



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

# THEMES/INSIGHTS for Today Instructor's Manual

## 大学英语 泛读教程 教师参考书

预备级  
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1

第二版

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Lorraine C. Smith, Nancy Nici Mare  
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## 再 版 前 言

《大学英语泛读教程》系列教材是在美国圣智学习出版公司出版的*Reading for Today Series*的基础上改编而成。本教材在改编中，保留了原版教材新颖独特的设计模式和先进的编写理念，并根据我国英语教学的特点与实际，改编了部分练习，增设了中英文双语释义的词汇表，使之更能满足中国学习者的要求。本套教材于2005年8月由高等教育出版社正式出版发行，由于该教材语言的真实性和教学内容的实用性，自发行以来受到了高等院校教师、学生以及各类读者的广泛好评。

在四年的教材使用中，我们注重对该教材使用的调查和研究，收集了学习者的反馈意见，在高等教育出版社的大力支持下，组织各册编者对该系列教材进行了修订。在原改编的基础上，第二版更注重实用性，具体修改内容如下：

- 在每个单元中增加了系统的由浅入深的阅读策略和阅读技巧的介绍和训练。
- 为课文增加了Notes介绍相关背景知识以及理解难点、专有名词。
- 修改了部分词汇练习，以适合各种不同程度的学习者的需要。
- 某些课文后增加翻译练习，以增强学生对英语语言的实践能力。
- 部分单元中充实了一些讨论题或思考题，使学习者学有所思，思有所悟，同时也给学习者的口头训练提供了语料和实践机会。
- 在所有文章后均标明该文章的总字数，以便于学生把握自己的阅读量和阅读速度。

《大学英语泛读教程(第二版)》系列教材已被列为“普通高等教育‘十一五’国家级规划教材”。全书共分五册，低起点，高目标；内容丰富、题材广泛。该教材经修订后更能体现其新颖性与独特性，更能满足不同层次学习者的要求。

《大学英语泛读教程(第二版)》系列教材由贵州大学王健芳教授任总主编。由张林教授、周杰教授、朱华章教授、甘莉萍教授以及林雅教授担任各分册主编。

王健芳

2009年12月



# TO THE TEACHER

**Reading for Today** series features a broad range of reading materials and resources to prepare students for academic success. The core of the series consists of reading passages of general and academic interest which provide a context for vocabulary development. The student books also contain a wealth of visual materials and nonlinear texts such as graphs, charts, maps and photographs. In addition, each unit is accompanied by a thematically related CNN® video clip and Internet activities that provide current, and authentic materials for expanding reading skills and strategies. Lastly, assessment materials are provided in the form of reproducible quizzes for each chapter in the *Instructor's Manuals*.

The Introduction to each student book presents strategies by the authors for using the sections for each chapter. In addition to providing chapter pre-reading activities, culture and background notes, and follow-up activities, this *Instructor's Manual* focuses on ways to make the most of the video, Internet and assessment materials in the **Reading for Today** series.

## Videos

Use the video clips *after* students have worked through unit chapters so that concepts and vocabulary in the text provide background scaffolding for viewing. "Reading videos"—actively watching videos for information—is different from passive watching for entertainment. Explain that students will employ many of the same skills they do in reading a text passage. They will engage in prereading by brainstorming what they already know about a subject, and they will predict what the video will show. During the video, students will identify the

main ideas and supporting details. They will also look for contextual information and differentiate between fact and opinion. After viewing, students should be able to answer comprehension questions. Here are some specific suggestions for helping your students become active viewers:

- Prepare students by giving the title of the video. Have students predict what it will be about.
- The video clips are very short (averaging 2–3 minutes per clip) so students may benefit from viewing them several times. First, "skim the video" for an overview of the topic and coverage. In other words, view for general comprehension. Then watch again for details. Students can "scan the video" for particular information, perhaps to answer comprehension questions in the book. Repeated viewings can be used to identify opinions or interpretations. These can be compared and contrasted with views from the text readings.
- The videos are authentic materials from the Cable News Network (CNN®) and therefore speech is at a natural speed. Moreover, speakers often use regional dialects. This presents a contrast to video materials made especially for English language learners where the content, pace and varieties of English are tightly controlled. Let students know that they are not expected to understand every word. Instead, have them focus on main points at first.
- Since the videos use authentic language, the speech often contains idioms and new vocabulary words. These are identified in the video script. You may choose to pre-teach some of these before showing the video to enhance comprehension.



