



# THE USA: PAST AND PRESENT

阅读美国



外文出版社



# THE USA: PAST AND PRESENT

## 阅读美国

王昶 徐正源 杨德林 编

外文出版社

## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

阅读美国/王昶, 徐正源, 杨德林编.

—北京: 外文出版社, 2003.11

ISBN 7-119-03407-3

I. 阅... II. ①王... ②徐... ③杨... III. 英语—对照读物—英、汉

IV. H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2003) 第 066628 号

外文出版社网址:

<http://www.flp.com.cn>

外文出版社电子信箱:

[info@flp.com.cn](mailto:info@flp.com.cn)

[sales@flp.com.cn](mailto:sales@flp.com.cn)

## 阅读美国

编 者 王 昶 徐正源 杨德林

责任编辑 杨春燕

封面设计 姚亚妮

印刷监制 张国祥

出版发行 外文出版社

社 址 北京市百万庄大街 24 号

邮政编码 100037

电 话 (010) 68320579 (总编室)

(010) 68329514 (68327211 (推广发行部))

印 刷 北京顺义振华印刷厂

经 销 新华书店 / 外文书店

开 本 大 32 开

字 数 150 千字

印 张 7.625

版 次 2004 年 1 月第 1 版第 1 次印刷

装 别 平装

书 号 ISBN 7-119-03407-3 / Z · 650 (外)

定 价 13.20 元

版权所有 侵权必究

本书从地理、历史、社会、政府与政党、艺术、科技、风俗等方面全面介绍美国社会，从而使读者一方面增加有关美国社会及其历史文化背景的知识，一方面在阅读的过程中提升英语阅读理解水平。

全书每单元由若干小文章构成，文中专有词、难度较大单词都加以中文释义，从而方便阅读；文章前有阅读提示，文章后配有测试题，以加深读者对短文的理解。

本书适用于高中、大学或同等水平的读者。

**Unit 1**  
**THE LAND**

〈1〉

The Country	1
Rivers	4
Weather and Climate	5
Natural Resources	6
National Parks	7
The Northeast: Massachusetts	9
The South: Florida	11
The Southwest: Texas	13
The Central Northwest: Colorado	14
The Southwest: Arizona	15
The Far West: California	16

**Unit 2**  
**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

〈18〉

Pre-Colonial Americ	18
How It All Started	20
The Making of a People	23
Britain and the Colonies	25
The Declaration: History of Creation	28
Another Mystery	31
Struggle for Independence	34

The US Constitution	35
Human Liberties Shared by All	38
19 <sup>th</sup> -Century Expansion	41
the Trail of Tears	42
the Civil War (1861 — 1865)	45
the Rush for Wealth	47
Industrialization	48
Prohibition: Crusade for Abstinence	50
The Great Depression and the New Deal	52

### Unit 3

#### **THE PEOPLE**

〈55〉

Population	55
The Society	58
The Story of the People: the Saga of Migration	60
Ellis Island: Gateway to America	62
The Involuntary Immigrants	64
Afro-American Migration (1915 — 1940)	67
The Search for Equality	69

### Unit 4

#### **THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT**

〈72〉

Separation of Powers	72
The White House	75

The Legislative Branch	77
Federal Judiciary	80
Local Administration	82

## Unit 5

### **ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES**

〈84〉

Presidential Election	84
Political Parties	86

## Unit 6

### **OUTSTANDING PRESIDENTS**

〈88〉

The American Presidency	88
George Washington: First President (1789 — 1797)	91
Thomas Jefferson: Third President (1801 — 1809)	94
Abraham Lincoln: Sixteenth President (1861 — 1865)	97
Franklin D. Roosevelt: Thirty-Second President (1933-1945)	100
JohnFitzgeraldKennedy: Thirty-FifthPresident(1961—1963)	102

## Unit 7

### **RELIGION**

〈105〉

Churches	105
The Black Church	108

**Unit 8**  
**THE MEDIA**  
〈110〉

The Press	110
The Power of the Press	112
Radio and Television	114

**Unit 9**  
**EDUCATING THE NATION**  
〈118〉

American School System	118
Public Education: Historical Review	120
Higher Education	124
World Famous	127

**Unit 10**  
**ARTS AND SCIENCE**  
〈129〉

The Smithsonian: a Treasure-Filled Institution	129
The National Gallery of Art: History of Construction	131
John Russel Pope	133
The National Gallery of Art	134
The National Museum of American History	136
The Great Migration	138



