

1984

Reading American Culture: A Curriculum for Intermediate and Advanced ESL Students

Katherine Ann Reed
SIT Graduate Institute

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection

 Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), and the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Reed, Katherine Ann, "Reading American Culture: A Curriculum for Intermediate and Advanced ESL Students" (1984). *MA TESOL Collection*. 613.
https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection/613

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the SIT Graduate Institute at SIT Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in MA TESOL Collection by an authorized administrator of SIT Digital Collections. For more information, please contact digitalcollections@sit.edu.

READING AMERICAN CULTURE:
A CURRICULUM FOR INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED ESL STUDENTS

Kathrine Ann Reed

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the
School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont.

March, 1984

This project by Katherine Reed is accepted in its present form.

Date April 16, 1984

Project Advisor Michael Gerald

Project Reader Gavin S. Duncan

AUTHOR: Katherine Ann Reed

TITLE: Reading American Culture: A Curriculum for Intermediate
and Advanced ESL Students

DEGREE AWARDED: Master of Arts in Teaching

INSTITUTION: School for International Training

YEAR DEGREE WAS GRANTED: 1984

THESIS ADVISOR: Michael Jerald

PROGRAM: Master of Arts in Teaching

AUTHOR'S CURRENT ADDRESS: 3 Auldwood Lane
Rumson, New Jersey 07760

ABSTRACT

This paper is a compilation of ESL readings for intermediate and advanced level students, relating specifically to American culture. The readings have been chosen from a variety of sources, including books, magazines and newspapers. Along with each reading there are suggestions for additional activities in the areas of speaking, listening and writing.

The writer of this project believes that language study is not complete without the development of cultural awareness. Readings which give the students insight in cultural values and traits are a useful tool in the ESL classroom.

ERIC Descriptors: Cultural Awareness
Cultural Education
Reading Material Selection

CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE UNITED STATES.	6
AMERICAN LIFESTYLES.	23
AMERICANS AT HOME.	31
WORK AND EDUCATION	44
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS	63
SOCIAL ISSUES.	74
SPORTS AND RECREATION.	93
ENDNOTES104

INTRODUCTION

ESL students at the intermediate and advanced levels are usually working to perfect their abilities in the four skill areas: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. If the students are living in or planning to visit the United States, or are dealing with Americans in business or on a personal basis, they will also need to learn about American culture.

Culture can, and should be incorporated into each of the four skill areas mentioned above. In this paper, I will focus on reading materials which specifically deal with different aspects of American culture. In addition, I will give suggestions for follow-up activities in the areas of speaking, listening, and writing.

In selecting reading materials, I have tried to cover all aspects of American life. I used the following general headings to group selections:

- 1) Introduction to the United States
- 2) American Lifestyles
- 3) Americans at Home
- 4) Work and Education
- 5) Personal Relationships
- 6) Social Issues
- 7) Sports and Recreation

These various topics are not necessarily to be covered in this

order. Depending upon the students' needs and interests, the teacher may want to rearrange the syllabus, add to it, or even eliminate some topics altogether.

The purpose behind this project is two-fold. First, the language in typical ESL reading materials is usually simplistic and, therefore, unreal. The topics are often irrelevant to the students or just plain boring. Some examples are selections on the history of the United States, folktales, and short stories that have been "simplified" for easy reading.

My second purpose is to put together a collection of readings specifically relating to American culture, which deal with both positive and negative aspects. Very often in an ESL classroom, culture is handled on a rather superficial level. The students look at beautiful travel posters, listen to some "American" music, perhaps sing a few songs, and read a little of the history and customs of the United States. This does not prepare the students for the reality of life in the U.S. That is not to say that a student can be totally prepared in an ESL classroom for every situation he or she will encounter. However, there are some very basic characteristics of American life that can be incorporated into the lessons.

The readings I have chosen have been taken from various sources. They are "real" in that the writing itself has not been changed. I have, however, condensed many of the passages to make them more manageable for an ESL class to deal with.

By choosing readings from a variety of sources, the teacher allows the students to sample different styles of writing. Some

of the readings are very formal, either scientific in nature or highly literary. Others are more conversational in nature, even to the point of incorporating non-standard English. Most ESL readings don't have this variety, which native Americans encounter in everyday reading. Also, readings taken from up-to-date sources tend to be full of useful idioms and expressions. Selections that are controversial or humorous in nature will probably be the most successful, as students will relate what they are reading to their own personal lives, and therefore become more involved.

For this paper, I looked through books, magazines and newspapers. The best sources that I found were:

- 1) Reader's Digest magazine, which is full of stories, articles about life in the U.S. and which is not overly difficult
- 2) America and Americans, a book by John Steinbeck which describes all aspects of American characteristics
- 3) American Dreams Lost and Found, by Studs Turkel, full of personal accounts about life in America
- 4) magazines, especially Parade and other Sunday supplements
- 5) newspapers (Some, like the Boston Globe, are very readable. Others, like the N.Y. Times, are quite difficult, even for native English speakers).