- The video segments share a particular structure. Usually a reporter introduces the topic by interviewing knowledgeable people. Sometimes several people are presented as supporting examples for the topic. At the end, the reporter concludes the segment, often with a summary or personal opinion. Check on comprehension of this structure by asking about the reporter, the setting, and the people who are interviewed. Where does this take place? Why were people chosen for this video? Are some of these people “authorities”? How do we know that?



## Internet Resources

Internet sites change often, so relatively few URLs or Internet addresses are given in the *Instructor's Manuals*. Instead, students are encouraged to develop search strategies using keywords and search engines such as Netscape, Google, or Yahoo. There are several ways in which exploring Internet sites fosters the development of good reading skills. First, students need to consider what words to use with the search engine. This leads naturally to a discussion of key terms and their relationships. If a term is too broad, the search results in too many sites. Conversely, a narrow keyword will produce a limited range of sites. Use graphic organizers to show specific and more general terms in a hierarchy.

Second, the Internet provides a full range of texts from the simplest and most straightforward (often intended for young learners but equally accessible to beginning English language learners) to sites meant for technical specialists. For beginning learners using *Themes for Today* and *Insights for Today*, it may be appropriate to pre-identify sites that use comprehensible language or, following Krashen, language that stretches their comprehension skills slightly.

Third, Internet resources vary enormously in terms of accuracy and reliability. Early in the course find websites with very different perspectives on a topic to illustrate this point. Attune students to investigating the source of a site. For example, if the domain in the site address is .edu, the source is academic—from a college or university. With experience, students will learn to rely on dependable sites.

Lastly, using the Internet effectively is a giant exercise in critical thinking. Encourage students to treat online material the same way they would evaluate print material—by determining what is reliable and what is questionable material. From the beginning, require students to identify their sources. Expect students to paraphrase information in their own words and you'll reinforce good summarizing and vocabulary skills.

## Assessment

The *Instructor's Manuals* contain sets of quizzes for each chapter in the *Reading for Today* series. The first section emphasizes reading comprehension and recall. You may want to encourage students to do this from memory instead of referring to the text passages. The second section uses key vocabulary from each chapter in a cloze passage similar to the text. Each text chapter has grammatical exercises and extensive work on vocabulary in context. These sections should make the students aware of the function and relationship of words within sentences. When students do the cloze exercises, they should pay close attention to parts of speech as well as collocations. Each response is used only once.

*Reading for Today* provides an integrated package of resources that enables every teacher to tailor the course to the needs of particular students. We hope you enjoy exploring all five levels of the *Reading for Today* series.



# CONTENTS

To the Teacher    iv

## ***Themes for Today***

Teacher Notes    1

Answer Key    19

Video Scripts    35

Assessment    41

## ***Insights for Today***

Teacher Notes    53

Answer Key    73

Video Scripts    96

Assessment    101



# Themes for Today

## TEACHER NOTES

### Unit 1

### Home and Family

#### Chapter 1

(pages 2–12)

#### The McCaugheys: An Unusual Family

*A family has septuplets, seven children born at the same time. It's hard work to care for so many children and now that they're older, their mother is teaching them at home.*

#### Suggestions for Prereading Activities

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Before starting the chapter, ask the class how many children are in their families. Are there any twins or triplets? Do they know of any families with multiple births? What are the names for four, five, or more children born at the same time (quadruplets, quintuplets, sextuplets, septuplets, and octuplets)? How often does this happen?

Now have students look at the picture on page 2 and work in pairs to answer the questions. For the question "How old are they?", students with babies in their families may have a better idea. Ask "When are babies able to sit up by themselves?" Babies usually start to do this at about six months, but there are lots of individual differences. When students seem to understand the concept of multiple births, have them read each of the passage segments and answer the accompanying questions. Ask them to discuss their answers with a partner.

#### Culture Notes

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There are two main topics within the reading passage: multiple births and homeschooling. Multiple births have occurred with increasing frequency in recent years because of the use of fertility drugs. Doctors give these medications to women who have had difficulty in becoming pregnant. Unfortunately, it's difficult to judge exactly the right amount of medication to help a mother have just one baby. Often, couples using fertility drugs end up with multiple births, which can pose health problems for both the mother and the babies. Sometimes the multiple birth babies are born too early and don't survive. In other cases, the babies live but have many medical problems. Even if the babies are healthy, taking care of them is always a great deal of work. Providing for the needs of so many children at once is very expensive. The McCaugheys, the family in the story, are lucky to have financial support from a women's magazine which features the children on its cover every year. Other families with multiple births have not had as much support and have experienced financial problems.

