



(高级篇)

Learn English from American Culture

边品美国文化边学英文

肖冉 等/编著

你不可不知的 66 个美国文化和 1200 个英文单词



中国水利水电出版社
www.waterpub.com.cn



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内容提要

美国有着多元而时尚的文化,是最吸引留学生的国家之一。本书全面介绍了美国,让你在感受美国元素、沉浸于美国丰富文化的同时不知不觉喜欢上英语,在故事中、在情境中学习和体验英文的魅力。

本书共有十一章,内容涉及:美国概述、美国政治、美国经济、美国文化、美国生活、美国教育、美国节日、美国城市、美国名胜、美国名人与美国企业。

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

边品美国文化边学英语.高级篇/肖冉等编著. —北京:
中国水利水电出版社, 2009

ISBN 978-7-5084-6069-7

I. 边… II. 肖… III. 英语—口语—美国 IV. H319.9

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2008)第180731号

书 名	边品美国文化边学英语(高级篇)
作 者	肖冉 等编著
出版 发行	中国水利水电出版社(北京市三里河路6号 100044) 网址: www.waterpub.com.cn E-mail: mchannel@263.net (万水) sales@waterpub.com.cn 电话: (010) 63202266 (总机)、68367658 (营销中心)、 82562819 (万水)
经 售	全国各地新华书店和相关出版物销售网点
排 版	北京万水电子信息有限公司
印 刷	北京蓝空印刷厂
规 格	170mm×240mm 16开本 15.75印张 370千字
版 次	2009年1月第1版 2009年1月第1次印刷
印 数	0001—5000册
定 价	30.00元

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前言

在全球化、国际化浪潮汹涌澎湃的今天，不管是工作需要，还是应付各种各样的英语考试，学习英语、学好英语在当代社会已是势在必行。尤其是对于大学生而言，英语的好坏已经直接关系到个人的前途。英语如此重要，因此，学好它已经成了当务之急。

英语在个人生活、学习以及工作中越来越重要，为了学好英语，很多人“饥不择食”，没有选择好适合自己的学习方法，没有找到合适的教材，便匆匆忙忙开始与英语“打交道”，而如此盲目学习的结果便是“欲速则不达”。经过一段时间的学习，不仅英语成绩没有提高，能力没有提升，相反却对英语越来越不感兴趣，当学习成为一种负担而不是乐趣时，学习的成效便可想而知了。

像汉语一样，英语也是一种语言，是一种交际工具，因此，如果我们能反思一下母语的学习过程，那就不会“谈英语色变”了，相反却会给我们很多学英语的启示。语言是用来交流和表情达意的，因此，学英语首先要张开嘴巴。没有老外不要紧，不好意思去英语角也不那么重要，关键是自己要养成每天坚持阅读的好习惯，每天至少朗读半小时，声音越大越好，先培养起语感，日积月累，就会像我平常说汉语一样，想到就会顺口说出来而不是先想想主语对不对，谓语应该放在哪里。平时没事建议再看些英美大片，找些好看的英语阅读素材，作为交际工具的英语就这样练出来了。

选对了合适的方法相当于在学英语的路上成功了一半，接下来就要寻找喜欢的教材了，寻找一种能让自己“爱不释手”的英语书很有必要。我们可以回忆一下小学的语文课本，尤其是小学一至三年级的课本，它不是把汉字一个个地放在那里让你去读、去背，而是在一段段有趣的文章中包含若干生字，这样小学生在被故事吸引的同时也能轻松地记住这些生字。这原本是学习语言的一种好方法，可是当我们长大成人的时候，却往往忘记了这个简单而十分有效的学习途径。经常看到很多同学拿着厚厚的单词本在纸上密密麻麻地写单词，背得不快，忘得却非常快。这样的学习方式没有乐趣可言，强行记忆的效果也让人担心。

英语学习对不少同学来说已经成为了一种负担。为什么不能找到一些有趣的教材

来激发同学的兴趣呢？让同学先被故事吸引，然后在不知不觉中学单词、背单词，让学英语成为一种享受，让同学在长知识、扩见闻的同时，也轻松地“拿下”英语——这就是编者编著此书的最大目的。

