

复旦博学·研究生英语系列



研究生英语 基础教程

王典民 总主编 麻保金 郑明 康天峰 马跃珂 主编



复旦大学出版社

Basic Integrated English Course
for Postgraduates

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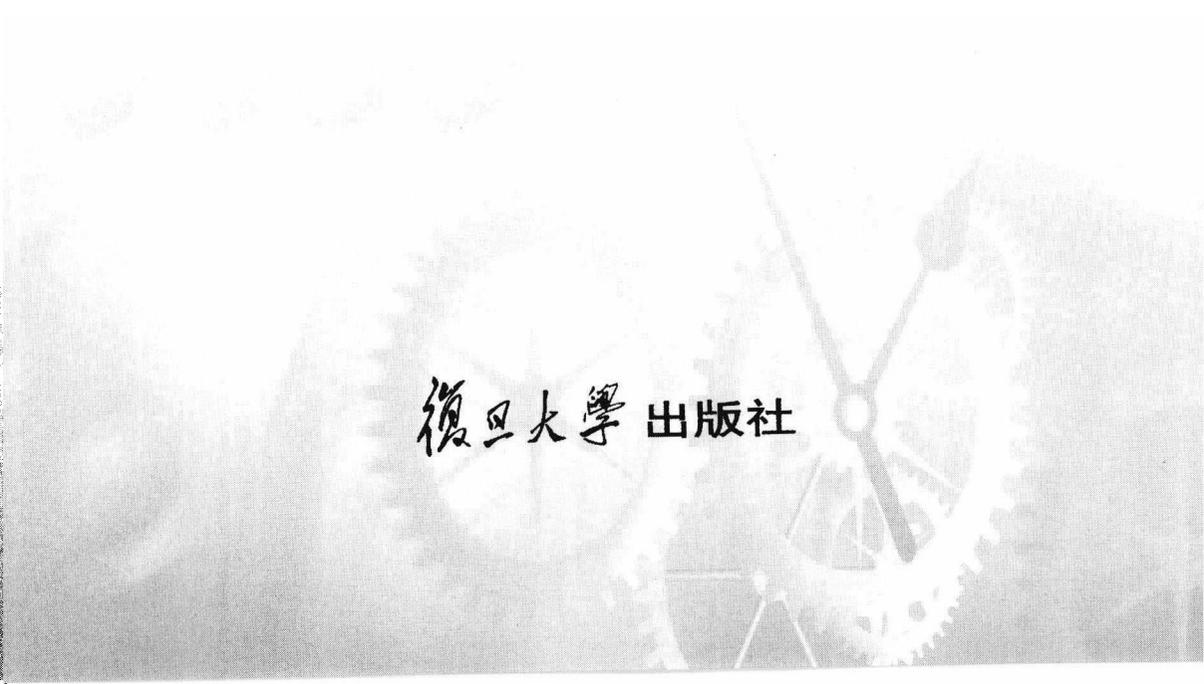
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Unit One

The ABCs of the U.S.A.: Americana, Seen with European Eyes

By MICHAEL DOBBS

British-born, Michael Dobbs returned to the United States in 1987 after years in Europe as a foreign correspondent for a major newspaper. He returned with a new look at things American, which he expresses in these impressions, organized from A to Z.

America can be a strange experience for a foreigner. My wife and I arrived in the United States in January after seven years overseas — four in France, three in Poland. From the jumble of first impressions, we compiled an A-to-Z explanation of why America can be such a foreign country to those who arrive here from Europe. 1

I should explain at the outset that I am from Britain, but my Florida-born wife Lisa is as American as apple pie. In this alphabet, however, A does not stand for apple pie. It stands for ambition. 5

Ambition. In the Old World, people are taught to hide it. An exception was Macbeth who (Shakespeare tells us) nurtured “an ambition that overleaps itself and falls on the other side” — and look what happened to him. Here, it seems quite proper to announce that you are after the boss’ job or want to make a million dollars by the age of 30. 10

Breakfast. The American habit of conducting business at breakfast has reached Europe, but I doubt that it will ever really catch on. In France and Britain, breakfast is too much a family affair. Here, it has become part of the power game. 15

Credit Cards. You really can not leave home without them. It is interesting, and somewhat infuriating, to discover that bad credit is better than no credit at all: I was refused a Visa card on the grounds that I did not have a credit profile. Speaking of credit cards, we are bemused by the relatively new fad of destroying the carbons.