According to the reading, the McCaugheys have chosen to teach their children at home. Homeschooling is done by parents for a number of reasons. In the past in places like Alaska, families lived a long distance from schools and didn't want to



send their children away to boarding schools. These days, however, most parents decide on homeschooling because they want to give their children a traditional education that matches their religious beliefs or educational philosophy. For example, some parents like the ideas of John Holt, an educator who thought that children themselves should decide what they are interested in learning. Homeschooling is legal in North America, but parents often have to provide the government with a plan for what their children will learn and show that they are prepared to be good teachers. One of the criticisms of homeschooling is that children spend too much time with adults and don't have enough chance to interact with other children of their own ages. That won't be a problem for the McCaughey septuplets and their older sister. They'll have plenty of playmates of exactly their own ages!

## Suggestions for Follow-up Activities

Try to personalize the topics from the first readings with your students. If any of them know twins or other multiples, they could describe them to the rest of the class. Other students might want to look on the Internet or in the *Guinness Book of World Records* to find other examples of multiple births. There are many Internet and print resources for homeschooling. Students might like to explore some of them (by using "homeschooling" as the key word in a search) and then discuss whether they'd rather learn at home or at school. Have any of your students been homeschooled? If so, perhaps they would share their experiences with the class.

Refer to page 3 in this manual for helpful information regarding the CNN video and page 4 for introductory Internet information.



## Chapter 2

(pages 13–28)

### A Musical Family

*A family with four children moves from Chicago to a small town in Maine. The parents homeschool the children and give them music lessons. The family has a different life than they did before.*

## Suggestions for Prereading Activities

Before opening the textbook, ask if anyone in the class plays a musical instrument. If so, how and when did they learn it? Have students brainstorm names of musical instruments and write them on the board. Do some of these instruments form groups? How or why? (You may want to do some background reading on musical instruments in an encyclopedia before you do this with your class. The major instrument groups are strings, winds, brass, and percussion.) Then turn to page 13 and see if the class can identify the instruments in the picture. (They are all string instruments. The one on the left is a viola and it is a bit larger and lower in sound than the violins in the front row. The boy in the back is holding a cello, which is larger and deeper in pitch. All of these instruments are used in string quartets and in symphony orchestras.)

The reading passage entails a move halfway across the United States. Bring in a map of the United States and have the class locate the city of Chicago and the state of Maine. What would it be like to live in these places? What kinds of things could you do there? What type of housing would you live in?



## Culture Notes

This chapter also deals with homeschooling, a good reason to establish a basic understanding of the concept in Chapter 1. Having done that, discuss the differences between subjects you are required to study in public schools as contrasted to the kinds of things you could study in homeschooling. In Chicago, Nick, the oldest son in the reading, didn't do well in math. But he began to enjoy it when his mother taught him. Music is usually taught as **an elective** in public schools although math is **a required** subject. Mathematical skills are believed to be essential for success in life, but musical skills are seen as optional. In fact, some school systems no longer offer music because they have had to make budget cuts and some parents see music as an extra, a "frill." However, research has shown that students who learn to play a musical instrument have better overall academic success and better memories.

One reason some parents homeschool their children is that they want them to develop practical skills that will be valuable for the rest of their lives in the communities where they live. The Amish, a religious group living a very traditional agricultural lifestyle, is a good example of this. They teach their children household and farming skills that they need to know to function in Amish society. Have the class discuss the kinds of skills the Cabey-Gray family is teaching their children in Maine. Will they be able to use these skills later in life as adults? If the children went to public school in a small town in Maine, would they learn the same things?

## Suggestions for Follow-up Activities

Your students have probably gone through quite an admission process to get into college or university. Ask them how this would have been different if they had been homeschooled. Also, do they think it made a difference that they had extra-curricular skills such as playing a musical instrument or sports abilities? Ask the students to make lists of the courses they took in high school. Have students compare their high school experiences. As a class, make posters that feature the benefits of participating in these activities.

## Unit 1 Video Report

This video clip entitled *Homeschooling* can be viewed after either Unit 1 chapter as the families in both stories chose to homeschool their children. Before watching the clip, ask the class to share what they learned as children from their own parents. Then ask the preview discussion questions from the student book. Next, watch the video on *Homeschooling* once. Return to the student book and have students read through the True/False questions. Watch the video a second time before having students discuss the questions as a class or with a partner. Finally, ask students to work in small groups to make a list of the advantages and disadvantages of homeschooling for children.







