

# UNIT 2

## ABCs of British and American Cultures

### I. Teaching Plan (4 Teaching Hours)

PART A 30Ms

PART B 60Ms

PART C 60Ms

PART D 50Ms

Procedures	Duration (mins)	Objectives	Key Points
Part A Section 1	15	To check students' prior knowledge of British and American symbols through icons recognition	British and American symbols
Part A Section 2	15	To classify the British and American character and personalities	the British and American character and personalities
Part B Section 1	15	To introduce the UK in terms of language, culture, customs and etiquette; To sum up the aspects of culture behavior	profile of the UK; the basic elements of a country profile
Part B Section 2	20	To understand the present UK from the British Social Attitudes survey	Britons attitudes towards present life
Part B Section 3	10	To comprehend the English personality and character; To summarize the difference between English and American humor	The English personality and character; the difference between English and American humor

Procedures	Duration (mins)	Objectives	Key Points
Part B Section 4	15	To summarize Britain's ten core values; To interpret core British values during different premierships	Britain's core values during different premierships
Part C Section 1	15	To introduce the US in terms of language, culture, customs and etiquette; To demonstrate the differences between British and American customs and etiquette	profile of the US
Part C Section 2	20	To understand the diversity and pluralism that makes America uniquely multicultural	multicultural America
Part C Section 3	15	To identify American personality traits, major values and national character; To explain what is American Dream and how it came to be	American personality traits, major values, national character and American Dream
Part C Section 4	10	To summarize America's ten core values; To analyze the similarities and differences between British and American core values	America's ten core values; the similarities and differences between British and American core values
Part D Hands On	25	To compare the core values of America, Britain and China	knowledge utilization
Part D Hands On	25	To test your knowledge of British and American cultures by acting as a cultural advisor	knowledge utilization

## II. Instructional Design

PART A LEAD IN	
Section 1 + 2	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> British and American Icons Recognition & British and American Personalities Identification  1. The tutor asks Ss to talk about British and American icons, symbols, personalities and character in order to gauge their relevant background knowledge.  2. The tutor identifies Ss prior knowledge about British and American symbols and personalities.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> Pictures and a Personality Adjectives List
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> The tutor uses the two lead-in activities to test Ss prior knowledge. Through this, the tutor could assess their prior knowledge about the topic, determine the extent of instructions that are necessary and better prepare them for it.
PART B FOCUS ON THE UK	
Section 1	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Text Structure Analysis, Q&A, Group Discussion and Writing Practice  1. The tutor checks for Ss understanding of the profile of the UK by asking students to analyze the text and answer reading comprehension questions.  2. The tutor evaluates Ss knowledge about basic elements of a country profile by asking students to do group discussion and writing practice.
	<b>Resources / Equipment:</b> The Textbook
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> Ss should comprehend the text and practice writing a profile of a country.
Section 2	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Q&A, Graph Interpretation, and Video Watching  1. The tutor assesses Ss understanding of British social attitudes survey by using the tasks of reading comprehension, statistics interpretation and video watching and comprehension.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> The Textbook, a Graph, and a Video Clip
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> Ss should read, observe and watch attentively to have a thorough understanding of the survey.

PART B FOCUS ON THE UK	
Section 3	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Q&A 1. The tutor checks for Ss understanding of the English personality and character through reading comprehension exercises.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> The Textbook
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> Ss should find examples and details to support their opinions.
Section 4	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Summary and Group Discussion 1. The tutor evaluates Ss understanding of the ten core British values and their ability of critical thinking by asking them to write a summary and to discuss challenging questions.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> The Textbook
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> Ss summarize the ten core British values.
PART C FOCUS ON THE US	
Section 1	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Q&A and Logical Arrangement of Ideas 1. The tutor evaluates Ss understanding of the profile of the US by asking them to finish reading comprehension exercise and to put the main ideas of the text in a logical order.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> The Textbook
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> Ss should finish the two exercises on their own.
Section 2	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Q&A and Group Discussion 1. The tutor asks Ss to take notes about what makes US American while watching the video clip. 2. The tutor checks for Ss understanding of the content by asking them to answer the comprehension questions. 3. The tutor evaluates Ss ability of critical thinking by asking them to pose challenging questions.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> A Video Clip
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> Ss should use their listening skills and critical thinking skills to demonstrate their understanding of American identity.

PART C FOCUS ON THE US	
Section 3	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Text Outline and Q&A 1. The tutor evaluates Ss understanding of the American character by asking them to list the outline of the text and to do reading comprehension questions.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> The Textbook
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> Ss identify the national character, personality and major values of the US.
Section 4	<b>Tasks / Activities:</b> Summary, Challenging Questions Raising, and Group Discussion 1. The tutor checks for Ss understanding of the ten core American values by asking them to summarize the text, and to pose some challenging questions to each value. 2. The tutor evaluates Ss analytical skill by asking them to do a comparative study.
	<b>Resources/ Equipment:</b> The Textbook
	<b>Dos and Don'ts:</b> 1. Ss summarize the ten core American British values. 2. Ss elaborate on the differences between British and American core values.
PART D HANDS ON	
Project 1	A Comparative Study on American, British and Chinese Core Values
	1. Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5; 2. Identify the phenomenon your group is to study, decide on the type of descriptive research design, raise your key research questions, and finally design any data collection instruments; 3. Do literature review, look for patterns and trends that are relevant to your research questions and condense the data by drafting summaries into a more concise form; 4. Write a comparative study on ABC countries core values within 1,000 words with necessary resource bank to back up your view; 5. Make a PPT presentation in class about your project; 6. Use the Project and Process Assessment to evaluate the group project and their PPT presentation.