20 Back in Europe, people prefer to keep their fingers clean.

Dreams. The American Dream, dented though it is been recently, is still very much alive. Dreaming great dreams is what keeps American society going — from the waitress who wants to become a car dealer to the street kid who wants to become a basketball star. Europeans dream dreams too, but don't seem to believe in them so much. See *Ambition*.

25 *Exercise.* A couple of years ago, I came to Washington in the slipstream of French President Francois Mitterrand. A cheer went up from the French press corps as our bus passed a fitness center — and we saw body-conscious Americans bending, stretching and leaping from side to side. America's fetish for fitness amuses — and puzzles — Europeans.

30 *First names.* In Europe, there is a natural and orderly progression from the use of last names to the use of first names. Here, it's first names at first sight. This can create confusion. I have one acquaintance who calls me Bill — and I am not quite sure how to correct him.

35 *Gadgets.* These can be addictive. It is difficult to imagine now how we survived for so long without the cruise control, the automatic ice dispenser, the microwave and the cordless telephone.

Hechinger. If I were in charge of arranging the programs of visiting delegations from East European countries, I would include a compulsory visit to Hechinger. We know Polish farmers who have to wait months to buy fencing for their livestock. Their eyes would pop out of their heads in this temple of American capitalism.

40 *Insurance.* Americans have a policy to cover every risk, both conceivable and inconceivable. So far, we have refused rental reimbursement insurance for our car, death insurance for our mortgage and supplementary title insurance for our house. It gives us a feeling of living dangerously.

45 *Junk food.* Anyone who wants to understand why Americans suffer from higher rates of cancer and arteriosclerosis only has to look at what they eat.

Ketchup. I had to come to America to discover that it can be eaten with anything — from French fries to French cheese.

50 *Lines.* American lines — beginning with the yellow line at immigration control — are the most orderly and organized in the world. The British queue, once internationally renowned, has begun to fray at the edges in recent years. *La queue*

Françoise was never very impressive, and *La Linea Italiana* is simply a mob.

Money. In Europe, money is something that everybody likes to have — but is careful not to flaunt. Unless it has been in the family for several generations, there is often an assumption that it has been acquired dishonestly. In America, the green justifies the means. 55

No smoking. No longer just a polite injunction in America, almost an evangelical campaign. Nobody would dare to ask a Frenchman to put out his Gauloises in a restaurant. 60

Ollie North. What other major western democracy would allow a lieutenant colonel to make foreign policy? A hero for some, a traitor for others, Ollie (see *first names*) is a wonderful example of the American go-for-it attitude that both awes and alarms foreigners. 65

Patriotism. Exists everywhere, of course, but the American version is brasher, louder, and more self-conscious than the European. In Britain, it is taken for granted that a citizen or politician loves his country. Here, he is expected to prove it. 65

Quiet. American cities are quieter than European cities — thanks to noise controls on automobiles and the recent spate of environmental legislation. This was a major surprise for someone brought up to assume that America was a noisy place. 70

Religion. It's difficult, somehow, to imagine an English version of Jim and Tammy Bakker. When my parents came to visit recently, they were startled at the sight of a fire-breathing Jimmy Swaggart denouncing the Bakkers on live TV. That's not the kind of way they behave in our dear old Church of England. 75

Sales. Ever since arriving in Washington, we have been hurrying to take advantage of this week's unrepeatabe *offer* — only to discover that it is usually repeated next week. We are just catching on that there is always an excuse for a sale. 80

Television. How grown-ups can watch game shows and sitcoms at 11:00 a. m. mystifies me — but the national habit, day or night, is contagious, I recently found myself nodding in full agreement with a professorial type who was saying that American kids watch too much television. It was only later that I realized that I was watching him say this on television. 80

Ulcers. See *Work*. 85

Visas. Americans don't need visas to visit Britain (or most European countries, for that matter). To get my entry permit for the United States, I had to sign a document promising that I would not overthrow the government by force, had never been a member of the Communist Party, and was not wanted for war crimes.

90 I had to provide details of my affiliation to labor unions as well as affidavits from four countries stating that I had no criminal record. All this for cruise control and a cordless telephone.

