

This is America

美国
万花筒

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上海人民出版

• 美国英语听力丛书 •

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前 言

近年来我国对外交往日趋频繁，全国范围内掀起了一股学习英语的热潮。数以万计的科技工作者、大中学生正在攻读英语。有的正在努力提高自己的英语水平，以便及时了解国外的科技动态；有的在准备报考 TOEFL (托福)，以期出国深造，学习外国的先进科学技术和管理知识，报效中华。

要学好英语，首先必须从基础着手，掌握基本知识，苦练基本功。学习语法、掌握词汇固然是一个重要环节，但听、读更是必不可少的。只有坚持反复阅读并收听反映千姿百态、绚丽多彩的现实生活的大量语言材料，才能达到预期的效果。

这套听音材料就是适应广大读者的需要，编者根据美国大使馆驻上海总领事馆提供的 VOA (美国之音) 的原声带和文字资料精选汇编而成的。为了帮助读者学习，编者还就一些语言难点、历史、地理和社会背景作了注解。

This is America (《美国万花筒》) 从各个不同的侧面介绍美国的过去和现在，帮助读者了解美国的历史、地理、人种、宗教、教育、文化、艺术、风土人情、论现道德等方面的情况。本书共收入32篇，内容丰富，语言优美，并配有八盒磁带。

本书可作高等院校英语专业低年级学生的听音材料，也可供前往英语国家，尤其可供去美国学习、工作的同志自学使用，更可供具有中等英语水平的广大读者自学参考。

由于编者水平有限，缺点错误在所难免，敬希读者不吝指正。

在本书编注过程中，编注者曾获得俞耀生同志的协助，谨致谢忱，并对美国大使馆驻上海总领事馆提供材料表示衷心的感谢。

编 注 者

1988年2月

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The Fourth of July Celebration

This Friday, Americans will celebrate the Fourth of July — Independence Day in the United States¹. The holiday will mark 210 years of independence.

As in past years, July Fourth will be a day of traditional parades, speeches and firework shows². In addition some very special ceremonies will be held this year. The ceremonies will honor one of America's most famous sights: the Statue of Liberty³.

The Statue of Liberty stands on an island in New York harbor. It was a gift to the people of the United States from the people of France. The purpose of the gift was to mark the alliance between American colonists and the French during America's war for independence.

The Statue of Liberty was completed 100 years ago ... just in time for⁴ the July Fourth holiday in 1886. During the years since then, the statue's metal parts became weak. A project was begun to repair it. Many people and companies gave money to the project. They did not want to see this symbol of America fall apart.

Now, the repair work is done ... just in time for this year's July Fourth holiday.

In some ways, the Fourth of July celebration has remained much the same since Americans first began observing the day⁵. Most Americans see it as a huge birthday party — a party for the nation⁶.

But the parades, speeches and even the fireworks have a more serious purpose. They help citizens remember the events that led to American independence from Britain.

What were those events? And why is July Fourth — and not some other day — celebrated?

To answer these questions, we have to imagine what the situation was like in the thirteen American colonies during the summer of 1776.

By June, the thirteen colonies were in open revolt against Britain⁷. The Americans were fighting to oppose what they considered to be unfair taxation by the British government.

Representatives of the thirteen colonies were gathered in Philadelphia. They were discussing if the colonies should declare themselves independent of Britain⁸.

Some delegates to this Continental Congress⁹ believed the colonies could still reach an agreement with Britain to settle the dispute. They said a declaration of independence would only harm the chances of reaching such a settlement.

A majority of the delegates, however, rejected this. They said the colonies could gain and protect their rights only by becoming independent.

On June 7, 1776, the Continental Congress considered an independence resolution proposed by Richard Lee of Virginia¹⁰. But the delegates were too divided for a vote on the resolution¹¹. So the Congress decided to postpone the voting until early July.

It did appoint a committee to write a document, a declaration, that would explain and support the resolution of independence.

One of the men on this committee was Thomas Jefferson¹² of Virginia. He was chosen to write the Declaration of Independence¹³.

The Continental Congress met again on July first to debate the question of independence. The discussion was long, and sometimes very sharp. By the end of the day, the Congress decided to vote unofficially on the question. Nine colonies voted to break away from Britain. The delegates of the four remaining colonies were too divided to vote.