## PART D HANDS ON

### Project 2

Acting as a Cultural Advisor

1. Put British /American and Chinese cultures in the cultural behaviors patterns;
2. Sort out their similarities and differences;
3. Provide sufficient graphs, data and convincing cultural cases to prove your statement and opinions;
4. Act as a cultural advisor in a professional manner.



## NOTES

1. Before class, Ss are required to preview each section from going over the text to completing the exercises.
2. In class, the tutor checks for the students' understanding of the topic via a variety of learning activities.

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## III. Keys & References

### PART A

## Lead in

### How Much Do You Really Know about the UK and the US?

#### EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** How many British and American icons do you recognize? Please look at these pictures, and then put them in the following table.

Items	UK Icons	US Icons
Names of places	The United Kingdom, Great Britain, England, London	American, USA, New York

Items	UK Icons	US Icons
National flag	Union Jack	Stars and Stripes
Currency	sterling, pound	dollar
Landmarks	Big Ben, Tower Bridge	Statue of Liberty, Broadway, metropolis, skyscraper
Vehicles	red double decker bus, black cab, car	taxi, auto
Business	finance; red phone booth; tourism	Manhattan, Wall Street, business, financial, iphones, tourism
Customs & traditions	crown, royalty, the Changing of the Guard, beefeater; detective; tea service, tea pot; football, rainy, umbrella	big apple, eagle; Indian, cowboy, Independence Day, freedom; hamburger, hot dog, pizza, pretzel
<b>Similarities</b>	Symbols; Icons; Politics; Landmarks (scenic spots); Currency; Business; Public transport; Customs and traditions	
<b>Differences</b>	British icons focus on artifacts; while American icons focus both on artifacts and values.	

### 12 different American national symbols

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Stars and Stripes  | 7 American Bald Eagle  |
| 2 Liberty Bell       | 8 Statue of Liberty    |
| 3 US Capitol         | 9 Independence Hall    |
| 4 Jefferson Memorial | 10 Lincoln Memorial    |
| 5 Pentagon           | 11 Washington Monument |
| 6 Mount Rushmore     | 12 The White House     |

## EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** The following adjectives describe the British and American character and personalities. Please understand their meaning first and then put them into the right column.

British

humourous, wry, fair, witty, abhorrent, family-oriented, homey, stiff, starched, pompous, stringent, prejudiced, stuffy, awful

American loud, warm hearted, outgoing, pushy, self-confident, dominating, self-centered, over-powering, brash, colorful, reserved, modest, lively, inhibited, likable, bossy, overweight

### What are they like?

	Positive	Negative
<b>British</b>	humorous, fair, witty, family-oriented, homey, shopkeeper, stringent	wry, abhorrent, stiff, starched, pompous, prejudiced stuffy, awful
<b>American</b>	warm hearted, outgoing, self-confident, colorful, reserved, modest, lively, likable	loud, pushy, dominating, self-centered, over-powering, brash, reserved, inhibited, bossy, overweight

### WHAT ARE THE BRITISH LIKE?

HUMOR (AmE)= in BrE this word is spelled HUMOUR.

WRY= a sense of humour which is ironic and complicated.

FAIR= just (they believe in justice)

WITTY= with an intelligent sense of humour.

ABHORRENT= horrible

I HAVE A SOFT SPOT FOR X= I like X a lot, I have deep feelings for X.

FAMILY-ORIENTATED= their family is the most important thing for them.

HOMEY= they like being at home.

STIFF= very formal and not too friendly.

STARCHED= stiff. Starch is a liquid used for stiffening cloth and making it rigid and hard.

POMPOUS= they behave as if they are more important and superior.

STRINGENT= strict, controlling.

PREJUDICED AGAINST X= with a prejudice against X, with negative ideas about X.

STUFFY= very formal and old-fashioned.

AWFUL= horrible

### WHAT ARE THE AMERICANS LIKE?

LOUD= a loud person is someone too outgoing, too self-confident, who expresses their opinion in a very strong way and may also be eccentric and pushy. A negative word.

WARM-HEARTED= with a warm heart, that is, loving, who treats you kindly and caringly.



OUTGOING= extrovert, very sociable and friendly.

PUSHY= someone who tries to get everything they want, without caring for other people, and constantly demand other people's attention.

SELF-CONFIDENCE= with a lot of confident in themselves.

(note: for neutral singular words like "somebody", if we may be referring to either male or female, we use the pronouns "they, their, etc." and the reflexive themselves or even the singular "themselves", though this last one is considered by some people to be incorrect).

DOMINEERING= who always tries to dominate and control other people.

SELF-CENTERED= someone who only thinks of himself and his own needs (spelled "self-centred" in BrE).

OVER-POWERING= very powerful and domineering (a negative word).

BRASH= someone who is brash speaks too loudly or are too confident and aggressive.

COLORFUL= in BrE this word is spelled "colourful". It means "with a lot of colours", but may also be used metaphorically to signify that somebody is lively and very expressive and funny.

RESERVED= introverted, shy

MODEST= shy about nudity and sex. It may also mean humble.

LIVELY= showing a lot of life and energy.

INHIBITED= someone who doesn't show their real feelings or thoughts because they worry too much about what negative things other people may think of them.

LIKABLE= nice, that you can like them.

BOSSY= someone who enjoys telling other people what to do, giving orders, like a boss.

OVERWEIGHT= somebody who is overweight weighs too much, they are very very fat.

