

ENGLISH: AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

The English language is «the mother tongue» for excellence. It is also more important than the French and Spanish languages. It is the most important in politics, at the workplace and in the cultural sphere. Around the world, it is used to communicate among people of different nationalities. English is very popular because England created a big colonial empire that included Canada, Northern Ireland, north Africa and many others countries.

Today English is spoken in:

The U.S.A. (United States of America);

The UK (United Kingdom);

Canada;

Australia;

Ireland;

New Zealand.

In these places, the English language has changed because of the distance between the various countries.

LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE U.S.A. AND THE UK

There are many differences between British English and American English.

First, there is a strong difference in pronunciation and in vocabulary: you can find different words expressing the same meaning or object. For example:

The USA:

apartment;

wardrobe;

cookie;

elevator.

THE UK:

flat;

closet;

biscuit;

lift.

Therefore, some words are written in another way. For example:

- words ending in -our (in BrE) end in -or (in AmE) > colour/color;

- words ending in -ize (in BrE) end in -ise (in AmE) > recognize/recognise)

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States of America (commonly called the U.S.A. or States) are a federal democracy of 48 contiguous states, plus the federal district of Washington and other two states: the Hawaii Islands and Alaska, the biggest of all.

The president is Barack Obama, who is the first Black American president in the history of the USA.

The USA border with:

Canada (north)

Mexico (south)

The USA overlook the Pacific Ocean (west) and the Atlantic Ocean (east).

In the USA there are 325 millions of people and almost all speak English but with different accents depending on their location.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The American school system is obligatory up to 18 years old.

Children attend school up to 11 years old, then they go to Junior High School and to High School (until 18 years old).

This process is formed by 13 years and evaluations in the USA are very different from the Italian ones: in fact, they are expressed in percentage, from 1% to 100%.

Next, students can choose to attend college (Italian University) or to start working.

The most important American colleges also have a basketball team or a football team and they have a crest.

These sports are the most popular in the U.S.A. Guys live and go to school for five years.

RELIGION

- Cristianity (81,1%):
- Protestants (51,4%);
- Catholics (23,9%);
- Mormons (1,4%);
- Jehovah's Witnesses (0,7%);
- Orthodox (0,3%);
- Hebraism (1,4%)
- Islam (0,6%)
- Buddhism (0,4%)

In the U.S.A. about a quarter of the population is atheist.



AMERICAN FESTIVITIES

In the U.S.A. there are many important festivities, because of the innumerable traditions in the various regions. Here, the most important ones:

JANUARY: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Day, Carnival;

FEBRUARY: Groundhog Day, Lincoln's Day, St. Valentine's Day, Washington's Birthday;

MARCH: St. Patrick's Day, Easter;

MAY: Memorial Day, Mum's Day;

JUNE: Flag Day, Father's Day;

JULY: Independence's Day;

SEPTEMBER: Work's Day;

OCTOBER: Halloween;

NOVEMBER: Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day;

DECEMBER: Christmas



AMERICAN FOOD

There are many varieties of food in the U.S.A.

Fast foods are very popular in this place and there people can eat sandwiches, chips, and can drink sodas.

The typical American breakfast is made of fried eggs with bacon and sausages, pancakes, muffins or toasts.

For lunch, they usually eat soups or sandwiches, with fruit and yoghurt. Between lunch and breakfast Americans sometimes have a brunch (at about eleven a.m.).

For dinner (in the American language «supper»), the most famous dishes are beef or fried chicken wings with baked potatoes.



Sports

Sports in the U.S.A. have an important role because they are part of the American culture.

The most played are:

- Baseball, which is very popular;
- Softball: a type of baseball, but easier;
- Basketball: it's already practised at college and it has a very important role culturally;
- Football: it's a typical sport in the U.S.A. and it's practised only there. It's different from rugby as far as some rules are concerned.

