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**Second Edition**

**Contact  
U.S.A.**

**Reading and Vocabulary Textbook**

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**Second Edition**

# **Contact U.S.A.**

**Reading and Vocabulary Textbook**

Illustrated by Marci Davis



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# Introduction to the Teacher

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*Contact U.S.A.* is a reading and vocabulary text for high-beginning and low-intermediate ESL/EFL students. Although its structure and exercises are aimed primarily at developing academic reading skills and vocabulary, its content (a look at changes in values and lifestyles in the United States) is highly appropriate for all non-native English speakers, including immigrants, students in higher educational institutions, and students of English in foreign countries.

## Reading

Reading for high-beginning and low-intermediate students is sometimes a frustrating experience. Books that are appropriate in terms of the students' active English proficiency are often not challenging for adult readers, either in structure or content. Readings that match the student's intellectual or conceptual interest level usually have exercises requiring a more advanced active English proficiency. We have written this book on the premise that adult students at this level of English proficiency are able to read and understand more in English than they are able to produce actively. Therefore, although the readings may appear to be difficult for students at this level at first glance, the first analytical exercises are relatively simple, requiring only passive reading and vocabulary skills. We feel that these types of reading and vocabulary skills are important for students to develop, particularly because the analysis of a reading beyond their proficiency level is a process that students confront in standardized tests in English. The reading exercises in this book progress from main idea to inference. The following is a general outline of each chapter.

## Chapter Outline

### *Section 1: A First Look*

#### A. Background Building

#### B. Topic (skimming reading for topic of paragraphs)



C. Reading

D. Scanning/Vocabulary (similar-different analysis of vocabulary in the context of the reading)

**E. Reading Comprehension (multiple choice)**

*Section 2: Look Again*

A. Vocabulary (multiple choice)

B. Reading Comprehension (cloze summary or outline)

C. Think About It (active comprehension analysis of reading)

D. Reading (graphs or short readings related to the topic—can be used out of sequence in the chapter)

*Section 3: Contact a Point of View*

A. Background Building

B. Timed Reading (a personal observation followed by True, False, or Impossible to Know statements)

C. Vocabulary

D. React (semi-controlled discussion activities)

E. Word Analysis (Part 1: progressing through the book from recognition of function and form to production of appropriate forms; Part 2: stems and affixes)

*Section 4: Look Back*

A. Vocabulary (multiple choice)

B. Matching (synonyms)

C. Synthesis Questions (questions for discussion and suggestions for extension activities)

D. Vocabulary Preview

The teacher's guide contains Vocabulary Review Tests and Answer Keys (both for chapter exercises and the review tests).

## Vocabulary

This book was written with the firm belief that dictionaries are generally a reading inhibitor rather than a reading enhancer. With this in mind, the cardinal rule of the book is **NO DICTIONARIES ALLOWED**. The meaning of much of the vocabulary is implied within the reading passage, as the students discover when they complete the first vocabu-

lary exercise, which requires them to analyze words within the context of the reading and compare them to other words that they already know. The vocabulary exercises and the inaccessibility of a dictionary force the students to look for meaning within the context, an essential reading skill. This book serves as a vocabulary builder because we reuse the vocabulary throughout the book so that students are forced to recall vocabulary from previous chapters, where it is used in different contexts. This leads to actual acquisition of the words in the text.

## Content

From our experience as teachers, we feel that adult language learners need stimulating reading materials that (1) provide them with background information about American culture, (2) encourage their awareness of their environment, (3) prepare them to deal with the environment of the United States, and (4) let them draw their own conclusions about the United States. The presentation of information about the life and values in the United States is a very touchy subject; students are sensitive to "pro-America" rhetoric. In spite of this wariness, however, students want to understand some of the basic values and issues in the United States. We have chosen themes that have always generated a lot of discussion in class and about which students have strong opinions. The focus of these readings is primarily cross-cultural. The readings enable students and the teacher to examine American culture, to evaluate their feelings, and to redefine their positions in this culture or in their own cultures. We have tried to present, as far as possible, an apolitical portrayal of the United States. The first reading in every chapter is general, giving the overall idea and the key vocabulary items connected to the subject. The timed reading is a personal point of view about some aspect of the subject. For example, the timed reading in the chapter on immigration is from the point of view of a native American. The chapter on race issues has a second reading about reverse discrimination. These points of view are closely tied in with the speaking activities in each chapter, encouraging students to express their ideas about the subject. Since these readings are our personal impressions, and are, as such, debatable, we encourage teachers to feel free to contribute their own personal points of view and to express their cultural perspectives.

# Introduction to the Student

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*Contact U.S.A.* has two purposes:

1. to improve your **READING** ability, and
2. to improve your **VOCABULARY**.

Each chapter in the book has:

*A First Look:* exercises to determine general meaning of reading and vocabulary items.

