



# USA CULTURE

***"America is not just a country, it's an idea."***

Bono, Irish singer-songwriter

## 1. United States Culture Discussion

1. What comes to mind when you think about the United States and its people? What is the US famous for? How would you describe American culture? What are some stereotypes?
2. Do you know any typical American words or slang?
3. Have you ever visited the US? Where did you go, and what did you do? Which places in the US would you most like to visit? What would you do there?
4. How are the urban and rural areas of the United States different?
5. What has the United States given to the world?
6. Which American holidays or festivals do you know about? Are any of these also celebrated in your country?
7. Is the United States the best country in the world? If so, in what respect? If not, why?
8. Is there anything you don't like about the United States?

## 2. United States Culture Vocabulary

- **to pledge allegiance** (verb) / **The Pledge of Allegiance** (noun) – *to promise loyalty to something; a promise to be loyal to the United States, said daily by American schoolchildren.*
- **The Star-Spangled Banner** (noun) – *the national anthem of the United States.*
- **The Stars and Stripes / The Star-Spangled Banner / Old Glory** (nouns) – *alternative names for the flag of the United States.*
- **The American Dream** (noun) – *the idea that life can be improved dramatically with the opportunities for success available in the United States.*
- **The Deep South** (noun) – *a cultural and geographic region in the far south of the United States including the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and sometimes including Texas and northern Florida.*
- **patriotism** (noun, concept), **patriot** (noun, person), **patriotic** (adjective) – *pride or love for one's country; a person who loves their country or is proud of it.*

**Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun):**

1. And the \_\_\_\_\_ in triumph shall wave, O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.
2. I \_\_\_\_\_ to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
3. Many immigrants came to the United States in search of \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Supporting your government in times of war is a \_\_\_\_\_ duty.
5. Tennesseans were furious when it was revealed the best barbeque in the United States is in the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. When the nation is in mourning, \_\_\_\_\_ is flown at half-mast.

### United States Culture vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Do you find it a little strange that American children pledge allegiance to the flag every day? Could this be considered a type of brainwashing? Does anything like this happen in your country?
2. On which occasions might you hear the Star-Spangled Banner? Is the national anthem also sung on these occasions in your country?
3. What do you know about the Stars and Stripes? What do the stars represent? What do the stripes represent? Do you know what the red, white and blue colours represent?
4. Do people in your country have desires to follow the American Dream? Is the American Dream dead?
5. What comes to mind when you think of the Deep South? What was the history of this region? How is the culture? What kind of food has this region given to the world?
6. Why are Americans so patriotic compared to other countries? Are they too patriotic? Shouldn't everyone be patriotic? What's the difference between being patriotic and nationalistic?

### 3. Video: American Food

You are going to watch a video by Food Insider called "The Most Iconic Food In Every State."

**Watch the video here:** <https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-united-states-culture/>

**While you watch the video, answer the following questions:**

#### Multiple choice

1. How many salmon are harvested in Alaska each year?  
*a) 10 million    b) 100 million    c) 1,000 million*
2. Where did Arizona's Sonoran dog originate?  
*a) El Salvador    b) Mexico    c) Guatamala*
3. Which is not an ingredient in a Cuban sandwich?  
*a) pork    b) tomatoes    c) cheese*
4. What are pork tenderloin sandwiches bigger than?  
*a) your plate    b) your belly    c) your face*

#### Sentence completion

5. \_\_\_\_\_ of lobsters in the United States are caught off the coast of Maine.
6. There are over \_\_\_\_\_ fudge shops in Mackinaw Island.
7. In Missouri, ravioli is breaded and \_\_\_\_\_.
8. New York pizza gets its characteristic foldable and crispy crust from the city's \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Short answer

9. When did German and Russian immigrants bring Chislic to South Dakota?
10. How long are briskets smoked for in Texas?
11. When were pepperoni rolls created for coal miners in West Virginia?
12. Bison steaks have a lighter and sweeter flavour than which other meat?

## 4. United States Culture Conversation Questions

1. Do you like to watch any American TV shows? Do you have any favourite Hollywood movies?
2. Which music from the US do you like? Who are the most famous American musical artists? Which American music is popular in your country?
3. What do you know about the history of American music? Has the best music in the world come from the US?
4. What do you know about American sports? Are there any you like? Are there any that are popular in your country? Do you like to watch the Superbowl?
5. What do you think about American food? Which American food is popular in your country? If United States has some of the best traditional food in the world, why do so many people think that the only food eaten there is fast food like McDonald's or KFC?
6. What do you know about religion in the US? Why is the United States much more religious than other Western countries?
7. Is the United States a racist country? Is it any different to any other country in that respect?
8. Why do many Americans seem to be so obsessed with guns?

## 5. United States Culture Writing Task

Write about your opinion of American culture. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- The best things about American culture.
- The best places to visit in the United States.
- How American culture has influenced the world.

### **Alternative exam practice question:**

Some people say that patriotism is vital for a nation and its people to overcome challenges and protect against threats to the country. Other people say that patriotism is nothing more than dangerous nationalism promoted by governments to distract people from their own failings. Discuss both of these views and give your own opinion.