Work. A leading Polish sociologist, Jan Szczepanski, once told me that many Poles imagine that they will become rich simply by emigrating to America. He tries to persuade whoever will listen that America became a rich society through work, work and more work. It is still true.

95

X-rated movies. We have them in Europe, too, but not on motel room TVs and not in most small towns.

Yuppies. The European counterpart remains a pale shadow of the all-American original. The animal seems more driven, more ubiquitous on this side of the Atlantic.

100

Zillion. What other nation would have invented a number that is infinitely more than a billion? America may not always be the best, but it is certainly the biggest.

New Words and Expressions

1. **Americana** /ə,merɪ'kɑ:nə/ *n.* (used with the *pl.* verb) materials relating to American history, folklore, or geography or considered to be typical of American culture (与复数动词连用) 美国/美洲史料; 有关美国/美洲的历史、民俗、地理或被认为典型代表美国/美洲文化的资料
2. **correspondent** /,kɒrɪs'pɒndənt/ *n.* a person employed by a newspaper or magazine *etc.*, to report on a special subject or to send reports from a foreign country 通讯记者, 通信者
3. **jumble** /'dʒʌmbl/ *n.*
 - ① a confused or disordered mass 混乱或杂乱的一堆
 - ② a disordered state; a muddle 一团糟; 凌乱无序的状态, 混乱状态, 糟糕的

局面

4. **outset** /'aʊtset/ *n.* the beginning; the start 开端, 起始
5. **overleap oneself** 做过头而使自己失败
6. **catch on**
 - ① to understand; perceive 理解, 察觉
 - ② to become popular 变得流行
7. **infuriate** /ɪn'fjuəriət/ *vt.* to make (sb.) extremely angry 使(某人)大怒, 激怒(某人)
8. **on the grounds that** 以……为原因, 因为
9. **profile** /'prəʊfaɪl/ *n.*
 - ① side view, *esp.* of the human face 侧面; (尤指人面部的)侧面(像)
 - ② edge or outline of sth. seen against a background 轮廓, 外形
 - ③ brief biography of sb. or description of sth. in a newspaper, broadcast programme, *etc.* (报刊文章、广播节目中的)人物或事物之简介, 概况, 传略
10. **bemuse** /bɪ'mju:z/ *vt.*
 - ① to cause to be bewildered; confuse. 使迷惑, 使茫然
 - ② to cause to be engrossed in thought. 使全神贯注陷于沉思
11. **fad** /fæd/ *n.* fashion, interest, preference, enthusiasm, *etc.* that is not likely to last 流行的时尚、爱好和狂热等
12. **slipstream** /'slɪpstri:m/ *n.*
 - ① stream of air behind a moving object like racing-car 滑流(移动物体的后向气流, 如赛车)
 - ② stream of air thrust back by an aircraft's engines 尾流(飞机发动机的后向气流)
13. **corps** /kɔ:s/ *n.* group of people involved in a particular activity 从事某活动的团队或集体
14. **fetish** /'fi:tɪʃ; 'fetɪʃ/ *n.* an abnormally obsessive preoccupation or attachment; a fixation 迷恋, 迷信(物); 不正常地萦绕于心头的事物或情感
15. **gadget** /'gædʒɪt/ *n.* a small specialized mechanical or electronic device; a contrivance 小配件; 有专门用途的小机械装置或电动装置; 机械装置
16. **cruise control** 导航控制器

