

美国 文化与口语

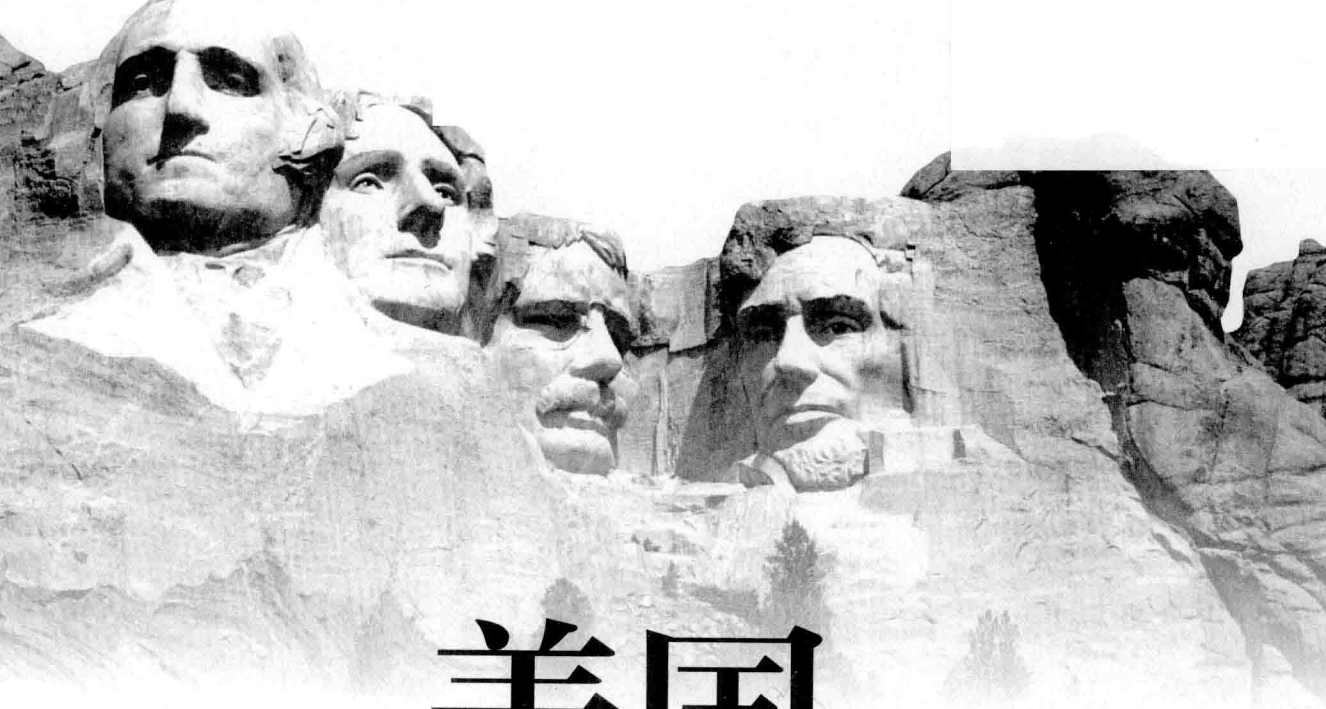
★★★ American Culture and Oral English ★★★

主 编 蒋景阳 / 副主编 周颂波



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序

随着教学改革的推进，各高校对教师开设课程的要求越来越高，大批优秀的通识课相继涌现。“美国文化与口语”被列为浙江大学首批立项建设的通识课程，该课程的教材《美国文化与口语》应运而生。它的出版不仅符合学校管理部门对通识课高要求的精神，同时又能很大程度地满足学生对知识与能力的渴望。

众所周知，语言与文化是密不可分的。语言是文化的组成部分和重要载体，而文化是语言的土壤。对于英语学习者而言，要想说一口地道的英语，就必须了解英美国家的文化习俗，而熟通英美文化，又能使谈话更加深入、得体，富有内涵。目前的英语教材，基本上只注重学生语言能力的提高，而文化方面的教材，又大多局限于文化的灌输，能够有机地把文化知识与语言能力，尤其是口语能力结合起来的教材，寥寥无几。《美国文化与口语》的问世弥补了这方面的不足，把文化与口语结合起来，使学生在了解熟悉美国文化的同时，提高口语交际能力。

