)
 4. What do you think Americans believe is the best thing about their country?
- B.** Think about what values and beliefs could be important to Americans. Work with a partner, and make three predictions about what you will read. Write your predictions here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Context of Traditional American Values: Racial, Ethnic, Religious, and Cultural Diversity

In the twenty-first century, the United States probably has a greater diversity of racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups than any other nation on earth. From the beginning of the history of the United States there has been diversity—Native Americans throughout the North American continent, Spanish settlers in the Southwest and in Florida, French missionaries and fur traders along the Mississippi River, black slaves brought from African countries, Dutch settlers in New York, Germans in Pennsylvania, and of course the British colonists, whose culture eventually provided the language and the foundation for the political and economic systems that developed in the United States.

- 2 Most early Americans recognized this diversity, or pluralism, as a fact of life. The large variety of ethnic, cultural, and religious groups meant that accepting diversity was the only practical choice, even if some people were not enthusiastic about it, or were even threatened by it. However, in time, many Americans came to see strength in their country's diversity. Today, there is more recognition of the value of cultural pluralism than at any other time in the history of the United States.



Source: <http://web.uccs.edu/~history/index/151maps.html>.

- 3 When we examine the system of basic values that emerged in the late 1700s and began to define the American character, we must remember this context of cultural pluralism. How could a nation of such enormous diversity produce a recognizable national identity?
- 4 John Zogby, an American pollster who surveys public opinion, says that what holds the United States together is that "we all share a common set of values that make us American. . . . We are defined by the rights we have. . . . Our rights are our history, why the first European settlers came here and why millions more have come here since."
- 5 Historically, the United States has been viewed as "the land of opportunity," attracting immigrants from all over the world. The opportunities they believed they would find in America and the experiences they actually had when they arrived nurtured this set of values. We will examine six basic values that have become traditional American values. Three represent traditional reasons why immigrants have been drawn

to America: the chance for individual freedom, equality of opportunity, and material wealth. In order to achieve these benefits, however, there were prices to be paid: self-reliance, competition, and hard work. In time, these prices themselves became a part of the traditional value system.

Individual Freedom and Self-Reliance

- 6 **T**he earliest settlers came to the North American continent to establish colonies which were free from the controls that existed in European societies. They wanted to escape the controls placed on many aspects of their lives by kings and governments, priests and churches, noblemen and aristocrats.¹ To a great extent, they succeeded. In 1776, the British colonial settlers declared their independence from England and established a new nation, the United States of America. In so doing, they defied² the king of England and declared that the power to govern would lie in the hands of the people. They were now free from the power of the kings. In 1789, when they wrote the Constitution for their new nation, they separated church and state so that there would never be a government-supported church. This greatly limited the power of the church. Also, in writing the Constitution they expressly forbade titles of nobility to ensure that an aristocratic society would not develop. There would be no ruling class of noblemen in the new nation.
- 7 The historic decisions made by those first settlers have had a profound³ effect on the shaping of the American character. By limiting the power of the government and the churches and eliminating a formal aristocracy, the early settlers created a climate of freedom where the emphasis was on the individual. The United States came to be associated in their minds with the concept of *individual freedom*. This is probably the most basic of all the American values. Scholars and outside observers often call this value *individualism*, but many Americans use the word *freedom*. It is one of the most respected and popular words in the United States today.
- 8 By *freedom*, Americans mean the desire and the right of all individuals to control their own destiny without outside interference from the government, a ruling noble class, the church, or any other organized authority. The desire to be free of controls was a basic value of the new nation in 1776, and it has continued to attract immigrants to this country.
- 9 There is, however, a price to be paid for this individual freedom: *self-reliance*. Individuals must learn to rely on themselves or risk losing freedom. Traditionally, this means achieving both financial and emotional independence from their parents as early as possible, usually by age eighteen or twenty-one. It means that Americans believe they should take care of themselves, solve their own problems, and “stand on their own two feet.” Tocqueville observed the Americans’ belief in self-reliance in the 1830s:

They owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to⁴ imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands.

¹ **aristocrats:** people who belong to the highest social class

² **defied:** refused to obey someone or do what was expected

³ **profound:** important and having a strong influence or effect

⁴ **are apt to:** have a natural tendency to do something

- 10 This strong belief in self-reliance continues today as a traditional basic American value. It is perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of the American character to understand, but it is profoundly important. Most Americans believe that they must be self-reliant in order to keep their freedom. If they rely too much on the support of their families or the government or any organization, they may lose some of their freedom to do what they want.
- 11 Often adult children return home to live with their parents because of economic conditions or a failed marriage. Parents are usually happy to help out, but most members of the family expect this to be a short-term arrangement. When people are dependent, they risk losing freedom and they may also lose the respect of their peers.⁵ Even if they are not truly self-reliant, most Americans believe they must at least appear to be so. In order to be in the mainstream of American life—to have power and/or respect—individuals must be seen as self-reliant.
- 12 Although Americans provide a lot of financial support to people in need through charities or government programs, they expect that help to be short-lived. Eventually, people should take care of themselves. Although receiving financial support from charity,⁶ family, or the government is allowed, it is generally not admired. Some people believe that such individuals are setting a bad example, which may weaken the American character as a whole. The sight of beggars on city streets and the plight⁷ of the homeless may inspire sympathy but also concern, for the same reason.

Equality of Opportunity and Competition

- 13 **T**he second important reason why immigrants have traditionally been drawn to the United States is the belief that everyone has a chance to succeed here. Generations of immigrants, from the earliest settlers to the present day, have come to the United States with this expectation. They have felt that because individuals are free from excessive political, religious, and social controls, they have a better chance for personal success. Of particular importance is the lack of a hereditary⁸ aristocracy.



New immigrants on Ellis Island at the turn of the century

- 14 Because titles of nobility were forbidden in the Constitution, no formal class system developed in the United States. In the early years of American history, many immigrants chose to leave older European societies because they believed that they had a better chance to succeed in America. In “the old country,” the country from

⁵ **peers:** people who are the same age or have the same type of job, rank, etc.

⁶ **charity:** an organization that gives money, goods, or help to people who are poor, sick, etc.

⁷ **plight:** a bad, serious, or sad condition or situation

⁸ **hereditary:** can be passed from an older to a younger person in the same family

which they came, their place in life was determined largely by the social class into which they were born. They knew that in America they would not have to live among noble families who possessed great power and wealth inherited and accumulated over hundreds of years.

- 15 The hopes and dreams of many of these early immigrants were fulfilled in their new country. The lower social class into which many were born did not prevent them from trying to rise to a higher social position. Many found that they did indeed have a better chance to succeed in the United States than in the old country. Because millions of these immigrants succeeded, Americans came to believe in equality of opportunity. When Tocqueville visited the United States in the 1830s, he was impressed by the great uniformity of conditions of life in the new nation. He wrote,

The more I advanced in the study of American society, the more I perceived that . . . equality of condition is the fundamental fact from which all others seem to be derived.

- 16 It is important to understand what most Americans mean when they say they believe in equality of opportunity. They do not mean that everyone is—or should be—equal. However, they do mean that each individual should have an equal chance for success. Americans see much of life as a race for success. For them, equality means that everyone should have an equal chance to enter the race and win. In other words, equality of opportunity may be thought of as an ethical rule. It helps ensure that the race for success is a fair one and that a person does not win just because he or she was born into a wealthy family, or lose because of race or religion. This American concept of “fair play” is an important aspect of the belief in equality of opportunity.

- 17 President Abraham Lincoln expressed this belief in the 1860s when he said,

We . . . wish to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everybody else. When one starts poor, as most do in the race of life, free society is such that he knows he can better his condition; he knows that there is no fixed condition of labor for his whole life.

- 18 However, the price to be paid for this equality of opportunity is competition. If much of life is seen as a race, then a person must run the race in order to succeed; a person must compete with others, even though we know not everyone will be successful. If every person has an equal chance to succeed in the United States, then many would say that it is every person's duty to try. Many Americans enjoy matching their energy and intelligence against those of others in a contest for success. People who like to compete are often more successful than others, and many are honored by being called *winners*. On the other hand, those who do not like to compete and those who are not successful when they try are sometimes dishonored by being called *losers*.



Shaking hands may be a polite acknowledgment of your competitor, as well as a greeting.

19 The pressures of competition in the life of an American begin in childhood and continue until retirement from work. Learning to compete successfully is part of growing up in the United States, and competition is encouraged by strong programs of competitive sports provided by the public schools and community groups. Competitive sports are now popular with both men and women.

20 The pressure to compete causes Americans to be energetic, but it also places a constant emotional strain on them. When they retire (traditionally at age sixty-five), they are at last free from the pressures of competition. But then a new problem arises. Some may feel useless and unwanted in a society that gives so much prestige⁹ to those who compete well. This may be one reason why older people in the United States sometimes do not have as much honor and respect as they have in other, less competitive societies. In fact, generally speaking, any group of people who do not compete successfully—for whatever reason—do not fit into the mainstream of American life as well as those who do compete and succeed.

Material Wealth and Hard Work

21 **T**he third reason why immigrants have traditionally come to the United States is to have a better life—that is, to raise their standard of living. For the vast majority of the immigrants who came here, this was probably the most compelling reason for leaving their homeland. Because of its incredibly abundant natural resources, the United States appeared to be a land of plenty where millions could come to seek their fortunes. Of course, most immigrants did not “get rich overnight,” and many of them suffered terribly, but the majority of them were eventually able to improve upon their former standard of living. Even if they were not able to achieve the economic success they wanted, they could be fairly certain that their children would have the opportunity for a better life. The phrase “going from rags to riches” became a slogan¹⁰ for the “American Dream.” Because of the vast riches of the North American continent, the dream came true for many of the immigrants. They achieved material success and many became very attached to material things. Material wealth became a value to the American people.

22 Placing a high value on material possessions is called *materialism*, but this is a word that most Americans find offensive. To say that a person is materialistic is an insult. To an American, this means that this person values material possessions above all else. Americans do not like to be called materialistic because they feel that this unfairly accuses them of loving only material things and of having no religious values. In fact, most Americans do have other values and ideals. Nevertheless, acquiring and maintaining a large number of material possessions is still of great importance to most Americans. Why is this so?

23 One reason is that material wealth has traditionally been a widely accepted measure of social status in the United States. Because Americans rejected the European system of hereditary aristocracy and titles of nobility, they had to find a substitute for judging social status. The quality and quantity of an individual’s material possessions became an accepted measure of success and social status. Moreover, as we shall see in later chapters, the Puritan work ethic associated material success with godliness.

⁹ **prestige**: the respect and importance that a person, organization, or profession has

¹⁰ **slogan**: a short, easily remembered phrase used in advertising or politics

- 24 Americans have paid a price, however, for their material wealth: *hard work*. The North American continent was rich in natural resources when the first settlers arrived, but all these resources were undeveloped. Only by hard work could these natural resources be converted into material possessions, allowing a more comfortable standard of living. Hard work has been both necessary and rewarding for most Americans throughout their history. Because of this, they came to see material possessions as the natural reward for their hard work. In some ways, material possessions were seen not only as tangible¹¹ evidence of people's work, but also of their abilities. In the late 1700s, James Madison, the father of the American Constitution, stated that the difference in material possessions reflected a difference in personal abilities.
- 25 As the United States has shifted from an industry-based economy to one that is service- or information-based, there has been a decline in high-paying jobs for factory workers. It is now much more difficult for the average worker to go from rags to riches in the United States, and many wonder what has happened to the traditional American Dream. As the United States competes in a global economy, many workers are losing their old jobs and finding that they and their family members must now work longer hours for less money and fewer benefits. When the economy weakens, everyone suffers, and there are greater numbers of the working poor—those who work hard but have low-paying jobs that do not provide a decent standard of living and may not provide health insurance.
- 26 Most Americans, however, still believe in the value of hard work. Most believe that people should hold jobs and not live off welfare payments from the government. There have been many efforts to reform the welfare system so that people would not become dependent on welfare and stop looking for jobs to support themselves. Limitations have been put on the number of years a family can remain on welfare, but the system still has many problems. One of the most critical problems is the cost of health care in the United States and the fact that many employers no longer offer health insurance to their employees. It is often the children who suffer most, particularly in families of the working poor. Another issue is government benefits to immigrants and immigrant children; many of these families are living in poverty.

The American Dream

- 27 John Kenneth White, in *The Values Divide: American Politics and Culture in Transition*, observes that in spite of all the changes in the nation's population, economy, and culture, the behaviors and values of Americans have remained remarkably constant:

Americans still love their country and believe that they can accomplish almost anything. A recent poll found 91 percent who agreed with the statement, "Being an American is a big part of who I am." Only 11 percent said they would like to emigrate elsewhere. . . . Frenchman Clotaire Rapaille captured this unique aspect of American patriotism: "America is not a place. It is a dream."

¹¹ tangible: concrete, able to be touched

28 In understanding the relationship between what Americans believe and how they live, it is important to distinguish between idealism and reality. American values such as equality of opportunity and self-reliance are ideals that may not necessarily describe the reality of American life. Equality of opportunity, for example, is an ideal that is not always put into practice. In reality, some people have a better chance for success than others. Those who are born into rich families have more opportunities than those who are born into poorer families. Inheriting money does give a person a decided advantage. Race and gender may still be factors affecting success, although there are laws designed to promote equality of opportunity for all individuals. And, of course, new immigrants continue to face challenges unique to their situation.

29 The fact that American ideals are only partly carried out in real life does not diminish their importance. Most Americans still believe in them and are strongly affected by them in their everyday lives. It is easier to understand what Americans are thinking and feeling if we can understand what these basic traditional American values are and how they have influenced almost every facet¹² of life in the United States.

30 The six basic values presented in this chapter—individual freedom, self-reliance, equality of opportunity, competition, material wealth, and hard work—do not tell the whole story of the American character. Rather, they should be thought of as themes¹³ which will be developed in our discussions on religion, family life, education, business, and politics. These themes will appear throughout the book as we continue to explore more facets of the American character and how they affect life in the United States.



To some, owning a beautiful house means they have achieved the American Dream.

¹² **facet:** one of several parts of someone's character or a situation

¹³ **themes:** main subjects or ideas in a piece of writing, speech, or movie

Understand Main Ideas

1. Check the predictions you made on page 27 before reading the chapter.

In Chapter 1, we looked at the relationship between the introduction and the conclusion, and at how the headings signaled the main ideas. The outline below shows the structure of Chapter 2: the introduction (A), the three sections containing the six traditional values (B, C, D), and the conclusion (E). The numbers under each heading show the main ideas of each section.

2. Reread paragraph 5 of the introduction section on pages 28–29. What does this paragraph tell you about the structure of the reading? Work with a partner to complete the outline. (Part of it is done for you.)

A. Introduction: The Context of Traditional American Values: Racial, Ethnic, Religious, and Cultural Diversity

1. The United States has great diversity, but it also has a national identity.
2. What holds the United States together is a common set of _____.

B. Individual Freedom and Self-Reliance

1. The early settlers came to the North American continent for individual freedom—the most basic of all the American values.
2. The price for individual freedom is _____.

C. _____

1. Immigrants have always come for equality of opportunity—the belief that everyone should have an equal chance to _____.
2. _____.

D. _____

1. Immigrants have traditionally come for material wealth—the chance for a higher standard of _____.
2. _____.

E. Conclusion: _____

1. Many Americans believe that, with hard work, their dreams of success can _____.
2. Even though many of the traditional values are ideals that may not describe the reality of American life, they still influence _____.

Understand Details

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences about the chapter.

- _____ 1. Early settlers came to the North American continent and established colonies mainly because they wanted to be free from
 - a. the power of kings, priests, and noblemen.
 - b. the influence of their families.
 - c. the problems of poverty and hunger.
- _____ 2. There are no titles of nobility in the United States today because
 - a. no one likes aristocrats.
 - b. the church does not allow it.
 - c. they are forbidden by the Constitution.
- _____ 3. The price that Americans pay for their individual freedom is
 - a. self-reliance.
 - b. competition.
 - c. hard work.
- _____ 4. The American belief in self-reliance means that
 - a. receiving money from charity, family, or the government is never allowed.
 - b. if a person is very dependent on others, he or she will be respected by others.
 - c. people must take care of themselves and be independent, or risk losing their personal freedom.
- _____ 5. The American belief in equality of opportunity means that
 - a. all Americans are rich.
 - b. Americans believe that everyone should be equal.
 - c. everyone should have an equal chance to succeed.

- ___ 6. In the United States, learning to compete successfully is
 - a. part of growing up.
 - b. not seen as healthy by most people.
 - c. not necessary, because Americans believe in equality.

- ___ 7. Traditionally, immigrants have been able to raise their standard of living by coming to the United States because
 - a. Americans value money more than anything else.
 - b. there were such abundant natural resources.
 - c. the rich have shared their wealth with the poor.

- ___ 8. Americans see their material possessions as
 - a. having nothing to do with social status.
 - b. the natural reward for their hard work.
 - c. showing no evidence of a person's abilities.