现在很多同学都忙着出国，出国已经成为大学生的潮流之选，美国有着多元而时尚的文化，是最吸引留学生的国家之一。因此，编者选择了以美国文化为对象，全面介绍美国，为大学生留学美国做一个最基础的铺垫，也让更多学生对这个在世界上有很大影响力的国家有个基本了解，让大家在感受美国、沉浸于美国丰富文化的同时不知不觉学会英语单词，在故事中、在情境中学会如何使用英语、体验如何正确地学习英语。

本书共有十一章，内容涉及美国概述、美国政治、美国经济、美国文化、美国生活、美国教育、美国节日、美国城市、美国名胜、美国名人与美国企业。

美国概述——本章讲述美国的地理、地貌、森林资源、矿产资源、美国的国旗、国歌等，旨在让读者了解美国丰富的地理资源及地理优势对美国崛起的作用。

美国政治——关于美国政治，除美国总统之外，人们对美国政治的其他方面可能知之甚少，本章会告诉你美国的三权分立、两党制、联邦政府、州政府与地方政府以及总统大选等，能让读者对美国的政治有一个全面了解。

美国经济——企业的魅力源于适应企业发展的经济体制，本章将会展现给你美国的经济体制。美国的经济实力让大家对美国印象停留在了名企上，殊不知美国的农业、服务业、娱乐业、运输业、科技及信息业等也都是世界一流。

美国文化——众所周知，美国有个自由女神像，美国人崇尚自由，但是美国人这种理念的基础是什么呢，在日常生活中是如何体现的呢？本章以好莱坞、博物馆、音乐、传媒、运动等为个案，告诉你美国文化的丰富及美国梦体现在美国的方方面面。

美国生活——美国人的生活丰富多彩，去美国留学首先要了解美国的日常生活。本章将带你提前全面接触美国人的生活，从吃饭到交友，从美国家庭到美国婚礼。

美国教育——我们只知道美国有世界上最著名的大学，却很少了解美国的教育体制。本章会告诉你美国的教育设置、美国的中小学、美国的公立学校与私立学校以及美国的特殊教育等。美国高等教育的辉煌是建立在其中小学教育的基础上的，全面认识美国教育，可以让大家对美国的顶尖大学有更深刻地认识。

美国节日——美国的节日文化同样让人瞩目，圣诞节、感恩节、情人节、父亲节、母亲节、愚人节、美国总统日与国旗日等，丰富的节日文化让人眼花缭乱。本章将带你一一体验！

美国城市——提及美国的发达城市，大家一般会首先想到纽约这一国际级的大都

市。全面观察美国文化，城市是个好的切入口，而美国的城市则几乎各有特色，像赌城拉斯维加斯、世界之城纽约、美国政治中心华盛顿等，本章会带你浏览美国大城市风采。

美国名胜——美国的经济举世瞩目，美国的科技世界一流，但是千万不要以为这些就是美国的全部，别忘了前面说过美国有着丰富的地理资源，而除了支持美国经济发展的自然资源外，美国还有着让人流连忘返的旅游胜地。像尼亚加拉大瀑布、黄石国家公园、圣·帕特里克大教堂等。当然，还有美国的白宫，想去美国旅游？这些地方都是不容错过的！

美国名人——美国的历史虽然谈不上悠久，但是作为一个移民国家，作为诸多移民文化的大熔炉，在美国的发展史上不乏影响世界的名人。像为了自由和国家统一而献出生命的总统林肯；为了人类的正义和尊严而战，用“我有一个梦想”感动世界的马丁·路德·金；照亮世界的“假如给我三天光明”的美国盲人女作家海伦·凯勒以及用发明改变世界文明进程的托马斯·爱迪生、文学天才马克·吐温、电脑时代的传奇比尔·盖茨、艳照全美的玛丽莲·梦露等。

美国企业——美国在世界的影响力主要归功于其强大的经济实力，而说起美国的经济，则不得不谈其享誉世界的诸多大型企业，像让连成人都流连忘返的迪斯尼乐园，连锁店开遍全世界的麦当劳、物美价廉的沃尔玛超市等。本章将会让你在对美国名企更熟悉的同时，感受美国的经济活力。

打开这本书吧，详尽的美国文化会让你迷上它，沉醉其中能让你在不知不觉中感受英语的魅力。也许它不能让你在短时间内提高英语成绩，但它会凭借丰富的内容、有趣的情节让你爱上英语！