## Unit 1 Internet Resources

The Internet provides excellent resources for students studying a language. It provides many excellent opportunities for students to read "authentic" materials from actual sources. On the other hand, to the novice user, the Internet can be overwhelming and intimidating. Plan your students' introduction to the Internet carefully, teaching such terms as "search engine," "URL," "keywords," and other related terms. Show students how to identify helpful sources of information versus commercial sites. Most importantly, remind students never to share personal information on the Internet. As this may be the first time your students have encountered the Internet. Do some preliminary searching to identify useful sites as "starter sites" for your students. Focus on helpful student-oriented ESL or ELT sites where they may work on self-study skills at the library or at home.

## Unit 2

## Language and Culture

### Chapter 3

(pages 30–44)

### Learning a Second Language

*You can make learning a language like English easier. To be a successful language learner, have a positive attitude, practice your new language, and keep a record of your achievements.*

### Suggestions for Prereading Activities

Ask the class about the basic language they might need or currently need to survive in an English-speaking environment. Offer suggestions such as words for asking directions, reading signs, using public transport, giving information about themselves, and shopping. What basic phrases would a person need to know to cover most of these situations? Ask students what's happening in the picture on page 30.

Ask students what they can do to help themselves learn English on their own where they live now. Who speaks English there? Are signs, newspapers, and television programs available in English? Are movies shown in English? How can students add some "English time" to their everyday lives?



## Culture Notes

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Cultural models for education are quite different. Depending on where people live, these models set role expectations for teachers and students, and determine whether learning is supposed to occur mostly in class or independently outside class time. In North America, students are expected to be active learners and take responsibility for part of their own learning. Teachers facilitate or help the learning process along, often by guiding students to gather and access resources. Colleges and universities have independent learning centers with many resources that students are expected to use on their own. These may include print materials such as books, reference works (encyclopedias), and periodicals (magazines, academic journals, newspapers) as well as computer software and Internet access points. There is a wealth of English language learning material available through the computer.

In other parts of the world, a more traditional model of education exists. In some cultures, teachers are viewed as authority figures who transmit learning to students, whose role is to receive information and memorize it. Sometimes this is called the “jugs and mugs” model of learning. By analogy, teachers are “jugs” of information which they pour into “mugs” or the heads of their students. In this model, teachers are active, providing essential information, but students are much more passive and expected to memorize what their teachers present. In this traditional way of learning, printed materials such as textbooks are the primary materials a student would use.

## Suggestions for Follow-up Activities

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Today, thanks to the Internet, students anywhere can become more proactive in their language learning. The first unit suggested that students do an Internet Search for English as a Second Language (ESL). Now ask students to identify areas of English that are most problematic for them, based on notes in their journals. Have them return to the ESL websites and do a further search for these words. Some examples might be *grammar*, *vocabulary*, or *idioms*.

For students without Internet access, suggest that they collect phrases from signs they see in English, look for English programs or movies on television, or try asking for information in English. It may be more fun and productive to do this activity in pairs and have students report back to the class.

## Chapter 4

(pages 45–62)

## Food and Culture

*People prefer food from their own culture because they are used to it. Different cultures have different foods according to what is available. When people move or travel to another culture, they can adjust to foods from that place.*

## Suggestions for Prereading Activities

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Before opening the textbook, ask the class to describe their favorite foods. Are there some foods everyone knows and likes? Are there other foods that almost no one else in the class is familiar with? Then do the prereading activity.

After answering prereading questions 1–4, have students look at all of the photographs in the chapter. Perhaps they will get some other ideas of things to put on their list. Ask students what people use to eat with (knives and forks, chopsticks, their hands, etc.)? Who prepares food at home, men or women, both?



## Culture Notes

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The concept of *culture* is key to this chapter. Anthropologists are social scientists (like sociologists, mentioned in the chapter) who specialize in studying culture. According to sociologists, *culture* consists of learned and shared patterns of behavior that are transmitted from one generation to another. Culture includes material things that we can see such as food, clothing, types of houses and celebrations, as well as things we can't see such as beliefs, values and language. Humans are not born with culture; they have to acquire culture from their families, their teachers and all the people around them. Each social group has certain cultural features that they share which are different from other groups. Food is a very good example.