在教材内容上，我们力求提供真实的语言素材以及符合现实生活的口语活动。本教材共分18个章节，题材内容包罗万象，涵盖了美国社会和文化的各个领域：美国地理、历史、政治与司法体制、教育、大众媒体、经济、工作与公司文化、节日、运动、休闲娱乐、音乐、社会问题、肢体语言、交通与驾车、购物、饮食文化、动物保护、公共场合的行为等。每个章节除了介绍美国文化的阅读材料，还提供了切合主题并生动有趣的视听内容，以及模拟真实语言使用场景的丰富多样的口语实践活动，从而使学生能够将所获得的

文化知识和语汇有机地结合到口语活动中去，既领会了文化知识，又锻炼了口语能力。相信学生在使用本教材后，不但能够通过读、视、听、说，深入了解美国文化与生活的方方面面，而且能够切实提高自己的口语交流能力。

该教材的编写者为：蒋景阳、周颂波、熊海虹、方富民、王小潞和闻人行。所有编写者都有最近在美国授课或游学的经历，因此所编写的内容和活动贴近现实生活，体现时代特征。美国专家Maxine Huffman和Don Huffman也为此书提供了大量的材料，并担任了本书的主审。此外，还要感谢方竹静、柏卉、邓望学、易兰和陈晶晶，他们对口语活动的样本提供了帮助。

本书“视”和“听”的内容丰富多彩，多渠道地展现了美国的社会和文化，并且配有二维码，只需用手机轻轻一扫就能看到或听到对应部分的视听内容。此外，本书附有光盘，包含视听内容以及电子版教师用书。

本书可以用作英语专业低年级本科生或非英语专业本科生的必修课、选修课或通识课的教材，同时也适用于希望了解美国文化且有一定英语程度的读者。

2015年8月

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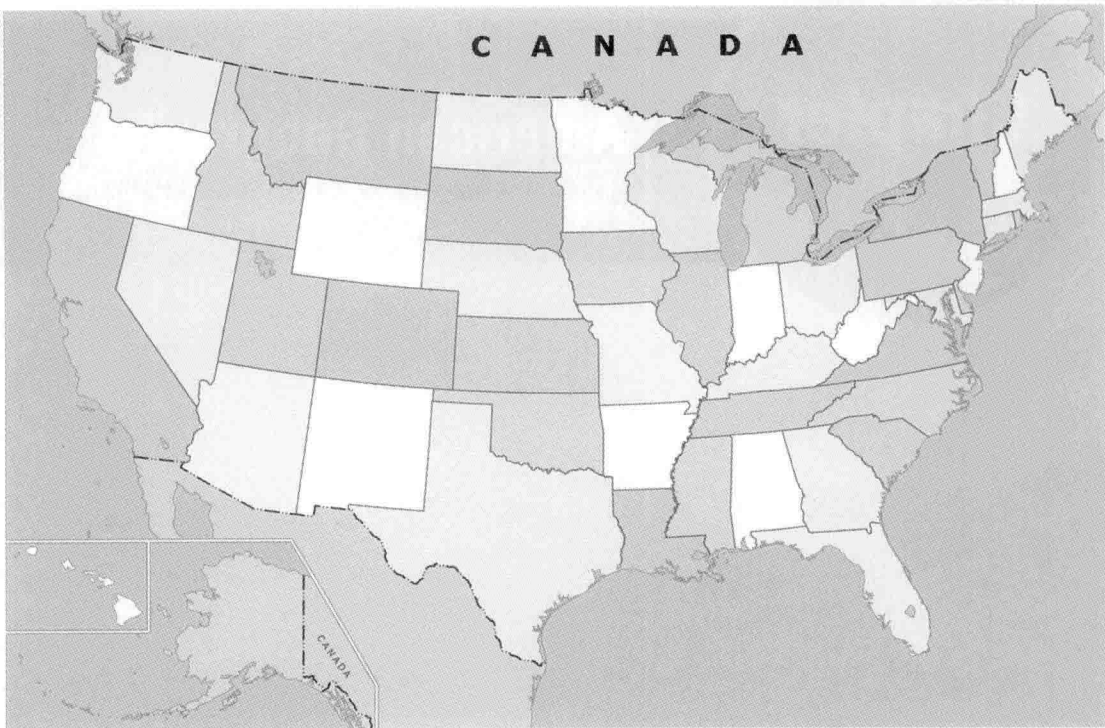
Chapter 1

American Geography

Part A Preview

Here's the US Map!