参与本书编写的人员有廖桂冬、沈琳、李金鑫、沈春杰、宋晓冬、胡庆、李月英、李璟瑜、杨永铎、董立新、王迪、幕鹏鹏、周彦冰、龙巍坚、肖冉等，在此一并致谢。

编者

2009年1月

目 录

Chapter One The Introduction of America	1
1. The Geography of United States	2
2. Surface Regions and Landforms	6
3. Rivers & Lakes	10
4. Climate and Weather	13
5. Resources	17
6. The American National Anthem and the Flag of The United States	20
Chapter Two American Politics	25
1. The Government and Politics in America	26
2. The Federal Government	29
3. The State Government and Local Government	37
4. Bipartisanship	40
5. Parties of America	45
6. Elections and Voting	50
Chapter Three American Economy	51
1. American Economy	52
2. American Economic System	56
3. American Agriculture	58
4. American Transportation	61
5. American Banking	64
Chapter Four American Culture	67
1. The Introduction of American Culture	68
2. The Heaven of Film Stars; Hollywood	70
3. Museums in the United States	74
4. American Music	78
5. The Media of the United States	84
6. Sports in America	89

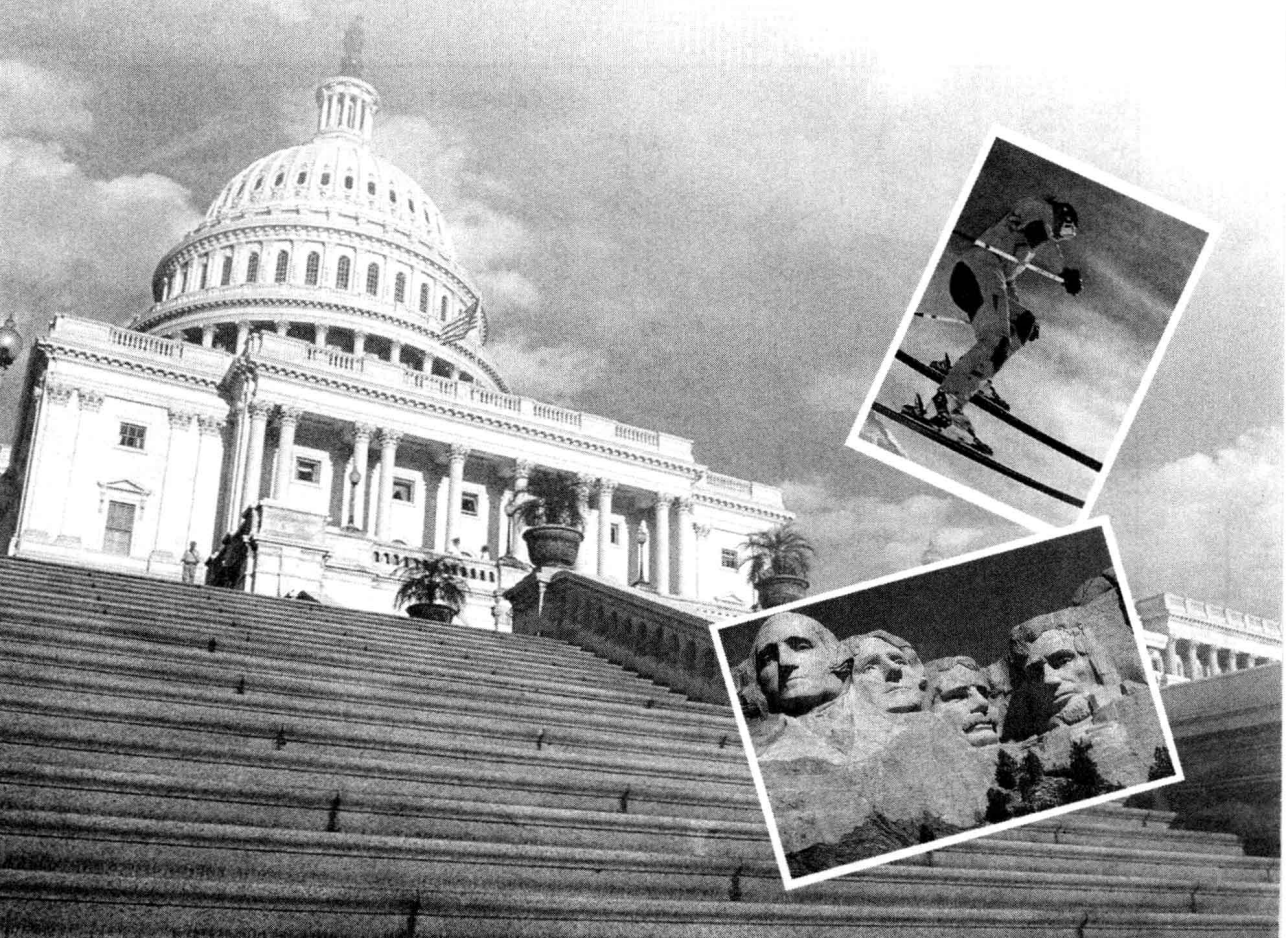
Chapter Five American Life	95
1. Eating Habits	96
2. Customs in Daily Life	99
3. The Other Customs	103
4. American Family	105
5. American Wedding	109
6. Moral Values in Daily Life	111
Chapter Six American Education	115
1. Education System	116
2. Elementary School, Junior and Senior High School	120
3. Higher-education	123
4. Educational Issues	128
5. Public and Private Schools	130
6. Education of Students with Special Needs	132
Chapter Seven American Festivals	135
1. New Year's Day	136
2. Valentine's Day	139
3. Easter Day	143
4. Christmas	146
5. Father's Day and Mother's Day	151
6. April Fool's Day	154
7. Presidents Day and the Flag Day	156
8. Thanksgiving Day	162
Chapter Eight American Cities	169
1. Las Vegas	170
2. New York	173
3. Chicago	177
4. Los Angeles	180
5. San Francisco	182
6. Philadelphia	186
7. Washington, D.C.	188
Chapter Nine Places of Interest in America	191
1. Niagara Falls	192