- ___ 9. A belief in the value of hard work
 - a. developed because it was necessary to work hard to convert natural resources into material goods.
 - b. developed because the immigrants who came here had a natural love of hard work.
 - c. has never been a part of the American value system because people have so much.

- ___ 10. In reality, such American ideals as equality of opportunity and self-reliance
 - a. do not exist because there is no equality in the United States.
 - b. are always put into practice in the United States and truly describe American life.
 - c. are only partly carried out in real life, but are still important because people believe in them.

Talk About It

Work in small groups and choose one or more questions to discuss.

1. Americans believe strongly in self-reliance and the freedom and independence of the individual. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being very independent? Which is more important to you, pleasing your family or having the freedom to do what you want?
2. If Americans had to pick one aspect of their country that they are most proud of, over 90 percent would choose freedom. What aspect of your country are people most proud of? How does that quality affect life there?
3. Is it healthy for a person to want to compete? Which is more important in a society—competition or cooperation? Which do you value more? Why?

Improve Your Reading Skills: Scanning

Read the questions below. Scan the chapter to find the specific information you need to answer each question.

1. What three types of freedoms were the early settlers seeking?
2. What happened in 1776?
3. What does *plight* mean?
4. Who wrote *The Values Divide: American Politics and Culture in Transition*?
5. In what year was the Constitution of the United States written?
6. What do Americans mean by the word *freedom*?
7. Who said, "Americans still love their country and believe that they can accomplish almost anything"?
8. Why didn't a hereditary aristocracy develop in the United States?
9. Who was James Madison and what did he say in the late 1700s?
10. Who said, "We . . . wish to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everybody else"?

Build Your Vocabulary

More AWL Words Test your knowledge of these additional AWL words in the reading by completing the crossword puzzle on the next page.

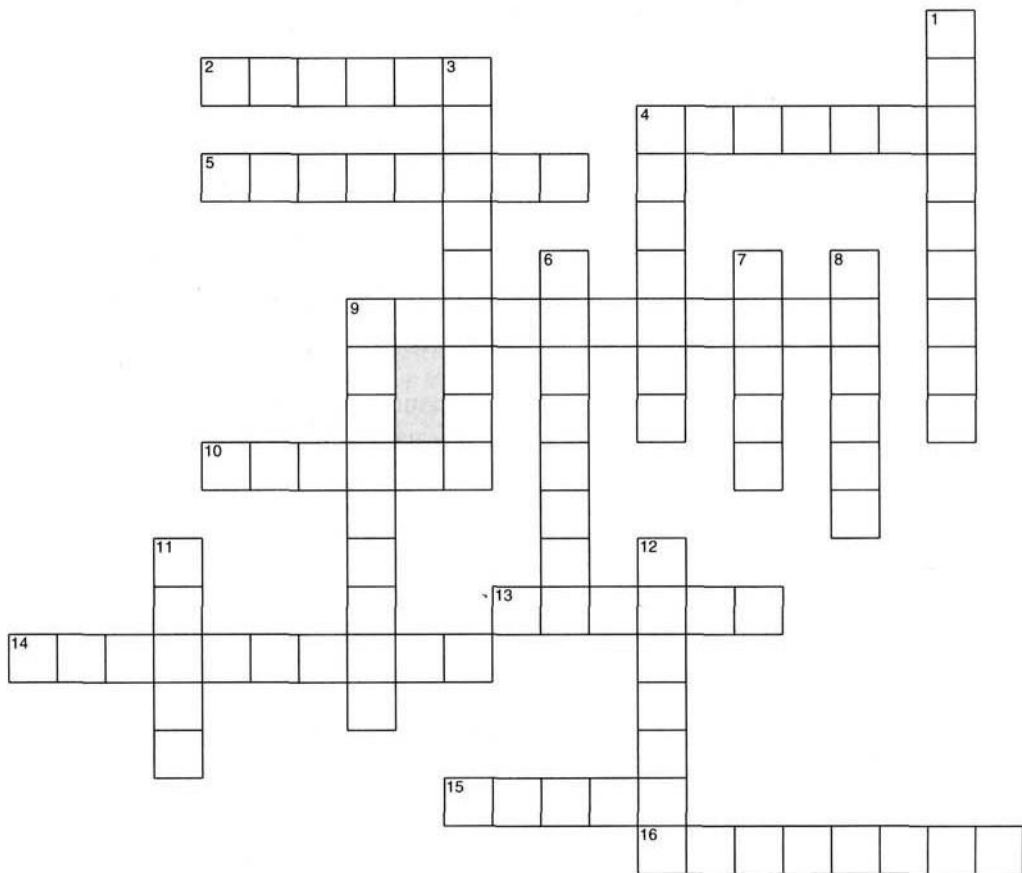
accumulate	decade	ethic	promote
adult	diminish	financial	shift
authority	eliminate	fundamental	unique
concept	energy	global	
convert	enormous	maintain	

Across

2. being the only one of its kind
4. an idea of how something should be done
5. to become smaller or less important
9. of central and underlying importance
10. a period of ten years
13. the physical and mental strength that makes you able to be active
14. to gradually get more and more money, possessions, or knowledge over a period of time
15. to move from one place or position to another
16. extremely large in size or amount

Down

1. the power you have because of your official position
3. to get rid of something completely
4. to change from one form, system, or purpose to a different one
6. to make something continue in the same way
7. a general idea or set of moral beliefs that influences people's behavior and attitudes
8. relating to the whole world
9. relating to money
11. a fully grown person or animal
12. to help something or someone advance and be successful



Use Context Clues Review the four kinds of context clues on pages 12 and 13 in Chapter 1. Use context clues in these sentences to choose the best meaning for the boldfaced words.

- _____ 1. In 1776, the British colonial settlers declared their independence from England and established a new nation, the United States of America. In so doing, they **defied** the king of England and declared that the power to govern would lie in the hands of the people.
- They killed the king and members of his court.
 - They refused to recognize the king's power to govern them.
- _____ 2. By *freedom*, Americans mean the desire and the right of all individuals to control their own **destiny** without outside interference from the government, a ruling class, the church, or any other organized authority.
- They wanted to control their own future lives.
 - They wanted to control their Constitution.
- _____ 3. To say that a person is **materialistic** is an insult. To an American, this means that this person values material possessions above all else.
- The person loves things.
 - The person fears being poor.
- _____ 4. John Kenneth White observes that in spite of all the changes in the nation's population, economy, and culture, the behaviors and values of Americans have remained remarkably **constant**.
- The behaviors and values have stayed the same.
 - The behaviors and values have changed.
- _____ 5. Because of its incredibly **abundant** natural resources, the United States appeared to be a land of plenty where millions could come to seek their fortunes.
- There were many natural resources.
 - There were very few natural resources.

Word Partners There are many verb + noun object collocations, or word partners, in English.

EXAMPLE: *achieve independence*

Americans expect their adult children to *achieve independence* and support themselves.

Read these word partners. Then complete the sentences that follow with the correct verb + noun object collocation.

face challenges

seek their fortunes

provide a decent standard of living

surveys public opinion

control their own destiny

1. John Zogby is an American pollster who _____
_____.
2. By *freedom*, Americans mean the desire and the right to _____
_____.
3. Millions came to the United States to _____
_____.
4. The working poor have low-paying jobs that do not _____
_____.
5. Of course, new immigrants continue to _____
_____.

Some English words can collocate, or partner, with only a few words; others have a great many collocations. For example, the verb **survey** has relatively few collocations with nouns:

survey (public) opinion
survey a group of people (teachers, voters)

When **face** is used as a verb, it has many collocations. It usually means confronting someone or something that is difficult or unpleasant:

face the facts, reality, the truth, the consequences
face the problem head-on, face the music
face an opponent, a rival, another sports team
face a challenge

The verb **seek** also has many collocations. It often means *to look for something you need* or *to ask someone for advice*:

seek shelter, sanctuary, comfort, help, advice, counseling
seek your fortune, a better life, an opportunity
seek a solution to a problem or seek a compromise
seek the truth, seek justice, seek an answer
seek employment, seek re-election

Choose two collocations each for *survey*, *face*, and *seek*, and then use them in your own sentences.

Word Forms Many words have verb and noun forms.

VERB FORM	NOUN FORM
achieve	achievement
conceptualize	concept
emphasize	emphasis
reject	rejection
rely	reliance

Choose the correct verb or noun forms from the chart above and write them in the following sentences. (Change the verb tenses, if necessary.)

Self-_____ ¹ is an important American value. Most Americans _____ ² the importance of eventually becoming independent and standing on your own two feet. They teach this _____ ³ to their children as they are growing up, expecting them to _____ ⁴ financial and emotional independence by the time they are in their early twenties. Americans do not _____ ⁵ their adult children; they still love them and believe this is the best preparation for life in the American culture.



American children often earn spending money by selling lemonade.

Ask Yourself

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Put a check under the number that indicates how you feel.

- +2 = Strongly agree
- +1 = Agree
- 0 = No opinion
- 1 = Disagree
- 2 = Strongly disagree

	+2	+1	0	-1	-2
1. The welfare of the individual is more important than the welfare of the group.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Our destiny is in our own hands.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. People should take care of themselves, solve their own problems, and stand on their own two feet.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. If I could have a better life in another country, I would go and live there.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Earning a lot of money is more important than having an interesting job.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. The government should take care of the poor and homeless.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Life is basically a competitive race for success.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Money and material possessions are the best indicators of high social status.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. People who work hard deserve to have a higher standard of living than others.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. If I work hard, I am sure I can be a success and get what I want in life.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Your teacher will place the numbers +2, +1, 0, -1, -2 on walls around the room. As the teacher reads the above statements, walk to the number that best describes your opinion. Be prepared to explain your choice.

Ask Americans

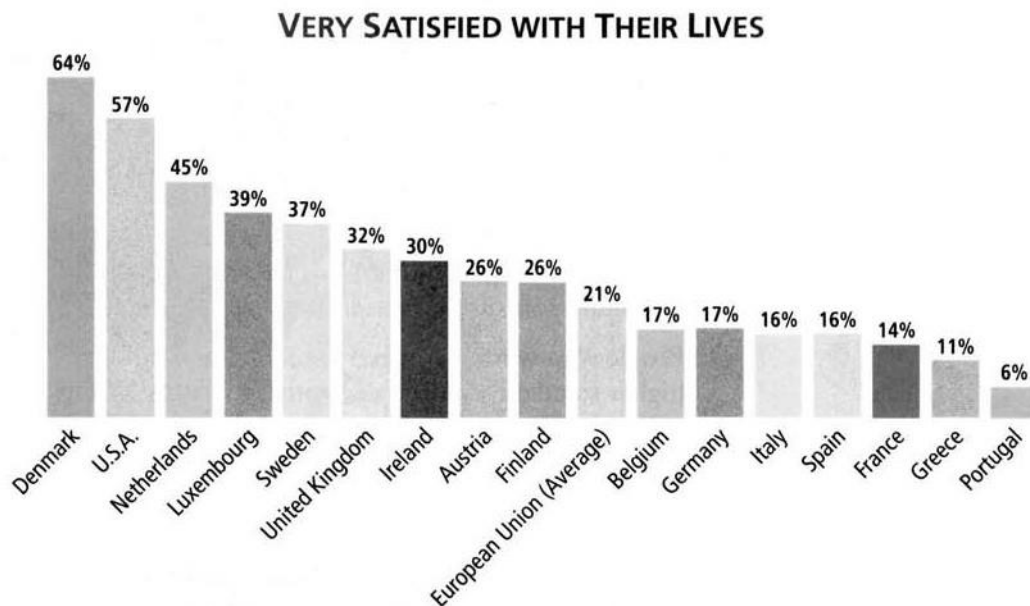
Interview several Americans of different ages and ask them about their basic beliefs. If this is not possible, try to interview people from several different countries. Ask each one the following questions and record their answers.

1. Some people say that people achieve success by their own hard work; others say that luck and help from other people are more important. Which do you think is more important?
2. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: If you work hard in this country, eventually you will get ahead.
3. On the whole, how satisfied are you with the life you lead? Would you say that you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied?
4. In the course of the next five years, do you expect your personal situation to improve, to stay about the same, or to get worse?

Compare Polls

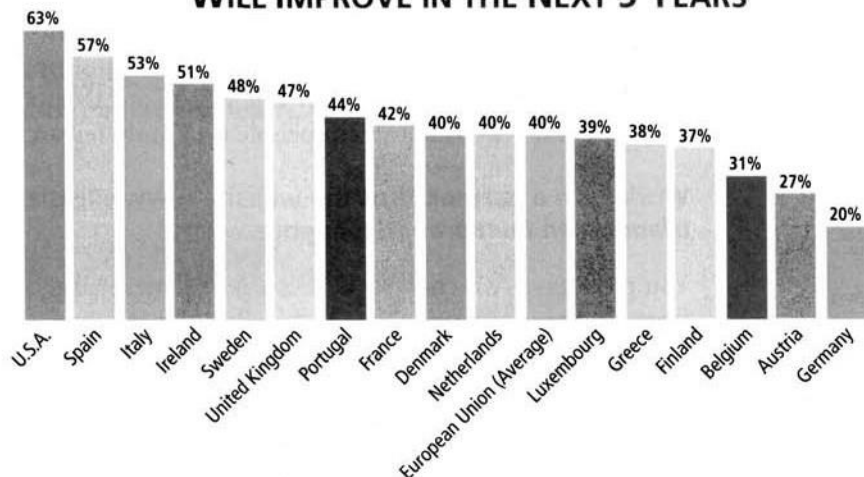
In the polls that follow, Americans and Europeans were asked to rate how satisfied they were with their lives today and how optimistic they were about the future (questions 3 and 4 of *Ask Americans*).

Look at the charts that follow. Then, answer the questions on the next page.



Source: *The Harris Poll*® #30, May 21, 2003, conducted by Harris Interactive Inc.

EXPECT PERSONAL SITUATION WILL IMPROVE IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS



Source: The Harris Poll® #30, May 21, 2003, conducted by Harris Interactive Inc.

1. How do the results you and your classmates obtained compare with the answers the pollsters obtained about how Americans feel about their present and future lives?
2. In general, who are more satisfied with their lives today, Americans or Europeans?
3. In general, who are more optimistic about what their lives will be like in the next five years, Americans or Europeans?
4. In which country are people the most satisfied with their lives today?
5. In which country are people most optimistic about life in the future?

People Watching

Rule: Americans usually stand about two and a half feet apart and at a slight angle (not facing each other directly) for ordinary conversation. They may touch when greeting each other by shaking hands (during a formal introduction) or by placing a hand briefly on the other's arm or shoulder (friends only). Some people kiss on the cheek or hug when greeting a friend. Note that the hug usually is not a full-body hug; only the shoulder and upper part of the bodies touch.

Observation: Observe people who are standing and talking. How far apart are they? Do they touch as they speak? What do you think their relationship is? Observe people greeting each other. What do they do? What is their relationship? Observe formal introductions. Do the people shake hands? Do women usually shake hands? If a man and a woman are introduced, who extends a hand first?

Experiment: Ask someone on the street for directions. When you are standing two or three feet apart and the other person seems comfortable with the distance, take a step closer. What is the person's reaction? Try standing more than two to three feet from the other person. What does the other person do? Try facing the person directly as you talk instead of standing at an angle. What happens?

Use the Internet

Many Americans interested in tracing their family history can learn when family members immigrated to the United States. Immigrants who came from Europe between 1892 and 1924 first landed on Ellis Island (in the New York harbor). There they went through Immigration. The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation has a museum and a website to help people do family research.

Work with a partner. Visit the website www.ellisland.org and click on *Ellis Island*, then *Immigrant Experience*.

You then have two choices: (1) *Family Histories* will tell you stories about individuals from different countries, or (2) *The Peopling of America* will give you a timeline that traces the history of immigration to the United States.

Choose one of these, read the information, and discuss it with your partner.


WRITE ABOUT IT

A. Choose one of the following topics. Then write a short composition about it.

1. Refugees from other countries often get both financial aid and personal support when they first arrive. However, after a few months, Americans expect the refugees to be independent and self-supporting. Write a letter to a refugee who has been in the United States for one year. Explain why Americans now expect him or her to “stand on his or her own two feet” and be self-supporting. Mention the American values that are relevant.
2. Watch advertisements on TV and look at ads in American magazines and newspapers. Some ads suggest that if Americans buy particular products, they will have high status and people will admire and respect them. Bring these ads to class and show them to the members of your small group. Discuss the products, how they are presented, and the messages the ads are sending. Make a collage by pasting all the ads your group has collected on a big piece of paper. Write a report summarizing your conclusions.

B. Write an essay about the responsibilities people in a community have to each other. Organize your thoughts before you write. Here are a few tips.

1. Write a short plan, or outline, of your main ideas: an introduction, two or three main ideas, and a conclusion.
2. Begin your essay by defining what you mean by the word *community*.
3. Be sure to introduce each of your main points, using words such as *first*, *second*, *third*.
4. Try to tie your conclusion to the introduction.