17. **dispenser** /dɪs'pensə/ *n.* a machine that gives you things such as drinks or money when you press a button 自动售货机; 自动提款机
18. **cordless** /'kɔ:dlɪs/ *a.* having no cord 无绳的
19. **pop out** 突然出来
20. **reimbursement** /ˌri:ɪm'bə:smənt/ *n.* repayment (of expenses, etc.) (费用等的) 偿还, 报销
21. **mortgage** /'mɔ:ɡɪdʒ/ *n.* 抵押, 抵押贷款
22. **supplementary** /ˌsʌplɪ'məntərɪ/ *a.* additional 补充的, 增补的
23. **arteriosclerosis** /ɑ:ˌtɪərɪəʊˌskliə'rəʊsɪs/ *n.* a chronic disease in which thickening, hardening, and loss of elasticity of the arterial walls result in impaired blood circulation 动脉硬化, 一种由于动脉血管粗化, 硬化, 失去弹力导致血液循环不畅的慢性病
24. **ketchup** /'ketʃʌp/ *n.* a condiment consisting of a thick, smooth-textured, spicy sauce usually made from tomatoes 番茄酱
25. **fray** /freɪ/ *v.* to become worn 磨损
26. **flaunt** /flɔ:nt/ *v.* to exhibit ostentatiously or shamelessly 炫耀; 卖弄地或厚颜无耻地展示
27. **injunction** /ɪn'dʒʌŋkʃən/ *n.*
 - ① the act or an instance of enjoining; a command, a directive, or an order 命令, 指令; 命令的动作或例子
 - ② (law) a court order prohibiting a party from a specific course of action 禁止令, 强制令, 禁止一个党派参加某个活动的法庭命令
28. **evangelical** /ˌi:væŋ'dʒelɪkəl/ *a.* of or according to the teachings of the Christian Gospel, or the Christian religion 福音的; 根据福音的
29. **brash** /bræʃ/ *a.* hasty and unthinking; impetuous 急躁的, 仓促而不假思索的; 冲动的
30. **spate** /spet/ *n.* a sudden flood, rush, or outpouring 突发的洪水, 暴雨
the spate of (sth.) a large number of similar events that happen in a short period of time (短时间内连续发生的) 大量(类似)事件
31. **fire-breathing** /'faɪə,bri:ðɪŋ/ *a.* 怒气冲冲的
32. **mystify** /'mɪstɪfaɪ/ *vt.* to confuse or puzzle mentally 迷惑; 使头脑混淆或迷惑

33. **sitcom** /'sɪtkɒm/ *n.* situation comedy 连续剧
34. **contagious** /kən'teɪdʒəs/ *a.*
 ① (of a disease) spreading by contact (指疾病)通过接触传染的
 ② (*fig.*) spreading easily from one person to another 容易感染他人的
35. **professorial** /,prɒfe'sɔ:riəl/ *a.* like a professor 教授的,学者的
36. **ulcer** /'ʌlsə/ *n.* 溃疡,腐烂物
37. **affiliation** /ə'fɪli'eɪʃən/ *n.* 联系,从属关系
38. **affidavit** /,æfɪ'deɪvɪt/ *n.* (law) a written declaration made under oath before a notary or other authorized officer <美国法律>宣誓书,经陈诉者宣誓在法律上可采作证据的书面陈述
39. **X-rated** /'eks,reɪtɪd/ *a.*
 ① having the rating X X级的
 ② vulgar, obscene, or explicit in the treatment of sex 淫秽的,下流的,猥亵的
40. **Yuppie** /'jʌpi/ *n.* 雅皮士(Young Urban Professional 的缩写,有职业的中上阶层的年轻人士)
41. **ubiquitous** /ju:'bɪkwɪtəs/ *a.* being or seeming to be everywhere at the same time 到处存在的,(同时)普遍存在的
42. **zillion** /'zɪljən/ *n.* an extremely large, indefinite number <美口>庞大的数字,无法计算的大数字
43. **Pole** /pəʊl/*n.* 波兰人

Notes

1. **the Old World**: 旧世界,东半球。这个术语常用来特别指欧洲。
2. **Francois Mitterrand**: (1916-1996) president of France from 1981-1995 密特朗(法国总统 1981—1995)
3. **Macbeth**:
 1) King of Scotland (1040-1057) who ascended the throne after killing his cousin King Duncan (died 1040) in battle. Legends of his rise to power and reign are the basis of Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth*. 麦克白: 苏格兰国王