2. The Sun Belt	195
3. The Yellowstone National Park	196
4. Saint Patrick's Cathedral	198
5. The White House	201
Chapter Ten American Famous People	203
1. Lincoln — the Model of Self-support	204
2. Martin Luther King: a Symbol of Human Dignity and Justice	208
3. Helen Keller: a Light in Darkness	211
4. Thomas Edison: a Hero of the Invention Age	215
5. Bill Gates: a Story of Success	220
6. Mark Twain: the Father of American Literature	223
7. Marilyn Monroe: Famous Even Among the Famous	226
Chapter Eleven American Firms	231
1. The Walt Disney	232
2. McDonald's	236
3. Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company	238
4. Wal-Mart	242



Chapter One

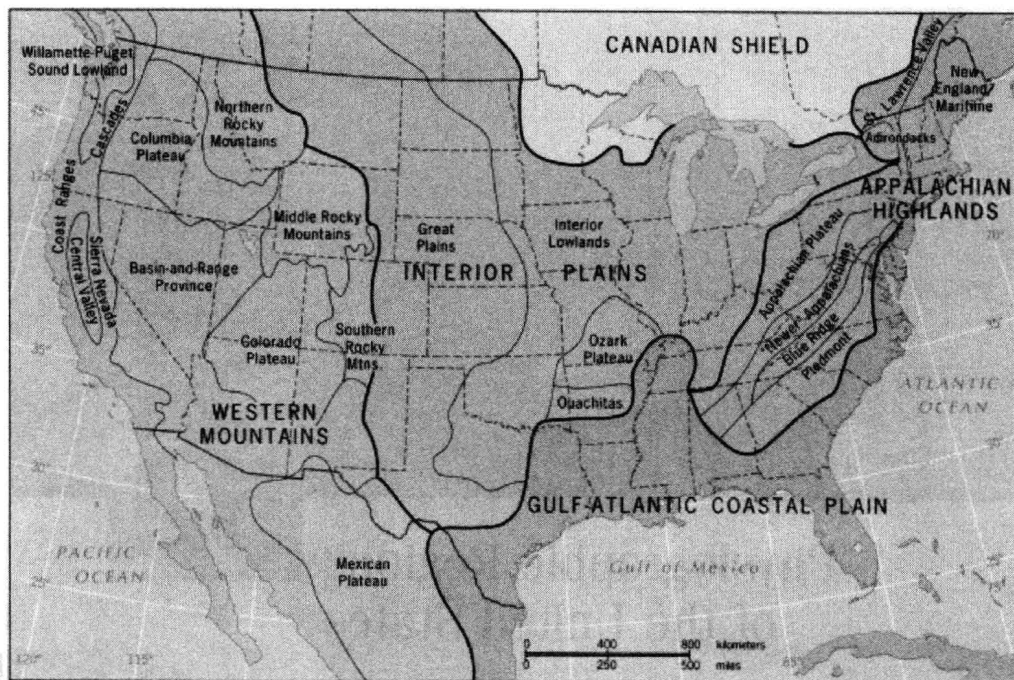
The Introduction of America



1. The Geography of United States

美利坚合众国，人们通常将其简称为美国，是继前苏联、加拿大和中国之后面积位居世界第四的大国。人们常常探讨美国经济持续快速发展的各种原因，唯独忽视对其国内丰富的地理资源进行深入探讨，而美国的崛起恰恰与其地理优势有着密不可分的关系。

The United States, the fourth largest country in the world, has **established** a highly developed national economy since it won **independence** 200 years ago. Many **sociologists** and economists have done **strenuous** work in trying to **analyze** the **contributing** factors to the success, but their **conclusions** often vary greatly because they view the problem from different **perspectives**. The only indisputable factor, perhaps, stems from (起源于) the generosity of nature, which provides Americans with a large piece of fertile land sandwiched between two large oceans. It is widely **acknowledged** that a nation's economic development depends on, to a certain extent, what kind of geography. When American economy rested mainly on (取决于, 依赖于) agriculture years ago, the importance of geography was even more obvious. This **promoted** some Americans to describe their country as a "land of **opportunity**". An American poet claims "Heaven and earth have never agreed better to **frame** a place for man's habitation".



美国北与加拿大接壤,南与墨西哥相邻,大部分地区位于北美洲的南部。美国与两个邻国在互利共赢的基础上达成了发展双边贸易的协定。西临太平洋,使得美国可以凭借方便的海运优势发展与远东的贸易,而东临大西洋,见证了无数的欧洲人是如何踏上美国这片梦想之地的。美国有50个州,其中的夏威夷和阿拉斯加与美国的主大陆部分相分离,这两个州也是最后加入美国的。