John Adams of Massachusetts¹⁴ — who later became America's second President — knew that a declaration of independence would mean little unless all the colonies supported it. So he and other patriots urged the delegates of the four colonies to join with the majority, and vote for independence.

Their efforts were successful.

On July second, the Continental Congress took an official vote on the question of independence, without voting on Jefferson's declaration. All the colonies — except New York — voted yes¹⁵. The New York delegates did not vote because they said they were waiting for orders from home. But the New York delegates promised that their state also would vote for independence.

Later that day, John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail¹⁶. He said he believed July 2nd would become the official birthday of the new country. He said future Americans would celebrate the day with speeches, parades and prayer in honor of independence¹⁷.

John Adams was right about how it would be celebrated. But he was wrong about which day.

July Fourth became the official Independence Day because that was when the Continental Congress approved Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. All the delegates, except New York, voted to approve the document. A few days later, New York joined the others in approving independence.

After the declaration was approved, the delegates signed the document. Today, the Declaration of Independence can be seen in the National Archive's building in Washington, D. C.¹⁸.

The first Independence Day celebrations were held in Philadelphia in 1777. Bells rang, big fires burned, fireworks exploded, and warships in the city's port fired their guns. A parade also was held in the city. And people celebrated with eating, drinking and music.

These celebrations remained much the same throughout the early years of the nation.

One custom that developed then was reading the Declaration of Independence in public. A statesman or politician usually would do the reading¹⁹. As time passed, however, politicians also began giving speeches of their own. Many of them began using the Fourth of July celebration as the time to launch election campaigns.

In 1826, American leaders organized a special celebration in Philadelphia to observe the 50th anniversary of independence.

They invited to Philadelphia all the men still alive who had signed the document²⁰. Among those invited were former Presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. But neither man could attend because of sickness. In fact, both men died that day — a few hours apart²¹ — on July Fourth, 1826.

In the years after the 50th anniversary, some events on the Fourth became more political. Organizations began using Fourth of July celebrations to spread their ideas. Groups opposed to slavery, for example, held protest marches.

A huge celebration was held in the United States on July Fourth, 1876—

the 100th anniversary of independence. The main events again were in Philadelphia. They included an international fair²².

One hundred years later, in 1976, the bicentennial celebration²³ was held. Special events took place throughout the nation to honor the 200th anniversary of independence.

Most Americans celebrate Fourth of July with their families and friends.

Many enjoy outdoor meals and games at nearby parks. Others go to national parks to camp overnight in the outdoors.

In some areas, special — and sometimes unusual — activities take place each year.

In the Pennsylvania town of Lititz, for example, thousands of candles are lit on Fourth of July night. After the candles burn out, fireworks are exploded.

In the western state of Arizona²⁴, thousands of American Indians gather in Flagstaff²⁵ to celebrate the Fourth of July with ceremonial dancing and games. And in Daytona Beach, Florida²⁶, thousands gather to watch car races.

Americans outside the United States also have celebrations. American embassies traditionally have held parties to mark the Fourth of July. This custom began in Paris, in 1778.

Usually one of the largest Fourth of July celebrations outside the United States is held in Denmark's Rebild National Park²⁷. The park was established to honor the friendship between Denmark and the United States. On July Fourth, a Liberty bell is rung in the park. And the Declaration of Independence is read to the people attending the ceremonies.

Wherever Americans are, July Fourth is a special day. It is a day to remember the freedom won more than 200 years ago.

注释:

1. Independence Day in the United States: 美国独立日。
2. a day of traditional parades, speeches and firework shows: 举办传统性的游行, 举行演讲会和燃放烟火的一天。
3. the Statue of Liberty: 自由女神像。
4. just in time for: 正赶上。
5. Americans first began observing the day: 美国人首次开始纪念独立日。observe 此处作“纪念”解。
6. Most Americans see it as a huge birthday party — a party for the nation: 美国大多数人把独立日的庆祝活动看成是一次全国性的庆祝国庆的盛大集会。
7. By June, the thirteen colonies were in open revolt against Britain: 到了六月份, 这十三个殖民地都起来公开反抗英国(的殖民统治)。
8. ... if the colonies should declare themselves independent of Britain: ……这些殖民地是否应该