-  C. Off the coast of California is Angel Island, known as the Ellis Island of the West. From 1910 until 1940, many Asian immigrants entered the United States by first going to this island.

Visit the website www.angelisland.org and click on *Immigration Stn.* Write a report about what you learn.

EXPLORE ON YOUR OWN

Books to Read

Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street*—Esperanza Cordero, a girl coming of age in the Hispanic quarter of Chicago, uses poems and stories to reveal her life in a difficult environment.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance*—A classic essay on the American value of self-reliance and Emerson's philosophy of moral idealism.

Richard Rodriguez, *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*—A Mexican American describes his academic success, his assimilation to middle-class America, and his loss of connection to his cultural roots.

Amy Tan, *The Kitchen God's Wife*—A Chinese immigrant mother tells her daughter about growing up in China and her life there before coming to the United States.

John Kenneth White, *The Values Divide: American Politics and Culture in Transition*—A discussion of the split between conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats and the American "culture wars" of the 2000s.

Movies to See

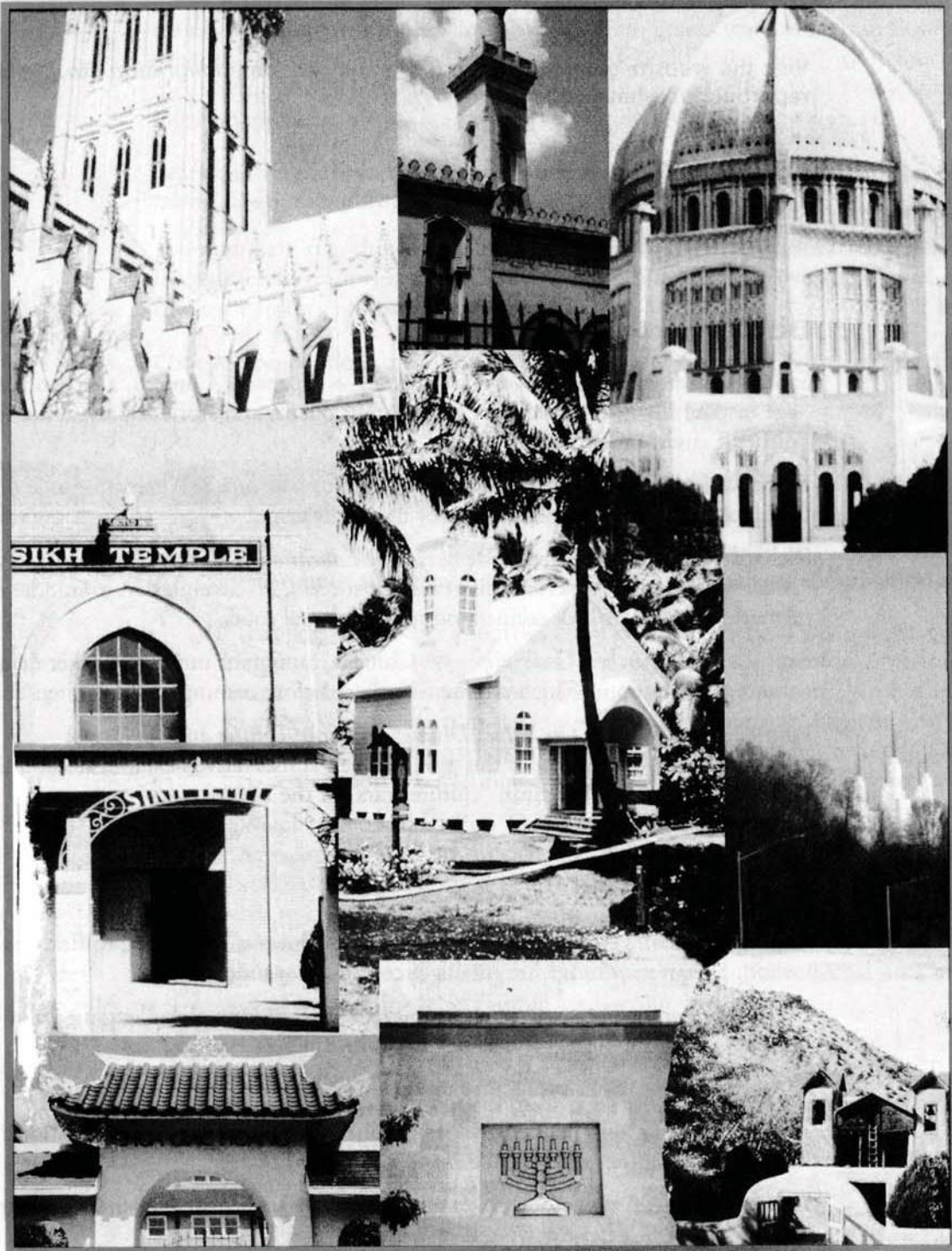
Coming to America—An African prince goes to Queens, New York, to find a wife whom he can respect for her intelligence and independence.

The Immigrants—The story of an immigrant who endures a challenging sea voyage and gets into trouble as soon as he arrives in America.

In America—An Irish immigrant family adjusts to life in the United States.

The Joy Luck Club—The life histories of four Asian women and their relationships with their daughters who were born in the United States.

Trading Places—A rich stockbroker and a street-smart beggar find themselves trading places as part of a bet by two old millionaires.



Religion in the United States: National Cathedral (Episcopal); Islamic mosque; Baha'i temple; Sikh temple; Hawaiian church (Protestant); Mormon temple; Buddhist temple; Jewish synagogue; Spanish chapel (Catholic)

THE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

The care of every man's soul belongs to himself.

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826)

BEFORE YOU READ

Preview Vocabulary

- A. Read the following sentences from the chapter and notice the words in italics. Use context clues to help you figure out the meanings. Then choose which definition is best for the italicized word. These key AWL words will help you understand the chapter reading.
- 1. Although the overwhelming majority of Americans are Christians, all religions make important *contributions* to the American culture.
 - a. things you give or do in order to help make something successful
 - b. official statements made by religious leaders to inspire people
 - 2. In contrast to Catholic traditions, Protestant leaders had a different *attitude* toward work. They believed that the work of all people was holy.
 - a. the opinions, feelings, or beliefs about something
 - b. particular practice or customary behavior

- _____ 3. The idea of mixing materialism (love of things) and religion may seem *contradictory*. Religion is considered to be concerned with spiritual matters, not material possessions.
- different
 - similar or almost the same
- _____ 4. Many businesses encourage their employees to do *volunteer* work, such as helping clean up parks or doing other community projects in their spare time.
- without being paid
 - necessary or required
- _____ 5. Perhaps the most *dramatic* example of the idea of self-improvement is the experience of being “born again.”
- uncertain or undecided
 - exciting and impressive
- _____ 6. America’s religious heritage seems to have encouraged certain basic values that members of many diverse faiths find easy to accept. This has helped to unite many different religious groups in the United States without requiring any to *abandon* their faiths.
- to leave behind a particular idea or principle
 - to try to convince others to join your religious faith

B. In this chapter, there are words dealing with religion, such as *priest*, *soul*, and *church*. Other words have to do with wealth, such as *money*, *financial*, and *sum*.

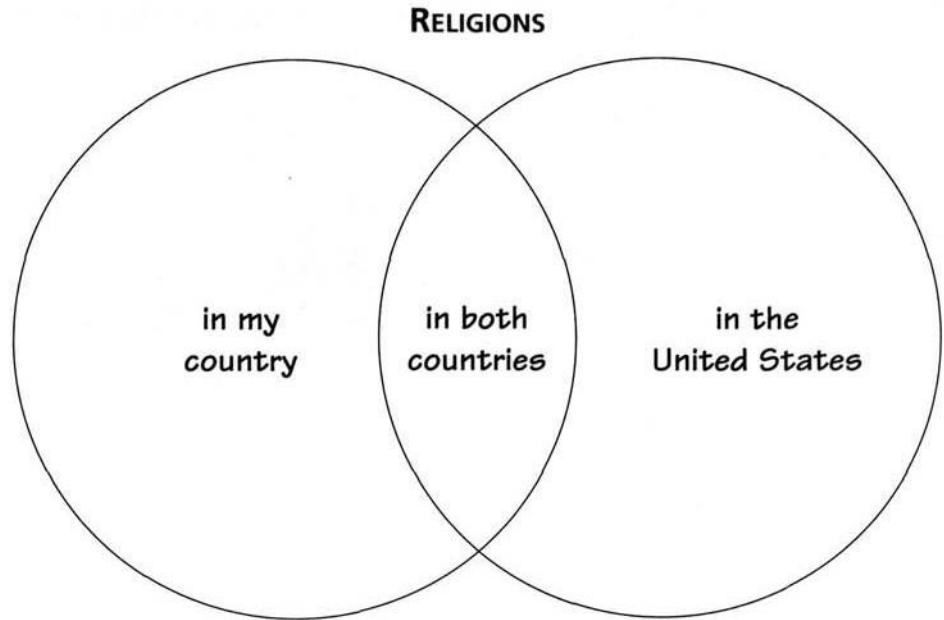
Look at the words below and classify them into one of these two groups. Write *R* next to words dealing with religion and *W* next to words dealing with wealth.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| _____ 1. bless | _____ 9. prosperity |
| _____ 2. faith | _____ 10. Protestant denomination |
| _____ 3. forgiveness | _____ 11. riches |
| _____ 4. fortune | _____ 12. save and invest |
| _____ 5. holy | _____ 13. sin |
| _____ 6. material success | _____ 14. soul |
| _____ 7. missionary | _____ 15. spiritual |
| _____ 8. pray | _____ 16. tax credit |

Preview Content

A. Read the questions below and discuss them with your classmates.

1. Read the quotation by Thomas Jefferson at the beginning of the chapter. What do you think he meant? How could this belief affect religion in the United States?
2. What do you know about religion in the United States? Do you think that the United States has the same religions as your country? Fill in the Venn diagram with the names of religions found only in your country, only in the United States, or in both countries.




B. Before you read the chapter, look at the headings for each section. Which sections do you think will have the answers to these questions? Write the heading of the section in the space below each question.

1. Do many Americans believe in God?

2. What is the most popular religion in the United States?

3. Do Americans have an official national religion?

4. How has religion shaped American values?



Freedom of Religion in the United States

1 **T**he fundamental American belief in individual freedom and the right of individuals to practice their own religion is at the center of religious experience in the United States. The great diversity of ethnic backgrounds has produced religious pluralism; most of the religions of the world are now practiced in the United States. Ninety percent of Americans say that they believe in God, although not all of them participate in traditional religious organizations. About 80 percent of Americans are Christians, about 2 percent are Jewish, and another 4 percent belong to other religious faiths such as Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

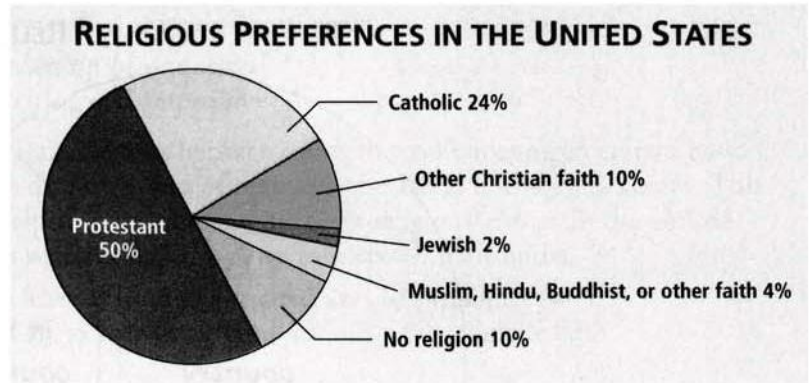
2 Although the overwhelming majority of Americans are Christians, all religions make important contributions to the American

culture. There are now about as many Muslims living in the United States as there are Jews. People of Hispanic origin now make up about one-half of the Catholic church. The Asian immigrants have brought with them the traditional religions of East Asia—Daoism, Confucianism, and Shintoism, as well as Buddhism. And the Native American religions are still practiced and studied today, particularly for their teachings about living in harmony with nature.

3 Religion has always played an important role in the history of the United States. The Catholic faith was first brought to the North American continent by the Spanish in the 1500s. For the next 300 years, Catholic missionaries and settlers from Spain and then Latin America came to what is now California and the Southwest. Many of the cities were named by these missionaries and settlers—San Francisco, Santa Fe, and San Antonio, for example. French Canadian Catholic missionaries also came with the explorers and traders from Quebec, down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. In the 1600s, the European settlers began establishing colonies along the east coast of North America. Although there were some Catholics, the vast majority of the European settlers were Protestants, most from England. As the new nation formed, it was the Protestant branch of the Christian faith that had the strongest effect on the development of the religious climate in the United States.

The Development of Protestantism

4 **T**he Protestant branch of the Christian faith broke away from the Roman Catholic church in Europe in the sixteenth century because of important differences in religious beliefs. (The Eastern Orthodox branch of the Christian faith had separated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1054.) At the time of the Protestant



Reformation, the Roman Catholic church was the center of religious life in western European countries; the Catholic pope and the priests played the role of parent to the people in spiritual matters. They told people what was right and wrong, and they granted them forgiveness for sins¹ against God and the Christian faith.

5 The Protestants, on the other hand, insisted that all individuals must stand alone before God. If people sinned, they should seek their forgiveness directly from God rather than from a priest speaking in God's name. In place of the power and authority of priests, Protestants substituted what they called the "priesthood of all believers." This meant that every individual was solely responsible for his or her own relationship with God.

6 After the Protestants broke away from the Catholic church, they found that they could not agree among themselves about many beliefs. Therefore, the Protestants began to form separate churches, called *denominations*. (The largest Protestant denominations in the United States now are Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and the United Church of Christ.) There was much



Children participating in an Easter Sunday service in a Baptist church

bitterness among some of the religious groups in the 1600s, and many Protestant denominations experienced religious persecution.²

A number of people were even killed because of their beliefs. The result of this persecution was that many Protestants were ready to leave their native countries in order to have freedom to practice their particular religious beliefs. Consequently, among the early settlers who came to America in the 1600s, there were many Protestants seeking religious freedom.

7 In the previous chapter we noted that this desire for religious freedom was one of the strongest reasons why many colonial settlers came to America. Generally speaking, the lack of any established national religion in America appealed strongly to European Protestants, whether or not they were being persecuted. A large number of Protestant denominations were established in America. At first, some denominations hoped to force their views and beliefs on others, but the colonies were simply too large for any one denomination to gain control over the others. The idea of separation of church and state became accepted. When the Constitution was adopted in 1789, the government was forbidden to establish a national church; no denomination was to be favored over the others. The government and the church had to remain separate. Under these conditions, a great variety of different Protestant denominations developed and grew, with each denomination having a "live and let live" attitude toward the others. Diversity was

¹ sins: things someone does that are against religious laws

² persecution: cruel or unfair treatment, especially because of religious or political beliefs

accepted and strengthened. Today, the various Protestant denominations have *completely* separate church organizations, and although there are many similarities, there are also significant differences in their religious teachings and beliefs.

The Protestant Heritage: Self-Improvement

- 8 **P**rotestantism has been a powerful force in shaping the values and beliefs of Americans. One of the most important values associated with American Protestantism is the value of self-improvement. Christianity often emphasizes the natural sinfulness of human nature. Unlike Catholics, Protestants do not go to priests for forgiveness of their sins; individuals are left alone before God to improve themselves and ask for God's guidance, forgiveness, and grace. For this reason, Protestantism has traditionally encouraged a strong and restless desire for self-improvement.
- 9 The need for self-improvement, once established, reaches far beyond self-improvement in the purely moral or religious sense. It can be seen in countless books which explain how people can be happier and more successful in life by improving everything from their vocabulary to their tennis game, or even their whole personality. Books of this type are often referred to as "self-help" books, and many are best sellers. They are the natural products of a culture in which people believe that "God helps those who help themselves." In addition, Americans attend thousands of self-help seminars and support group³ meetings to help them stop smoking or drinking, lose weight, be better parents, have happier relationships, and develop self-confidence.