The full name of the United States of American is sometimes **abbreviated** to the United States, or just to American. Mainland American is situated in the south of North American, mainly within the northern temperate zone. American has two land neighbors: Canada to the north and Mexico to the south. The boundary line between Canada and American, some 6000 kilometers long, runs along the 49th parallel in the west and then through four of the five Great Lakes, ending at the Atlantic Coast. The boundary between American and Canada is open and undefended. To the south of the United States lie Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico(墨西哥海湾). The boundary line between American and Mexico, about 3000 kilometers long, starts from the mouth of the Rio Grande River, continues through the lower reaches of the river and finally ends at the Pacific Seashore. The U.S. Government has established some checkpoints(检查站,检查点)along its border with Mexico. The purpose is to prevent drug traffickers and illegal immigrants from stealing into American. According to official reports, more than 300 Mexican migrants died crossing the U. S. - Mexico border in 2003. The main cause of death was dehydration(脱水,失去力量)or exposure in the desert in southern Arizona(美国亚利桑那州), which has become the main migration route. Others drowned in the Rio Grande River that divides Texas(美国得克萨斯州)and Mexico, or **perished** in car crashes in unsuccessful attempts at "border running" or trying to outrun border patrol agents(边防巡逻队)on rural highways and freeways.

On the west, the United States borders on the Pacific Ocean(太平洋), which provides **convenient** sea routes for America's foreign trade with the Far East. To the east of America lies the large Atlantic Ocean(大西洋)which witnessed numerous European immigrants sailing to their dreamland in the New World. The Atlantic is still the most important sea route from America to Europe and the Middle East.

The United States consists of 50 states with a total area of about 9.4 million square kilometers. Two of the 50 states are separated from the continental United States. Alaska(美国阿拉斯加州), which faces Russia across the 80-kilometer wide Bering Strait(白令海峡), is separated from mainland America by Canada while Hawaii(美国夏威夷)lies about 3200 kilometers away to the west and in the Pacific Ocean. Besides the 50 states, the United States also includes a number of overseas territories. The main ones are Guam(关岛), Puerto Rico(波多黎各岛), and the Virgin Island(维尔京群岛).