The National Air and Space Museum	140
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	141
Painters of a Virgin Land	144
American Genius	145

## Unit 11

### **MUSIC AND LITERATURE**

〈151〉

America's Music	151
The Church and Music	154
Purely American Creations	155
A Fresh Spirit in Literature	158
A Man of the River	159

## Unit 12

### **SPORTS, LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT**

〈162〉

Sports	162
Alexander Joy Cartwright and the Great American Game	165
Father of modern football	166
Made in the USA	168
Entertainment for All	169
The Early Days	171
Film Industry	173
The World in Your Home	176

Unit 13  
**THE WELFARE STATE**

〈179〉

Industry	179
Agriculture	181
Food for Thought	182

Unit 14  
**WORK AND MONEY**

〈184〉

Trade Unions	184
Wall Street	186

Unit 15  
**TRANSPORT**

〈188〉

Communications and Transport	188
From the History of Travel	189
Wheels for All Mankind	192

Unit 16  
**CITIES AND TOWNS**

〈195〉

Demographic Changes	195
The City of Washington	197

Seeing the Sights of Washington	200
New York	202

## Unit 17

### THE SYMBOLS

〈205〉

The Statue of Liberty	205
The White House	207
To the Stars and Stripes	209
The Library of Congress: Services to the Nation	211
The Cowboy: a Most Misinterpreted Hero	214
The Race for the Sky	215

## Unit 18

### TRADITIONS AND WAYS

〈218〉

American Food and Drink	218
Special Celebrations	222

## Unit 19

### AMERICANS ABOUT AMERICA

〈225〉

# Unit 1

## THE LAND



Read the text.

### The Country

The United States of America has an area of 3, 615, 122 square miles (9.4 mln square kilometers) almost all of which is on the American continent. Its overseas possessions are mainly small Pacific Islands (Guam〈关岛〉, Samoa〈萨摩亚群岛〉, etc.) plus Puerto Rico(波多黎各岛). There are 50 states and one Federal District, created as a site for the Federal Capital, Washington, and known as *the District of Columbia*(哥伦比亚特区).

The USA is considered to be the fourth largest country in the world. The 48 *conterminous*(本土的) states extend from latitude 25° N to 50° N and longitude 125° W to 67° W. From New York in the East to San Francisco or Los Angeles in the West, i. e. from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast, you have to travel more than 4,500 km and leave behind four time zones. The other two

states, Alaska and Hawaii, are situated respectively near the Arctic circle and in the tropical part of the Pacific Ocean(3,200km from the mainland).

Thanks to these geographical extremes, different parts of the country range from moist rain forest areas to arid desert regions and bald mountain peaks. *Mount McKinley*(麦金利山) in Alaska of 20,320 feet(6,194 meters) above sea level is the highest point in the USA, while part of *Death Valley*(死谷) in California is 282 feet(89 meters) below sea level. The West is an extensive mountain area occupying approximately one-third of the United States and is a region of tremendous variety, which can be subdivided into various other areas. It consists of high ranges of the *Cordillera*(雁列山脉, 主要山脉) parallel to the Pacific Coast culminating on its eastern border in *the Rocky Mountains*(落基山脉) (a high, discontinuous chain of mountains with peaks of 13,000 and 14,000 feet), which, in their turn, stretch from mountainous Alaska down to Mexico. These mountains are rich in resources such as gold, lead and uranium.

Among high mountains at the western edge of the *Cordillera* — *the Sierra Nevada*(内华达山脉), *the Cascades*(喀斯喀特山脉) and *the Coastal Ranges*(海岸山脉) — there are broad, fertile valleys and large plateau regions with canyons, cliffs and basins that contain many important metals, oil and natural gas.

The heart of the United States is a vast plain, which extends from Central Canada southwards to Mexico and from the *Cordillera* eastwards to *the Appalachian Mountains*(阿巴拉契亚山脉). These interior plains, which rise gradually like a saucer to higher land on all sides, are divided into two major parts: the eastern portion is called *the Central Plains*(中央低地) and the

western portion — *the Great Plains*(大平原), both of which have good soil.

The Appalachian Mountains — a chain of low, almost unbroken mountains — are extremely rich in coal and iron. These mountains are at the western edge of the Atlantic coastal plain, which is a long, gently rolling lowland area. These coastal plains are very flat: nowhere in Florida, for example, is more than 350 feet above sea level. The soil is very poor, except in the fertile southern part — *the Cotton Belt*(棉花种植带) of the Old South and the citrus country of Central Florida.