宣布独立,脱离英国的殖民统治。independent of: 作“独立于……之外”,“不受……的支配”解。

9. Continental Congress: (美国独立战争时期的)大陆议会。
10. Richard Lee of Virginia: /'ritʃəd li:/, 弗吉尼亚州的代表理查德·李。
11. But the delegates were too divided for a vote on the resolution: 但是代表们的意见分歧很大,无法就李提出的决议进行投票表决。
12. Thomas Jefferson: /'tɒməs 'dʒefənsn/, 托马斯·杰斐逊(1743—1826), 美国政治家, 1801—1809任美国第三任总统。
13. the Declaration of Independence: 独立宣言(1776年7月4日在美国国会上通过)。
14. John Adams of Massachusetts: /dʒɒn 'ædəms/, 马萨诸塞州的代表约翰·亚当斯。
15. All the colonies—except New York—voted yes: 除了纽约州以外,所有的殖民地都投了赞成票。
16. Abigail: /'æbigeil/, 人名。
17. future Americans would celebrate the day with speeches, parades and prayer in honor of independence: 未来的美国人将以发表演说,举行游行和进行祈祷的方式来纪念这一独立日。in honor of 此处作“纪念”解。
18. the National Archive's building in Washington, D. C.: 哥伦比亚特区华盛顿的全国档案馆大楼。D. C. = District of Columbia。
19. do the reading: 宣读(独立宣言)。
20. They invited to Philadelphia all the men still alive who had signed the document: 他们邀请了所有签署过独立宣言并仍然活着的人都到费城来参加庆祝活动。地点状语 to Philadelphia 因宾语过长而移前。
21. a few hours apart: 相隔几个小时。
22. international fair: 国际博览会。
23. bicentennial celebration: 二百周年纪念活动。
24. Arizona: /æri'zəʊnə/, 亚利桑那州(美国西南部的一州)。
25. Flagstaff: /'flægstɑ:f/, 弗拉格斯塔夫(亚利桑那州一城镇)。
26. Daytona Beach, Florida: /de'təʊnə bi:tʃ/, 佛罗里达州的代托纳比奇。
27. Denmark's Rebild National Park: 丹麦的雷比尔德国家公园。Rebild: /'reibild/。

archive
archive's
building

Suburbs

America began as a nation of farms and small towns. During the 19th century, hundreds of thousands of people left those farms and small towns. They moved to cities. Then, about forty years ago, another movement began from the cities halfway back to the country — to the suburbs¹.

Perhaps no other movement has changed the United States so much in such a short time. Today, 44 percent of all Americans live in suburban areas just outside cities. Many of these people also work in a suburb. But it is not always the same one in which they live. And, so many shopping and entertainment centers have been built in suburbs that some people say they never feel the need to visit nearby cities².

A suburb is considered to be any settled area that borders on a city³. Most major American cities now have several circles of suburbs. New York, for example, is circled by settled areas⁴ that extend almost 100 kilometers away from the city itself. New York's suburbs even extend into two other states: New Jersey⁵ and Connecticut⁶.

The first American suburbs appeared about 100 years ago around major cities on the Atlantic coast. But Americans did not begin to move to the suburbs in large numbers until around 1950. At that time, about 12,000,000 American soldiers had returned from military service in World War Two. A major economic expansion permitted the federal government to provide low-interest loans to buy new homes. The demand for those new homes continued to increase as America's birth rate continued to rise through the 1950's.

At first, Americans moved to the suburbs mainly in search of more land at a lower cost. But as the suburbs became more developed, they grew popular for other reasons. Most had better schools, less pollution and a lower crime rate than the cities nearby⁷. As a result, in the 35 years between the end of World War Two and 1980, America's suburban population increased by almost 200

percent.

As life in the suburbs continued to grow better, life in many cities seemed to grow more difficult. Stores and other businesses soon followed families to suburban areas⁸. The people left behind in the cities⁹ often were poor. Public services became worse. In fact, some American cities, including New York, suffered serious financial crises.

These problems, however, seemed far away from the suburbs.

During the 1950's, a common image of suburban life developed in the minds of most Americans¹⁰. That image included a nice home and car. It usually meant a father who worked in the city, and a mother who stayed home and cared for children. And it usually meant families that were white, and earned middle to high wages.