Material Success, Hard Work, and Self-Discipline

- 10 **T**he achievement of material success is probably the most widely respected form of self-improvement in the United States. Many scholars believe that the nation's Protestant heritage is also largely responsible for bringing this about. The idea of mixing materialism and religion may seem contradictory; religion is considered to be concerned with spiritual matters, not material possessions. How can the two mix?
- 11 Some of the early European Protestant leaders believed that people who were blessed by God might be recognized in the world by their material success. Other church leaders, particularly in the United States, made an even stronger connection between gaining material wealth and being blessed by God. In 1900, for example, Bishop William Lawrence proclaimed,⁴ "Godliness is in league with⁵ riches. . . . Material prosperity is helping to make the national character sweeter, more joyous, more unselfish, more Christlike."
- 12 American religious leaders, however, never encouraged the idea of gaining wealth without hard work and self-discipline. Many scholars believe that the emphasis on these two values made an important contribution to the industrial growth of the United States. Protestant leaders viewed the work of all people as holy, not just that of priests. They also believed that the capacity for self-discipline was a holy characteristic blessed by God. Self-discipline was often defined as the willingness to save and invest one's money rather than spend it on immediate pleasures. Protestant

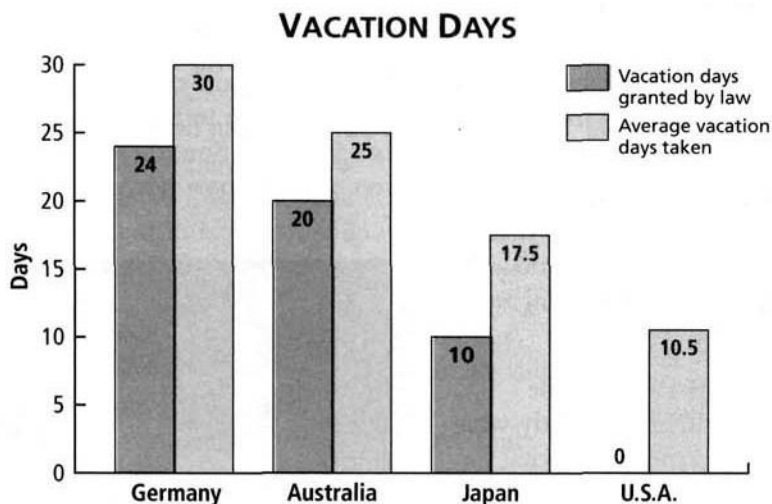
³ **support group:** a group of people who meet to help each other with a particular problem

⁴ **proclaimed:** said publicly or officially that something is true

⁵ **in league with:** working together secretly

tradition, therefore, may have played an important part in creating a good climate for the industrial growth of the United States, which depended on hard work and willingness to save and invest money.

- 13 The belief in hard work and self-discipline in pursuit of material gain and other goals is often referred to as “the Protestant work ethic” or “the Puritan work ethic.” It is important to understand that this work ethic has had an influence far beyond the Protestant church. Many religious groups in the United States share this work ethic, and even Americans who have no attachment to a particular church are influenced by the work ethic in their daily lives. Interestingly, the United States is the only industrialized country that does not have a legal requirement for workers to have a certain number of paid vacation days. Americans take an average of only two weeks of vacation time a year.



Source: AOL News, June 25, 2003, citing Catherine Valenti, “The No-Vacation Nation,” www.ABCNews.com.

Volunteerism and Humanitarianism

- 14 **T**he idea of self-improvement includes more than achieving material gain through hard work and self-discipline. It also includes the idea of improving oneself by helping others. Individuals, in other words, make themselves into better persons by contributing some of their time or money to charitable, educational, or religious causes that are designed to help others. The philosophy is sometimes called *volunteerism* or *humanitarianism*.

- 15 Historically, some of the extremely wealthy Americans have made generous contributions to help others. In the early 1900s, for example, Andrew Carnegie, a famous American businessman, gave away more than \$300 million to help support schools and universities and to build public libraries in thousands of communities in the United States. John D. Rockefeller, another famous businessman, in explaining why he gave a large sum from his private fortune to establish a university, said, “The good Lord gave me my money, so how could I withhold it from the University of Chicago?” The motive for humanitarianism and volunteerism is strong: Many Americans believe that they should devote part of their time and wealth to religious

or humanitarian causes in order to be acceptable in the eyes of God and in the eyes of other Americans. Many businesses encourage their employees to do volunteer work, and individuals may get tax deductions for money given to charity.

Born-Again Christians and the Religious Right

16 **P**erhaps the most dramatic example of the idea of self-improvement is the experience of being “born again.” Some individuals who have had this experience say that when they truly opened their hearts to God and Jesus Christ, their lives were so completely changed, it was like being born again. Whether they identify themselves as born-again Christians, Evangelicals,⁶ mainline Protestants or Catholics, they tend to hold conservative religious beliefs. Estimates are that one-third to one-half of all Americans consider themselves to be religious conservatives, although they do not all have the same beliefs. For example, Democratic President Jimmy Carter and Republican President George W. Bush have both spoken publicly about their born-again experiences.

17 Many of those who are religiously conservative are also politically conservative. Since the 1980s, they have been gaining numbers and political strength in the United States. Under such names as the Religious Right or the Christian Coalition, these individuals have joined together to oppose legalized abortion or to support prayer in the public schools, among other issues.

September 11, 2001, and the National Religion

18 **A**ll Americans, and probably most people around the world, can remember exactly what they were doing at the moment they heard that terrorists had attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. People in New York City and Washington, D.C., were especially devastated. As New Yorkers searched for news of missing friends and family members, they held up photos, and then taped thousands of pictures of the missing to building walls. They lit candles and held prayer vigils⁷ in parks for their missing loved ones. Strangers united in overwhelming grief held onto each other, praying and crying. A young flight attendant in New York was asked by friends in Europe what it was like in the city. They assumed that New Yorkers must be very angry. They were wrong, she told them. The overwhelming feeling in New York was sadness, a deep, terrible sadness that hung in the air. People spoke quietly and one could feel the heavy sense of loss. Everyone knew someone who was touched by the tragedy.



Photos of missing firefighters a week after September 11. This firehouse lost fifteen men when the Twin Towers collapsed.

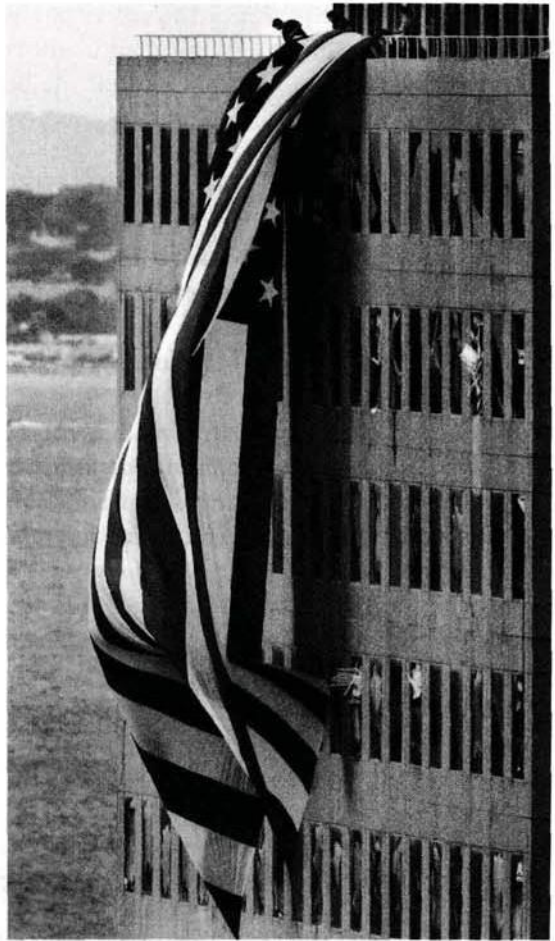
⁶ Evangelicals: people who are members of an evangelical Christian church; religious conservatives

⁷ vigils: periods of time, especially during the night, when you stay awake in order to pray

19 Immediately, there was an outpouring of love, charity, and patriotism around the country. So many people volunteered to help that officials had to limit the numbers. Millions of dollars were raised for the families of the victims, and Americans felt a huge surge of pride and love for their country. Eighty percent of them displayed the American flag—in the windows of their houses, on their cars, even on their clothing. People hung flags and put up signs on highway overpasses and bridges. And over and over, crowds spontaneously sang “God Bless America,” a patriotic song that is more popular (and much easier to sing) than the national anthem, along with “America the Beautiful” and “My Country ’Tis of Thee.”

20 This mixture of religion and patriotism is what some scholars have called the “national religion” of the United States. The roots of the national religion go back to colonial times. In the countries from which the American colonists emigrated, the dominant values of the nation were often supported by an organized national church. Although Americans made certain that no organized national church would exist in their young country, they have over the years developed a number of informal practices which combine national patriotism with religion. The main function of this national religion is to provide support for the dominant values of the nation, and comfort in times of grief. Thus, it does in an informal and less organized way what nationally organized churches did for European nations in earlier times.

21 Some observers of American society believe that the various practices that are called the national religion can have harmful effects, however. Sometimes these practices can help to create a climate in which disagreement with current national practices is discouraged or not tolerated. There have been times when citizens have disagreed with their government’s decision to wage war, for example, and other Americans accused them of being unpatriotic. This happened during the war in Vietnam, when protesters were told, “America—love it, or leave it.” A similar division of opinion occurred over the U.S. decision to invade Iraq in 2003.



Firefighters hang a giant American flag over the side of the American Express tower.

Religious Diversity in the United States: A Spiritual Kaleidoscope⁸

22 **T**he belief that the individual, not the organized church, should be the center of religious life has encouraged a tolerance and acceptance of all faiths. This climate of religious freedom has, of course, strengthened the development of cultural

⁸ kaleidoscope: colors or patterns that change quickly

pluralism in the United States. Today there is growing religious diversity. *The World Almanac* now lists over 140 different religious groups that each have at least 5,000 members, and other estimates are that there are at least 2,000 distinct religious groups in the United States.

- 23 Wade Clark Roof, a professor of religion and society, cites four trends that are creating a spiritual kaleidoscope in the United States. First, there is the change from being a “Protestant-Catholic-Jewish nation” to one with multiple religions. The number of Protestants has declined to a little over 50 percent, and if trends continue, they will probably be in the minority in the next decade. The number of Catholics is increasing due to the large numbers of Latin American Catholic immigrants, who now make up about half the total Catholic community. The number of Jews has stayed the same in recent years, but the number of Americans who choose “Other or None” when asked their religious preference is growing. The number of Muslims, for example, has increased to the point that some estimates are that there are now as many Muslims as there are Jews in the United States.
- 24 Second, there is religious “expressive individualism,” the switching of faiths—from one Protestant denomination to another, or even from one faith to another. Also, within the various faiths, Americans are now picking and choosing among the beliefs, particularly in the mainline faiths. Roof calls this “the privatizing of organized religion,” the search for a personal religious identity. For some, this results in a stronger faith; for others, it does not.
- 25 Third, there are many new religious organizational structures emerging in the United States. Some are ethnic denominations such as the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, while others are “special purpose groups”—such as support groups or groups to help the homeless or clean up the environment. Some groups are “liberal, oriented to reforming society; others are conservative, aimed at reforming individual lives,” Roof says. He observes the same trend toward fragmentation that Michael J. Weiss noted in his description of American lifestyles, mentioned in Chapter 1. However, Roof says that these new special interest groups are energizing the American religious community.



Muslim men at worship in an Islamic mosque in Florida

26 The fourth trend is toward a new spirituality, especially among young Americans. Many young people prefer to identify themselves as being *spiritual*, rather than *religious*. The majority prefer also to explore the beliefs of several religions, rather than just one. In a survey that Roof conducted, he found that 22 percent of young Americans believe in reincarnation, and many are attracted to Eastern religious teachings. They are looking for a belief system that will help them grow and improve as individuals; they are not interested in participating in a religion out of duty.



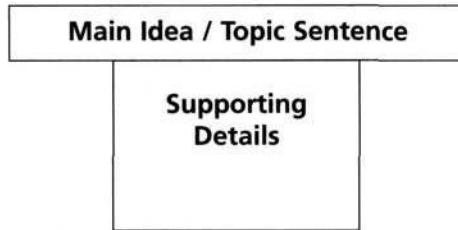
Buddhist women in Los Angeles celebrate the Thai New Year, pouring water on monks' hands.

27 Most Americans believe that religious freedom must be protected; that everyone has the right to practice his or her own religion without interference by the government or anyone else. While the majority of Americans follow the Judeo-Christian tradition, they also believe that freedom of religion should be a basic American right.

28 America's religious heritage seems to have encouraged certain basic values that members of many diverse faiths find easy to accept. This has helped to unite many different religious groups in the United States without requiring any to abandon their faiths. Cultural and religious pluralism has also created a context of tolerance that further strengthens the American reality of many different religions living peacefully within a single nation.

Understand Main Ideas

In Chapters 1 and 2, we discussed the importance of organizing and presenting main ideas for clear writing and formal speaking in English. Academic writing in English looks like a series of capital letter Ts:



Usually, each paragraph has a *topic sentence* that states the main idea of the paragraph. Often, this is the first sentence. The rest of the paragraph contains *supporting details* that develop or explain the main idea. There are many types of supporting details:

- definitions
- facts or opinions
- statistics
- examples or illustrations
- descriptions
- quotations

The first two paragraphs of the reading begin with a topic sentence supported by facts, statistics, examples, and an illustration (chart). (See page 52.) Look back at the reading and find the paragraphs that begin with the following topic sentences. Then find the details that support the main ideas stated in the topic sentence.

1. Topic sentence: *Some of the early European Protestant leaders believed that people who were blessed by God might be recognized in the world by their material success.* (page 54)

Supporting detail: (quotation) _____

2. Topic sentence: *American religious leaders, however, never encouraged the idea of gaining wealth without hard work and self-discipline.* (page 54)

Supporting detail: (definition) _____

3. Topic sentence: *Historically, some of the extremely wealthy Americans have made generous contributions to help others.* (page 56)

Supporting details: (example and quotation) _____

4. Topic sentences: *All Americans, and probably most people around the world, can remember exactly what they were doing at the moment they heard that terrorists had attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. People in New York City and Washington, D.C., were especially devastated.* (page 56)

Supporting details: (descriptions) _____

5. Topic sentence: *The belief that the individual, not the organized church, should be the center of religious life has encouraged a tolerance and acceptance of all faiths.* (page 58)

Supporting details: (facts and statistics) _____

Understand Details

Write *T* if the statement is true and *F* if it is false according to the information in the chapter.

- _____ 1. Although there is cultural pluralism in the United States, there is no religious pluralism.
- _____ 2. The Protestant denominations (such as Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian) are all part of the Roman Catholic church.
- _____ 3. No single church has become the center of religious life in the United States because the emphasis is on the individual, not a particular church.
- _____ 4. Most of the settlers who came to colonial America to escape religious persecution in Europe were Catholics.
- _____ 5. The Constitution of the United States separates church and state and forbids the government from ever establishing a national church.
- _____ 6. Protestantism encourages a strong desire for self-improvement.
- _____ 7. Some American Protestant leaders have said that people who are rich have been blessed by God.
- _____ 8. The Protestant work ethic is the belief that people should share their time and their wealth to help others.
- _____ 9. A majority of Americans now consider themselves part of the religious, politically conservative movement.
- _____ 10. The national religion of the United States is a mixture of religion and patriotism.

Talk About It

Work in small groups and choose one or more of these questions to discuss.

1. Do the majority of the people in your country belong to one particular church or religious faith? Is there a government-supported church or official religion? What are the advantages and disadvantages of having a government recognize one official religion for a country?
2. The United States does not have a national legal requirement for workers to have a certain number of paid vacation days. Does your country have such a legal requirement? Explain.
3. What is humanitarianism? Do you think that people should volunteer their time to help the poor?
4. What do you think being *religious* means?

Build Your Vocabulary

Use Prefixes Some words use prefixes to create negative or opposite meanings:

encourage—discourage

patriotic—unpatriotic

capable—incapable

Make the following words negative by adding the correct prefix. Scan the chapter to find the words, or use a dictionary.

dis-

un-

in-

1. tolerance _____ tolerance
2. favorable _____ favorable
3. respectful _____ respectful
4. selfish _____ selfish
5. agreement _____ agreement

Use the five words with their new prefixes in sentences.

Recognize Word Forms Many adverbs end in *-ly*. Use the following adverbs to fill in the blanks in the sentences from the chapter. (Some have more than one possible answer.)

consequently	immediately	solely	traditionally
historically	particularly	spontaneously	

1. In Protestantism, every individual is _____ responsible for his or her own soul.
2. There was freedom of religion in the new nation. _____, there were many Protestants who came seeking religious freedom.
3. _____, some wealthy Americans, such as Andrew Carnegie in the 1900s, have made generous contributions to help others.
4. Crowds _____ sang "God Bless America" in the weeks after 9/11.
5. The Native American religions are studied today, _____ for their teachings about living in harmony with nature.
6. _____ after 9/11, there was an outpouring of love, charity, and patriotism around the country.
7. Protestantism has _____ encouraged a strong and restless desire for self-improvement.

Collocations This chapter has many adjective + noun collocations. Circle the one word in each of the following groups that will *not* form a collocation with the boldfaced word.

EXAMPLE: European / colonial / national / early / British **settlers**
(You can say European settlers, colonial settlers, early settlers, or British settlers, but not national settlers.)