Culture does not stay the same over time. Changes occur because of new inventions or due to the spread of ideas from one culture to another. Ask about fastfood in cultures represented in your class. Can they give some examples of traditional fastfood and some that have recently spread from the West? Do they think fastfood is healthy? Who likes fastfood and why? If you have students from a variety of different cultures, you might find it useful to tie this chapter to the first chapter about raising children. Ask about what babies and young children eat in different cultures. Do they eat the same kinds of foods as adults or special foods? Is there special food for holidays and celebrations?

## Suggestions for Follow-up Activities

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A field trip to a supermarket can lead to good discussions of culture and food. Advance organization makes such a field trip more productive. Develop worksheets for students to fill out about different types of foods and where they come from. Have them work in small teams to conduct a treasure hunt.

If you can't get out into the community with your class, create a project on describing different kinds of restaurants including fastfood restaurants. Have students list restaurants by culture and describe the types of foods they serve. Telephone directories often list restaurants by ethnic groups (Chinese, Italian, Indian, etc.). Your class can produce a restaurant guide for other students.

Alternatively, have your class develop a cookbook with recipes that each student donates. Have everyone think of their favorite food and how it is prepared. They may want to consult with members of their family or other people in their culture about ingredients, amounts and cooking time. Develop recipe guidelines, such as instructions, sequences, and the types of discourse markers used with them (e.g., first, after that, next, finally). If you have the resources, students can create cookbooks with illustrations and share them with other classes.

## Unit 2 Video Report

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The discussion of fastfood (as suggested above) is a natural lead-in to watching the video on ***The Changing Japanese Diet***. After talking about the effect of a changing diet on young people in Japan, broaden the discussion to the results of eating fastfood meals. The effects of fastfood meals appear frequently in the news as a major health issue. Enter the keyword "fastfood" into any search engine to find recent information.





## Unit 2 Internet Resources

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Internet sites targeted to ESL/EFL students have special sections on food. The language on these sites may be more accessible than on food sites intended for native speakers with specialty interests in cooking. Do some preliminary searching to identify useful sites as “starter sites” for your students. Most sites have links to other resources where they can explore their own interests.

## Unit 3

## Exercise and Fitness

### Chapter 5

(pages 64–76)

### The Importance of Exercise for Children

*Although some American children are very active in after-school sports programs, most only have 45 minutes of physical education a week during-school hours. In contrast, children in other countries have an hour of exercise daily. Regular exercise in childhood is important for establishing lifelong habits.*

### Suggestions for Prereading Activities

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Before starting the chapter, ask the class about their participation in sports now and when they were children. How much exercise was required as part of their school program? How much did they do outside of school? Did they do this on their own or as part of a team? Do they exercise now?

When students do the prereading activity, they may have questions about the sport in the picture. It's street hockey, a year-round version of ice hockey that can be played anywhere. The picture on page 74 depicts a relay race where the contestants have to jump in bags or sacks to the finish line.

### Culture Notes

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Sports differ quite a lot throughout the world. In North America, team sports such as baseball, ice hockey, basketball and football are in the news much more than other sports. North American football has the same name as football in the rest of the world, but it is played with a differently shaped ball and has very different rules. For North Americans, the game known as football in other countries is called soccer. Soccer is extremely popular, especially at the time of the World Cup. Hockey is especially important in Canada and in the northern states because it is cold enough to have ice to play on. Girls and women often play field hockey on grass.



In other parts of the world, one of the main sports is cricket, a sport that originated in England and spread to all the former British colonies. Today, it is one of the most important sports in Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the Caribbean.

Outstanding athletes in golf, tennis, skating, bicycling or gymnastics may promote an interest in those sports. However, sports that require special equipment or the use of expensive facilities, such as ski slopes or golf courses, reduce the possibility of the sport becoming popular with the same numbers of people as soccer.

## Suggestions for Follow-up Activities

Ask your class how they follow their favorite sports, on television or in person (by attending an event). In their opinion, which way is more exciting? Why?

If your class has students from different backgrounds, organize them in groups by sports. Ask the class to call out the names of sports **they know** and form teams of 3 or 4 students. Have the "experts" **give the rules and a brief demonstration** of important moves of each sport. The rest of the class can ask questions.

Refer to page 9 in this manual for helpful information about the CNN video clip related to Chapter 5.

CNN



## Chapter 6

(pages 77–92)

### The New York City Marathon: A World Race

*The New York City Marathon has changed a lot since it started over 30 years ago. Today, almost 30 000 people from all over the world run in the race through all the sections of New York City. Many exciting events happen during the race and large crowds of people come to watch.*

## Suggestions for Prereading Activities

Check your students' background knowledge of foot races. What races are they familiar with? What other famous races have they heard about? Do they know the word *marathon*? How long is a marathon in both distance and time? (Marathons are a little over 26 miles or 42 kilometers. They take about 3 hours to run, depending on the landscape or terrain. Courses with hills, of course, take longer.)