## PART B

# Focus on the UK

## Section 1

### The UK — Language, Culture, Customs and Etiquette

## TEXT A

### EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** Please fill out the form about the structure of Text A. Pay attention to the basic components of a country profile.

Title		UK — Language, Culture, Customs and Etiquette	
Text Analysis	Part I	Facts and Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Location</li> <li>● Capital</li> <li>● Climate</li> <li>● Population</li> <li>● Ethnic Make-up</li> <li>● Religion</li> <li>● Government</li> </ul>
	Part II	Language in the UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● English is the official language, spoken by 70% British</li> <li>● Other native languages including Welsh, Irish, Ulster Scots, Cornish, Gaelic and British Sign Language</li> <li>● Many foreign languages that immigrants have brought from across the globe</li> </ul>
	Part III	British Society, People and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The United Kingdom: geographical distinctions and the way to address people from 4 different nations</li> <li>● The Class System</li> <li>● A Multicultural Society</li> <li>● The Stiff Upper Lip</li> </ul>

## EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** Read Text A and then answer the following questions.

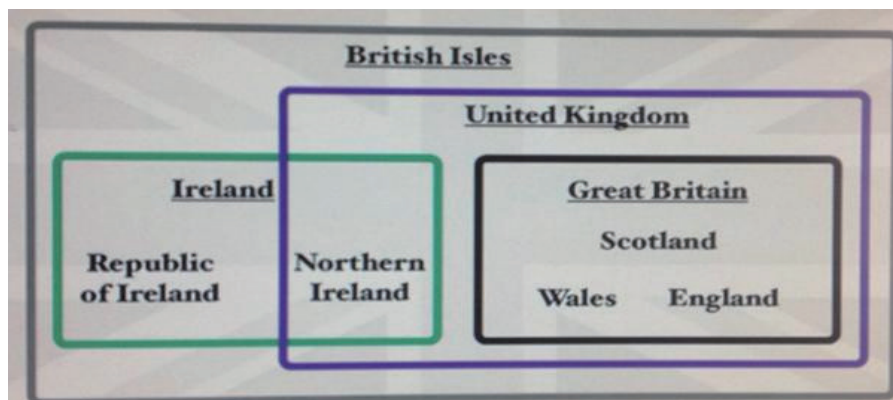
1. Are the United Kingdom, Great Britain, and England the same place?

These three places are different.

**The United Kingdom** contains four co-equal and sovereign nations: England, to the north is Scotland and to the west is Wales. And what's often forgotten is Northern Ireland. However, as the four constituent countries don't have their own passports, they are all British Citizens. They are British Citizens of the United Kingdom, whose full name is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

**Great Britain** is a geographical rather than a political term. It is the largest island among the British Isles. Within the United Kingdom, the term "Great Britain" is often used to refer to England, Scotland and Wales alone, with the intentional exclusion of Northern Ireland. This is mostly, but not completely true, as all three constituent countries have islands that are not part of Great Britain, such as The Isle of Wight, part of England, the Welsh Isle of Anglesey, the Scottish Hebrides, the Shetland Islands, the Orkney Islands and the Islands of the Clyde.

**England** is often confused with the United Kingdom as a whole, because it's the largest and most populous of the nations and contains the de facto capital city, London.



2. How to address people from different nations of the UK?

Someone who is from England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland is called British or a Briton/Brit (pl. Britons/Brits). People from England are English, from Scotland are "Scots", from Wales Welsh and from Northern Ireland Irish. Be sure not to call someone Welsh, Scots, or Northern Irish.

“English.”

3. What is the British class system like?

The British class system is still very much the same although in a more subconscious way. It seems playing fair but the British still seem to treat people unfairly according to class.

4. Why is the UK called a multicultural society?

Since World War II, Britain has become increasingly diverse as it has accommodated large immigrant populations, particularly from its former colonies such as India, Pakistan and the West Indies. The mixture of ethnic groups and cultures make it a multicultural society.

5. What are the British people known for?

They are known for their stiff upper lip and blitz spirit, holding an “grin and bear” attitude in the face of adversity or embarrassment.

6. What is the British character?

The British are very reserved and private people. They are a bit more contained in their body language and hand gestures while speaking. They are generally distant, and may not initially appear to be as open or friendly. Friendships take longer to build; however, once established they tend to be deep and may last over time and distance.

## EXERCISE 3



**Directions:** Please compare Text A with the text “Profile of United Kingdom” in Section 1 of the Online Reading and answer the following questions.

1–5 Open.

6. Please try to complete the following form and then illustrate what you believe to be norms and values characteristic of British culture.

Aspect of Cultural Behavior	Typical of British Culture	Typical Beliefs of British Culture
Politics	Legal system — Law-abiding	Fair trial
Family	Marriage / cohabitation	Romantic love
Work	Employer / employee	Work for money
Education	Attending school (5 – 16)	Qualifications are important
Media	Watching	TV Private / Public ownership

Religion	Prayer	Christianity / Islam
Science	Medical Surgery	Keeping people alive as long as possible

## Section 2

### How Much Has the British Changed? Changing Attitudes — The 1980s and 2012

#### TEXT B

#### EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** Read Text B and answer these questions.

- On what aspect have the British changed according to the British Social Attitudes survey?  
Poll (The British Social Attitudes) shows our views on class, politics, unions and royalty have all moved on from 1963 to 2013.
- Is class still important in British life?  
No.
- Are the British more or less interested in politics?  
The British are more interested in politics. Significantly, in 2013 only 17% think that “having elections makes government pay a good deal of attention to what people think”, against 46% in 1963. Yet in contrast, 28% now say they take “a good deal” of interest in politics, up from 16%, while 43% take “some” interest, compared with 37% in 1963.
- Are the British of today more or less optimistic?  
The comparative figures reveal a sharp decline in optimism.
- Do people think the Queen is still important?  
The survey also underlines the decline in support for the monarchy as a political entity.

## EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** The words and expressions in the image above are often used to describe graphs, data and statistics. Please fill in the form based on the following classification. An example is already done for you. Add more words or expressions you can think of to the table after you finish the categorization.

Subject	V. / N. ↗	V. / N. ↘
survey; poll; proportion; show; figures; report; findings; changes; opinion; results	rise; increase; half; double; triple; quadruple; peak; top; upturn; emphasise; underscore; underlines	diminished; decline; plummet; fall; downturn; bottom; reverse; opposite

## EXERCISE 3



**Directions:** Look carefully at the following diagram and fill in the gaps with the correct number.

### Changing Attitudes — The 1980s and 2012

(A) NHS (National Health Service)

1. 61%, 2. 34%, 3. 70%

(B) Social Security Benefits

(B) 4. 51%, 5. 62%

(C) Family and Sexual Attitudes

(C) 6. 28%, 7. 11%; 8. 49%, 9. 13% 10. 64%

## EXERCISE 4



**Directions:** Watch the video about recent changes in British social attitudes towards marriage, relationships, religion and welfare, and fill in the blanks.

1. fallen

2. halved

3. tolerant

4. halved

5. an upturn

6. has fallen

7. steady decline

8. 12, class, politics, unions, royalty, NHS, social security benefits, family, sexual attitudes, marriage, relationships, religion, and welfare.

## Section 3

### Great Britain: English Personality and Character

#### TEXT C

#### EXERCISE



**Directions:** Read Text C and then answer the following questions.

1. What is the English national character?  
The English national character is dualistic: One aspect is conservative with a strong willpower to self-control, and the other is extroverted, audacious, and innovative.
2. What example did the author cite to illustrate the English national character? Why?  
The author cited the example of pub to illustrate the English national character for the following reasons. First of all, they go to the pub for fellowship and spiritual enlightenment, i.e. the same reason why people go to the church. Secondly, its home-like qualities in terms of decoration and atmosphere and its respectable open hours are both appealing to the locals and visitors. Plus, the pub represents pleasure with control and in good taste.
3. What is the difference between English humor and American humor?  
English humor is word oriented while American humor is more action oriented.
4. Could you find more examples to illustrate that the English are conservative and self-controlled?  
We can see that the English are conservative and self-controlled in English humor, in the English pace of living, in the English people's standing in line quietly for the bus or the taxi, and also in English tea drinking.
5. Do you think that the English national character and the British core values the same or different? Do they share some common features?  
Open.

6. Can you find some examples to support your opinion?  
Open.

The following two readings help you know more about British character, and give you some thoughts about the relationship between British national character and British core values.

### Reading 1

#### Abridged from United Kingdom “England, Arthur Kirkland, Britain, Great Britain and Northern Ireland”

A British personality is rather cynical, stubborn, sarcastic, competitive, and cold, even though he claims to be a gentleman. He has a sharp tongue and a potty mouth, but is not a bad person. He's also described as being a tsundere. When he becomes friends with someone, he is surprisingly very loyal to them. France noted him once as having a slender build. England has a strong belief in the supernatural and the occult; he can even perform black magic, see supernatural creatures, and is able to converse with said creatures (such as unicorns, ghosts, fairies, and even on some accounts, a flying bunny and Captain Hook). However, he refuses to believe in aliens. His hobbies include embroidery and other craftsmanship, drinking tea, getting drunk, literature, rock/punk music, and criticizing America's movies. He also loves to cook, but a running gag throughout the entire series is that he sucks at it and that his food has no taste whatsoever (which is why America, who grew up eating his food, is able to eat the strange “delicacies” that he does). When drunk, he becomes violent and bitter, often complaining or raving on about America in his drunken state.

### Reading 2

#### Top 50 “typically British” traits

1. Talking about the weather
2. Great at queueing
3. Sarcasm
4. Watching soaps
5. Getting drunk
6. A love of bargains
7. A love of curtain twitching
8. Stiff upper lip (“Keep Calm And Carry On” approach)
9. Love of all television
10. Moaning
11. Obsession with class
12. Gossiping with neighbors over the garden fence



13. Obsession with the traffic
14. Enjoying other people's misfortune
15. Inability to complain
16. Love of cheap foreign holidays
17. Working long hours
18. A soothing cup of tea to ease worries
19. Eating meat and two vegetables
20. Looking uncomfortable on the dance floor
21. Feeling uncomfortable when people talk about their emotions
22. Clever sense of humor
23. Obsession with property values
24. Pandering to political correctness
25. Road rage
26. Being unhappy with our weight
27. Wanting a good tan
28. Being proud of where we live
29. Not saying what we mean
30. The ability to laugh at ourselves
31. Washing the car on a Sunday
32. Taking the mickey out of others
33. Asking people about their journey
34. Inability not to comment on how other people bring up their children
35. Jealousy of wealth and success
36. Being overly polite
37. Texting instead of calling
38. An inability to express our emotions
39. Obsession with the Royal Family
40. Fondness for mowing the lawn
41. Love of rambling through the countryside
42. A love of all things deep fried
43. Emulating celebrity lifestyles
44. Leaving things to the last minute
45. Irony
46. Keeping our homes neat and tidy
47. Take decisions and accept the consequences
48. Achieving against all odds
49. Wanting our sportsmen / teams to fail
50. DIY on a Bank Holiday

## Section 4

### The Core British Values that Define our Nation

#### TEXT D

#### EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** Please read Text D and then sum up the 10 British core values.