A teacher living in the United States has ready access to such sources and can constantly add to his or her collection of cultural readings as he or she comes across them. American culture is changing so fast that the collection really must be kept

current. Teachers living abroad might have relatives or friends send along any interesting articles or passages, or they can check with American embassies for used magazines and newspapers.

Here are some issues to consider when selecting readings:

1) Reading about and discussing American culture can lead to valuable and interesting cross-cultural comparisons. Activities in developing student awareness and acceptance of differences in cultural values can also be incorporated. But the teacher, when selecting readings, must keep in mind that certain topics may not be appropriate to a particular culture.

2) Another factor to take into consideration when selecting passages is that of teacher bias. In order to give the students a fair picture of American culture, the teacher ought to beware of forcing one point of view upon the students. For example, a reading selection dealing with divorce in America might be followed by a passage about the persistence of family values by the majority of Americans.

3) One final consideration is the difficulty of the material. If it is too difficult, the students will lose interest in participating. There are several formulas for determining the level of readability of a passage based on the length of sentences, the number of syllables per word, and the number of sentences per 100 words. But these are formulas used primarily for students who are learning to read in their first language. Therefore, the teacher may have to estimate the readability of a passage and experiment on a group of students before being sure that it is

appropriate. Normally, when a student can recognize (pronounce) 93-97% of the words and comprehend 75-90% of the ideas in a passage, it is appropriate for his or her level.¹

INTRODUCTION TO THE UNITED STATES

AMERICAby Stephen Vincent Benet²

There is a country of hope, there is a country of freedom. There is a country where all sorts of different people, drawn from every nation in the world, get along together under the same big sky. They go to any church they choose — Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Mohammedan, Buddhist — and no man may be persecuted there for his religion. The men and women of this country elect the people they wish to govern them, remove those people by vote — not by revolution — if they feel their representatives have done badly, speak their minds about their government and about the running of their country at all times, stay themselves and yet stay loyal to one cause, one country, and one flag.

The flag is the Stars and Stripes. The country is the United States of America. The cause is the cause of democracy.

It is not an earthly paradise, a Garden of Eden, or a perfect state. It does not pretend to be any of those things.

It has not solved every problem of how men and women should live. It has made mistakes in its own affairs, mistakes in the affairs of the world. But it looks to the future always — to a future of free men and women, where there shall be bread and work, security and liberty for the children of mankind.

It does not want to rule the world or set up an American empire in which Americans will be the master race and other people subject races. If you ask any real American whether he believes in a master race, you will get a long stare or a long

laugh. Americans do not believe in master races.

It is a fighting country, born in battle, unified in battle, ready and willing always to fight for its deep beliefs. It has never lost a war. But it does not believe that war and martial spirit are the end and goal of man. It honors the memory of its great soldiers — men like Washington and Grant and Lee — as it honors the names of those who fight for it today. But every one of those men fought for something more than conquest. When the wars were done, they said: "Let us have peace. Let us build up the land. Let us make something, build something, grow something that was not there before. Let us try to make a good country — a place where people can live in friendship and neighborliness."

AMERICASuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Discuss the concept of patriotism. Ask students how they feel about their own countries, their leaders, and about defending their countries from military aggression by others.
- 2) Tell them that the essay they will be reading is one man's view of the U.S. and does not represent the viewpoint of all Americans. Also point out that it was written in 1944.
- 3) Ask them to look for any statements in the reading which they believe are true of America and Americans and also statements they feel are false.

After Reading:

Speaking

Discuss with the students their reactions to Benet's view of America. Ask them to give other characteristics of America that they believe to be true. Make a list of these characteristics on a large sheet of paper to save for future reference.

Writing

Have students write a profile of their own countries, similar to the profile of America by Benet.

Listening

Students read their profiles to the class. Questions and discussion can follow the readings.

E PLURIBUS UNUMby John Steinbeck³

Our land is of every kind geologically and climatically, and our people are of every kind also — of every race, of every ethnic category — and yet our land is one nation, and our people are Americans. Mottoes have a way of being compounded of wishes and dreams. The motto of the United States, "E Pluribus Unum," is a fact. This is the strange and almost unbelievable truth; and even stranger is the fact that the unit America has come into being in slightly over four hundred years.

In the beginning, we crept, scuttled, escaped were driven out of the safe and settled corners of the earth to the fringes of a strange and hostile wilderness, a nameless and hostile continent. Some rulers granted large sections of unmapped territory, in places they did not own or even know, as cheap gifts to favorites or to potential enemies for the purpose of getting rid of them. Many others were sent here as a punishment for penal offenses. Far from welcoming us, this continent resisted us. The Indigenes fought to the best of their ability to hold on to a land they thought was theirs. The rocky soils fought back, and the bewildering forests, and the deserts. Diseases, unknown and therefore incurable, decimated the early comers, and in their energy of restlessness they fought one another. This land was no gift. The firstlings worked for it, fought for it, and died for it. They stole and cheated and doublecrossed for it, and when they had taken a little piece, the way a fierce-hearted man ropes a wild mustang, they had to defend their holdings against new

waves of the restless and ferocious and hungry.