Some critics charged that suburbs lacked individuality¹¹. They said suburbs were cut off from real life. But for most people, a home in the suburbs became part of the American dream. It was a sign of success and security.

That old image of suburban life is no longer as true today as it was once. Sharp increases in the number of women with jobs outside the home mean that fewer wives and mothers are staying home in the suburbs. And the drop in America's birth rate¹² in recent years means these suburbs have fewer children. In fact, a lack of students has forced some suburban schools to close.

The suburbs also have become more racially balanced. In recent years, many black families have moved out of cities into suburban areas.

New problems, however, have come with the changes in suburban life¹³. In fact, suburbs now are suffering some of the same difficulties as the cities nearby. These include crime, pollution and higher taxes. Another problem is the rising price of a new home. The average cost of a new home in the United States is about \$110,000. This high price makes it very difficult for people, especially young people, to buy a new home.

Recently, some of America's cities have made major efforts to provide better housing, public transportation and other services¹⁴. And some young people — even those with families — are returning to live in the cities their parents once left.

Other people are choosing to live in the country, or in small towns. The population in these areas has been rising in recent years.

As a result of these developments, the average age of people living in the suburbs is higher than it once was. In 1970, the average age was about 27 years. Today, the average age is more than 30.

Experts do not believe that suburbs — as we know them — are about to disappear completely. They say more young people still are choosing to live in the suburbs than in either the country or the city. But they also agree that suburbs must change to meet the new needs of Americans.

Experts believe suburbs must seek ways to help themselves. In the past, many people were concerned mainly about problems within their own suburbs. Now, experts are urging them to work together with other suburbs on common problems¹⁵. These include land use, pollution control, public transportation and emergency medical services.

Pressure also is being put on the suburbs to offer wider choices in the design and cost of housing.¹⁶

Most suburbs were built as settlements of one-family homes that sold for moderate or high prices¹⁷. But today, many Americans cannot pay such prices. And a growing number do not need such large homes. Families are smaller.

These developments have caused an increase in housing designed to contain many families. About 60 percent of all new homes are separate houses for one family. The rest are mostly apartment buildings and groups of houses that share one or two walls.

Some people who live in suburbs oppose these new kinds of housing. They want to keep their areas free from any housing other than one-family homes¹⁸.

Many experts believe these suburbs are fighting a losing battle¹⁹. In several legal cases, courts have ordered suburbs to ease their restrictions against putting up apartment buildings²⁰. Experts believe suburbs must offer different kinds of housing if the suburbs want to keep those who are older, who are unmarried or newly-married, or who can pay for only a small living space.

The suburbs must change in other ways if they are to continue to grow. People now expect better public transportation in suburban areas. Parents need more centers to care for their young children while they are at work. And some young people now want to live in suburbs that are a little more like cities. They want a greater mixture of people, and economic and cultural activities.

Experts note that life in the suburbs was a dream come true for many Amer-

icans in the 1950's²¹. It is a dream that remains popular today. But the experts say suburbs will have to continue to change if they are to survive.

注释:

1. another movement began from the cities halfway back to the country — to the suburbs: 开始了另一场由城市迁往郊区——介于城市与乡村之间——的运动。
2. nearby cities: 邻近的城市。
3. any settled area that borders on a city: 任何与城市接壤的定居区。
4. New York ... is circled by settled areas: 纽约的四周有许多定居区。
5. New Jersey: /'dʒɜ:zi/, 新泽西州(美国东部的一州)。
6. Connecticut: /kə'netikət/, 康涅狄格州(美国东北部的一州)。
7. Most had better schools, less pollution and a lower crime rate than the cities nearby: 郊区与邻近城市相比, 大多学校设备较好, 污染程度不太严重, 犯罪率也较低。
8. Stores and other businesses soon followed families to suburban areas: 随之, 商店及其他商行也很快迁到了郊区。
9. The people left behind in the cities: 留在城市里的居民。
10. a common image of suburban life developed in the minds of most Americans: 美国人在自己的心目中, 对郊区生活大多已形成了一种共同的想法。
11. Some critics charged that suburbs lacked individuality: 有些评论家指责说, 郊区缺乏个性。
12. the drop in America's birth rate: 美国出生率的下降。
13. New problems, however, have come with the changes in suburban life: 然而, 随着郊区生活的变化, 产生了各种各样的新问题。
14. some of America's cities have made major efforts to provide better housing, public transportation and other services: 美国有些城市在改善住房条件、公共交通以及其他公共设施方面已作出了巨大的努力。
15. Now, experts are urging them to work together with other suburbs on common problems: 现在, 专家们正敦促他们与其他郊区的居民一起致力于解决共同面临的各种问题。
16. Pressure also is being put on the suburbs to offer wider choices in the design and cost of housing: 也迫使郊区在住房设计及价格方面提供更多的选择余地。
17. Most suburbs were built as settlements of one-family homes that sold for moderate or high prices: 多数郊区已被建成中、高档的一家一户式的住宅区。
18. They want to keep their areas free from any housing other than one-family homes: 他们希望自己居住的地区除了一家一户式的住房外, 没有其他的房子。
19. these suburbs are fighting a losing battle: 看来这些郊区无望取胜。
20. to ease their restrictions against putting up apartment buildings: 放宽对建造公寓式住房的限制。
21. life in the suburbs was a dream come true for many Americans in the 1950's: 在五十年代, 对许多美国人来说, 生活在郊区简直是一种梦想, 但现在已经实现了。