- A. Background Building
- B. Topic
- C. Reading
- D. Scanning/Vocabulary (similar/different)
- E. Reading Comprehension

*Look Again:* more detailed exercises in reading comprehension and vocabulary

- A. Vocabulary
- B. Reading Comprehension
- C. React
- D. Reading

*Contact a Point of View:* additional reading:

- A. Background Building
- B. Timed Reading Exercise
- C. Vocabulary
- D. React



## **E. Word Analysis**

*Look Back:* review of the vocabulary from the chapter:

**A. Vocabulary**

**B. Matching**

**C. Synthesis Questions**

**D. Vocabulary Preview**

The first chapter, "Impressions of the United States," has special instructions for each exercise. These instructions will teach you how to use the book effectively.

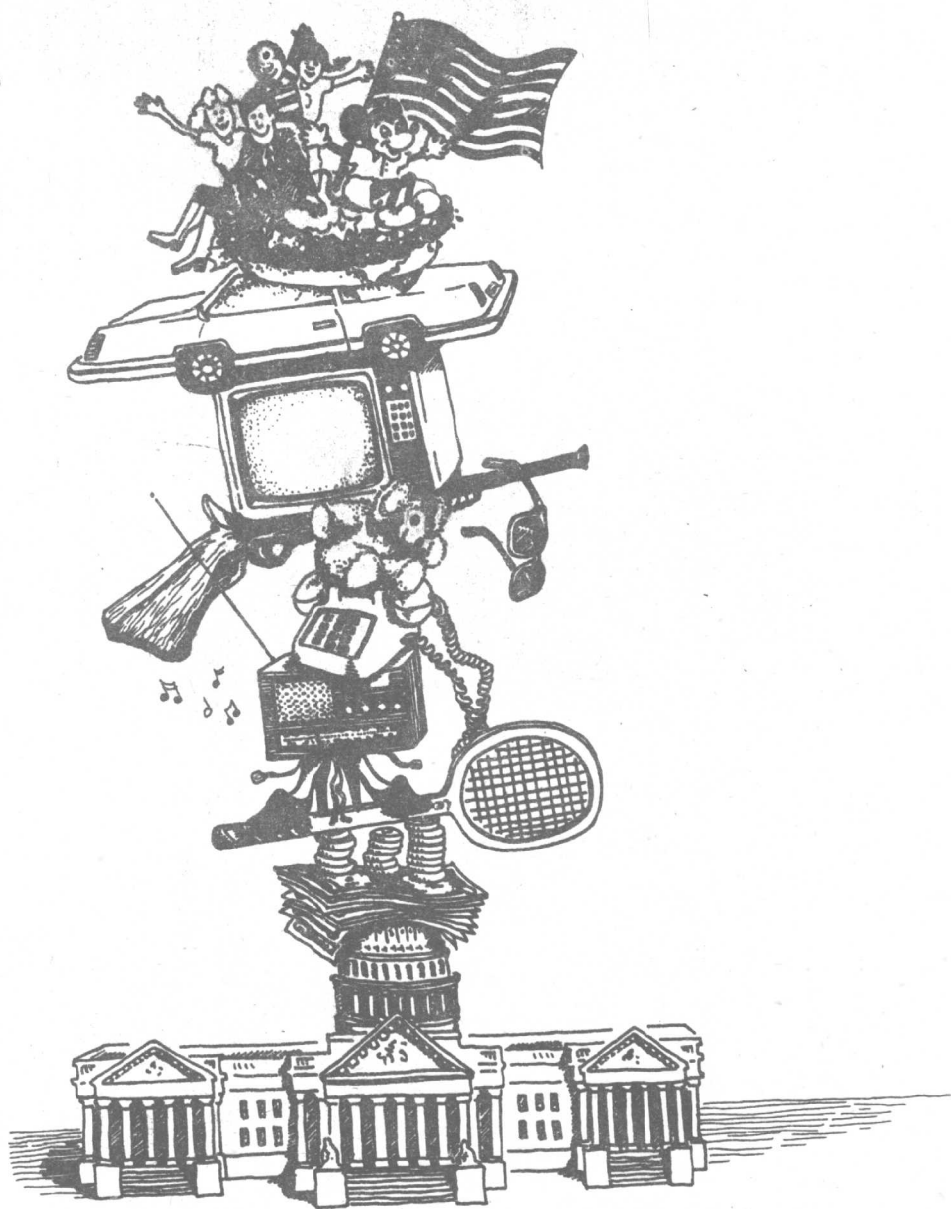
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# Impressions of the United States



# A First Look

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## A. Background Building

- 1a. What are the first things you think of when you hear the words, "United States?" What words come into your head? Write them here.

Example: big, crowded streets

Share your ideas with a classmate.

- b. Look at your words again. Are they *positive*, *negative*, or *neutral* (not positive or negative)? Write them again here.

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

NEUTRAL

crowded streets

big

What were most of your words? Why?

- 2a. What is in the illustration on page 1? Write the words here.

- b. Why are these things in the picture? What other things do you think should be in the picture?