Have students do the prereading exercises. Ask them to estimate the number of people who take part in the marathon. Record their guesses and check them after the reading.

## Culture Notes

Please note that Chapter 6 introduces nonlinear texts in the forms of charts and graphs. Since these are important ways of displaying information, students need to learn to "read" them as well as traditional texts.

Fast running or track-and-field events are important worldwide and form part of the Olympics. The name *marathon* goes back to ancient Greece when about 2 500 years ago a man ran from the town of Marathon to the city of Athens



to bring news of a Greek victory in an important battle. When the modern Olympic Games started in 1896, long races became a part of the contests.

Today, a number of cities hold marathons, but two of the most important races in the United States are held in Boston and New York. Thousands of people from all over the world come to take part in them. These runners prepare by doing long runs under all kinds of weather conditions. They push themselves to run fast but also to be able to run for long distances. Both factors are important when you compete in a marathon. The winners are those who complete the race in the shortest amount of time. Winning times can also change from year to year because of the weather. People receive medals for winning and sometimes money.

Some people like to run as a form of exercise. They know that they will never win a marathon or an Olympic event, but they run to stay fit and healthy. This kind of slow running is called *jogging*. It is popular because it doesn't require a lot of equipment other than good running shoes. However, it is important to follow good safety procedures to avoid injuries.

## Suggestions for Follow-up Activities

Use reference sources to find out more about marathons and other running races. If there are running races in your area, have students get information about them. Who can participate and what do you have to do to register? Are there any charity races such as the Terry Fox Run? Terry Fox was a young Canadian who started the Marathon of Hope to raise money for cancer research. He himself had cancer and ran on an artificial leg. Since his death, Terry Fox Runs are held annually all over the world to continue to raise money.

## Unit 3 Video Report

The video clip for this unit is brief, but filled with statistics about the health of American children. Play it several times and have students list the main topics. Which statistics apply to babies? Young children? Teenagers or adolescents? According to the report, what are the main issues for teenagers? (Note: Eighth graders are about 13 years old, high school seniors are 16 to 18 years old.) Do any of the numbers surprise the students? Discuss as a class.



## Unit 3 Internet Resources

Students will be able to make more sense from Internet sites about the New York City Marathon after they have worked through Chapter 6. One way to make the topic exciting would be to have a role play of a television report covering the Marathon. Have members of the class take different roles (marathon winners and runners-up, spectators, television reporters, sports editors, etc.) and use information from the Internet in a mock sportscast. Videotape the students if possible, so they can see their performances.





**Chapter 7**

(pages 94–106)

**Margaret Mead: The World Was Her Home**

*Margaret Mead, a famous American anthropologist, was encouraged to get a good education by her family who were teachers. She studied anthropology at the university level because she was interested in different cultures. Mead lived with people on the island of Samoa and later wrote a famous book about them. She continued to research and write about interesting places throughout her long life.*

**Suggestions for Prereading Activities**

Start the chapter by asking what the class knows about the social sciences. What are the main subject areas (anthropology, sociology, geography, economics, political science and history) and what do people study in each of them? Are your students taking or have they taken any social science courses? Which ones?

Have students look at the pictures on page 94 and page 99 during the pre-reading time. What does it mean to “study cultures?” Do they remember what culture means from Chapter 4?

**Culture Notes**

Students may not be familiar with the field of anthropology. It actually covers four different areas: physical anthropology (human origins, primate studies, modern human diversity), archeology or human prehistory (studying the physical remains of earlier cultures), linguistics (the study of languages), and cultural anthropology, which studies traditional cultures around the world. Cultural anthropologists usually live with the people they study to become familiar with their culture and language. Later, they write up this information in a book called an ethnography. Their research covers areas such as kinship, social organization, economics and politics, art and belief systems.

In the past, one of the main differences between anthropology and sociology was that anthropologists studied traditional cultures that hadn't been changed much by contemporary life, whereas sociologists studied modern societies and urban or city life. That distinction has become blurred since there are few societies left unchanged by the modern world. However, at the time Margaret Mead was doing her research, she studied primitive groups in New Guinea and Bali in addition to Samoa. She was especially interested in child rearing practices and contrasting what happened in those societies with American life.