Directions: *Work in pairs and fill in the names of the 50 states of the US in the map.*



A Geography Quiz

Directions: *Choose the right answer for each question.*

1. What is the total area of the US including Alaska and Hawaii?
 - A. Over 9 million square kilometers.
 - B. Between 8 million and 9 million square kilometers.
 - C. Between 7 million and 8 million square kilometers.

2. What is the distance from west to east of the continental US?

- A. 5,500 km. B. 5,000 km. C. 4,500 km.

3. What are the two youngest states of the US?

- A. Louisiana and Virginia. B. Texas and Florida. C. Alaska and Hawaii.

4. Match the state with the country from whom it was bought.

Alaska
Louisiana
Florida

Spain
Russia
France

5. Where are they situated?



Write down in the blanks the cities in which the above landmarks are situated.

- 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____

6. Where is the US farm belt located?

- A. Northeast. B. West. C. Midwest. D. Southeast.

7. In which city of Florida is Disney World located?

- A. Orlando. B. Tampa. C. Miami. D. Fort Lauderdale.

8. Which is the "City of Skyscrapers"?

- A. Los Angeles. B. Chicago. C. New York. D. San Francisco.

9. On which mountain are the faces of four US presidents carved?

- A. Mount Vernon. B. Mount McKinley. C. Mount Pleasant. D. Mount Rushmore.

10. Which is the largest state in the US in terms of land area?

- A. Texas. B. Alaska. C. California. D. Montana.

11. Which river forms a natural border between the US and Mexico?

- A. Red River. B. Mississippi River. C. Rio Grande. D. Gila River.

12. Las Vegas (拉斯维加斯) is located in _____.

- A. California B. Nevada C. Arizona

13. San Diego (圣地亚哥) borders _____.
 A. Canada B. Mexico C. the Atlantic
14. Kansas City is in both Kansas and which other state of the US?
 A. Missouri. B. Nebraska. C. Oklahoma.
15. Write the full names of the abbreviated state names.
 ND _____ MN _____ WI _____
 OK _____ AR _____ LA _____
 GA _____ CO _____ WM _____

Part B Viewing



The Western Valleys and the Columbia Plateau

Vocabulary in the Viewing

Imperial Valley 帝国山谷
 Sierra Nevada 内华达山脉
 vineyard 葡萄园
 Oregon Trail 俄勒冈小道
 hydroelectric power 水力发电
 spectacular 壮观的
 towering waterfall 高耸的瀑布

Coastal Ranges 海岸山脉
 orchard 果园
 Willamette Valley 韦拉迈特山谷
 the Cascades 喀斯喀特山脉
 Portland 波特兰 (美国俄勒冈西北部港市)
 Columbia River Gorge 哥伦比亚河谷
 plateau 平原

Directions: Watch the video about the Western Valleys and the Columbia Plateau and fill in the missing information.

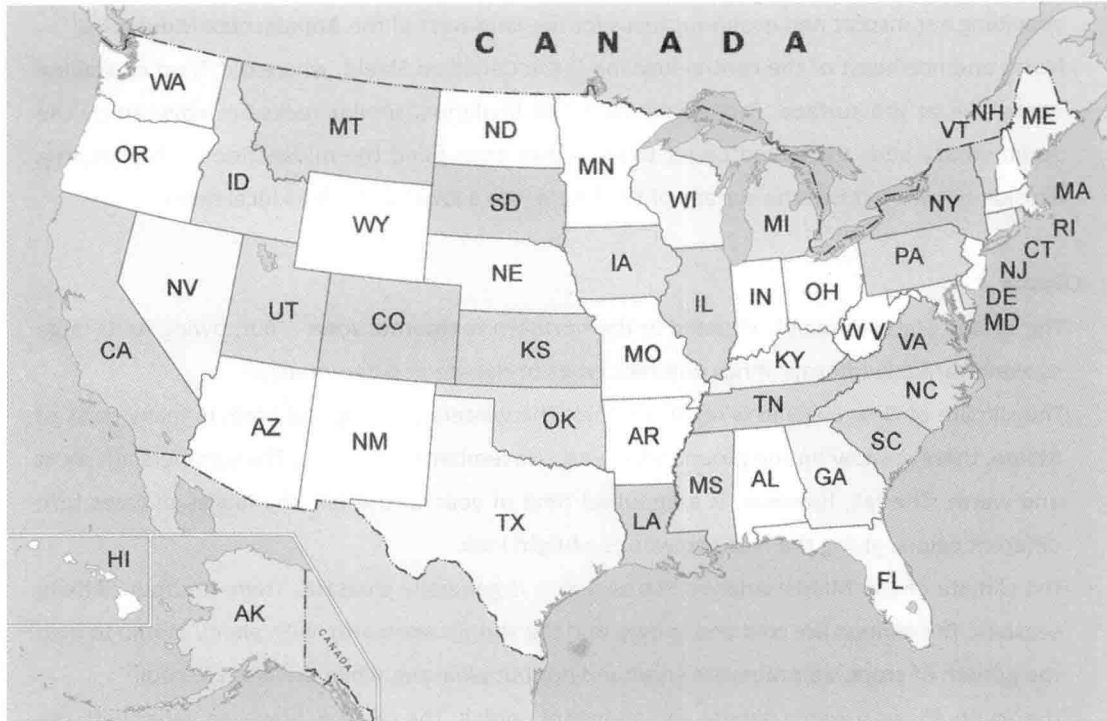
The Pacific region is home to large and productive _____. The Central Valley has long _____, moderate _____, and _____. Among many other agricultural products, this area has lots of _____ orchards, _____ orchards, _____, and many types of _____.