America did not exist. Four centuries of work, of bloodshed, of loneliness and fear created this land. We built America and the process made us Americans — a new breed, rooted in all races, stained and tinted with all colors, a seeming ethnic anarchy. Then in a little, little time, we became more alike than we were different — a new society; not great, but fitted by our very faults for greatness, E Pluribus Unum.

The whole thing is crazy. Every single man in our emerging country was out for himself against all others — for his safety, his profit, his future. He had little care for the land; he ripped it, raped it, and in some cases destroyed it. He cut and burned the forests, fired and plowed the plains, dredged the beautiful rivers for gold, leaving a pebbled devastation. When his family grew up about him he set it against all other families. When communities arose, each one defended itself against other communities. The provinces which became states were each one a suspicious unit, with jealously held borders and duties, tolls, and penalties against strangers. The surges of the new restless, needy, and strong — grudgingly brought in for purposes of hard labor and cheap wages — were resisted, resented, and accepted only when a new and different wave came in.

All this has been true, and yet in one or two, certainly not more than three generations, each ethnic group has clicked into place in the union without losing the pluribus. When we read the line-up of a University of Notre Dame football team, called the "Fighting Irish," we do not find it ridiculous that the names are

Polish, Slovak, Italian, or Fiji, for that matter. They are the Fighting Irish.

E PLURIBUS UNUMSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

Talk about mottoes. Ask students if they know what E Pluri-
bus Unum means.

Students who know a Latin-based language should have some idea. Find out from the students if their countries have mottoes.

After Reading:

Speaking/Listening

Visit New York City, if possible, or show slides of New York's ethnic neighborhoods, signs in different languages, international restaurants, etc., or visit any nearby city where there are ethnic groups. Talk about ethnic plurality in America.

Writing

Have students write a brief history of the origins of their own countries: where the people came from, whether they have all blended in together or retained separate identities within the same country. This will provide good practice with past tense.

AMERICANS AND THE LANDby John Steinbeck⁴

I have often wondered at the savagery and thoughtlessness with which our early settlers approached this rich continent. They came at it as though it were an enemy, which of course it was. They burned the forests and changed the rainfall; they swept the buffalo from the plains, blasted the streams, set fire to the grass, and ran a reckless scythe through the virgin and noble timber. Perhaps they felt that it was limitless and could never be exhausted and that a man could move on to new wonders endlessly. Certainly there are many examples to the contrary, but to a large extent the early people pillaged the country as though they hated it, as though they held it temporarily and might be driven off at any time.

This tendency toward irresponsibility persists in very many of us today; our rivers are poisoned by reckless dumping of sewage and toxic industrial wastes, the air of our cities is filthy and dangerous to breathe from the belching of uncontrolled products from combustion of coal, coke, oil, and gasoline. Our towns are girdled with wreckage and the debris of our toys — our automobiles and our packaged pleasures. Through uninhibited spraying against one enemy we have destroyed the natural balances our survival requires. All these evils can and must be overcome if America and Americans are to survive; but many of us still conduct ourselves as our ancestors did, stealing from the future for our clear and present profit.

Since the river-polluters and the air-poisoners are not

criminal or even bad people, we must presume that they are heirs to the early conviction that sky and water are unowned and that they are limitless. In the light of our practices here at home it is very interesting to me to read of the care taken with the carriers of our probes in space, to make utterly sure that they are free of pollution of any kind. We would not think of doing to the moon what we do every day to our own dear country.

AMERICANS AND THE LANDSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students what the word "pollution" means to them. Put various definitions that they have given on the blackboard.
- 2) Introduce new vocabulary from the reading passage through pictures. Or, divide the class into (2) teams and give each team the vocabulary list and English dictionaries. The first team to write all definitions correctly on the blackboard wins.

After Reading:

Speaking

- 1) Students give presentations on environmental concerns in their own countries.
- 2) Debate: Industry vs. Environmental Protection Agency.

Listening

- 1) Show movie, "Who Killed Lake Erie," or another environmental film, or slides of environmental damage in America.

Writing

- 1) Play tape recording of various man-made noises in the environment. Have students write about how noise can be a form of pollution.
- 2) For students in U.S., have them write on environmental damage and pollution they have noticed in the U.S., or compare environmental problems in the United States with the situation in their own countries.

THE PRESIDENTby John Steinbeck⁵

The relationship of Americans to their President is a matter of amazement to foreigners. Of course we respect the office and admire the man who can fill it, but at the same time we inherently fear and suspect power. We are proud of the President, and we blame him for things he did not do. We are related to the President in a close and almost family sense; we inspect his every move and mood with suspicion. We insist that the President be cautious in speech, guarded in action, immaculate in his public and private life; and in spite of these imposed pressures we are avidly curious about the man hidden behind the formal public image we have created. We have made a tough but unwritten code of conduct for him, and the slightest deviation brings forth a torrent of accusation and abuse.