1. **spiritual** values/beliefs/practices/banks/experiences
2. **religious** freedom/diversity/grief/persecution/climate
3. **overwhelming** grief/examples/fear/frustration/sadness

More AWL Words Test your knowledge of these additional AWL words in the chapter by doing the word puzzle below. First match the words and definitions. Then find and circle the AWL words in the puzzle. Words may run horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or backwards.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. capacity | a. force people to accept a rule |
| _____ 2. cite | b. a set of beliefs about how people should live |
| _____ 3. consequently | c. an amount of money |
| _____ 4. display | d. ability to do or produce something |
| _____ 5. function | e. the way a situation is developing or changing |
| _____ 6. impose | f. as a result |
| _____ 7. liberal | g. mention something as an example or proof |
| _____ 8. persistence | h. most important |
| _____ 9. philosophy | i. the usual purpose of something |
| _____ 10. primary | j. continuing to do something even though it is difficult |
| _____ 11. sum | k. put things in a place where people can see them |
| _____ 12. trend | l. supporting changes in social systems that give people more freedom |

E V A S M P I W I C Y C C F D
 Z S U R B Y S X D K T O O U I
 H M O R L Y S I Y E I N N N S
 Y H M P P V G Z D J C S F C P
 O N K D M V H Q Y Q A E X T L
 Y S X T E I H M J P P Q A I A
 P H I L O S O P H Y A U S O Y
 L A X T J O R K K O C E T N M
 P H I H D T W E H Y K N L P O
 P E R S I S T E N C E T I R N
 P T C K C B R C B Y T L B I D
 A R I I Q O C U B A V Y E M E
 K E T H J A N A A M W A R A C
 J N E P L W G B C Z Z Y A R T
 U D O I F O E H H S T L L Y D

Ask Americans

Americans have a saying, “Never discuss religion and politics.” These are not “safe” topics because they may touch on personal beliefs. Most Americans, however, will be willing to talk to you if you make it clear that this is an assignment for a class you are taking. You could begin by saying: “I wonder if you could help me with an assignment I have. I’m taking a course at _____ (school) and I am supposed to interview Americans about their religious beliefs. Would you be willing to answer some questions? I won’t use your name. (Show them the list of questions.) Please tell me if there are any questions you don’t feel comfortable answering.”

Interview several Americans and ask them the following questions about their religion. If you cannot ask Americans, interview international students or your classmates. Compare your findings with your classmates’ findings and with the poll results that follow here and on the next page.

1. How important would you say religion is in your own life: very important, fairly important, or not very important?
2. What is your religion?
3. How often do you attend religious services?
4. Would you say that your religious beliefs are very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal, or very liberal? Do you consider yourself to be *evangelical* or *born again*?

How important is religion in your life?

Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	No opinion
65%	23%	12%	0%

Source: CNN/USA Today, Sept. 2–4, 2002.

Weekly Attendance of Religious Services*

All men	32%
All women	44%
Catholic men	26%
Catholic women	49%
Protestant men	42%
Protestant women	50%
Jews	23%
Muslim men	35%
Muslim women	26%

*Not counting weddings and funerals, 38 percent of Americans say they go to religious services at least once a week. But there are big differences across demographic groups, with self-reported attendance peaking among older people, women, Southerners, and Baptists, among others.

Source: Polls adapted from ABC NEWS/Beliefnet poll, Feb. 19–20, 2003; the Zogby International Poll for the Georgetown University Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding cited on www.allied-media.com; and a Zogby poll cited in *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, May 5, 2000.

Self-Identification of “People of Faith”

Poll done by The Gallup Organization for The Interfaith Alliance Foundation in August 2001 on adults who met two criteria:

1. They must have indicated that they attended church or religious service at least once a month, or
2. They must have indicated that religion was “very important” to them

Responses of these “People of Faith”		Religious affiliation	
Very conservative	21%	Evangelicals	31%
Somewhat conservative	25%	Mainline protestants	17%
Moderate	27%	Black protestants	11%
Somewhat liberal	15%	Catholics	22%
Very liberal	8%	Other	19%
No opinion	4%		
Evangelical or born again	51%		

Source: *Call for Reform*, published by The Interfaith Alliance, August 2001.

Proverbs and Sayings

There are a number of proverbs and sayings about right and wrong. For example, the golden rule, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” means that you should treat people the way you want them to treat you. What proverbs do you know that deal with right and wrong?

Ask Americans to explain these sayings to you. Do they know any more sayings about money? Collect as many sayings as you can and share them with your classmates.

1. A penny saved is a penny earned.
2. Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.
3. Save something for a rainy day.
4. Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die.
5. Idle hands are the devil’s workshop.

Observe the Media

Working with a partner, look at the titles of some popular American self-help books. What aspects of life do they promise to improve? What conclusions about American values can you draw from these titles?

Collect other book titles by visiting an American bookstore, checking best-seller lists or websites, and looking at ads for books in magazines and newspapers. Share your findings with the class.



Use the Internet

Work with a partner. Search the Internet and find the answers. Discuss your findings.

The Committee for the Study of Religion at Harvard University sponsors a website—www.pluralism.org. The website lists information about their study of religious diversity in the United States. Go to their website and answer the following questions. (Click on *Resources* and then *Statistics*.)

- a. Which religions are listed?
- b. Are there any that were new to you? Did you know about Baha’i or Sikhism or paganism?
- c. Choose one that is interesting to you. Find other websites with information about Americans who practice that religion. What facts and statistics from the website are most interesting to you?

WRITE ABOUT IT

A. Choose one of the following topics. Then write a short composition about it.

1. Americans volunteer in many ways: at churches, in libraries or museums, in hospitals, or in schools. Former President Jimmy Carter volunteers with Habitat for Humanity. The goal of this organization is to build houses for poor people. How successful have they been? Go to the Internet and find out. Can you help where you live? How? Write a report about a Habitat for Humanity project that you would like to help with.



Habitat for Humanity volunteers build a house for people in need.

2. Times of crisis often bring out the best in people. When a house burns down and a family is homeless, or when there is a natural disaster such as a flood or earthquake, people often volunteer to help. Think of an event that you have experienced, or one that you have heard about, and write a description of what happened and how people helped.
- B.** Practice using supporting details such as definitions, facts or opinions, statistics, examples or illustrations, descriptions, or quotations.

Choose one of these topic sentences and write a paragraph with good supporting details. You may use information from the chapter or ideas of your own.

1. September 11, 2001, had a profound effect on the people of the United States.
2. The Protestant work ethic causes many Americans to work very hard.
3. Americans are (or are not) religious.
4. Americans are very interested in self-improvement.
5. Freedom of religion may result in a spiritual kaleidoscope.



C. The following people are highly regarded for their religious work. Choose one and find out why the person is or was important. Do research on the Internet and then write a report about your findings.

Dalai Lama

Mother Teresa

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Muhammad

Desmond Tutu

EXPLORE ON YOUR OWN

Books to Read

Diana L. Eck, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*—An explanation of how the immigration of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, and other religious groups has brought religious pluralism to the United States.

Richard W. Flory, *GenX Religion*—An examination of the diverse spiritual journeys of young Americans outside traditional churches.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*—Set in early colonial times in New England, this classic story reveals the impact of an act of passion in a Puritan society.

Herman Melville, *Billy Budd*—A classic American story of an innocent young man on a ship who is accused of treason by another sailor who dislikes him.

Jacob Neusner, Editor, *World Religions in America: An Introduction*—A discussion of the diverse religions practiced in the United States, including Native American religions, Protestantism, Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

Movies to See

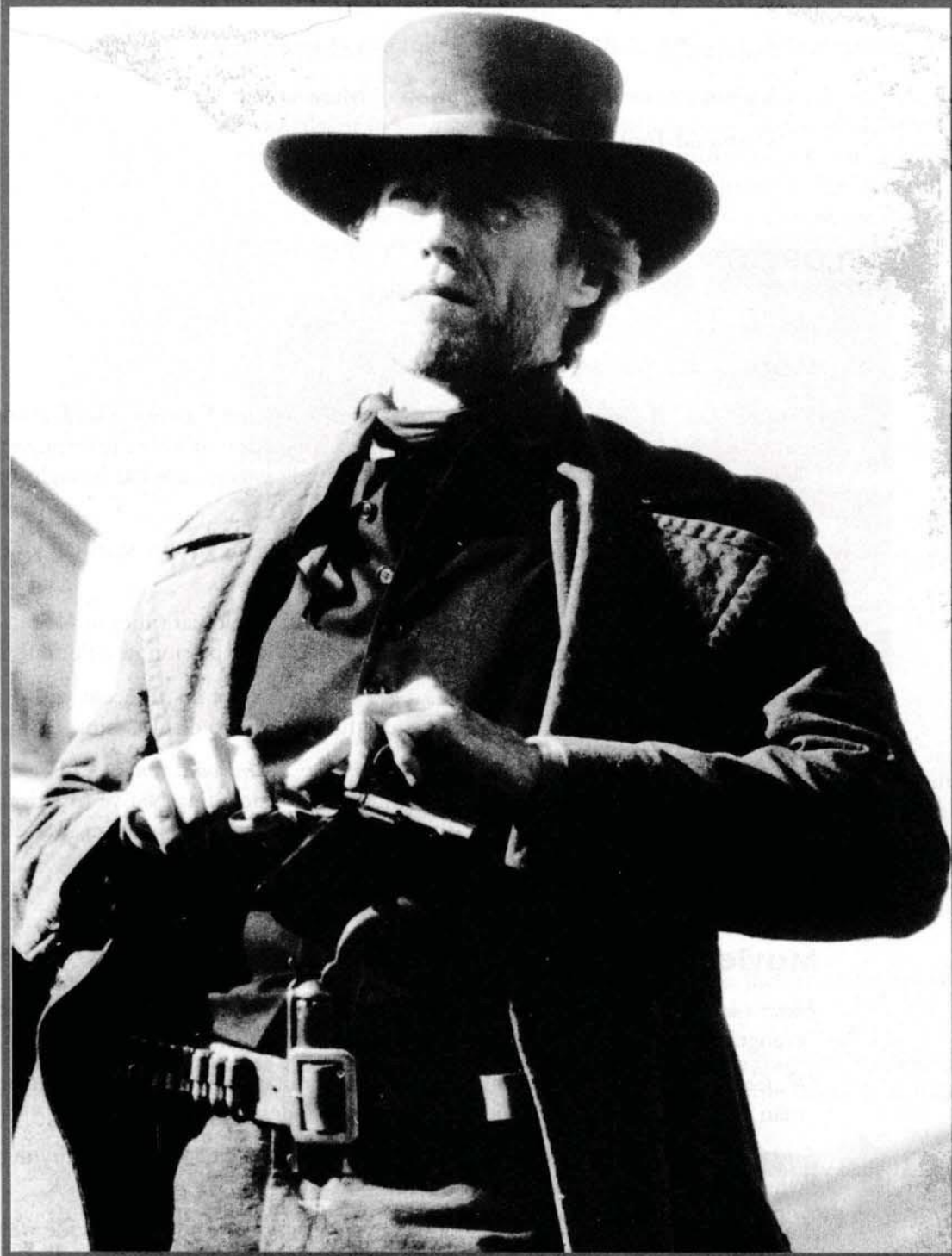
Elmer Gantry—Elmer Gantry, a salesman, teams up with Sister Sharon Falconer, an evangelist, to sell religion in America in the 1920s.

Oh, God—God appears to an assistant grocery store manager as a good-natured old man and selects him as His messenger for the modern world.

Saved—A comedy about teenagers in a religious school who have difficulty deciding what is really the right thing to do.

A Simple Plan—Two brothers find a bag of stolen money and must decide what to do with it.

The Spitfire Grill—A girl is released from prison and goes to a small town to start over.



Clint Eastwood as William Munny in Unforgiven

THE FRONTIER HERITAGE

This ever-retreating frontier of free land is the key to American development.

Frederick Jackson Turner (1861–1932)

BEFORE YOU READ

Preview Vocabulary

- A. Work with a partner to answer the questions. Make sure you understand the meaning of the AWL words in italics.**
1. If “spiritual” has to do with your soul, and “mental” has to do with your mind, what does *physical* have to do with?
 2. If people are discussing a *controversial* topic, such as religion or politics, would you expect there to be a lot of agreement or disagreement?
 3. If we say that the settlement of the western frontier had an *impact* on American culture, do we mean that it had some influence or that it was not very important?
 4. If you wanted to *reinforce* your cowboy *image*, what would you wear?
 5. Would someone who had a “can-do” attitude be an *optimist* or a *pessimist*?
 6. Is gun control an *issue* in the United States, or do all Americans believe that everyone should have complete *access* to guns? What percentage of American households do you think have guns?

B. Read this paragraph from the chapter. Then use context clues and write the correct word next to its definition

How Americans *reacted* to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, *reveals* another *legacy* of the frontier: Americans' willingness to take the law into their own hands to protect themselves and their families. This tendency usually appears when Americans believe the police cannot *adequately* protect them. For example, when the passengers fought with the terrorists on the 9/11 flight that crashed in Pennsylvania, they were *hailed* as heroes.

- _____ 1. well enough for a particular purpose
- _____ 2. described someone as being very good
- _____ 3. shows something that was hidden
- _____ 4. acted in response
- _____ 5. a situation that exists as a result of things that happened at an earlier time

Preview Content

A. Read the quotation at the beginning of the chapter. Discuss these questions with your classmates.

- 1. What is a frontier?
- 2. Why do you think Turner says that the frontier is the “key” to understanding the development of America?
- 3. Which of these can be a frontier?
 - _____ the border between two countries
 - _____ an unsettled region
 - _____ space exploration
 - _____ deep-ocean exploration
 - _____ understanding how the mind works
 - _____ new or experimental medical treatments
- 4. What American movies about the Old West have you seen?

B. Before you read the chapter, look at the headings of each section. Examine the photos and other illustrations. Predict three values that were reinforced by the frontier experience. Write your predictions here.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____



The Impact of the American Frontier

- 1 **A**lthough the American civilization took over and replaced the frontier more than a century ago, the heritage of the frontier is still evident in the United States today. Many people are still fascinated by the frontier because it has been particularly important in shaping American values. When Ronald Reagan was president in the 1980s, he liked to recall the image of life on the frontier. He was often photographed on his western ranch—chopping wood or riding his horse, and wearing his cowboy hat. President George W. Bush reinforced this cowboy image by inviting members of the press to photograph him on his Texas ranch, wearing his cowboy boots and hat.
- 2 For many years, the frontier experience was romanticized¹ in popular movies and television shows that featured cowboy heroes fighting Indian villains. Little attention was given to the tragic story of what really happened to the Native Americans, also known as the American Indians. Today, most Americans are more aware of the darker side of the settling of the continent, when thousands of American Indians were killed, their lands taken, and much of their culture destroyed. There is a renewed interest in Indian cultures, and the Smithsonian now has a museum dedicated to Indian culture in Washington, D.C.
- 3 The frontier experience began when the first colonists settled on the east coast of the continent in the 1600s. It ended about 1890 when the last western lands were settled. The American frontier consisted of the relatively unsettled regions of the United States, usually found in the western part of the country. Here, both land and life were more rugged and primitive than in the more settled eastern part. As one frontier area was settled, people began moving farther west into the next unsettled area, sweeping aside the Native Americans as they went. By settling one frontier area after another, Americans moved across an entire continent that was 2,700 miles wide. They came to believe that it was their destiny to control all the land, and eventually they did. The Native Americans were given small portions of land, called *reservations*, to control, but the United States government broke many promises and created much misery for the Indian nations.
- 4 While most Americans have a more balanced view of the settling of the West, many Americans still see aspects of the frontier, its people, and their beliefs as inspiring examples of traditional American values in their original and purest form. How did the frontier movement, which lasted more than two centuries, help to shape these basic American values?
- 5 To be sure, the frontier provided many inspiring examples of hard work as forests were turned into towns, and towns into large cities. The competitive race for success was rarely more colorful or adventurous than on the western frontier. The rush for gold in California, for silver in Montana, and for fertile land in all the western territories provided endless stories of high adventure. When it was announced that almost 2 million acres of good land in Oklahoma would be opened for settlement in

¹ **romanticized:** talked or thought about things in a way that made them seem more attractive than they really were

April 1889, thousands of settlers gathered on the border waiting for the exact time to be announced. When it was, they literally² raced into the territory in wagons and on horseback to claim the best land they could find for themselves.



The 1889 rush to claim land in Oklahoma

6 Although daily life on the frontier was usually less dramatic than the frontier adventure stories would lead one to believe, even the ordinary daily life of frontier men and women exemplified³ national values in a form which seemed purer to many Americans than the life of those living in the more settled, more cultivated eastern United States.

7 Individualism, self-reliance, and equality of opportunity have perhaps been the values most closely associated with the frontier heritage of America. Throughout their history, Americans have tended to view the frontier settler as the model of the free individual. This is probably because there was less control over the individual on the frontier than anywhere else in the United States. There were few laws and few established social or political institutions to confine people living on the frontier. In the United States, where freedom from outside social controls has traditionally been valued, the frontier has been idealized, and it still serves as a basis for a nostalgic⁴ view of the early United States, a simpler time that was lost when the country became urbanized and more complex. Many people living in the West today still hold these beliefs about freedom from government controls.