Willamette Valley of Oregon produces _____ of crops because it has a _____, _____ piece of land with _____ climate, and _____. The water of the Columbia River is used for _____ and to generate _____.

The Columbia Plateau is very productive, but has _____ climate and almost _____. So the main agricultural products grown there are the _____ and _____.

Part C Reading for Information

Physical Environment in the US



Geographical Divisions

- ① The dominant geographical features of the United States tend to extend north-south across the country. The interior of the country is a vast lowland that stretches from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border and then on to Alaska. Geographers place this expanse of flat land and gently **rolling**¹ hills in three different **physiographic**² regions—the Atlantic and Gulf coastal plains, the interior lowland, and the Canadian Shield.
- ② The Atlantic and Gulf coastal plains reach north along the east coast of the United States as far as the southern margins of **New England**³. Underlying this area are beds of young, soft, easily eroded rock **deposited**⁴ in recent geologic time as shallow seas. These low plains extend well out under the ocean surface to form a **continental shelf**⁵, which in places extends as much as 400 kilometers beyond the shore.
- ③ The interior lowland, although noticeably hillier than the coastal plains, has almost no rough **terrain**⁶. This region is like a saucer, turned up at the edges and covered with **sedimentary**⁷ rocks.
- ④ The character of this massive interior lowland area has had a number of important influences

on the economic and settlement history of the United States. In addition to the vast agricultural potential it provides, half the country can be crossed without encountering significant **topographic**⁸ barriers. This facilitated the integration of both this region and the distant West into the economic fabric of the country. Nearly all of the interior lowland is drained by the Mississippi River or its **tributaries**⁹. This assisted regional integration by providing a transport and economic focus for the land west of the **Appalachian Mountains**¹⁰.

- ⑤ North and northeast of the central lowland is the Canadian Shield, where old, hard **crystalline rocks**¹¹ lie at the surface. Farther south in the lowlands, similar rocks are covered by the sedimentary beds deposited under the sea that once filled the midsection of the country. Erosion has worn down the surface of the Shield into a lowland of small local **relief**¹².

Climate

- ⑥ The United States is mainly situated in the northern **temperate zone**¹³. But, owing to its large size and varied landforms, it has different types of climate in different areas.
- ⑦ The climate of New England is relatively cold. The winters are long and hard. In many parts of Maine, there is snow on the ground from early November to late May. The summers are short and warm. The fall, however, is a beautiful time of year. In the fall, the leaves of trees turn different colors, giving the hills and woods a bright look.
- ⑧ The climate of the Middle Atlantic States region is generally pleasant. There are four definite seasons. The winters are cold and snowy, and the springs are warm, with plenty of rain to help the growth of crops. Summers are short and hot but pleasant, while the falls are cool.
- ⑨ The South enjoys a warm climate and abundant rainfall. The climate, however, varies with the geographical position of each state. Virginia and North Carolina have a temperate climate like that of Maryland. In southern Florida, on the other hand, the climate is almost tropical. Some states in this region are sometimes **harassed**¹⁴ by the disaster of **hurricanes**¹⁵.
- ⑩ Since the **Great Plains**¹⁶ stretch from the Canadian border to Texas, the climate in this region varies widely. North Dakota has extreme temperatures, strong winds, and low **precipitation**¹⁷. Oklahoma, on the other hand, has a more temperate climate. The open treeless, unbroken land offers little protection against storms or against the rapid changes of weather that occur in this area. In many parts of the plains states there is little rain. Extended periods of very hot weather during a summer without rain may not only destroy crops but also turn the land into dust.
- ⑪ The climate of the Midwest is temperate. The region lies in a great valley between the **Allegheny Mountains**¹⁸ to the east and the Great Plains and **Rocky Mountains**¹⁹ to the west. This is a largely open country, and the wind blows freely, often bringing sudden and extreme changes in temperature. Midwest summers are sometimes very hot; winters are sometimes extremely cold.
- ⑫ The states west of the Rocky Mountains have sharply different climatic conditions. This is largely because of the effects of the mountain ranges and the Pacific Ocean. Winds from the