The President must be greater than anyone else, but not better than anyone else. We subject him and his family to close and constant scrutiny and denounce them for things that we ourselves do every day. A Presidential slip of the tongue, a slight error in judgement — social, political, or ethical — can raise a storm of protest. We give the President more work than a man can do, more responsibility than a man should take, more pressure than a man can bear. We abuse him often and rarely praise him. We wear him out, use him up, eat him up. And with all this, Americans have a love for the President that goes beyond loyalty or party nationality; he is ours, and we exercise the right to destroy him.

THE PRESIDENTSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Outline on the blackboard the basic structure of the U.S. government with students contributing as much information as possible. Have students talk briefly about the governments in their own countries.
- 2) Present vocabulary:

inherently	mood	guarded	to bring forth
avidly	code	immaculate	to subject
	torrent	tough	to denounce
	abuse	slight	to bear
	scrutiny	ethical	

Idioms and expressions:

slip of the tongue
 to wear out
 to use up
 to eat up

Assign one word or expression to each person in the class. They have five minutes to look up the word and write a sentence using the word (or expression). They must then write the sentence on the blackboard and be able to explain the meaning to the class.

After Reading:

Listening

Tape a presidential speech from the T.V. or radio. Have the students listen for comprehension of key points. Give an oral or written comprehension quiz.

Writing/Speaking

Have each student prepare a short talk, taking the part of a presidential candidate (if in the U.S.) or a candidate for the highest office of their own countries. Students tell what they would do, as President or leader, to change the present system of government. This is good for practice with conditionals.

HOW OTHERS SEE AMERICANSfrom Newsweek Magazine⁶

Characteristics most often associated with Americans:

<u>FRANCE</u>	<u>JAPAN</u>	<u>WEST GERMANY</u>	<u>GR. BRITAIN</u>
Industrious	Nationalistic	Energetic	Friendly
Energetic	Friendly	Inventive	Self-indulgent
Inventive	Decisive	Friendly	Energetic
Decisive	Rude	Sophisticated	Industrious
Friendly	Self-indulgent	Intelligent	Nationalistic
	<u>BRAZIL</u>	<u>MEXICO</u>	
	Intelligent	Industrious	
	Inventive	Intelligent	
	Energetic	Inventive	
	Industrious	Decisive	
	Greedy	Greedy	

Characteristics least often associated with Americans:

<u>FRANCE</u>	<u>JAPAN</u>	<u>WEST GERMANY</u>	<u>GR. BRITAIN</u>
Lazy	Industrious	Lazy	Lazy
Rude	Lazy	Sexy	Sophisticated
Honest	Honest	Greedy	Sexy
Sophisticated	Sexy	Rude	Decisive
	<u>BRAZIL</u>	<u>MEXICO</u>	
	Lazy	Lazy	
	Self-indulgent	Honest	
	Sexy	Rude	
	Sophisticated	Sexy	

HOW OTHERS SEE AMERICANS

Suggested Activities

Before Reading the Chart:

Give students a list of the adjectives from the chart: industrious, energetic, inventive, decisive, friendly, rude, self-indulgent, nationalistic, sophisticated, intelligent, greedy, sexy, lazy, honest. Define any unknown vocabulary. Ask students the following questions: In general, which of these characteristics do you associate with Americans? Then tabulate the results. If the class is multi-national, tabulate the results by country.

Reading:

Have the students read the chart to compare their results with the Newsweek poll.

After Reading the Chart:

Speaking

Have each student choose one of the characteristics from the chart and explain to the class why he or she feels the characteristic is or is not typically American.

Writing

Return the list of characteristics to the students and have them develop the answers that they gave into a composition. The theme would be "How I See the American People."

Listening

To reinforce the vocabulary, tape some short dialogues in which the speakers demonstrate some of the characteristics from the chart. For example, a dialogue on honesty might

involve someone returning a lost wallet. The students would have to select the adjective that best demonstrates the characteristics of the speakers.

AMERICAN LIFESTYLES

SINGLES

by J. Simenauer and D. Carroll⁷

Approximately one out of every three adults in the U.S., some fifty million people between the ages of twenty and 55, are single. The post-World War II baby crop has matured with a vengeance, and an unprecedented number have chosen to wait longer before marrying, are obtaining divorces more frequently, or have decided to remain permanently uncommitted.

Since 1970 the number of people who live alone has jumped from 11 million to 17.8 million according to 1980 Census Bureau statistics, and this accounts for almost a quarter of all American households. In 1978 almost a fifth of all home-buyers were unmarried. Such statistics go on for pages. The message behind them is simple: The single population in America is on the increase.

The following questions were asked of American singles. The total often add up to more than 100% due to respondents giving multiple answers.

MEETING

Where do you meet most of the men/women you date?

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
a. through friends	30%	36%
b. at social gatherings	22%	18%
c. at bars, discos, nightclubs, etc.	24%	18%
d. at singles functions	14%	18%
e. at work	10%	9%
f. through personal ads in newspapers, magazines, etc.	1%	0%

DATING

Do you feel it's right for a woman to ask a man out for a date?