Self-Reliance and the Rugged Individualist

8 Closely associated with the frontier ideal of the free individual is the ideal of self-reliance. If the people living on the frontier were free of many of society's rules, they were also denied many of society's comforts and conveniences. They had to be self-reliant. Men and women often constructed their own houses, hunted, tended their own gardens, and made their own clothing and household items.

² **literally:** according to the most basic or original meaning of a word or expression

³ **exemplified:** was a very typical example of something

⁴ **nostalgic:** feeling or expressing a slight sadness when remembering happy events or experiences from the past

- 9 The self-reliant frontiersman has been idealized by Americans who have made him the model of the classic American male hero with *rugged individualism*. This hero is a man who has been made physically tough and rugged by the conditions of frontier life. He is skilled with guns and other weapons. He needs no help from others. Often, he appears in stories as alone, unmarried, and without children. Standing alone, he can meet all the dangers which life on the frontier brings. He is strong enough to extend his protection beyond himself to others.
- 10 There are two types of heroic rugged individualists. Each is drawn from a different stage of life on the frontier. In the early frontier, which existed before the Civil War of the 1860s, the main struggle was man against the wilderness. Daniel Boone is probably the best-known hero of this era. Boone explored the wilderness country of Kentucky in the 1760s and 1770s. On one trip, he stayed in the wilderness for two years, successfully matching his strength and skills against the dangers of untamed nature and hostile Native Americans. In 1778, Boone was captured by Native Americans who were so impressed with his physical strength and skills that they made him a member of their tribe. Later, he succeeded in making a daring escape. Boone's heroic strength is seen primarily in his ability to master the harsh challenges of the wilderness. Although he had to fight against Indians from time to time, he is admired mainly as a survivor and conqueror of the wilderness, not as a fighter.
- 11 The second type of heroic rugged individualist is drawn from the last phase of the western frontier, which lasted from the 1860s until the 1890s. By this time, the wilderness was largely conquered. The struggle now was no longer man against nature, but man against man. Cattlemen and cowboys* fought against farmers, outlaws, Native Americans, and each other for control of the remaining western lands. The traditions of law and order were not yet well established, and physical violence was frequent. The frontier became known as "the Wild West."
- 12 It is not surprising, then, that the hero drawn from this period is primarily a fighter. He is admired for his ability to beat other men in fistfights,⁵ or to win in a gunfight. The principal source of his heroism is his physical prowess⁶ and he is strong enough to defeat two or three ordinary men at one time. This rugged individualist is typically a defender of good against evil.
- 13 The hero of the Wild West is based on memories of a number of gunfighters and lawmen of the time, men such as Jesse James and Wyatt Earp. The Wild West hero had more impact on the American idea of heroism than Daniel Boone, the hero of the earlier wilderness frontier. It is the Wild West hero, who has inspired countless western movies; until the 1960s, 25 percent of all American movies made were westerns.

*Cattlemen were men who raised large herds of cattle as a business and needed large areas of land on which their cattle could graze before being sent to market. Cowboys usually worked for the cattlemen. They would spend most of the day on horseback rounding up the cattle or taking them on long drives to market.

⁵ **fistfights:** fights using bare hands with the fingers curled in toward the palm

⁶ **prowess:** great skill at doing something

American Macho Heroes

- 14 **T**hrough movies and television programs, this Wild West hero has helped shape the American idea of “macho,” or male, strength. For the most part, almost all American male heroes on television and in movies have traditionally had the common ability to demonstrate their strength through physical violence. Once the western macho hero had been created, the model for this hero was used in other settings—for soldiers in battle, and tough detectives and policemen fighting crime. From the cowboy heroes to Rambo and the Terminator, these heroes can fight with their fists or with their guns, or both. Although there are movie and TV heroes who are respected more for their intelligence and sensitivity than their physical prowess, these classic macho male heroes still dominate much of American entertainment and video games. However, there are now female versions of this macho image. Several popular female heroes in TV and movies have also been shown as tough fighters capable of defeating their enemies.
- 15 The image of the rugged individualist has been criticized for overlooking many factors that played a central part in the development of the frontier. The rugged individualist image overstates the importance of complete self-reliance and understates the importance of cooperation in building a new nation out of the wilderness. Second, because the image has been traditionally masculine, it has overlooked the importance of pioneer women and their strength, hard work, resourcefulness, and civilizing influence on the untamed frontier.
- 16 Finally, the rugged individualist image is criticized because of its emphasis on violence and the use of guns to solve problems. On the frontier, men did use guns to hunt and protect themselves and their families, but western movies romanticized and glorified gunfights in the Old West. The good guys and the bad guys “shot it out” in classic westerns such as *High Noon*. Incidentally, the classic old western movies always featured the “good guys” wearing white hats, while the “bad guys” wore black hats. Gradually, however, the western hero was largely replaced in the movies by the soldier or the crime fighter—guns still blazing—and the violence in movies, and later on TV, increased.
- 17 Some Americans worry about the impact of these entertainment heroes on the lives and imaginations of young people. At the very least, many young people have become desensitized⁷ to the sight of violence and killings. In the 1990s, guns became a critical issue when there were shootings in several public schools. It is all too easy for teenagers to get guns, and they are much more at risk of being killed by guns than adults are. The problem is particularly bad in the inner cities, where a number of young gang members carry guns. However, several of the most shocking incidents occurred in normally peaceful suburban communities, and now many schools require students to pass through metal detectors as they enter school buildings.
- 18 Americans have a long history of owning guns, and many people strongly believe having a gun in their house is an important right. In fact, the right to bear arms is even guaranteed in the Constitution, though there is debate about what the founding fathers meant by that. Today, there are over 200 million guns in the United States, enough for every adult to own one. Most guns are owned by Americans who enjoy hunting or gun collecting, and these individuals usually own more than one gun. Some guns are owned by people who want their own gun for protection of their homes and families. After the

⁷ **desensitized:** made emotionally insensitive

9/11/01 terrorist attacks, the sale of guns rose in the United States. Estimates are that anywhere from 25 percent to 51 percent of U.S. households have at least one gun.

19 How Americans reacted to 9/11 reveals another legacy of the frontier: Americans' willingness to take the law into their own hands to protect themselves and their families. This tendency usually appears when Americans believe the police cannot adequately protect them. For example, when the passengers fought with the terrorists on the 9/11 flight that crashed in Pennsylvania, they were hailed as heroes.

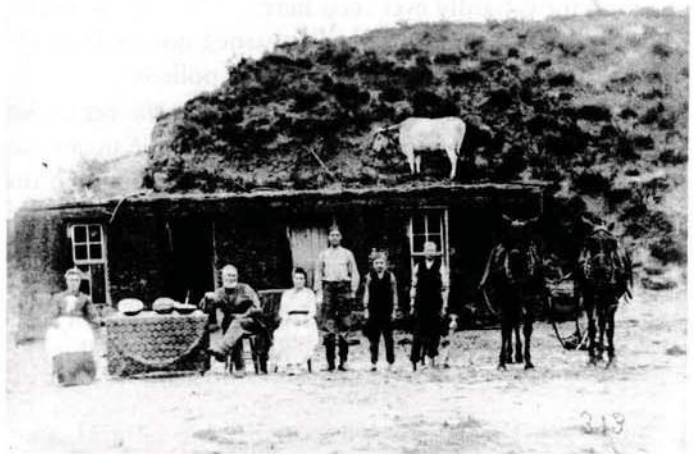
20 The issue of gun control is very controversial in the United States, and people on both sides of the issue have strong opinions. Many Americans favor stricter government controls on the sale of guns, and they would not consider having a gun in their home. Others who oppose gun control feel strongly enough about the issue that they have created powerful political pressure groups, such as the National Rifle Association (NRA), which has worked to prevent most gun control legislation from passing. They argue that limiting gun sales will keep law-abiding citizens, not criminals, from owning guns. On the other side are gun-control organizations such as Handgun Control, Inc., which are especially concerned about the sale of handguns and automatic assault rifles. They argue that American homes, particularly where there are children, are safer without guns.

Inventiveness and the Can-Do Spirit

21 **W**hile the frontier idealized the rugged individual as the great American hero, it also respected the inventive individual. The need for self-reliance on the frontier encouraged a spirit of inventiveness. Frontier men and women not only had to provide most of their daily life essentials, but they were also constantly facing new problems and situations which demanded new solutions. Under these circumstances, they soon learned to experiment with new ways of doing things.

22 Observers from other countries were very impressed by the frontiersman's ability to invent useful new farm tools. They were equally impressed by the pioneer woman's ability to make clothing, candles, soap, and many other items needed for the daily life of her family. Lord Bryce, a famous English observer of American life, believed that the inventive skills of American pioneers enabled them to succeed at tasks beyond the abilities of most ordinary men and women in other countries. Although Americans in the more settled eastern regions of the United States created many of the most important inventions in the new nation, the western frontier had the effect of spreading the spirit of inventiveness throughout the population and helping it to become a national character trait.

23 The willingness to experiment and invent led to another American trait, a "can-do" spirit, or a sense of optimism that every problem has a solution. Americans like to believe that a difficult problem can be solved



A nineteenth-century frontier family in front of their sod house

immediately—an impossible one may take a little longer. They take pride in meeting challenges and overcoming difficult obstacles.⁸ This can-do spirit has traditionally given Americans a sense of optimism about themselves and their country. Many like to say that if the United States can land a man on the moon, no problem on earth is impossible. In the 1830s, Alexis de Tocqueville said that no other country in the world “more confidently seizes the future” than the United States. Traditionally, when times were hard, political leaders have reminded Americans of their frontier heritage and the tough determination of their pioneer ancestors; the can-do spirit has become a source of pride and inspiration.

Equality of Opportunity

24 **T**he frontier is an expression of individual freedom and self-reliance in its purest (and most extreme) forms, and it is also a pure expression of the ideal of equality of opportunity. On the western frontier there was more of a tendency for people to treat each other as social equals than there was in the more settled eastern regions of the country. On the frontier, the highest importance was placed on what people could do in their own lifetime. Hardly any notice was taken of their ancestors. Frontier people were fond of saying, “What’s above the ground is more important than what’s beneath the ground.”

25 Because so little attention was paid to a person’s family background, the frontier offered a new beginning for many Americans who were seeking opportunities to advance themselves. One English visitor to the United States in the early 1800s observed that if Americans experienced disappointment or failure in business, in politics, or even in love, they moved west to make a new beginning. The frontier offered millions of Americans a source of hope for a fresh start in the competitive race for success and for a better life. On the frontier there was a continuing need for new farmers, skilled laborers, merchants, lawyers, and political leaders.

26 There were fewer differences in wealth between rich and poor on the frontier than in the more settled regions of the nation. People lived, dressed, and acted more alike on the frontier than in other parts of the United States. The feeling of equality was shared by hired helpers who refused to be called “servants” or to be treated as such. One European visitor observed, “The clumsy gait⁹ and bent body of our peasant is hardly ever seen here. . . . Everyone walks erect¹⁰ and easy.” Wealthy travelers to the frontier were warned not to show off their wealth or to act superior to others if they wished to be treated politely.

27 The American frontier may not be *the key* to American development, as Frederick Jackson Turner said, but it is certainly one major factor. The frontier provided the space and conditions which helped to strengthen the American ideals of individual freedom, self-reliance, and equality of opportunity. On the frontier, these ideals were enlarged and made workable. Frontier ideas and customs were continuously passed along to the more settled parts of the United States as newer frontier regions took the place of older ones during a westward march of settlers which lasted more than two centuries. In this way, many of the frontier values became national values.

⁸ **obstacles:** things that make it difficult for someone to succeed

⁹ **clumsy gait:** walking in an awkward way

¹⁰ **erect:** in an upright position

Understand Main Ideas

A. Check the predictions you made on page 72 before you read the chapter. Work with a partner. Answer these questions about the main ideas.

1. What are the three values that are traditionally associated with the frontier heritage?
2. What two new values are introduced in this chapter?
3. What are the two types of rugged individualists?
4. Describe someone with a can-do spirit.
5. What personal characteristics did the frontier settlers share?

B. In academic writing, paragraphs often begin with a topic sentence that contains the main idea. Read and highlight the first sentence of each paragraph of the reading. Then choose one main idea from each of the five main sections that you think is the most important. Write these ideas below. Compare your list with a partner's.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Understand Details

Write *T* if the statement is true and *F* if it is false according to the information in the chapter.

- _____ 1. The frontier experience began in about 1890 and is still continuing in the American West today.
- _____ 2. One reason why many Americans are still fascinated by the frontier period is that it represents a time when the traditional basic American values were expressed in their purest form.
- _____ 3. The settling of the frontier did little to affect the lives of the American Indians.
- _____ 4. Daniel Boone is an example of the earliest type of rugged individualist hero, a man who fights against the wilderness.

- 5. The primary qualities of the American macho hero are intelligence, sensitivity, and caring for others.
- 6. It is difficult for the average American to buy a gun, so very few people own them.
- 7. Members of the NRA (and many gun owners) believe the right to own a gun is guaranteed in the United States Constitution.
- 8. The can-do spirit came from the willingness of the pioneers to work together on a cooperative project for the good of all.
- 9. On the frontier, family name and ancestry were more important than what a person could do.
- 10. On the frontier, the rich and the poor rarely mixed, and social class was more important than in the more settled regions.

Complete a Timeline: Scanning

Scanning is looking for a specific piece of information. Scan the chapter to find these dates. Write what happened next to the date to complete the timeline. Some are done for you.

1600s: Settlers established colonies on the east coast.

1760s and 1770s: _____

1778: Boone was captured by Native Americans.

1860s: _____

April 1889: _____

1890: _____

until 1960s: 25 percent of all American movies made were westerns.

1980s: _____

1990s: Gun control became a critical issue after shootings in schools.

2001: _____

Improve Your Reading Skills: Skimming

Skimming is reading quickly to get the general ideas. Skim the ad on the next page and answer these questions.

1. What are the four problems presented in this ad?
2. What solutions are offered by American Indian values?

As you read the morning newspaper, you quickly come to an undeniable conclusion. Our world is in rough shape. Our environment. Our families. Our values.



Indians, though, believe wealth and success only means that you're able to give more to others, and materialism only removes one further from God.

A SANE, RATIONAL ARGUMENT FOR GIVING THE ENTIRE COUNTRY BACK TO THE INDIANS.

Now, the only way we can change the world we live in, is to change the way we think. And a good place to start is by becoming better acquainted with the traditional American



Indian beliefs. For reasons of economy, we'll briefly mention how traditional American Indian thinking applies to just four timely issues: The destruction of the wilderness. The breakdown of the family. Greed. And international turmoil.



The destruction of the wilderness. You can't watch television for fifteen minutes without hearing about another toxic dump or another endangered species. To the American Indian, nature is more than a collection of water and landforms, it's their religion and thus it's treated with the appropriate respect. There is the belief that everything must

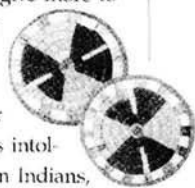


be kept in balance and to disrupt this balance (pollution, over-hunting, over-developing, etc) will only result in tragedy.

The breakdown of the American family. It's a sad and widely accepted fact. In traditional American Indian culture, though, the family is not only strong, it spans many generations. The children are also raised by the aunts and uncles and elders for Indians believe it's best for a child to learn from as many people as possible to give them a more well-rounded education. Also, child abuse was unheard-of in the traditional American Indian world. In their journals, Lewis and Clark often commented with amazement how the Indians never struck their children.

Greed. So many modern problems can be directly traced to that emotion. The American

The international problems. Most often they occur because one culture becomes intolerant of another. The American Indians, on the other hand, believe all cultures are equally important. The Indians often used the analogy of the wagon wheel to explain this belief. The spokes represent all the various cultures,



each one unique unto itself. None of the spokes could ever be removed or shortened or lengthened, because they are all absolutely necessary for the wheel (the earth) to turn.

As stated earlier, these are only four examples demonstrating how relevant traditional American Indian beliefs are. But the greater problem is that the American Indian culture is in

danger of becoming extinct. 200 years of forced assimilation has done everything possible to dilute and destroy their world.

And the greatest hope for survival is through the 26 tribal colleges. The tribal colleges were formed to keep the tribal ways alive and to reintroduce them to a generation of Indians who may know nothing about their heritage. The results have been remarkable. More Indians are becoming educated, tribal pride is increasing, and the old ways are being restored and preserved.

The tribal colleges, though, are struggling financially and to survive this decade, they are going to need your help.

So please call 1-800-776-FUND. And help save a culture that could save ours.



AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND

American Indian College Fund, 27 East 85th St., Suite 207 DA, New York, NY 10028. We would like to give a special thanks to LIS West for all their concern and support.

Talk About It

Work in small groups and choose one or more of the following questions to discuss.

1. What effect do you think seeing violence on TV or in movies has on children? What happens when people become desensitized to violence?
2. What qualities should a true hero have? Who are some of your own personal heroes? Why do you admire and respect these people?
3. Would you have a gun in your own home? Why or why not?
4. If you were going to live in the wilderness for a week, what ten things would you take with you? Why?