1. the rule of law
2. the sovereignty of the Crown in Parliament
3. tolerance
4. personal freedom and a presumption against state coercion
5. free speech and freedom of expression
6. a belief in private property and the freedom to buy and sell
7. institutions capturing and reflecting its British character
8. history and culture
9. love of sport and of fair play
10. patriotism

#### More readings

##### UK Attitudes and Values

It is not just a useless platitude that the UK is an open and multicultural society. It is a fact that has a massive impact on how we live and also on how comfortable international students are in the country. In the UK it is possible not only to meet a wide variety of people but also to feel accepted yourself for who you are no matter where you are from.

Here are some of the most famous attitudes and values in British people and culture, and why they contribute to improve student life for all.

#### Tolerance

The UK is one of the most tolerant societies in the world, with people being open to the inclusion of all without emphasis on their ethnic background, sexual orientation or place of origin. Although levels with diversity vary in different parts of the country, you don't need to be in London to feel the tolerance and respect that British people have for others. Overall this is great not just for British postgraduates leaving their communities for the first time but also for international postgraduates who fear how welcome they will be as a "foreigner" in a new country.

If on the off-chance you do encounter some unseemly behavior, UK laws on discrimination, harassment and other problems students face are extremely stringent. This means that if you ever experience a problem, you will have the law handily on your side.

#### Entrepreneurial Spirit

“Pulling yourself up by your bootstraps” is a tradition dear to many people in the UK and one that is reflected in British universities. People from all kinds of socioeconomic backgrounds are present at UK universities meaning that the amount of money you have is not a factor in your social acceptance. As long as you work hard and to the best of your ability, there is no discrimination or bias against those who have come from humbler beginnings.

#### Community

Tight-knit communities are the staple of British society and that is often reflected well in university cities and towns. Whether you study in Bath or Bangor, the sense of welcoming and community is palpable between students and the residents of their area. Because university students are often involved in philanthropic projects that benefit communities, it is easy to get involved and feel local pride for a place even when you are an “outsider.”

#### Humor

In addition to all these serious notes on British attitudes and values, perhaps the most distinguishing part of the British character is humour. British people are the masters of jokes and satire, and everyone from cab drivers to Prince Charles are known for cracking a good quip or two. Humour is a great part about British attitudes and culture because it helps put people at ease and also to help them feel part of the society.

#### Tradition

The strange and quirky traditions of the UK are often things that British people take for granted but serve to delight and bemuse the international visitors. Whether it is our love of the Queen or our need for a Sunday Roast, traditions are what make Britain interesting. But just because our traditions are old does not mean we are not willing to incorporate the new. British people respect the past at the same time as embracing change, meaning even the oldest of universities retain their old-style charm while still being excellent modern institutions.

## EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the author? Please exemplify your opinion.

Open.

## PART C

# Focus on the US

## Section 1

### USA — Language, Culture, Customs and Etiquette

#### TEXT E

#### EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** Read Text E and then answer the following questions.

1. What language is the second most common language in America? And why?  
Spanish is the second-most common language in the country, spoken by almost 30 million people (or 12% of the population).
2. Why is America a diversified society?  
America is ultimately a nation of immigrants. Not only is the country populated by people from foreign countries but all Americans in one way or another trace their ancestry back to another culture, whether Irish, German, Italian or Scottish. Looking around any major city one will notice the “melting-pot” that it is.
3. What are the distinctive American character?  
The Americans are friendly and informal.
4. What do they value most?  
They value time, wealth, and family most.
5. What are the differences between British and American society and culture?  
They differ in character and values. The British are very reserved and private people; while the Americans are friendly and informal. The British have a “grin and bear” attitude in the face of adversity or embarrassment that lives on today; while, the American value time, wealth, and family most.
6. Could you demonstrate the differences between British and American customs and etiquette?  
Open.

## EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** There are four parts in American Society and Culture. Put the main idea of each part in a logical order.

III. American Society and Culture	
The Family; Time is Money; Informal and Friendly; Diversity	
Part 1	Diversity
Part 2	Informal and Friendly
Part 3	Time is Money
Part 4	The Family

## Section 2 What Makes US American

### TEXT F

## EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** Watch the video clip about what makes US American, and then answer the following questions.

1. When you think of the United States, what is the first thing that comes to mind?  
Maybe you think of the food, like Indian food, Pizza, Chinese food, BBQ, Japanese food, etc.
2. What holidays are demonstrated in the video clip?  
Holidays are Christmas, Easter, Judaism's important holidays like Hanukkah (光明节), Passover (逾越节), and Thanksgiving Day.
3. What are the symbols of the American identity appeared in this video clip?  
Baseball, Free compulsory education, equality, natural scenery (Yellow Stone Park), the Statue of Liberty, and the Golden Gate Bridge.
4. Who are the famous immigrants in the video clip that have helped build America?  
Einstein, Jacky Chan, Choplin, Yo-Yo Ma, etc.
5. What makes American?  
It is the immigrants that helped build the nation, and continue to do so today.

## SCRIPT

### What Makes US American

“We may have all come on different ships, but we’re in the same boat now.” —

MLK Jr

The United States is a country made up of many people, places and things; a country rich with culture, diversity, freedom, and ideas.

When you think of United States, what is the first thing that comes to mind?