Men: yes 69%
 yes, but not on the first date 9%
 no 7%
 don't know 16%

Women: yes 76%
 no 23%
 don't know 3%

LIVING TOGETHER

Do you think living together is as personally fulfilling as marriage?

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
yes	55%	37%
no	40%	57%
don't know	8%	7%

CHILDREN

Would you ever consider having children even if you were not married?

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
yes	23%	19%
already have done it	6%	6%
no	55%	59%
would like to but it would be hard on child	13%	12%
worried about what people would think	2%	2%
don't know	2%	3%

SINGLE VS. MARRIED

Do you plan to stay single indefinitely or would you like to marry?

75% of men and women plan to marry. 25% intend to stay unmarried.

Those in the second category have usually had unhappy previous marriages. Only a tiny percent of those who have never married intend to remain single for life.

SINGLESSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

Have students define the term single. Talk about singles' bars, singles' clubs, singles' apartment complexes, and singles' vacations. Ask students if there is any equivalent singles lifestyle in their countries.

After Reading:

Speaking

Have students discuss the questionnaire, talking about the differences between answers given by men and women (good for practicing comparatives), and how they, themselves, would answer the questions.

Speaking/Listening

Students can interview Americans who are single, asking similar questions to those in the reading and any other questions they feel are relevant.

Writing

To provide practice in writing reports, have students develop the statistics from the reading and their own findings from the interviews into a type of sociological report on "Singles in America."

DIVORCE, AMERICAN STYLE

This scene is taken from a play by Woody Allen called, Play it Again Sam⁸. In the scene, Allan is sitting alone in his apartment watching T.V. He is thinking about his impending divorce from his wife Nancy.

ALLAN: Two years of marriage down the drain. . .like that. . .I couldn't believe it when she told me two weeks ago. She was like a stranger, not like my wife, like a total stranger.

(Allan recalls the conversation with Nancy)

NANCY: I don't want any alimony. You can have everything. I just want out.

ALLAN: Can't we discuss it?

NANCY: We've discussed it fifty times. It's no use.

ALLAN: Why?

NANCY: I don't know. I can't stand the marriage. I don't find you fun. I feel you suffocate me. I don't feel any rapport with you, and I don't dig you physically. For God's sake, don't take it personal!

(The memory fades)

ALLAN: (Talking to himself) Oh, I won't take it personal. I'll just kill myself, that's all. If only I knew where my damn analyst was vacationing. Where do they go every August? They leave the city. Every summer New York is full of people who are crazy till Labor Day. What's the matter with me? Why can't I be cool? What's the secret?

DIVORCE AMERICAN STYLESuggested Activities

Before Reading:

Listening

- 1) Have two native speakers record the dialogue on tape. Play the tape for the students.
- 2) Ask students questions (written or oral) about the dialogue. Examples - How long were Nancy and Allan married? What were some of the reasons that Nancy gave for wanting a divorce?

Reading

- 1) Write the following idioms on the blackboard: down the drain, to want out, like that (snapping fingers), it's no use, can't stand, to dig, to be cool, to take something personally.
- 2) Have students read through the dialogue, locating the idioms. Make sure students notice the ungrammatical use of the word "personal."

After Reading:

Speaking

- 1) Have students try to define the idioms in the context of the dialogue.
- 2) Talk about Nancy's reasons for wanting a divorce. Have students brainstorm other reasons they think Americans (or anyone) get divorced.

- 3) Do humorous role plays pairing up male and female students. Either the male or the female partner asks for a divorce. Students use some of the new idioms and vocabulary.

Writing Topics

- 1) How do you feel about divorce?
- 2) What factors contribute to the high rate of divorce in America?

AMERICANS AT HOME

THE HOMEby John Steinbeck⁹

One of the characteristics most puzzling to a foreign observer is the strong and imperishable dream the American carries. On inspection, it is found that the dream has little to do with reality in American life. Consider the dream of and the hunger for home. The very word can reduce nearly all of my compatriots to tears. Builders and developers never build houses — they build homes. The dream home is either in a small town or in a suburban area where grass and trees simulate the country. This dream home is a permanent seat, not rented but owned. It is a center where a man and his wife grow graciously old, warmed by the radiance of well-washed children and grandchildren. Many thousands of these homes are built every year; built, planted, advertised, and sold — and yet, the American family rarely stays in one place for more than five years. The home and its equipment are purchased on time and are heavily mortgaged. The earning power of the father is almost always over-extended, so that after a few years he is not able to keep up the payments on his loans. That is on the losing side. But suppose the earner is successful and his income increases. Right away the house is not big enough, or in the proper neighborhood. Or perhaps suburban life palls, and the family moves to the city, where excitement and convenience beckon.

THE HOMESuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students if they know the difference between the words house and home, as used by Americans. Have them give some examples of sentences using each word. Consider the phrases: "Home, Sweet Home," "Home on the Range," "Home is where the heart is," "Home made," etc.
- 2) Sing such songs as, "Home on the Range," or "Take Me Home, Country Roads."