Pacific bring plenty of rain, yet these winds are conditioned by the mountains along the coast. Generally speaking, the western slopes of the Coastal Mountains are cool, rainy, and cloudy. The part of Washington near the Pacific Ocean has the highest rainfall in the country. But after crossing these mountains, very little rain falls and deserts appear.

Vegetation

- ⑬ The “natural” vegetation, if it ever existed, has been so substantially removed, rearranged, and replaced that it seldom is found now. In the Southeast, for example, the original mixed **broadleaf and needleleaf forests**²⁰ were cut and replaced by the economically more important needleleaf forests. The grasses of the plains and prairies are mostly European imports. Most of what **climax vegetation**²¹ remains is in the West and North.
- ⑭ There are several ways of dividing vegetation regions. Perhaps the simplest is to divide the United States into three broad categories—forests, grasslands, and **scrublands**²². Forests once covered most of the East, the central and northern Pacific Coast, the higher **elevations**²³ of the West, and a broad band across the interior North.
- ⑮ Grasslands covered much of the interior lowlands, including nearly all of the Great Plains from Texas and New Mexico to the Canadian border. This is an area of generally **sub-humid climate**²⁴ where precipitation amounts are not adequate to support tree growth.
- ⑯ Scrublands usually develop under dry conditions. They are concentrated in the lowlands of the interior West. Actual vegetation varies from the **cacti**²⁵ of the Southwest to the dense, brushy **chaparral**²⁶ of southern California and the **mesquite**²⁷ of Texas.

Natural Resources

- ⑰ The United States is a land rich in natural resources. Some of these resources, such as water, iron **ore**²⁸, coal, oil, silver, and gold, are especially plentiful in the country.
- ⑱ America has a large deposit of iron ore. The nation produces more than 80 million tons of iron a year. For many years, iron ore came primarily from the great Lake region of Minnesota and Michigan, but the mines were severely **depleted**²⁹ during the two World Wars. The richer ores are exhausted, though large amounts of lower-grade materials remain and form the basis of a thriving industry. Iron ores are also mined in Missouri, New York, Utah, and Wyoming.
- ⑲ Coal is another major natural resource found in large quantities in the US which can last for hundreds of years. Coal deposits are widely distributed in the country. Most of coal reserves are to be found in the Appalachians, the Central Plain, and the Rockies.
- ⑳ America, very rich in oil, was once the largest oil producing country in the world. Oil wells in the United States produce more than 3,200 million barrels of petroleum a year. The production, processing, and marketing of such petroleum products as gasoline and oil make up one of America’s largest industries. Most domestic production of oil and natural gas comes from **offshore**³⁰ areas of Louisiana and Texas, and from **onshore**³¹ areas of Texas, Oklahoma,

and California. Although the oil production in the US is very large, her big consumption has made America insufficient in oil supply. The shortage of domestic supplies of energy was forcefully publicized by the Arab oil **embargo**³² of 1973–1974. Until this embargo most Americans did not realize that the United States does not have enough energy to meet its ever-growing needs.

②① America enjoys abundant water resources. Today the rivers and streams of America furnish 63% of the water supply for cities, towns, and farmlands, 93% of the water used by industry, and almost all of the water used to create electric power. Unlike some other countries, America as a whole has little trouble as caused by the shortage of fresh water.

②② America has also plenty of fertile soil. Farmlands in the United States make up about 12% of the **arable**³³ lands in the world, and they are among the richest and most productive. Of the 2.3 billion acres of land in the 50 states an estimated 300 million acres are planted annually. The country's very large **acreage**³⁴ of highly productive farmlands could be expected to continue to supply the nation generously, with substantial surplus for export.