(1040—1057), 在一次战斗中杀死其表兄国王邓肯(卒于 1040 年)后即位。他夺权和统治的传说构成了莎士比亚悲剧《麦克白》的主要基础。

- 2) 麦克白(莎士比亚悲剧《麦克白》的主人公) Probably composed in late 1606 or early 1607, *Macbeth* is the last of Shakespeare's four great tragedies, the others being *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Othello*. On the level of human evil, Shakespeare's Scottish tragedy is about Macbeth's bloody rise to power, including the murder of the Scottish king, Duncan, and the guilt-ridden pathology of evil deeds generating still more evil deeds. Another most memorable character in the play is Lady Macbeth. Like her husband, Lady Macbeth's ambition for power leads her into an unnatural, phantasmagoric realm of witchcraft, insomnia and madness. But while Macbeth responds to the prophecies of the play's famous trio of witches, Lady Macbeth goes even further by figuratively transforming herself into an unnatural, desexualized evil spirit.
4. **Hechinger**: a chain of home improvement retail stores selling lumber, tools, hardware, garden supply and plants
John Hechinger, Sr. helped pioneer the do-it-yourself industry; from a single hardware store established by his father in 1911, Hechinger grew to a 64-store chain.
5. **temple**: 这里指上文所说的 Hechinger 五金店。比喻成“庙宇”, 主要指美国人对五金店如此崇拜, 到了要经常朝拜的地步。
6. **La queue Francaise**: French queue 法国人的队伍
7. **La Linea Italiana**: Italian line 意大利人的队伍
8. **The green justifies the means.** The end justifies/sanctifies the means; if a result is good, it does not matter if the methods used to get this result are unfair, unjust, violent, *etc.* 只要目的正当, 可以不择手段。
9. **Gauloises**: a brand of cigarette of French manufacture. It is produced by the Company Altadis 高卢烟
10. **Ollie North**: (= Oliver North) 奥利弗·诺斯
Oliver North was former military aide to the US National Security Council, whose name became a household word over the course of the Iran-Contra Affair, American political scandal of 1985 and 1986, in which high-ranking members in the administration of President Ronald Reagan arranged for the

secret sales of arms to Iran in direct violation of existing United States laws. The dual goal was to better American relations with Iran and obtained release of American hostages held in Lebanon by pro-Iranian terrorists. Profits from the \$30 million in arms sales went to the Nicaraguan right wing “contra” guerrillas to supply arms. North was instrumental in setting up a covered network for providing support to the contras with ship, airplanes, airfield, and secret bank accounts.

11. **Jim and Tammy Bakker:** James Orsen Bakker and Tammy Faye, James Orsen Bakker, born January 2, 1940, in Muskegon, Michigan, is an American televangelist, a former Assemblies of God minister, and a former host (with his then-wife Tammy Faye Bakker) of *The PTL Club*, a popular evangelical Christian television program. A sex scandal led to his resignation from the ministry. Subsequent revelations of accounting fraud brought about his imprisonment and divorce and effectively ended his time in the larger public eye. **Tamara (Tammy) Faye Messner** (March 7, 1942 – July 20, 2007) was an American Christian singer, evangelist, entrepreneur, author, talk show host and television personality. She was the former wife of the televangelist, and later convicted felon, Jim Bakker, and she co-hosted with him on *The PTL Club* from 1976 to 1987. She was known for her tendency to wear heavy makeup — particularly mascara and false eyelashes — and for her eyebrows, which were tattooed on. She was a participant in the 2004 season of the reality show, *The Surreal Life*.
12. **Jimmy Swaggart:** Jimmy Lee Swaggart, born March 15, 1935 in Ferriday, Louisiana, is a Pentecostal preacher and pioneer of televangelism who reached the height of his popularity in the 1980s. Swaggart is the first cousin of recording artists Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley. The sons of three sisters, all of them share similar middle names and play the piano. All were born within a year of one another.
13. **Church of England:** the episcopal and liturgical national church of England, which has its see in Canterbury. 英国国教会,英国圣公会, 英格兰主教派和礼拜仪式的国家教会,在坎特伯雷有主教。
14. **Jan Szczepanski:** a Polish sociologist and politician (14 September, 1913 – 16 April, 2004) 什切潘斯基(1913—2004),波兰社会学家和政治家。

Language Points

1. From the jumble of first impressions, we compiled an A-to-Z explanation of why America can be such a foreign country to those who arrive here from Europe.

从杂乱的初步印象中,我们编了一套从 A 到 Z 的解释,来说明为什么对那些从欧洲到这里的人来说,美国会是这样一个陌生的国家。

这个句子中有两个从句,第一个从句由 why 引导作 of 的宾语,第二个从句套在第一个从句中由 who 引导作 those 的定语。

2. An exception was Macbeth who (Shakespeare tells us) nurtured “an ambition that overleaps itself and falls on the other side” — and look what happened to him.

唯一例外的是麦克白(莎士比亚告诉我们的)。他具有雄心壮志,但过分膨胀,最后走向了反面。看看他的下场吧!