After Reading:

Speaking

- 1) Have students discuss the various types of dwellings that Americans inhabit, including condos, mobile homes, geodesic domes, log cabins, high-rises, walled-off communities with security gates, houseboats, etc. Try to get as many pictures of these as possible to facilitate student participation. Ask students how these lifestyles compare with the way people live in their countries.
- 2) Give students paper and colored markers. Ask them to draw their own home or a "dream home," both inside and outside. Then have them describe their homes to the other students. New vocabulary can be introduced, including construction materials and physical features, like "picture window," "sunken living room," "railings," etc.

Writing

Students can write a composition based on the picture they have drawn entitled, "My House" or "My Dream House."

ALL AMERICAN RECIPES
from Parents Magazine¹⁰

Southern Fried Chicken with Cream Gravy

1 broiler-fryer chicken, weighing 3 to 3-1/2 lbs., cut into 8 pieces
1 egg
1/4 cup milk
1 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon pepper
1 cup solid vegetable shortening

Cream Gravy:

2 tablespoons fat from frying chicken
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
4 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
1 cup heavy cream
salt to taste

Rinse and dry chicken pieces on paper toweling.

Beat egg and milk together in a shallow dish. Dip each piece of chicken into egg-milk mixture, allowing excess to drip off. Place pieces, as they are dipped, on a piece of wax paper large enough to hold them in a single layer.

Place flour, salt, and pepper in a paper or plastic bag and add chicken pieces a few at a time; shake pieces several times, patting to make certain flour adheres to all surfaces; reserve remaining flour for gravy. Let stand 20 minutes on clean wax paper.

Melt shortening in a 10 or 12 inch skillet and heat until just short of smoking. Melted shortening should reach a depth of about 1 inch.

Arrange chicken pieces in skillet without crowding them. Lower heat slightly and begin to fry until golden brown. It should take

about 6 or 7 minutes to brown each side. When both sides are browned, cover skillet two-thirds of the way to allow steam to escape. Turn pieces two or three times during cooking time, which will be about 20 minutes.

As chicken finishes cooking, drain pieces on paper toweling.

To make gravy, pour off all but 2 tablespoons of fat from skillet after chicken has finished frying. Add butter; heat and stir in four tablespoons of flour. Cook, stirring constantly, for about 2 to 3 minutes. Add milk, cream and salt to taste. Cook over low heat 4 to 5 minutes, stirring constantly.

Potato Salad

10 red new potatoes
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 1 tablespoon spicy mustard
 2 tablespoons salad oil
 1 tablespoon white vinegar
 2 tablespoons shredded onion
 1/2 cup chopped dill pickle
 1/2 cup mayonnaise

Scrub potatoes; cook in boiling salted water about 20 minutes, or until tender. Drain and rinse with cold water.

While potatoes cook, combine salt, pepper, mustard, oil, and vinegar in a medium bowl. When potatoes are cool, cut into cubes.

Add them to oil mixture and toss to coat well.

Add remaining ingredients. Mix well. Cover and chill.

Corn Pudding

2 cans cream-style corn
 2 eggs, beaten
 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon pepper
 4 tablespoons butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350°

Mix all ingredients thoroughly. Pour mixture into a buttered, 1-1/2 to 2 quart casserole with a cover.

Bake, covered, for 1 hour and 15 minutes, until a crusty edge forms.

ALL AMERICAN RECIPESSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students to name typical dishes from their countries. Ask them if they know any typically American food. Discuss pictures from food magazines of such typical dishes as apple pie, fried chicken, corn on the cob, submarine sandwiches, cornbread, banana splits, steak, etc.
- 2) Go over measurement words. If possible, show students a teaspoon, tablespoon, etc.

After Reading:

Speaking

Have students prepare a dinner using the recipes. Break them into 3 groups, each group working on one recipe. During the preparation of the meal, they will be giving instructions in English with the vocabulary from the reading.

Writing

Have students write, in English, a recipe for a typical dish from their own countries. (Instead of preparing an American meal, the students can prepare an international meal using their own recipes.)

Field Trip

(In U.S.) Go to MacDonalds to sample some other typical American food.

THE TELEPHONE

from Reader's Digest Magazine¹¹

I could live, if I had to live, without my dishwasher. I could certainly survive without my Cuisinart or TV. But what I could never give up, what I could never live without, is my blue-in-my-bedroom, white-in-my-workroom, yellow-in-my-kitchen, long-cord telephone.

"Hi, Joyce. It's Judy. Listen. You know that recipe you gave me? Just tell me this — should the chicken be turning purple?"

Now mind you, I am a very busy woman. I've got a husband and three kids and a full-time career. And so, though I talk on the telephone, I never just talk on the phone — I cut onions, straighten shelves, set the table, shorten hems, clean out my purse, make my bed, hang up my clothes, floss my teeth. And I'm frequently doing all this while drying my hair beneath my portable dryer.

I'd hate to miss a thing coming over the telephone. Well, that's not exactly true. There's my great-aunt Ruby, hypochondriac, who calls me with her current Disease of the Week. . . . "Remember how Warren Beatty died in 'Reds'? I swear to you I've got the exact same symptoms." . . .and with whom I have learned to commiserate while reading the entire morning paper.