3. What do you want to learn about the United States?

## B. Topic

*DIRECTIONS: Before you begin to read, look at these topics. There is one topic for each paragraph. Look quickly at the reading to find these topics. Do not read every word at this point. Write the number of the paragraph next to the topic of that paragraph.*

1. 2 positive and negative ideas about the United States
2. \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge of a country
3. \_\_\_\_\_ this book about the United States
4. \_\_\_\_\_ first thoughts about the United States
5. \_\_\_\_\_ how people form impressions

## C. Reading

*DIRECTIONS: Now read, but try to think about groups of words, not individual words. Do not stop if you do not know the meaning of a word.*

1 The United States. What is your first thought when you hear these words? Is it an image of something typically American? Perhaps you think of hamburgers and fast-food restaurants. Or perhaps you have an image of a product, such as an American car or Coca-Cola®. Some people immediately think of American universities. Others think of American companies. Many Americans think of the red, white, and blue flag when they think of the United States. There are many images associated with the name of a country.

2 There are also many ideas or concepts associated with the words *United States*. Some people think of a positive concept, such as freedom, when they think of the United States. Other people think of a negative concept, such as American involvement in other countries. Many Americans have both positive and negative ideas about their country. When they think of the lifestyle or the scenery (landscapes such as mountains or beaches at the ocean), they feel very positive and proud of their country. But sometimes, when they think about the government, they think about nuclear war and international problems. Then they have negative feelings about the country.

These images and ideas are all impressions of a country, the United States. People form these impressions in many different

\*Although technically more accurate, the term *North American* is not used by the people in the United States to describe themselves. Therefore, the term *American* is used throughout this book to describe things in the United States.

3 ways. They see American products and advertisements. They read newspapers and hear people talk about the United States. They probably see American movies and television shows. These impressions are always changing. As people receive more information, they adjust their images and concepts of a country.

4 Knowledge of a country includes many things. Typical products and actions by governments are part of this knowledge. But the most important thing in learning about a country is knowledge of the people of that country. What are their customs and lifestyles? How do they raise their children? What are their values and beliefs? How do they feel about work and entertainment, about time, about friendships?

5 In this book you will read about many aspects of the United States. You will read about lifestyles, institutions, values, and issues which are all part of American life and culture. Before you begin each chapter, think of your own impressions of the subject, American women, American cities, American families. Use your own impressions to compare with and question the impressions of the authors. Contact the U.S.A.

The following vocabulary exercise will help you understand the meaning of new words in the reading without a dictionary.

## D. Scanning/Vocabulary

*DIRECTIONS: It is important to be able to find information quickly when you read. This is scanning. Scan the reading for these words. Write the number of the line where you find them.*

Example: car 4 automobile similar

Now look at the word on the right. Is its meaning similar or different from the meaning of car? The meanings of car and automobile are similar, so you write similar on the line. Remember that the word similar does not mean exactly the same; it means that the two words are close in meaning.

Try another example:

first 1 last different

In this case, you find first in line 1 of the reading. The meanings are different, so you write different on the line. If you are not sure about the meaning of a word, read the sentence where you find it again. Try to



understand its meaning from the other words in the sentence and the reading.

	LINE NUMBER		SIMILAR OR DIFFERENT?
1. thought	_____	idea	_____
2. image	_____	picture	_____
3. ideas	_____	concepts	_____
4. perhaps	_____	maybe	_____
5. positive	_____	negative	_____
6. scenery	_____	landscapes	_____
7. impressions	_____	first ideas	_____
8. form	_____	make	_____
9. include	_____	have inside	_____
10. typical	_____	common	_____
11. products	_____	customs	_____
12. adjust	_____	change a little	_____
13. proud	_____	ashamed	_____
14. lifestyle	_____	institutions	_____
15. compare with	_____	look at side by side	_____

How much of the reading did you understand without using a dictionary? Do the next exercise to find out.

## E. Reading Comprehension

*DIRECTIONS: Circle the letter of the choice that best completes each sentence.*

- There are \_\_\_\_\_ examples given of images associated with the name *United States*.  
a. six                                      b. seven                                      c. eight
- An example of a positive concept is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. nuclear war                              b. freedom                                      c. advertisement
- According to the reading, Americans are \_\_\_\_\_ about their lifestyle.  
a. scenery                                      b. negative                                      c. happy

4. According to the author, Americans \_\_\_\_ have negative thoughts about their country.
- a. always                      b. never                      c. sometimes
5. The author thinks that you, the reader, have \_\_\_\_ the United States already.
- a. no knowledge of              b. many impressions              c. negative ideas about of
6. In paragraph 5, the author gives the idea that your ideas will \_\_\_\_.
- a. always be the same as the author's ideas              b. be wrong                      c. sometimes be different from the author's ideas
7. People probably have \_\_\_\_ impressions of American involvement in other countries.
- a. positive                      b. negative                      c. no
8. Foreign business people probably think of an American \_\_\_\_ when they hear the words United States.
- a. product                      b. landscape                      c. institution
9. The term *American* is used because \_\_\_\_.
- a. North American is too long              b. people in the United States use it                      c. the book is about Canada
10. People's impressions \_\_\_\_ when they learn more about a country.
- a. are negative                      b. are never different                      c. change