(1,399 words)

- Which of the following has vast flat land and gently rolling hills?
 - The Atlantic and Gulf coastal plains.
 - The interior lowland.
 - The Canadian Shield.
 - All of the above.
- The landform of the interior lowland area assisted all of the following EXCEPT _____.
 - agricultural gains
 - the integration of national economy
 - easy transportation
 - the formation of sedimentary rocks
- Compared with the rock deposit of the Atlantic and Gulf coastal plains, the rocks in the Canadian Shield are _____.
 - older and harder
 - younger and softer
 - more easily eroded
 - lower and flatter
- In the United States, the climate _____.
 - is mild and pleasant throughout the year
 - is humid and rainy in the Great Basin of the southwest
 - varies widely due to its immense size and spread of topology
 - is mild and sunny in spring and fall and wet and cold in winter
- Which area has the most pleasant climate?
 - The Midwest states.
 - The Middle Atlantic states.
 - The Great Plains states.
 - Southern Florida.
- The climate west of the Rocky Mountains is greatly affected by _____.
 - the mountains and the Pacific
 - the Great Plains
 - desert-like dryness
 - hurricanes and tornadoes
- Why were the original forests in the Southeast cut down?

- A. To rearrange the ecological structure of the area.
 B. To replace the old forests with new ones from Europe.
 C. To grow trees which yield higher economical benefits.
 D. To increase the variety of actual vegetation.
8. What is true of the iron ores in the United States?
 A. They are depleted.
 B. Most of them produce iron of low grade.
 C. They are no longer mined.
 D. They are the basic support of a prosperous country.
9. The natural resources of the US are _____.
 A. limited B. exhausted C. evenly distributed D. abundant
10. America does not have enough _____ to meet its domestic needs.
 A. water supply B. oil supply C. arable land D. grain supply

Notes to the Passage

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. rolling 起伏的 | 17. precipitation 降水量 |
| 2. physiographic 地形学的 | 18. Allegheny Mountains 阿利根尼山脉 (从宾夕法尼亚州中北向西南延伸至弗吉尼亚西南部, 绵亘800多千米) |
| 3. New England: a region of the northeast United States comprising the modern-day states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island 新英格兰 | 19. Rocky Mountains 落基山脉 |
| 4. deposit 沉积 | 20. broadleaf and needleleaf forests 阔叶林和针叶林 |
| 5. continental shelf 大陆架 | 21. climax vegetation 顶级植被 |
| 6. terrain 地形 | 22. scrubland 灌木丛林地 |
| 7. sedimentary 沉积性的 | 23. elevation 高地 |
| 8. topographic 地形(学)的 | 24. sub-humid climate 半湿润气候 |
| 9. tributary 支流 | 25. cacti (单数cactus) 仙人掌 |
| 10. Appalachian Mountains 阿巴拉契亚山脉 | 26. chaparral 灌木丛 |
| 11. crystalline rock 结晶岩 | 27. mesquite 豆科灌木 |
| 12. relief (地势的) 起伏 | 28. ore 矿 |
| 13. temperate zone 温带 | 29. deplete 耗尽 |
| 14. harass 骚扰 | 30. offshore 近海的 |
| 15. hurricane 飓风 | 31. onshore 陆地上的 |
| 16. Great Plains (密西西比河流域以西的) 大平原 | 32. embargo 禁运 |
| | 33. arable 适于耕种的 |
| | 34. acreage 英亩数 |

Part D Speaking Activities

1. A Travel Plan

Directions: A group of Chinese university students are going to visit the US for the first time during their summer vacation. It will be a 14-day tour. They want to visit as many places as they can, but they may have different places in mind. They are now talking with a travel agent about it.

Work in groups of 4 to 6. One of you is going to act the role of the travel agent, and the rest are the students. Discuss and try to come up with an exciting travel plan for the whole group. You may refer to the preview exercises and the reading material for places of interest.

2. Immigrants in the US

Directions: While an influx of new residents from different cultures presents some challenges, "the United States has always been energized by its immigrant populations..." At the 1998 commencement address at Portland State University, President Clinton voiced support for immigrants when he said that "America has constantly drawn strength and spirit from wave after wave of immigrants...They have proved to be the most restless, the most adventurous, the most innovative, the most industrious of people."

Step 1: Read the following figure and tables.



Fig. A Immigrant Population in the US, Years 1820–2013