此句中有两个定语从句: who 引导的定语从句修饰 Macbeth, that 引导的修饰 ambition, 从句中 overleaps itself and falls on the other side 两个并列的谓语表示递进关系,破折号后祈使句的动词 look 提醒读者,译成汉语时要分译。

3. Dreaming great dreams is what keeps American society going—from the waitress who wants to become a car dealer to the street kid who wants to become a basketball star.

梦想正是美国社会运行的动力,从想成为汽车商的女侍者到想成为篮球明星的街头小孩,人人都有自己的梦想。

此句中破折号后的介词短语 from the waitress... to the street kid... 是对前面句子意义上的解释,省略了主干句型 Everyone in America dreams great dreams. 其中有两个由 who 引导的定语从句分别修饰 the waitress 和 the street kid。

4. A cheer went up from the French press corps as our bus passed a fitness center and we saw body-conscious Americans bending, stretching and leaping from side to side.

在我们的大客车经过一个健身俱乐部时,法国记者团欢呼起来。我们看到注重健康的美国人在弯腰曲背,舒展肢体,四处跳跃。

此句中 and 连接了两个句子,前面的是复合句 as 引导时间状语从句;后面是简单句,其中 bending, stretching 和 leaping 是三个并列的分词短语作宾语补足语;body-conscious 是个复合结构作定语;conscious 常与 safety, energy, weight, health 等词构成复合结构,表示对这方面的关注。如:safety-conscious 意为对安全的关注,具有安全意识。

We have to be very safety-conscious about this kind of machine. 我们必须非常了解这种机器的安全性。

5. A hero for some, a traitor for others, Ollie (*see first names*) is a wonderful example of the American go-for-it attitude that both awes and alarms foreigners.

一些人看奥利(见注释)是英雄,而另一些人看他却是叛徒,他是让欧洲人既敬畏又诧异的美国式鲁莽的例证。

此句中 A hero for some, a traitor for others 是并列名词短语作状语放在句首表示强调;that 引导的定语从句修饰 attitude;

go-for-it 动词短语用连字符连起来作定语,也修饰 attitude。这样的结构用的很多:如;do-it-yourself

6. Ever since arriving in Washington, we have been hurrying to take advantage of this week's unrepeatable offer—only to discover that it is usually repeated next week.

自从到华盛顿后,我们一直急匆匆地抓住本周的一次性减价的机会买便宜货,结果却发现下周又会出现同样的优惠。

这句中的 only to discover 是不定式短语作结果状语,表示惊奇或失望,only 用在这儿表示强调。

only to do sth. 这种结构表达惊奇或失望的结果,用得很多。如:

I raced home to tell my family the good news, only to fall down the stairs and break my leg.

我跑着回家想把好消息告诉我妈妈,结果摔倒在楼梯上,断了腿。

7. All this for cruise control and a cordless telephone.

我所做的这一切只是来这儿开开车,打打电话。

这个句子是个省略句,All this 前面省略了主谓结构 I did (All this for cruise control and a cordless telephone.)。All this 指的是作者办签证时做的所有繁琐的事情。译成汉语时要加词。

Exercises

I. Questions to the text:

1. What was the author's purpose of compiling this list?
2. For what reason does the author feel that he "should explain at the outset" where he and his wife are from?
3. Does the author admire any of the American phenomena that he mentions in his list?
4. Which of the American attitudes and habits on the list does the author say (or imply) that he's adopted himself?
5. How does the author define the American Dream?
6. Why did the French journalists "cheer at the sight of body-conscious Americans"?
7. According to the author, how does the American use of first names confuse Europeans?
8. How does the author explain the European attitude towards money?
9. Judging from the other descriptions in the text, why does the idea of having religion preached on TV alarm Europeans?
10. What does the author mean by "Ulcers: See *work*"?
11. What does the last sentence of the text mean?

II. Choose a proper word from the list to fill in each blank in the following passage. Change the form if necessary.

such	arrive	disappoint	impatient	it
minute	miss	nothing	occur	on
over	saying	often	wait	wear

Almost every American (1) _____ a watch, and, in nearly every room in an American home, there's a clock. "Be (2) _____ time." "Don't waste time." "Time (3) _____ for no one." All of these familiar (4) _____ reflect the American obsession with promptness and efficiency. Students and