But most of the pain that comes over the line compels my full attention. In my crowd, when a friend is depressed or sick or in

urgent need, we will call her on the telephone, day after day.

To offer an ear to cry into. To offer, if asked, some advice. But mainly to say that we're there, that we care, that we want to share those dark moments. When a husband loses his job. When a child gets into trouble. When a marriage starts to crumble.

But I also run to the telephone to send out tidings of joy, and to hear — from folks I hold dear — about Fred's promotion and Sheila's new baby and Dad's clean bill of health and Nan's meeting Robert Redford. . .

"Okay, we didn't exactly meet. But we made eye contact."

And on Sundays, at 11 a.m., ever since I've been married, I talk long-distance to my best friend, Phyllis. Week after week — for two decades! — we've maintained our connection. Laughing and crying and growing up together. Discussing husbands and kids, love and death, books and clothes, periodontists and politics and poetry. Sharing our lives together, over the telephone.

"Please go bleed in the bathroom, Alexander. I'll be finished talking to Phyllis in just a few minutes."

Kids are the biggest problem with the telephone. First of all, they hang around when I'm trying to tell a friend a deep, dark secret. Second, they bleed, or otherwise interrupt. Third, they tie up the line — they can talk for two hours about which teams have a shot at the Super Bowl. And fourth, if I tell them to call me as soon as they've reached their destination, that's the only time they don't use the telephone.

No, life isn't always easy on the telephone. I wouldn't deny that at times the phone gives me a pain. But it also can give me weather and time and prescriptions for antibiotics and train reservations and take-out Chinese food.

It's amazing the things you can ask for over the telephone.

"Do I still love you? Do I still love you? What kind of question is that? Why else am I spending a fortune calling long-distance?"

That may not seem wildly romantic to you, but it's good enough for me when Milton's in Ouagadougou and I'm at home. Glad to be staying in touch with my husband, my friends, my relations — even great-Aunt Ruby. Glad to be keeping connected over the telephone.

THE TELEPHONE

Suggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students to name as many standard American household appliances as they can.
- 2) Talk about the ease with which Americans can obtain a telephone (or two or three) and the extent to which they are used in our daily lives. Ask students for comparisons in regard to their own countries.

After Reading:

Listening

Pretape some "typical" phone calls to friends or family, and information-type calls to businesses or the operator. Have students listen to them for certain "standard" responses and expressions that we use on the telephone.

Speaking

1. After students have listened to some typical phone calls, have them practice talking on the telephone in various situations. Use real telephones, if possible, and native speakers on the other end of the line.
2. Refer back to the reading and the many ways in which the author uses the telephone. Invite students to express their opinions on whether the telephone encourages or inhibits communication in the United States.

Writing

When practicing on real telephones, have students call for information and write down what they hear. For example, when

calling about a flight: write down flight number, time of departure and arrival, etc. Also practice taking messages over the phone.

WORK AND EDUCATION

JOBSfrom Parade Magazine¹²Jobs with the Most Openings: 1978-1990

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Annual Openings</u>
Secretaries and Stenographers	305,000
Retail Sales Workers	226,000
Building Custodians	180,000
Cashiers	119,000
Bookkeeping Workers	96,000
Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants	94,000
Cooks and Chefs	86,000
Kindergarten and Elementary School Teachers	86,000
Registered Nurses	85,000
Assemblers	77,000
Waiters and Waitresses	70,000
Guards	70,000
Blue Collar Worker Supervisors	69,000
Local Truck Drivers	64,000
Accountants	61,000
Licensed Practical Nurses	60,000
Typists	59,000
Carpenters	58,000
Industrial Machinery Repairers	58,000
Real Estate Agents and Brokers	50,000
Construction Laborers	49,000
Engineers	46,500
Bank Clerks	45,000
Private Household Workers	45,000
Receptionists	41,000
Wholesale Trade Sales Workers	40,000

Hottest Careers for the '80s

<u>Career</u>	<u>Projected Average Salaries by 1990</u>
<u>Data Processing</u>	
Programmer	\$33,000-43,500
Systems Analyst	38,000-52,500
Data Base Manager	49,500-67,000
<u>Engineering</u>	
Mechanical	\$33,500-47,000
Electronics	\$35,300-49,000
Energy	\$44,000-60,500

Career Projected Average Salaries by 1990

(continued)

Accounting and Finance

Cost Accountant	\$34,700-46,000
Auditor	\$34,900-48,000
Financial V.P.	\$80,000-115,000

Human Resources/Personnel

Technical Jobs Recruiter	\$31,500-43,800
Personnel V.P.	\$70,000-95,000

Marketing and Sales

Sales Engineers	\$34,000-47,500
Secretary	\$15,100-28,900

MEDIAN SALARIES FOR SELECTED OCCUPATIONS

Engineer	\$25,000+
Physician	\$25,000+
Dentist	\$25,000+
Administrator	\$23,375
Foreman	\$22,760
Science Technician	\$20,523
Construction Worker	\$20,451
Miner	\$20,265
Machinist	\$18,953
Sales Worker	\$18,131
Teacher (except college)	\$16,971
Delivery worker	\$16,762
Carpenter	\$16,564
Auto Mechanic	\$16,321
Bookkeeper	\$12,607
Secretary	\$12,060
Farmer	\$12,209
Household worker	\$ 5,298