Maybe you think of the food?

The holidays?

Or perhaps you think of symbols of the American identity.

Each of these elements come together to paint the picture of the United States, but what truly makes our country what it is today is the *people*.

Roughly one-in-seventeen US citizens were born in another country or were foreign born.

Immigrants helped build our nation, and continue to do so today.

In 2009, 12.5 % of businesses were immigrant owned.

Immigration as a whole increases the US Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by roughly \$37 billion each year.

Misinformation is a powerful tool that creates fear, mistrust, and hatred. Don’t let hate fuel the debate.

“Everywhere immigrants have enriched and strengthened the fabric of American Life.” —JFK

## EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** Discuss the following questions with your partner.  
Open.

## Section 3

### American Character: As I See It

#### TEXT G

#### EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** Please read Text G and then complete the following form about the **OUTLINE** of the text.

Outline of American Character: As I See It	
Structure	Main Idea
I. Introduction Para 1	The United States is a “ <u>salad bowl</u> ” or a “ <u>pizza</u> ” rather than a “melting pot”.
II. Body Para 2-11	1. National Character: <u>greedy, practical, not really intelligent individuals, very proud of being Americans (stereotype)</u>
	2. Major Values: 1) Freedom 2) <u>Practicality</u> 3) Individualism (Self-reliance; <u>Attitude to Time</u> ; Result Orientation; <u>Competition</u> ; <u>Success</u> ) 4) <u>Mobility</u> (a nation on wheels) 5) Patriotism 6) Personal Features ( <u>Straightforwardness</u> ; <u>Openness</u> ; <u>Sincerity</u> ; Activity)
	3. Attitude to Sports
	4. <u>Patriotism</u>
	5. Ethics
	6. <u>American Dream</u>
III. Conclusion Para 12	Importance of the topic

## EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** Discuss the following questions with your partner based on what you have read.

1. What is America compared to?

America is known as melting pot, salad bowl and pizza.

2. How do the three terms differ? Which term do you think best describes the US today?

The term “melting pot” came from a play written in 1908, which showed how people from different nations were melted together and born again as Americans. Most immigrants left behind their culture, traditions and language and started a new “American” life. Some people went so far as to change their name so they would blend in more with the people.

Positive terms used today to describe this blend of people are “salad bowl” and “pizza”. Both of these foods are made of several ingredients either mixed together in a bowl or held together by dough. Today the Italian immigrant arrives and remains Italian while living alongside Irish, Polish, Russian and other immigrants. It is the blending of these nationalities that gives America its flavor. Immigrants are proud of their heritage and even prouder that the nation of America has welcomed them.

3. List the American national character, personality and major values. What are the differences among the three?

### American personality traits

1. People who live in the friendly and conventional region are sociable, considerate, dutiful, and traditional.
2. People who reside in the relaxed and creative region value tolerance, individualism, and happiness.
3. People who live in the temperamental and uninhibited region are reserved, aloof, impulsive, irritable, and inquisitive.

### American major values

1. Freedom
2. Practicality
3. Individualism
  - Self-reliance
  - Attitude to Time
  - Result
- Orientation
- Competition
- Success
4. Mobility
5. Patriotism

### American national character

1. The most striking feature is the obsession with business and wealth.
2. the serious manner of Americans
3. their underlying kindness
4. informality in social situations



4. Pick ONE feature to elaborate on. You need to illustrate your point of view in details with evidence.

Open.

5. What is American Dream? How to achieve it?

American Dream, the most exact definition was given by J.T. Adams in *The Epic of America* is: “the dream of a land in which life should be better, richer, and fuller for every man with opportunities for each according to his abilities and achievement.” The Americans believe that the only way to reach the Dream is hard work and faith. The symbol of the American Dream, which is well-known all over the world, is the American smile, the brightest peculiarity of the American national character.

6. What shaped the American character?

The following FOUR reasons explain how the Americans shaped their character and values.

Firstly, the ideals and principles of the leaders of the American Revolution (1765—1783) have influenced American culture since. The American Revolution was a political upheaval during which the Thirteen American Colonies broke from the British Empire and formed an independent nation, the United States of America. The Revolution generated radical changes in the principles, opinions, and sentiments of the American people. New ideas and issues affected social customs, political ideals, and gender and racial roles as the thirteen colonies evolved into the United States. Of all the great contributors, Thomas Paine and his famous works *Common Sense* (published in Jan. 1776) was most credited with influencing the colonists' decision to seek independence from British rule. *Common Sense* concluded that America had an obligation to the world to become an independent and democratic society. And then Thomas Jefferson and *the Declaration of Independence* (created by Thomas Jefferson *et al* in June 1776). This document stated that “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Secondly, American Puritanism, originated from a movement for reform in the Church of England, had a profound influence on social, political, ethical, and theological ideas of the Americans. The forming of American individualism and democratic thoughts were influenced by Puritanism in New England. It also shaped American people's national character of being hard-working and thrifty, and made them bear a strong sense of mission.

Moreover, Puritanism rendered Americans devoted to popular education. Thirdly, according to Frederick Jackson Turner, an American historian in the early 20th century, the moving western frontier shaped American democracy and the American character from the colonial era until 1890. Fourthly, US society is made up of a diversity of ethnic groups and cultures that have helped shape American values.

### Further Reading

Mapping America's personalities: Scientists chart the most friendly, conventional and relaxed regions of the US Data was collected over 12 years from more than 1.5 million people living in 48 states and the District of Columbia. Researchers identified three psychological profiles based on openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism.