Hawaii is a chain of twenty islands, only seven of which are inhabited. The mountainous islands were formed by volcanic activity and there are still a number of active volcanoes.

### Vocabulary

overseas 海外的, 国外的	possession(私人)财产, 属国, 属地
district 行政区, 地域	site 位置, 场所
conterminous 有共同边界的, 邻接的, 包含在同一边界之内的	
latitude 纬度	longitude 经度
coast 海岸, 海滨地区	mainland 大陆, 本土
extreme 尽头的, 末端的; 开头的; 极端的, 极端	
arid 干旱的; 荒芜的	lead 指引; 通往; 领导
fertile 多产的; 肥沃的, 丰饶的	plateau 高原
basin 盆地	southward(s) 向南的
eastward(s) 向东的	volcano 火山

☞ Supply answers to the following questions.

- 1) Where is the United States of America situated?
- 2) What parts does the country consist of?
- 3) What makes the USA the fourth largest country in the world?

- 4) Why is the United States called a country of geographical extremes?
- 5) How can the physical features of the West be characterized?
- 6) What part of the USA is compared with a saucer?
- 7) What region is rich in coal and iron?
- 8) What is special about Hawaii?



Read the text and pick out the facts you did not know before.

## Rivers

The United States has several immensely long rivers. There are a large number of rivers in the eastern part of the country, the longest of which is *the Missouri* (密苏里河) (4,740 km), a tributary of *the Mississippi* (密西西比河) (3,950 km). The Mississippi-Missouri system extends for over 6,000 km before entering *the Gulf of Mexico* (墨西哥湾) near *New Orleans* (新奥尔良). Two other tributaries of the Mississippi — *the Ohio* (俄亥俄河) and *Tennessee* (田纳西河) — are more than 1,500 km long.

In the West *the Rio Grande* (格兰德河), which forms part of the United States-Mexico border, flows for 3,016 km and only *the Colorado* (科罗拉多河) (2,320 km), *Columbia* (哥伦比亚河) (2,240 km) and *the San Joaquin* (圣华金河) - *Sacramento* (萨克拉门托河) river systems reach the Pacific.



Read the text. Say whether it is connected with the preceding texts of the

Unit or not.

## Weather and Climate

Virtually every type of climate can be found somewhere in the United States — from arctic in Alaska to subtropical in Florida. The climate is not generally temperate, despite the latitude, because the tremendous size of the North American land mass heightens the extreme variations in temperature and precipitation, especially in the central regions( in *Dakota*〈达科他准州〉 temperatures have reached a maximum of  $49^{\circ}\text{C}$  and a minimum of  $-60^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).

Most of the country has a humid continental climate with hot summers and cold winters, while the lack of natural barriers either to the north or south allows cold, dry air to flow south from Canada and warm, humid air north from the Gulf of Mexico, giving rise to spectacular weather of every possible type in the Great Plains and Midwest(中西部). Summers are hot and very humid in this region and rainfall decreases to the west as a result of the rain shadow created by the West Pacific Range and the Sierra Nevada. The southwest portion of the Great Plains is the hottest and most arid region of the United States, with precipitation, mostly in the form of summer showers, averaging less than 250 mm a year.

The Pacific coast is almost rainless in the summer, although there is often fog. In winter there is frequent drizzle, but the climate remains generally warm and dry, especially in California.

The eastern part of the country is moderately rainy, with the precipitation fairly well distributed throughout the year. Summers



tend to be extremely humid, especially along the coast of Texas (得克萨斯州) and Florida.


### Vocabulary

temperate 温和的(气候)

precipitation 降(雨)量

average 平均, 平均水平

drizzle 下小雨; 下毛毛雨

 Read the text. Is there any new information here as compared with the information of the text "The Country"?

## Natural Resources

The United States possesses vast non-fuel natural resources. The major resource is iron, three quarters of which comes from the *Lake Superior* (苏必利尔湖) region of the *Great Lakes* (大西洋). Other basic metals and minerals mined on a large scale are zinc, copper, silver and phosphate rock (used for fertilizers). This wealth is distributed throughout most of the country, but Texas and the West (especially California) are the most important mineral-producing areas. Mining and quarrying account for only about 2% of GNP (国民生产总值).

The United States produces one quarter of the world's coal and one seventh of its petroleum, with sufficient coal reserves to last for hundreds of years. About half of the nation's electric power comes from coal-fired power stations, while natural and manufactured gas supply more than 33% of the nation's power. The main gas fields are found near the main oil fields in Texas,