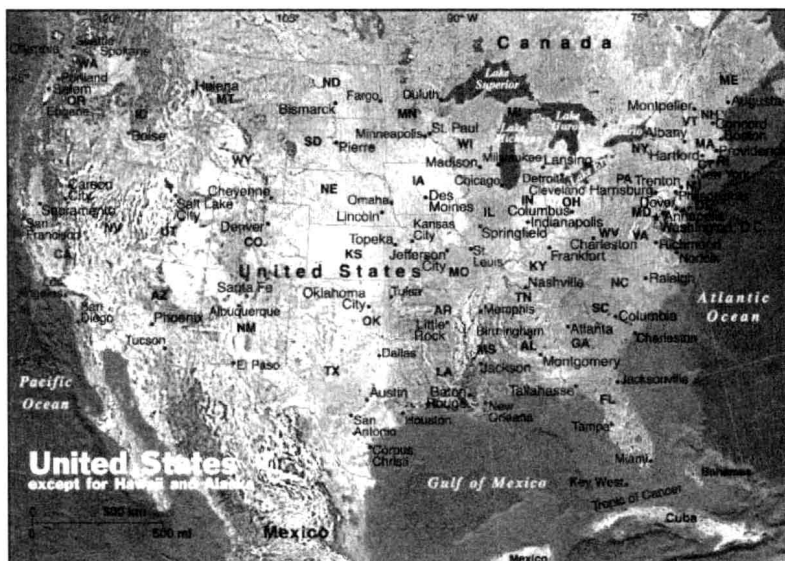
Mainland America extends about 5000 kilometers from east to west, and some 2500 kilometers from south to north. Its coastline is about



20000 kilometers. Even with modern highways and high-powered cars, it is still a time consuming drive for people from the east to travel to the Far West.

America's position on the globe and its relative position in relation to other countries both provide advantage for the country in its development. Mainland American, lying within the northern temperate zone, grows rich agricultural products. The long coastline with many harbors and inlets not only provides favorable conditions for foreign trade and the fishing industry, but also brings much of the country within the influence of the oceanic air mass. America has no land neighbor that is strong enough to pose a threat to its security. This relieves the United States of the burden of maintaining a large frontier army along its border. As a matter of fact, Canada has been America's most important trading partner and the trade between America and Mexico is also climbing. The three nations have approved the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The door is open for wider cooperation based on mutual benefit.

美国的地理优势对经济发展的积极作用主要体现在：位于北温带，使农业得到了长足发展；众多的海岸线为其提供了与其他国家发展贸易的机会及渔业优势。另外，美国超强的经济实力也使得它可以降低在维持边防军上的支出。



★ **establish**

vt. 建立, 创立; 确立, 证实, 认可

adj. establish able

n. establisher

establish oneself in

定居于, 在...落户

★ **independence**

n. 独立, 自主, 自立(of; on); 能自立的收入; 独立心, 自尊心

independence in judgement

独立判断(能力)

★ **sociologist**

n. 社会学者, 社会学家

Sociology

n. 社会学

★ **strenuous**

adj. 积极的, 奋发的, 使劲的

a long strenuous march

艰苦的长途行军

strenuously

adv. 拼命地

★ **analyze**

vt. 分析, 分解

★ **contribute**

vi. 捐献(to); 起作用, 促成, 投稿

contribute to the Red Cross

向红十字会捐献

contribute to a literary journal

向文学杂志投稿

★ **conclusion**

n. 终结, 结论; 决定; 推断; 缔结

false conclusion 假结论

inductive conclusion 归纳推理

★ **perspective**

n. 透视(画, 画法), 远景, 景色, 眼界

see thing in perspective

正确地观察事物

a perspective of lakes and hills

湖山远景

★ **acknowledge**

vt. 以...为真, 答谢; 表示注意到(某人的敬意), 告知收到(信等)

acknowledge the applause 谢幕

★ **promote**vt. 促进, 发扬, 提升, 提拔, 晋升为
be promoted (to be [to the rank of]) first mate 被提为大副★ **opportunity**

n. 机会, 时机

★ **frame**

n. 结构, 体格

vt. 构成, 设计, 使适合, 陷害

n. 帧, 画面, 框架

★ **abbreviate**

vt. 节略, 省略, 缩写; 缩短

The United States of America is commonly abbreviated to U.S.A..

美利坚合众国常被缩略为 U.S.A..

abbreviated

adj. 缩短的, 短小的, 简化的; 小型的

★ **perish**

vi. 毁灭, 灭亡, 死去; 枯萎, 腐烂

The city perished in an earthquake.

