

LESSON 1 - The United States

PART 1: Go to <http://www.usconsulate.org.hk/pas/kids/index.htm> and <http://www.top50states.com/index.html> to collect general information about the United States of America.

1. How many states are there in the United States of America?

48. 50. 52.

2. Name the two states that are 'isolated' from the others.

3. What is the motto of the United States?

4. In terms of land area, what is the largest state?

5. What is the second largest state?

6. In terms of land area, what is the smallest state?

7. What is the most populous state?

8. What is the least populous state?

9. What is the capital of the United States?

When did this city become the capital city?

What is the motto of the capital city?

Name the two cities that also served as the capital of the United States.

10. How many inhabitants are there in the US? (Give an approximate figure.)

11. Name the two most populous cities in the US.

12. When is the national day of the United States? _____

What is it called? _____

GRAMMAR POINT 1: Superlative Forms.

Observe the following examples and deduce the rules!

the largest state - the smallest state
the wealthiest state (wealthy = rich)
the most populous state

REMEMBER!

1) The superlative form of a short adjective is:

_____ adj. - _____ (ex: *great* > _____)

2) The superlative form of a short adjective ending with a *-y* is:

_____ adj. - _____ (ex: *happy* > _____)

3) The superlative form of a long adjective (> 2 syllables and no *-y*) is:

_____ _____ adj. (ex: *expensive* > _____)

Two important exceptions!!!

good > the best
bad > the worst

Time to practise!

Write the comparative forms of the following adjectives.

- Mount McKinley (Alaska) is _____ mountain in the US. (high)
- The Empire State Building is _____ skyscraper in New York City. (tall)
- With 7.4 million inhabitants, Long Island (New York) is _____ island in the United States. (populous)
- Fire Island is _____ American volcanic island. (young)
- _____ name for islands in the United States is "Big Island". (common)
- The crater of Kilauea (Hawaii) is _____ volcano in the world. (active)
- January is _____ month of the year in Minnesota. (cold)
- Many Americans think George Bush has been _____ President they have ever had. (bad)

PART 2: Two important symbols - The American Flag and The American National Anthem.

a) The American Flag

Go to <http://www.americamminute.com/index.htm> and watch the video entitled "The American Flag". Then, answer the following questions.

1. What do the 13 red and white stripes represent? List the names!

2. What do the white stars represent?

3. What do the colours symbolize?

Go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_the_United_States and find more information about the American Flag.

4. How many times has the American flag been changed?

5. Give the three official names of the American flag.

6. When was the first American flag officially adopted?

7. How old is the current American flag?

b) The American National Anthem

Watch this video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkDyhYdqHM8>
Then, answer the following questions.

1. What was the name of the first national anthem?

2. When was it composed?

3. What was it composed for?

4. What were the two important ideas in the anthem?

5. When was it replaced?

Go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_National_Anthem and answer the following questions.

1. What is the name of the American national anthem?

2. Where do the lyrics come from?

3. Where does the tune (= music) come from?

Listen to the first stanza of the American national anthem and fill in the gaps!

O! say can you see by the _____'s early _____,

What so proudly we hailed at the _____'s last gleaming,

Whose broad _____ and bright _____ through the perilous _____,

O'er the _____ we watched, were so gallantly streaming.

And the _____' red glare, the _____ bursting in air,

Gave proof through the _____ that our _____ was still there;

O! say does that star-spangled _____ yet wave,

O'er the _____ of the _____ and the _____ of the _____?

Give your opinion on the American national anthem! Compare it with the national anthem of your country!

GRAMMAR POINT 2: The Passive Voice.

Observe the following examples and deduce the rules!

The American national anthem was adopted in ...
The lyrics come from a poem that was written by ...

PASSIVE VOICE = _____ + _____
1) _____
2) _____

WHEN TO USE THE PASSIVE VOICE

We use the Passive Voice ...

- when we do not know the agent (= the person/thing that does / is doing / did ... the action).

Ex: *My bike was stolen last weekend.* (I don't know who stole my bike.)

- when the agent is not important.

Ex: *Your room is being cleaned, Sir.* (the focus here is on the room, not on the person who is cleaning it.)

Note: When we want to specify the agent, we use *by*.

"Your room is being cleaned by our new maid, Sir."

- when the agent is obvious.

Ex: *The thief was arrested yesterday.* (Only the police can arrest thieves.)

OTHER REMARKS

- Do not use *by* with a pronoun.

Ex: *He has washed the car.* → *The car has been washed ~~by him~~.*

- When an active sentence has two objects (a direct object and an indirect object), it is possible to make two passive sentences.

Ex: *Her boyfriend sent her a dozen roses for her birthday.*

→ *A dozen roses were sent to her (by her boyfriend) for her birthday.*

→ *She was sent a dozen roses for her birthday.*

Time to practise!

Exercise 1: Transform into PASSIVE sentences.

1. Present Simple Tourists take many pictures of the Statue of Liberty.

2. Present Simple Do they clean the streets of New York City every day?

3. Present Continuous They are building a new skyscraper down the street.

4. Present Continuous Look! They are planting new flowers in Central Park!

5. Past Simple Americans elected Barack Obama President of the US in 2008.

6. Past Simple Southern planters bought slaves to pick up cotton in the fields.

7. Modal We must never forget 9/11.

Exercise 2: Transform into ACTIVE sentences.