Build Your Vocabulary

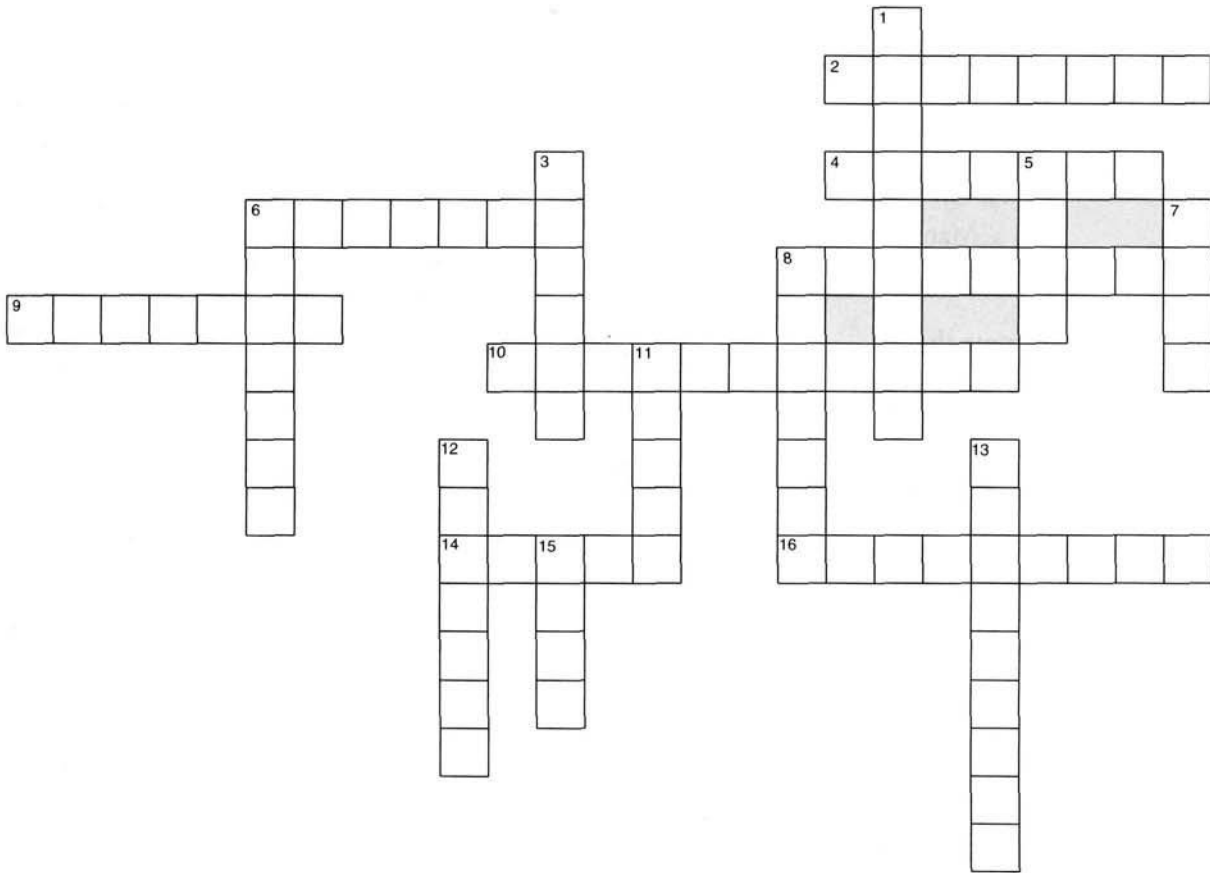
Use Context Clues Review the four kinds of context clues on pages 12–13 of Chapter 1. Use context clues to choose the correct words to fill in the blanks.

desensitized	fascinated	nostalgic	romanticize
exemplified	fists	obstacles	

1. In many action movies, the heroes are expected to be able to fight with their _____.
2. Some people prefer to _____ life on the frontier; they do not want to look at its negative aspects.
3. If you are reading a book that is so interesting that you can't put it down, you are _____ by the book.
4. Frontier people were good examples of the American national values; these people _____ these values.
5. In order to succeed, people living on the frontier had to overcome many difficulties and _____, such as clearing the land for farming.
6. Americans like to remember the days on the frontier; they feel _____ about the Old West.
7. Some Americans worry that their children are becoming _____ to the violence and killing on television. It doesn't seem to bother them.

More AWL Words: Test your knowledge of these additional AWL words in the chapter by completing the crossword puzzle on the next page.

area	capable	confine	cooperation	evident	phase
automatic	challenge	consist	deny	feature	region
aware	classic	construct	detective	item	survivor



Across

2. someone who is still alive after almost being killed
4. to keep someone in a place that they cannot leave
6. having the skills needed to do something
8. something that tests strength, skill, or ability
9. easily noticed or understood; obvious
10. the act of working with someone to achieve something
14. realizing that a problem exists
16. to build something large

Down

1. designed to operate by itself
3. a fairly large area of a state
5. a single thing in a set, group, or list
6. to be made of a number of things
7. to say that something is not true
8. considered important, with a value that lasts for a long time
11. one of the stages of a process
12. something you notice because it seems interesting
13. someone paid to discover information
15. a particular part of a country or city

Word Partners: Match the word partners to form collocations. Then use the correct collocations in the paragraph.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| _____ 1. unsettled | a. fathers |
| _____ 2. law-abiding | b. spirit |
| _____ 3. can-do | c. individualism |
| _____ 4. founding | d. citizens |
| _____ 5. physical | e. region |
| _____ 6. rugged | f. prowess |

Many Americans believe that when the _____₁ wrote the Constitution, they meant to ensure the right of the people to own guns. They would argue that _____₂ should be allowed to keep guns in their homes. The frontier strengthened the tradition of owning guns because it was an _____₃ and settlers needed guns for hunting and protection. They had to be tough, and part of the frontier legacy is the _____₄ and _____₅ of Western movie heroes. Frontier settlers were also known for their inventiveness and their _____₆.

EXPAND YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Proverbs and Sayings

Ask Americans, if possible, to explain these proverbs and sayings about succeeding on your own or being tough. What similar proverbs and sayings are there in your culture?

1. Pull yourself up by the bootstraps.
2. If at first you don't succeed, try and try again.
3. Actions speak louder than words.
4. Life is what you make it.
5. Every problem has a solution.
6. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

Ask Yourself

Do you agree or disagree with the statements below? Put a check under the number that indicates how you feel.

- +2 = Strongly agree
- +1 = Agree
- 0 = No opinion
- 1 = Disagree
- 2 = Strongly disagree

	+2	+1	0	-1	-2
1. I love action movies that have a lot of gunfights.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. A real man should be able to defend himself well and even win in a fistfight.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Intelligence and sensitivity in a man are more important than physical strength.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Watching fights in movies and on TV shows probably doesn't hurt children.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Having a gun in your home is a good way to protect yourself against robbers.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. I believe people should not own guns and there should be strict laws controlling the sale of them.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Every problem has a solution.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. What you do is more important than who your ancestors were.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Now place the numbers +2, +1, 0, -1, -2 on walls around the room with the zero in the middle. As the teacher reads the above statements, walk to the number that reflects your opinion. Explain your choice.

Ask Americans

Read the statements from the previous exercise to several Americans. If this is not possible, try to interview people from several different countries. Ask them if they agree or disagree with each statement. Write their opinions in your notebook.

Think, Pair, Share

Think about this question, and write your answer. Then share it with a partner and with another pair of students.

In 2003, Arnold Schwarzenegger was elected governor of California in a special election. During his campaign, he frequently referred to his movie role as “the Terminator” and talked about how he was going to clean up the state government. Based on the information in this chapter, why do you think this image appealed to Californian voters?



Arnold Schwarzenegger as “the Terminator”

People Watching

Americans are very conscious of space and have a strong sense of territory—that is, the idea that a particular space belongs to them. Children may have a special place to play with their toys; Mom may have her own desk; Dad may have a workshop.

Observe Americans at home, in a public place, or in a social situation to see how they use space. (Watch TV shows, if you are not in the United States.) If someone has been sitting in a particular chair and gets up, does the person tend to come back to the same chair? When someone asks, “Is that seat taken?” what does that person mean?

Conduct the following experiment and record the results in your journal.

Rule: When an American sits down at a table where a stranger is sitting alone, the American will choose a seat across from the other person or at least one chair away. The space is divided in half between them, and personal belongings must be kept on each person’s respective side of an imaginary boundary line.

Observation: Observe people sitting in a public place where there are tables, such as a cafeteria or library. What happens when a stranger sits down at a table where a person is sitting alone? If someone sits down next to a stranger, what happens? How do the people acknowledge each other’s presence? Does the person who was sitting there first move his or her belongings?

Experiment: Choose a table where a stranger is sitting alone and sit down in the next chair. What happens? Sit across from someone at a table and put some personal belongings (such as books) on the table in front of you. Push them toward the other person so that they are more than halfway across the table. What is the person’s reaction?

Observe the Media

Work in small groups. Choose one of the following activities.

1. Cowboys and the Old West are frequently used in advertisements for blue jeans, SUVs, trucks, cars, and other American products. What image do they have? Why does this image help sell this or that product? Collect examples of ads in magazines or newspapers that use cowboys or western themes. Make a collage and share it with your classmates. Explain what the message is to the people who may buy these products.

2. Watch American TV shows or movies that have male heroes. Compare the heroes of several shows. How do they compare with the description of American macho presented in this chapter? What personality traits do they have? Compare the heroes of several shows. Reread the section on page 76 for help with descriptions.

Use the Internet

From May 1804 until September 1806, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark traveled from St. Louis, Missouri, to the Oregon coast, and back again.

Work with a partner to find out more about this historic trip. Do an online search for "Lewis and Clark Expedition." Answer these questions.

1. Who was the U.S. President who ordered the expedition?
2. What territory had the United States purchased from France in 1803?
3. What was the purpose of the expedition?
4. Who was Sacajawea?
5. What route did Lewis and Clark follow?
6. What important discoveries did they make?

WRITE ABOUT IT

A. Choose one of the following topics. Then write a short composition about it.

1. Some Americans are nostalgic for the Old West, and there may be a period of your country's history that is romanticized in a similar way. If you could travel back in time to anywhere in the world, what place and what period in history would you like to visit? Explain why.
2. Americans believe in the importance of teaching their children to be self-reliant. Perhaps this philosophy has something to do with how the frontier was settled. Ellen Goodman, a popular columnist, observes:

The whole country was settled by one generation of leavers after the next—people who moved to a new frontier or a new neighborhood or a new job, who continually left relationships for opportunities. It was considered unreasonable, almost unpatriotic, for parents to "cling." And it still is.

The result of this is an emphasis on raising children to live independently and separate from their parents. The goal of parenting in America is to make children competent and confident enough to "leave the nest." What do you think of this philosophy? Compare and contrast this philosophy of raising children with that of your country.

3. Some consider space to be the final frontier. Space exploration is controversial. Although there have been important scientific discoveries, some believe that the cost exceeds the benefits. Write an essay arguing for or against the value of space exploration. You may wish to focus on a particular aspect, such as the support of the international space station, the establishment of a colony on the moon, or whether humans should travel to Mars.



- B.** The rush to the West to find gold or silver created a number of very wealthy towns with hotels, opera houses, and beautiful houses. Today, many of these cities are “ghost towns.” Some towns have no people living in them; in others, only a few people remain.



American astronaut David R. Scott salutes the flag on the moon, 1971.

Choose one of these ghost towns, and find information about it. Answer the questions and then write a summary of what you learned about the town.

Bodie or Calico, California

Pinos Altos, New Mexico

Gold Hill or Silver City, Utah

Goldfield, Nevada

Shakespeare Ghost Town, New Mexico

1. Why did people come to the town?
2. What can be seen there today?
3. What did you find most interesting about the town?



Ghost town of Nevada City, Montana

Books to Read

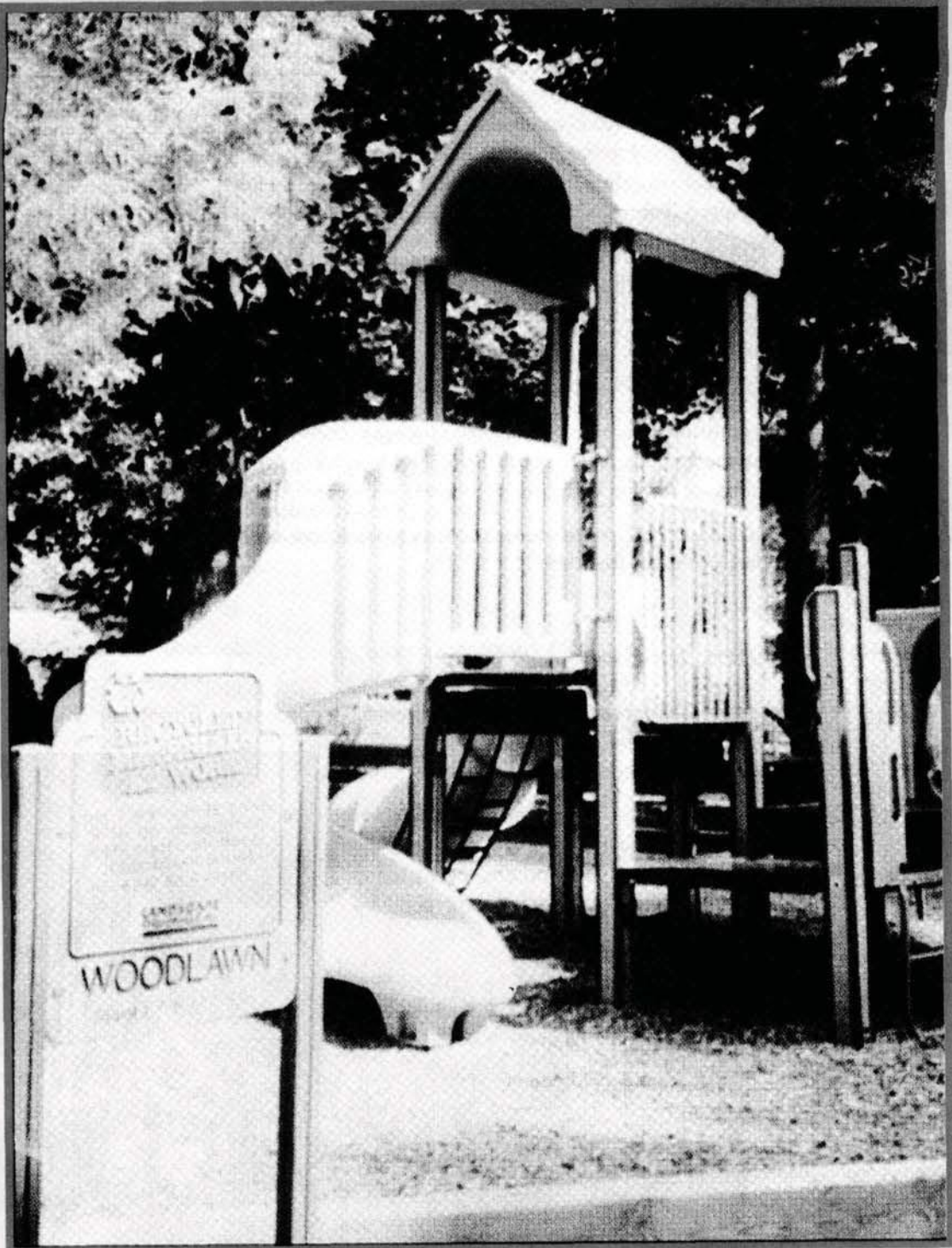
- Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson and the Opening of the American West*—The best-selling account of the expedition by Lewis and Clark through the American West in the early 1800s, as they traveled from St. Louis, Missouri, to the Pacific Ocean.
- Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*—A best-selling, documented historical account of the systematic destruction of the American Indian during the last half of the 1800s.
- Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!*—A classic novel written in 1913 about the physical hardships of the frontier and the enormous changes it brought to the United States.
- James Fenimore Cooper, *The Leatherstocking Tales*—A series of five literary novels about the adventures of Natty Bumppo, a scout on the American frontier, from the French and Indian Wars until the early nineteenth century.
- Larry McMurtry, *Lonesome Dove*—A best-selling novel about life, love, and adventure on the American frontier.

Movies to See

- Bowling for Columbine*—In this controversial documentary, filmmaker Michael Moore explores the roots of America's fascination with guns and violence.
- Dances with Wolves*—A soldier sent to a remote western Civil War outpost makes friends with wolves and Indians, eventually falling in love with a white woman raised by the Indians.
- Far and Away*—A young Irishman who loses his home after his father's death decides to go to America to begin a new life and eventually goes to live on the frontier.
- High Noon*—In this classic movie, a sheriff who must face a returning deadly enemy finds that his own town refuses to help him.
- Lakota Woman: Siege at Wounded Knee*—A movie (made for TV) based on the true story of the life of Mary Crow Dog, the daughter of a poor Indian family, telling how she grew up on a reservation and became involved in the Indian movement.