这城在一次地震中毁灭。

Perisher

n. [俚]讨厌的家伙; 混蛋; 笨蛋

★ **convenient**

adj. 便利的, 合适的, 附近的

When would it be convenient for you to go? 你什么时候去方便?

We must arrange a convenient time and place for the meeting.

我们必须安排一个合适的时间和地点开会。



2. Surface Regions and Landforms

纵观美国大陆的版图,可以发现许多山脉和河流将美国这片土地分成若干部分。而这些山脉与河流对美国的经济、气候,甚至美国人的生活及其多姿多彩文化的形成都有着重要影响。

The landforms of America **vary** from place to place. Mainland America can be generally divided into three basic geographical areas or surface regions: the Atlantic Seacoast and the Appalachian Mountains(阿巴拉契亚山脉) in the east; the great Mississippi River Valley in the middle; and the Rockies (落基山脉) west to the Pacific Ocean. These three surface regions are rough **divisions** with each having its own diversity in geography.

● The Mississippi River Valley

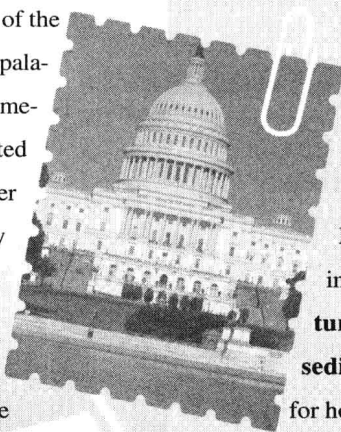
密西西比河大峡谷包括西部的落基山脉和东部的阿巴拉契亚山脉等一大片区域。阿巴拉契亚山脉是美国著名的古老山脉,由于雨水和其他气候的长年侵蚀,这座山脉的平均海拔高度只有800米。落基山脉是美国最高的山脉,落基山脉从北冰洋绵延到墨西哥边界,它常被称为大陆的脊骨,也叫大陆的分水岭。地壳的快速上下运动使得落基山脉非常陡峭和不规则。

The Great Mississippi River Valley consists of the between the Rocky Mountains on the west and the Appalach-east. The valley covers a distance of some 2000 kilometers, taking up about half of the continental United States. Rivers rising in both mountain chains flow toward each other sides of this vast bowl, emptying into the mighty Mississippi. The northern part of the plain reaches Canada while the southern part borders the Gulf of Mexico. Thinly populated, the featureless plain **displays** best America's largeness. The basin makes the soil of the basin very rich. One may drive through the **dramatic** changes of the scene. Its large size and rich soil have made this region known as the "Barn of America".

The northeastern part of the Mississippi Basin is also known as the Midwest, which was once covered with sunny open grasslands but no trees. Soon after America won its independence, many **frontiersmen** rushed into the Midwest for land and finally turned the treeless **prairie** into America's richest agricultural region. Chicago, the largest city in the Midwest, is also the largest food-processing center of the United States.

The strip of **territory** along the west part of the Mississippi Valley is called the Great Plains, which can be likened to the top of a table, **slightly** tilted upward to the west. The territory of the Great Plains, including

large area between the Appalachian on the east and the Rocky Mountains on the west. Rivers rise down the **sloping** sides of the Appalachian in the south it borders the **featureless** level land of the **sediment** of the rivers for hours in his car with-



Montana (蒙大拿州), Wyoming (怀俄明州), Colorado (科罗拉多州) and New Mexico (新墨西哥州), is **composed of** rolling lands that run north and south through the entire originally covered with rich prairie grass, but no trees. An example can help show the natural conditions here. In the 16th century, the Spanish colonists brought a few young cows and a bull into the Great Plains. By 1870, there were many million wild cattle wandering and grazing on these wild plains. Brave cowboys used to round up the white-faced long **horn** cattle and drive them to a railway station for sale. Today the area is still a cattle country, although some tracts of land have been turned into agricultural fields. Open ranges are divided into **enclosed** ranches. **Ranchers** are making efforts to improve cattle **strains** and grow new types of grass.