People who live in friendly and conventional states like Minnesota and South Dakota are poorer, less educated, more conservative.

Americans who reside in relaxed and creative states, such as California and Oregon, are more ethnically and culturally diverse.

Temperamental and uninhibited portion of the US, which includes New York and Massachusetts, has more women and people who are wealthier.

**The “Friendly and Conventional” region.** The first region features the states of Middle America, including South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa, known as the “red” states. People here ranked highly in levels of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, moderately low in neuroticism, and very low in openness. Residents of the region tend to be “sociable, considerate, dutiful, and traditional,” the researchers write. They are predominantly white with low levels of education, wealth, and social tolerance, and tend to be more religious and politically conservative than people outside of the region. They are also less healthy compared with other Americans.

**The “Relaxed and Creative” region.** The second cluster consists of West Coast states, Washington, Oregon, and California. Its personality profile is marked by low extraversion and agreeableness, very low neuroticism, and very high openness. Cultural diversity and alternative lifestyles are high, and residents are politically liberal and healthy, both mentally and physically. This region is richer, has more residents with college degrees, and is more innovative than other areas. These states cast fewer votes for conservative presidential candidates and are less religious compared with others. Here, the study's authors write, people value tolerance, individualism, and happiness.

**The “Temperamental and Uninhibited” region.** The third and final

grouping comprises of mid-Atlantic and Northeast states like Maine, Pennsylvania, and New York—the “blue” states. The region is low in extraversion, very low in agreeableness and conscientiousness, very high in neuroticism, and moderately high in openness. People here, the researchers say, are “reserved, aloof, impulsive, irritable, and inquisitive.” Residents are politically liberal and less religious, and are disproportionately college-educated individuals, older adults, and women. A good chunk of the “passionate” and “competitive” residents are leaving the area, according to census data, and heading south or southwest.

So why do researchers care about what people are like across America?

Because personality traits on their own, rather than the usually cited factors like religion, racial diversity, education, or wealth, could help explain the country’s differing political views. “In left-leaning regions, it appears that residents are generally open, reserved, and socially distant, whereas in right-leaning regions, residents appear to be friendly, warm, dutiful, and traditional,” the researchers write.

Regional personality traits could also tell researchers a lot about economic prosperity and health. States high in openness and low in neuroticism show greater economic success and innovation. Nine of the 11 states that comprise a southeastern region dubbed the Stroke Belt for its unusually high incidence of strokes are located in the “friendly and conventional” cluster, which rates low in well-being and healthy behavior. People living in the “relaxed and creative” region, on the other hand, are in good health.

***Ten Books That Shaped the American Character*** written by Yardley, Jonathan, compiles a list of 10 books, by American authors, that have most affected America’s cultural, social and domestic life.

*Walden* by Henry David Thoreau;

*Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman;

*Ragged Dick* by Horatio Alger;

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain;

*The Original Boston Cooking School Cookbook* by Fannie Farmer;

*The Theory of the Leisure Class* by Thorstein Veblen;

*The Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. Du Bois;

*In Our Time* by Ernest Hemingway;

*How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie;

*The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* by Benjamin Spock.

## Section 4

### America's Ten Core Values

#### TEXT H

#### EXERCISE 1



**Directions:** Please read Text H and then sum up the America's 10 core values.

1. The 10 core American values according to the Dr. Baker's new book *United States*.

# AMERICA

## WAYNE BAKER

### AMERICA'S TEN CORE VALUES

- 1** Respect for others: Acceptance and appreciation of people of different racial, ethnic and religious groups
- 2** Symbolic patriotism: An emotional connection to country; feeling good when seeing the American flag or hearing the national anthem
- 3** Freedom: Having the right to participate in politics and elections; expression of unpopular ideas without fearing for one's safety
- 4** Security: Keeping the nation safe and secure from external and internal threats
- 5** Self-reliance & individualism: Reliance on oneself; independence; emphasis on individual strengths and accomplishments

- 6** Equal opportunity: Equal access to jobs, education, voting, etc. regardless of age, gender, race, or other factors; a level playing field
- 7** Getting ahead: Individual achievement, status, and success
- 8** Pursuit of happiness: Enjoyment, leisure, pleasure
- 9** Justice & fairness: All the world's people should live in harmony; justice and fairness for all, even people we don't know
- 10** Critical patriotism: Tough love of country; criticism of America stems from love of country and desire for improvement

#### EXERCISE 2



**Directions:** After reading Text H, try to raise some questions about each core value.

1. How do you practice respect for others?
2. What do you do when you observe disrespect?
3. Is respect for others one of your core values?

4. How do Americans feel when they see their symbols and rituals?
5. Does seeing “Old Glory” and hearing the national anthem stir your blood?
6. How do you feel when you see our symbols and rituals?
7. Do you see the ban on smoking in public places to be an infringement of your liberty?
8. Do you support or oppose the ban?
9. What does freedom mean to you?
10. What are the 5 issues do Democrats and Republican prioritize for government in 2014 respectively?  
economy, education, poverty and homelessness terrorism, the military and national defense, healthcare policy, social security and medicare, healthcare policy
11. How important is the value of equality for you?
12. Should Americans focus on economic outcomes to secure more opportunities?
13. Is economic justice served when women are doing better and men are doing worse?
14. What does justice and fairness mean to you?
15. Do you approve and disapprove of the “triple package” theory?
16. What did your parents teach you about getting ahead?
17. How do Americans feel when others criticize the nation?
18. How do you feel when others criticize our nation?
19. After the tour of the 10 values, what’s your conclusion?
20. What are the core Chinese values?