Fashion Industry

In many countries, the style of clothing changes from year to year. Experts say this change in clothing styles comes from the human desire for new and different experiences. People grow tired of sameness— in food, in music, in art, even in the way they appear to others. So fashion designers, the people who create new styles of clothing, always are looking for new ideas.

In the United States, the history of fashion took a big jump forward¹ with the invention of the sewing machine in the middle 1800's. Before then, only the rich had enough money to buy fashionable clothing made especially for them.

Private clothing makers used beautiful imported materials and European designs to make the clothing of the rich. The families of the great majority who were not rich usually made their own cloth from wool, and sewed their own simple clothes.

After 1850, however, American factories began producing low-cost clothing to be sold in stores throughout the country. The new industry grew quickly. Soon, all kinds of fashionable clothing in different sizes were sold everywhere. The styles were copied from European clothing².

The first American designer was Hattie Carnegie³. She was born in Vienna, Austria⁴. She moved to the United States with her parents when she was eleven years old. Miss Carnegie showed her first clothing designs in 1918. Ten years later, she had a factory which mass-produced⁵ the clothes she designed.

Carnegie designs were similar to those seen in Paris, France. But Hattie Carnegie also developed a new, so-called 'American look,'⁶ in clothing that women liked.

Most clothing made and sold in the United States, however, closely followed French designs⁷. As one writer put it, the American fashion industry remained a French colony⁸.

This changed when World War Two cut off the flow of materials and ideas from Europe. American designers began to create their own fashions.

The American designs were not as formal as those from Europe. Writers described the new fashions as seeming more free and active⁹.

For example, American designers created a completely new kind of women's clothing that became known as 'sportswear'¹⁰. This was not clothing to be worn while playing sports. It was clothing that was less formal, but still acceptable for wearing to an office or even to church.

Fashion writer, June Weir¹¹ said American clothes were less formal, because the American way of life was not very formal.

American life became even less formal during the 1940's and 1950's. This was when millions of Americans left the cities and farms for homes in the suburbs.

American women wanted clothing they could wear while raising children, doing housework and traveling by car to stores and jobs.

Many women began to wear pants at least part of the time. And they began buying separate pieces of clothing that could be worn together in different ways.

While these changes were taking place in the United States, Paris was losing some of its influence as the world leader in fashion. French designers were slow to begin producing fashionable clothing in different sizes for everyone. But everyone wanted new fashions immediately. No one, not even the rich¹², wanted to wait while designers made clothes just for them.

American designers were able to meet this demand.

By the early 1960's, New York City's Seventh Avenue fashion area¹³ had become a force as powerful as Paris or Milan, Italy¹⁴.

Today, the United States has more famous designers than any other country. Newspapers and magazines report a great deal of fashion news. There are many schools of fashion design. The Fashion Institute of New York is the most well-known.

A few American clothing designers have become as famous as motion picture or television stars: Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren¹⁵, for example. Their success had led many young designers to start their own businesses.

It is not easy to start a fashion design business. Designers need enough money to pay for one year of production before anything is sold.