● The Rockies West to the Pacific Ocean

To the west of the Great Plain are the Rocky Mountains, known as "the backbone of the continent". The Rocky Mountains is well known for its striking and varied scenery. To protect environment and develop tourism, the U.S. Government has established 38 national parks here. Like America's other national parks, nearly 300 in all, these parks are open to the public and they are in the charge of the Federal Park Service. Within the parks, there are campgrounds, cabins and motels available to the approximately 180 million annual tourists. These high mountains, with their tops of bare rock often capped with snow, stretch all the way from New Mexico into Wyoming where they are interrupted by a vast **plateau** called the Wyoming Basin, which is about 40,000 square kilometers in size. The whole tremendous system of the mountain chain includes several mountain ranges.

One of the most famous is the Yellow Stone National Park, which, with an area of about 9000 square kilometers, is situated in Wyoming. In this park there are deep canyons(大峡谷), towering waterfalls, great caves far beneath the earth, dense **virgin** forests and hot springs, including the Old Faithful that **erupts** punctually (按时地, 如期地). Grand Canyon National Park(美国大峡谷国家公园), situated in north Arizona(亚利桑那州), is also world-famous. The Grand Canyon, cut by the Colorado River(科罗拉多河), is about 400 kilometers long and

★ vary

vt. 改变; 使多样化; 使变化

vary one's teaching method

改变教学方法

vary one's life 使生活丰富多彩

★ division

n. 分开, 分割, 区分, 公司, (军事)师

stir up divisions 制造分裂

★ sloping

adj. 倾斜的, 有坡度的

★ featureless

adj. 无特色的, 平凡的

feature

n. 面容

vi. 占主要位置; 扮演角色

vt. 以...为特色; 以...为号召

★ display

vt. 陈列, 展览, 显示

n. 陈列, 展览, 显示, 显示器

★ sediment

n. 沉淀(物), 沉积

sediment bowl 澄清池

★ dramatic

adj. 戏剧的; 剧本的; 演剧的

dramatic criticism 戏剧评论

dramatic performance 戏剧表演

★ frontiersman

n. 边远的居民, 边远者

★ prairie

n. 大草原, 牧场; 林中空地

P-State [美国]草原之乡(美国伊利诺斯州的别名)

★ territory

n. 领土; 版图; 领地; 领域, 范围

in the territory [sphere, field, domain, area] of science and technology 在科学技术的领域内

★ slightly

adv. 苗条地; 轻微地; 有一点, 略

be slightly wounded 受轻伤

be slightly deaf 有一点聋

nearly 20 kilometers wide between the tops of its steep (陡峭的, 峻峭的) walls. The water stored behind the Hoover Dam (胡佛大坝) is piped to cities nearby, including Los Angeles.

Along the Pacific Coast are the gentler and lower Coast Ranges which include many forested hills and lowlands. Between the Coast Ranges and the Sierra Nevada Mountains (内华达山脉) and the Cascade Mountains are two great valleys. The southern valley, more than 800 kilometers long, is called the Central Valley (中央大峡谷), and the northern one, Willamette Valley. The two valleys are fertile regions, dotted with lush (青葱的, 繁荣的) farms and orchards (果园) that rely on irrigation for production. Large amounts of fresh fruits produced here are shipped to markets in America and Asia. The Central Valley, situated in California, leads the country in the production of fruits such as oranges, apricots, and peaches.

● The Atlantic Seacoast and the Appalachians

The Atlantic Seacoast, also known as the East-



ern Coastal Plain, is a strip of fairly level country between the Atlantic and the Appalachians. It is the country of the first European immigrants and the 13 original states. Broad in the south, about 200 kilometers, the coastal plain narrows towards the north and gives way to rocky coastlines in New England. The coastal plain is made of low land and the tides from the sea can be seen rushing up the screams for many miles, and so it is also called the tide-water region. A large part of Georgia and Florida (佛罗里达州) is low-lying **swampy** land. The Okefenokee Swamp (奥克弗诺基沼泽) in southern Georgia and the Everglades (湿地, 沼泽地) in Southern Florida are huge swamps, which have become tourist attractions. The Atlantic beaches are well known for their fine white sand that has given birth to famous summer playgrounds such as Atlantic City and Miami Beach.

To the west of the Coastal Plain lies a long mountain chain known as the Appalachians which are old mountains with rounded tops and densely-wooded hills, usually not exceeding an elevation of 800 meters. These mountains run about 3000 kilo-

meters from northeast to southwest. As the Appalachian extend towards the northeast, they replace the coastal plain gradually and border on the Atlantic finally, making the coastline rugged (高低不平的, 崎岖的) and rocky with a number of fine deep-water harbors. Partly because of this geographic