### EXERCISE 3



**Directions:** Discuss the following questions after reading Text D and Text H about British and American core values.

1. What core values do they share?  
Open.
2. In which values do they differ from each other?

#### Britain’s 10 core values

- 1 the rule of law
- 2 the sovereignty of the Crown in Parliament

#### America’s 10 core values

- Respect for others  
Symbolic patriotism

3	tolerance	Freedom
4	personal freedom & against state coercion	Security
5	free speech and freedom of expression	Self-reliance & individualism
6	private property and freedom to buy and sell	Equal opportunity
7	institutions reflecting its British character	Getting ahead
8	history and culture	Pursuit of happiness
9	love of sport and of fair play	Justice & fairness
10	patriotism	Critical patriotism

Generally speaking, the two countries share the following core values: freedom, equality, security, justice and fair play, patriotism, symbolic identity, pursuit of happiness. But they differ in the following core values. The Britons value its history and culture more, while the Americans put emphasize on self-reliance, individualism and success.

3. Can you recognize the facts and the opinions about the core values that the authors have provided in the texts? Open.
4. Do you think the authors are biased or unbiased about their core values? Find some examples to support your point of view. Open.
5. Which text do you like better? In which way does the text impress you most? Open.

### More Readings

#### 1. Democrats and Republicans Differ on Top Priorities for Gov't

Democrats prioritize education; Republicans focus on terrorism as a top issue by Joy Wilke and Frank Newport PRINCETON, NJ — American politics over the last decade has become notoriously polarized, with congressional Republicans and Democrats disagreeing on the best way to address healthcare, immigration, taxes, and a host of other issues. But supporters of both parties do agree that the economy should be a top priority, with 91% of Democrats and 88% of Republicans saying it is extremely or very important that the president and Congress deal with that issue this year. There is less agreement on the other issues the federal government should focus on.

### Top 10 Priority Issues, by Party Identification

Next, how important is it to you that the president and Congress deal with each of the following issues in the next year ?

% Extremely/Very important

	Democrats/Democratic leaners	Republicans/Republican leaners
	%	%
1.	The economy (91)	The economy (88)
2.	Education (91)	Terrorism (77)
3.	Poverty and homelessness (82)	The military and national defense (76)
4.	Healthcare policy (79)	Healthcare policy (75)
5.	Social Security and Medicare (77)	Education (70)
6.	Distribution of income/wealth (72)	Taxes (69)
7.	Crime (71)	Social Security and Medicare (67)
8.	The environment (71)	Crime (65)
9.	Terrorism (68)	Immigration (54)
10.	Gun policy (64)	World affairs (53)
		Poverty and homelessness (53)

Jan. 5-8, 2014

GALLUP

## 2. Values Americans Live By

By L. Robert Kohls (Meridian House International, Washington, D.C. 1984)

### 1. Personal Control Over the Environment

We believe we have the right to alter nature for our own purposes and to exert control over the natural world to the extent we are able; fate is in our hands.

### 2. Change is good

Change is good and is associated with progress and improvement and is considered essential to development.

### 3. Time & Its Control is important

Time is considered an important commodity and needs to be used wisely, leading to emphasis on time management and adhering to schedules.

### 4. Equality & Egalitarianism

There is a central belief in the basic equality of opportunity for human beings and equal protection under the law, as well as equal social treatment.

### 5. Individualism & Privacy

Each person is considered a unique individual and a high value is placed on personal style and action. Privacy is valued as necessary time to one's self and is often jealously protected against intrusions.

### 6. Self-help

Accomplishment is based upon what one does for oneself, and getting ahead requires individual effort.

### 7. Competition & Free Enterprise

Competition is viewed as natural and positive and free enterprise is the preferred economic system to facilitate this process.

#### 8. Future Orientation

Belief that “the best is yet to come” makes Americans stress the future rather than the past or present; we generally have optimistic expectations.

#### 9. Action/Work Orientation

Active engagement and planning is seen as useful. “Don’t just stand there, do something” is a basic American attitude. One’s identity is derived significantly from what one does for a living. Busy is good.

#### 10. Informality

Emphasis is on a casual approach to many things including social interactions, clothes, and communication styles.

#### 11. Directness, Openness, Honesty

Sincerity is thought to be demonstrated by the degree of open and frank discussion involved. Honesty is equated with a certain bluntness and directness. Little ritualism is tolerated and “telling it like it is” admired.

#### 12. Practicality & Efficiency

“What works” is valued, realistic assessments preferred to philosophic speculations, and making things “better” and “faster” applauded.

#### 13. Materialism & Acquisitiveness

Acquiring goods and services is a natural reward for hard work, and doing so seen as a reasonable goal.

## IV. Online Reading Materials

### PART A Lead in

How Much Do You Know about the UK and the US?

### PART B Focus on the UK

#### Section 1 United Kingdom Profile

#### Section 2 What Are British “Core Values”?

#### Section 3 Video Watching —Welcome to the UK

#### Section 4 English Humor Versus American Humor



## PART C Focus on the US

### Section 1 Country Profile: United States of America

### Section 2 US-American Values

### Section 3 An Adventure in American Culture & Values

### Section 4 The Knights Versus the Yankees

## V. Resources

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-1-respect-others/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-2-symbolic-patriotism/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-3-freedom/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-4-security/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-5-self-reliance-individualism/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-6-equal-opportunity/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-7-getting-ahead/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-8-pursuit-happiness/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-9-justice-fairness/>

<http://www.readthespirit.com/ourvalues/united-america-core-value-10-critical-patriotism/>