1. The Empire State building is visited by millions of tourists every year. (Present simple)

2. Security measures are being reinforced in public buildings. (Present Continuous)

3. John F. Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald. (Past simple)

PART 3: Important events in American History.

Go to <http://www.usconsulate.org.hk/pas/kids/history1.htm> and complete the following grid.

PERIOD	WHEN?	EVENT
Colonial America (1492-1763)	1492	_____
	_____	The first colony was founded at Jamestown, Virginia.
Revolutionary Period (1764-1789)	1620	_____
	1765	The Stamp Act was passed.
	1773	_____
	1775-1781	_____
The New Nation (1790-1828)	_____	The Declaration of Independence was written.
	(1803)	3 major events:
	(1804-1806)	1) _____
	1812	2) _____
Western Expansion and Reform (1829-1859)		3) _____
	(1848-1852)	Pioneers started to head west to California. Abolitionists started to oppose slavery. Women started to militate in favour of more power.
_____	_____	Abraham Lincoln was elected president.
	(1862-1863)	Eleven states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. Slavery was abolished (= The Emancipation Declaration)

Reconstruction (1866-1877)	<p>_____</p> <p>1870</p>	<p>With the Fourteenth Amendment former slaves became American citizens.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
Gilded Age (1878-1889)		<p>3 important phenomena:</p> <p>1) _____</p> <p>2) _____</p> <p>3) _____</p>
Progressive Era (1890-1913)	<p>(1898)</p>	<p>The US fought against _____.</p>
Great War & Jazz Age (1914-1928)	<p>1917</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>American women won the right to vote.</p>
Depression & WWII (1929-1945)	<p>Oct. 29, 1929</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Dec. 8, 1941</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president.</p> <p>_____</p>
Modern Era (1946-present)	<p>(1955-1968)</p>	<p>3 important wars:</p> <p>1) _____</p> <p>2) _____</p> <p>3) _____</p> <p>_____</p>

GRAMMAR POINT 3: The Past Simple.

Observe the following sentences and deduce the rules.

The Civil Rights Movement did not begin in 1950. It began in 1955.

When did it end? It ended in 1968.

Did it give more rights to African Americans? Yes it did.

	REGULAR VERBS	IRREGULAR VERBS
Affirmative Sentences		
Negative Sentences		
Interrogative Sentences		

HOW TO PRONOUNCE -ed

Guess the pronunciation of *-ed* when the following verbs are in the past simple:

end - elect - play - invent - stop - discover - crash - declare - secede - abolish - start - pass - arrive.

/ɪd/	/t/	/d/

Exercise: Ask the questions to know about the missing information!

1. They discovered [...] in California in 1845.

2. Abraham Lincoln became President of the US in [...].

3. The Pilgrims arrived [in ...] in 1620.

4. The Pilgrims left Europe [because ...].

5. [...] invented the telephone.

PART 4: New York City and Two of Its Famous Attractions.

a) A General Introduction to New York City.

Watch the video and fill in the gaps!

New York City is _____ in the United States and one of the world's major global cities. Located in the state of New York, the city has a population of _____ million, within an area of _____ square miles, making it _____ city in North America.

New York City is an _____ center for _____, _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____. The city is also home to _____ and to many of the world's most famous _____ such as _____ and _____.

Otherwise known as _____ and _____, the city attracts people from all over the globe, who come for _____, _____ and fast-paced _____.

New York City is located on the coast of the North Eastern United States, at the mouth of the _____ River in South Eastern New York State.

New York has a _____, _____ climate, resulting from prevailing wind patterns that bring cool air from the interior of the North American continent. New York winters are typically _____, with moderate snowfall averaging a total of two feet annually.

New York City is home to the most complex and extensive transportation networks in all of the United States, with more than _____ iconic _____, _____ daily _____, _____, _____ and _____ systems, immense _____, landmark _____ and _____, _____ services and even an aerial commuter _____. The New York City _____ is the largest _____ system in the world measured by track mileage and it is also the world's _____ largest when measured by annual ridership.

b) The Statue of Liberty.

Revise "How + adjective / adverb" questions. Complete the questions with the following words:

far - long - many - much - tall.

1. How _____ has the Statue of Liberty been in New York City?

The Statue of Liberty was dedicated on October 28, 1886, so it has been in New York City for _____ years.

2. How _____ did the Statue of Liberty cost?

The Statue of Liberty costs _____ dollars.

3. How _____ rays are there on her crown?

There are _____ rays on her crown. They evoke the sun, the seven seas and the seven continents

4. How _____ is the Statue of Liberty?

The Statue of Liberty is _____ tall. (= 46m)

5. How _____ is Liberty Island from Manhattan?

Liberty Island is about two miles away from Manhattan.

Something you must remember about the Statue of Liberty:

The Statue of Liberty was a present / gift from _____!

c) The Empire State Building.

Write down a few things you want to remember about the Empire State Building.

PART 5: Famous American Presidents.

Take some notes about the people who can be seen on American dollar bills!

BILLS	Who?	Short Biography
One dollar bill		
Two dollar bill		
Five dollar bill		
Ten dollar bill		
Twenty dollar bill		
Fifty dollar bill		
Hundred dollar bill		