Indian dancing with rings—Hopi hoop dance



A play structure made from 5,978 plastic containers, 11,203 aluminum cans, and 9,232 soup cans

THE HERITAGE OF ABUNDANCE

For millions of people throughout this world, during the past three centuries, America has symbolized plenty, wealth, and abundance of goods.

David Potter (1910–1971)

BEFORE YOU READ

Preview Vocabulary

A. Read the following sentences from the chapter and notice the words in italics. These key AWL words will help you understand the reading. Use context clues to help you figure out the meanings. Then choose which definition is best for the italicized word.

- 1. In the aristocratic European nations the settlers left behind, the material wealth and comforts of the ruling classes were *guaranteed* by their birth.
 - a. certain to happen
 - b. unlikely to happen

- 2. Unlike many countries where the love of material things was seen as a vice, a mark of weak moral character, in the United States it was seen as a virtue, a positive *incentive* to work hard, and a reward for successful efforts.
 - a. encouragement
 - b. discouragement

- _____ 3. Mass advertising crosses *media*; there are ads for movies on TV, and ads for TV shows in the movie theaters and at the beginning of movie videos.
- TV, radio, and newspapers
 - interests and viewpoints
- _____ 4. Because Americans place such a high value on individual freedom, particularly freedom of speech, they have traditionally been very hesitant to censor, or even *restrict*, the flow of information by any means of communication.
- allow
 - limit
- _____ 5. Americans viewed the material wealth and abundance of the United States as an *ever-expanding* pie that would continue to grow so that all people could get a bigger piece of a bigger pie.
- becoming larger
 - becoming smaller
- _____ 6. The cost of maintaining a high standard of living has been rising, while the number of high-paying factory jobs has been *declining*.
- going up
 - going down
- _____ 7. Many full-time minimum-wage-earners cannot afford to rent an apartment that is not *subsidized* by government funds.
- partly paid
 - guaranteed to be safe
- _____ 8. Because of the profound effect abundance has had on the American belief system, a *widespread* perception of its decline could have important consequences.
- happening in many situations
 - happening in only a few situations

B. Read the quotation by David Potter at the beginning of the chapter. Find the words with the following meanings. Write each word next to its meaning.

- _____ 1. periods of 100 years
- _____ 2. represented an idea or quality
- _____ 3. products
- _____ 4. enough, or more than enough
- _____ 5. a large quantity of something

Preview Content

A. Think about the David Potter quotation and discuss the questions with your classmates.

1. Do you agree with David Potter? Why or why not? What is the source of American abundance?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of having abundance? List the positive and negative aspects in the chart.

AMERICAN ABUNDANCE	
Plus +	Minus -

3. Think about your daily activities. What do you throw away every day?
4. What are some environmental problems we face today?
5. For these words and phrases, write *P* for the environmental problems, and *S* for the solutions.

_____ endangered species

_____ global warming

_____ trash and garbage

_____ recycling

_____ wastefulness

_____ conserving energy

_____ protecting historical lands

_____ air pollution

B. Read the headings in the chapter and look at the illustrations. Write five topics that you predict will be covered in this chapter.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

important to keep not only their bodies, but also their clothes, their houses, their cars, and even their pets, clean and smelling good. Indeed, many Americans are offended by anyone who does not follow their accepted standards of cleanliness.

16 Along with cleanliness and comfort, Americans love having things that are new and different. Perhaps this love of novelty comes from their pride in their inventiveness. Americans have always been interested in inventing new products and improving old ones. They like to see changes in cars, clothing, and products for the home.

Advertisements encourage people to get rid of old products and try new ones, whether the old ones still work or not. And if they cannot afford to buy something now, advertisers encourage consumers to charge it on a credit card—"Buy now—pay later."

17 In addition to the three qualities that Lerner mentions, there is a fourth quality that American consumers like very much—convenience. In the late 1900s, there was a dramatic increase in such labor-saving devices as automatic washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers, food processors, microwave ovens, garbage disposals, and power lawn mowers. Today, all of these, and many more, are found in a typical suburban home. These labor-saving devices are designed to reduce the time spent on housework. However, the time that Americans save is quickly spent on other activities.

18 The American desire for convenience also created the concept of *fast-food* restaurants, which are found in every city and almost every small town in the United States, and are now exported all over the world. These fast-food restaurants, such as McDonald's and KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken), serve sandwiches, salads, fried chicken, seafood, etc., to customers in five minutes or less, often at a drive-up window. There are also many kinds of restaurants that will deliver Chinese food, pizza, and other dishes to people's homes in about a half hour. In many areas, there are "take-out services" that will deliver food from the menus of twenty or thirty different restaurants for a small charge. For those who prefer to prepare their food at home, American grocery stores are full of convenience foods that are packaged and ready to cook, or are even precooked.

19 Like microwaves and dishwashers, fast-food and take-out restaurants are convenient because they save the American consumer time that would otherwise be spent fixing meals or cleaning up. These conveniences, however, do not cause Americans to be less busy. Women now make up about one-half of the American workforce, and the majority of mothers with children under the age of eighteen work outside the home. With both parents employed, children eat a lot of take-out food, a significant contributor to childhood obesity.³

20 Thus, the conveniences that Americans desire, reflect not so much a leisurely lifestyle as a busy lifestyle in which even minutes of time are too valuable to be wasted. Alexis de Tocqueville was one of the first to see in this a curious paradox in the American character. He observed that Americans were so busy working to acquire comforts and conveniences that they were unable to relax and to enjoy leisure time when they had it. Today, as in Tocqueville's time, many Americans have what one medical doctor has called "the hurry sickness."

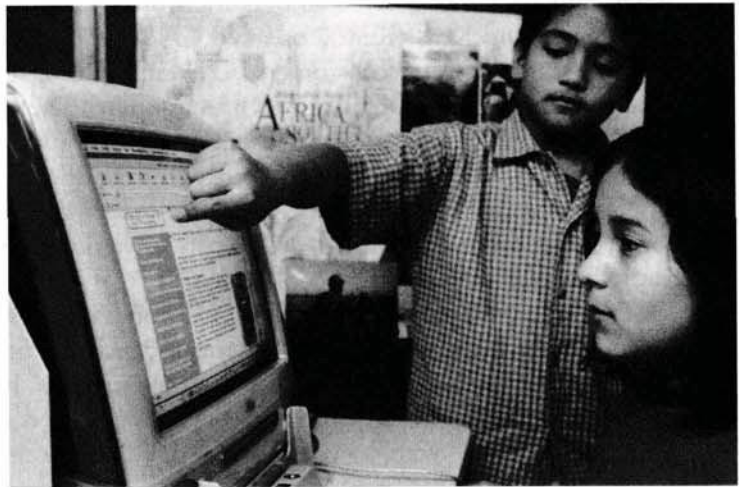
³ obesity: the condition of being too heavy in a way that is dangerous to your health

An Abundance of Technology

21 **N**ew technologies have increased the hectic pace of life in the United States, and they have caused some important changes. First, technology has changed television viewing habits. In the past, broadcast television was dominated by the networks NBC, CBS, ABC, and more recently, Fox. In addition to these commercial networks, there were also public TV stations that offered more educational and cultural programs, supported by contributions from viewers, donations from private companies, and government grants. A viewer could choose from about a dozen different TV shows broadcast at a time.

22 Today, the spread of cable and satellite TV has resulted in a virtually unlimited number of TV programs available. By 2003, the majority of American homes had either cable or satellite TV. For the first time, there were more people watching programs on cable channels (delivered by either cable or satellite systems) than were watching the four original broadcast networks. Many Americans may now view several hundred channels via cable or satellite, in addition to the traditional network shows and public television programs. Some of the cable channels, such as HBO (Home Box Office), are called *premium channels*, and viewers pay an extra monthly fee to receive them. There are no advertisements on these channels or on public television stations.

23 The result is that the viewing audience is more fragmented, with a smaller percentage watching any given program. This means that mass advertisers have to find new ways to reach the buying public. Some companies now pay for product placement in TV shows and movies—the hero drinking a Coke, for example. Also, most companies do extensive market research to find individuals who are most likely to buy their products. They then focus on delivering their ads to these individuals, often using the Internet and other direct-marketing techniques.



The majority of American families have access to the Internet.

24 The technology revolution is changing how Americans get both entertainment and information. By the year 2000, more than one-half of all American households had personal computers (PCs), and the majority of those under age fifty had become users of the Internet. Polls show that today the computer has become the center of entertainment in a number of American households, and many households have more than one. Harris pollster Hal Quinley reports that people look at their computer as “a TV, DVD player, stereo and CD player combined. The increased simplicity in using the computer to acquire, edit, organize and enjoy music, movies and photos is clearly driving this hot trend. . . .” Another important trend is the popularity of computer games played online.

25 The Internet is not only a source of entertainment, it is also a major source of news, information, and goods for sale. Individuals can customize, or personalize, the

news they receive about current events, new products, sales, or special offers. Individuals can set up their own news sites and web logs, or *blogs*. Musicians can record their own CDs and sell them on the web. Indeed, it is now possible to find just about anything or anyone on the Internet.

Challenges of the Technological Revolution

26 **T**here are several issues raised by the technological revolution. The first is the merging of technology providers. A single company can now provide access to television shows, telephone service, cell phone service, and the Internet. On the one hand, as communication media merge, more and more options become available to the home user at lower and lower prices. On the other hand, fewer companies own more of all media (radio, TV, newspapers, magazines). Some worry that this trend will eventually limit the variety of programs and points of view offered. For example, Clear Channel is a company that owns a large number of radio stations throughout the country. The owner has strong political views, and he has on occasion refused to play the music of musicians who publicly criticized the president.

27 Another challenge is the effect of all this technology on children. Some worry that American children and young people are spending too much time watching television, using their computers, and playing video games. Clearly, they are not getting enough exercise, and the lack of physical activity has led to serious problems of childhood obesity and a sharp rise in the number of children with type 2 diabetes.⁴

28 Others worry more about the quality of what children are watching on TV and what they are seeing on the Internet. Americans face a constant dilemma⁵—how to balance the right to free speech with the need to protect children and maintain standards of decency.⁶ Because Americans place such a high value on individual freedom, particularly freedom of speech, they have traditionally been very hesitant to censor,⁷ or even restrict, the flow of information by any means of communication. True censorship occurs when the government sets the standards; Most Americans would prefer that the entertainment industry regulate itself, and the movie industry does have a rating system for films. Now that many American children have access to the Internet, there is a debate over whether and how to regulate it. For example, there have been arguments over whether public libraries should deny Internet users access to certain websites.

29 Finally, there is concern about the growing “digital divide,” the gap between Americans who



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⁴ **diabetes:** a disease in which there is too much sugar in the blood

⁵ **dilemma:** a situation in which you have to make a difficult choice between two or more actions

⁶ **decency:** basic accepted behavior, especially moral and sexual behavior

⁷ **editor:** to examine books, movies, or letters to remove anything that is offensive

own computers and those who do not. People who have more education and are higher on the socioeconomic scale are likely to spend less time watching television and more time on their computers. Many of those on the other side of the digital divide, those who do not own computers, live in poverty, and some belong to minority populations. As computer literacy⁸ becomes increasingly important in American society, the government and concerned individuals look for ways to bridge the digital divide with programs to provide training and free computers. Most public libraries, for example, have computers available that provide Internet access at no cost.

The Ever-Expanding Pie?

30 **D**uring the first 200 years of their nation's existence (1776–1976), Americans were never forced to change their great optimism about wealth and abundance. They viewed the material wealth of the United States as an ever-expanding pie. In most other countries, people believe that the rich take a larger piece of the pie and the poor get a smaller piece. Americans, however, have believed that their economic pie would just continue to grow so that all people could get a bigger piece of a bigger pie. This expectation was based on the early experience that as the new nation grew, the pie of wealth and abundance grew at an even faster rate. In the 1800s, the nation grew in size as new western lands were settled and became states. In the 1900s, when the continent had been settled, Americans invented new products and techniques of production, such as Henry Ford's mass production of cars on the assembly line. The expanding economy created new jobs, and the pie continued to grow larger and larger. Under these circumstances, Americans came to believe that their heritage of abundance would last as far as they could see into the future.

31 The belief in an everlasting heritage of abundance had many good effects. It made Americans an optimistic people with confidence that human problems could be solved. It greatly reduced the conflict between the rich and poor that has torn many older nations apart. Perhaps most important, the belief in an always growing abundance gave strong support to such basic national values as freedom, self-reliance, equality of opportunity, competition, and hard work. It seemed to Americans that their high standard of living was a reward for practicing these values.

Or the Decline of American Abundance?

32 **O**ver the last few decades, the American economy has had its ups and downs. In the late 1970s, the energy crisis and the economic recession warned Americans that there might be a limit to their abundant natural resources and the lifestyle that these natural resources had supported. The 1980s and 1990s brought a general turn-around in the economy, but it was often the rich who got richer and the poor who got poorer. The dramatic fall of the stock market in the early 2000s cost many middle-class Americans much of their retirement savings, forcing them to work longer. The response of most Americans to economic downturns is generally to work harder, and their productivity has risen significantly as a result.

33 A high standard of living has been at the heart of the American Dream—a house in the suburbs, one or two cars, a secure job, and enough money to go on vacations

⁸ computer literacy: being able to operate a computer and use the Internet

and to send the children to college. But the cost of all these things has been rising, while the number of high-paying jobs in factories has been declining. Those without a college education are hardest hit. The new jobs are often in the service economy—in stores, restaurants, or hotels—not in the manufacturing economy in factories. Many of the service workers, such as janitors and dishwashers, have relatively low pay and poor benefits. As a result, many Americans must work harder than their parents did to have the same standard of living. Often, young parents believe that it is necessary for both of them to work outside the home in order to maintain their lifestyle. The average number of hours per week that Americans work has risen to well over forty hours, with many professionals (teachers, doctors, lawyers, businesspeople, etc.) working fifty or sixty hours per week.

- 34 Although Americans are working harder and have less leisure time, many are still having difficulty keeping up with rising costs, particularly for housing. Many people have to spend a larger percent of their income on owning a home or renting an apartment. Today, many families cannot afford to buy a house in the area in which they are living, and so they live in apartments. In some areas, even apartments are too expensive for some full-time minimum-wage-earners to rent unless they are subsidized by government funds. Minority populations are often the hardest hit, especially those with entry-level jobs⁹ such as janitors, hotel maids, fast-food cooks, and agricultural workers.

What of the Future?

- 35 It is difficult to predict the economic future. More and more, Americans find themselves competing in a global economy, and there will continue to be cycles of upturns and downturns. One thing is certain, however. The American tradition of abundance has had a profound effect on the lifestyles and the values of the American people. When Americans experience a decline in abundance, they become more pessimistic. However, even economic downturns may have long-term positive effects.

- 36 On the positive side, a decline in American abundance causes people to become less wasteful and more protective of their environment. Many Americans now recycle aluminum and tin cans, plastic and paper bags, plastic and glass containers, office paper, and newspapers. Children study about environmental issues in school: They learn about care of the local environment and the problems of the earth—air and water pollution, global warming, and the threat to endangered species. Businesses sometimes “adopt” sections of roads, and the company employees volunteer their time to keep the trash picked up. Communities conduct environmental impact studies before developing empty land. Sometimes a



Children often help their families recycle.

⁹entry-level job: a first job for a person entering the job market, such as a janitor, a dishwasher in a restaurant, or a day laborer on a construction job

local community chooses to keep its rural lifestyle and protect its historical lands. The people may reject development, even if it means losing potential new jobs. For example, the citizens of a rural community near Washington, D.C., were able to stop the Disney company from building a new theme park in their area, even though Virginia state officials were in favor of the development.

- 37 On the negative side, old habits are hard to change. Many Americans are optimistic about their future, but others are pessimistic about the economy of their country and its ability to expand forever. Because of the profound effect abundance has had on the American belief system, a widespread perception of its decline could have important consequences. Whether the traditional American values will remain strong in the coming decades or undergo basic changes is impossible to predict with certainty. Only time will tell.

AFTER YOU READ

Understand Main Ideas

Check the predictions you made on page 93 before reading the chapter. Work with a partner and answer the questions about the main ideas of each section of the chapter. Skim the sections for the main ideas if you do not remember them.

1. *A History of Abundance*: What three values were strengthened by the abundant natural resources of the United States?
2. *From Producers to Consumers*: What caused Americans to change from thinking of themselves mainly as producers to thinking of themselves mainly as consumers?
3. *What American Consumers Like*: What four things do American consumers like?
4. *An Abundance of Technology*: What changes have new technologies brought in American TV-viewing habits and in the way Americans access entertainment and information?
5. *Challenges of the Technological Revolution*: What are the three challenges that the technological revolution has brought?
6. *The Ever-Expanding Pie*? What is the ever-expanding pie, and how did this idea develop?
7. *Or the Decline of American Abundance*? What effects do economic downturns have on Americans?
8. *What of the Future*? What is one possible positive effect of declining abundance?