JOBS

Suggested Activities

Before Reading the Statistics:

- 1) Group the Students according to country. If they are all from the same country, this activity can be done as a class. Give each group a list of 10-15 occupations, in random order, from the reading on Jobs. Ask the students to arrange the occupations in order of pay, from highest to lowest, according to the pay scales in their countries. When they have finished, have the groups compare their results. Then ask them to estimate the average pay, in their countries, for each occupation. Again, groups can compare their figures.
- 2) Ask the class what occupations are most in demand, right now, in their respective countries. What fields are university students going into?
- 3) Now have the students read the statistics on Jobs to see how their countries compare to the U.S. in regard to employment, including salaries, types of jobs and job prestige.

After Reading the Statistics:

Speaking

- 1) For practice in using large numbers, have students ask each other questions based on the statistics. For example: Q - How much does an engineer make in the U.S.?
A - Over 25,000 dollars.

- 2) For practice with comparatives and superlatives, students can ask each other questions like, "Which occupation will have the most openings between now and 1990?"

Listening

- 1) The film Nine to Five is all about bosses and employees. Also appropriate for unit on working women.
- 2) The film Harlan County U.S.A. is a film about working class coal miners. Good for listening to strong regional accent.

Writing

- 1) Have students fill out employment applications, particularly if they are interested in working in the U.S.
- 2) Students can write on the theme, "The Best Career for Me."

THE LOTTERYfrom The Boston Globe¹³

Paul and Colleen Gagnon of Lowell were trying to figure out where they would get \$13,000 for a down payment to buy a house when they realized yesterday they had won the biggest Massachusetts lottery jackpot ever — \$2,560,860.

"When I went to work last night, I was so depressed, because we'd been renting the same apartment for 15 years," said Colleen, who is 34 and works as a nurse at Tewksbury Hospital. "But we didn't know where we could ever get the money from."

Then yesterday morning, Paul, 35, came bounding up the stairs with the newspaper in his hand. "I said, 'Colleen, we hit the Megabuck.' But I asked her to recheck the numbers, 'cause I was numb! Then she burst out into tears, and I knew we'd won."

Gagnon works as an asphalt raker for James Welch Pavement Co., and makes between \$12,000 and \$13,000 a year. "But I get laid off every December, so for three months out of a year, we live on welfare checks," he said. Colleen has been working for only a month after three years of nursing school.

The couple have no children. They live in a five-room apartment on 6 Arthur Street, drive a 1978 Buick Regal and have not taken a vacation since they went to Las Vegas in 1979. "We've been so used to scrimping and saving that it hasn't quite sunk in yet that we're millionaires," Colleen said.

"I just always had this feeling I would win some day," Gagnon said. He said his mother, three brothers, and two

sisters, all of whom live in Lowell, also play the Megabucks game every week.

Colleen said, "We have to pay off my education loan. And both our families have been really good about helping us out while we were in school, so we're going to do some good for them now."

She said she plans to keep working, but Paul said he probably will quit his job.

The owner, of the variety store, where Gagnon bought the winning ticket, is Peter Velgados. He will get \$15,000 for selling Paul the ticket. "That's peanuts," Velgados said. "But the \$2.5 million couldn't have gone to a nicer guy."

THE LOTTERYSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

Discuss the word lottery and ask the students if there are similar money games in their countries. If teaching in the U.S., have the students find out if there is a lottery in the state where they live. Students may want to go and buy lottery tickets as a group to see how the lottery works. Or, they may want to make up a class lottery, each student contributing 50 cents or \$1.00, winner take all.

After Reading:

Speaking

Have students in pairs make up dialogues to present to the class on winning a lottery. One person could be a newspaper reporter, and the other the winner of the lottery. The reporter could ask such questions as "What are you going to do with the money?" "Do you think being rich will change you?" etc.

Writing

Write a paragraph or two on the theme, "If I won the million dollar lottery I would. . ." This is excellent for working on conditionals. Probably some interesting cultural differences will come out in the students' writing as well as personal values. These can be used as a springboard for discussion.

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT WORKING WOMENfrom Parents Magazine¹⁴

A working woman makes only 60 cents for every dollar that a working man makes. In part, the salary discrepancy reflects the fact that women often hold lower-level jobs than men. But even when they perform similar jobs, women still earn lower salaries than men.

The notion that you don't have to pay a woman as much as a man is the result of certain myths about women in the workplace. These include the notions that women don't really need to work as much as men do, that they aren't as well trained, that they are less dependable workers, and that their personalities and physical capabilities are not suited to the rigors of certain types of work. The time has come to put these myths to rest.

MYTH # 1: Women don't need to plan for a career because their husbands will take care of them.

THE FACTS: No matter what a woman's marital status, she generally will spend a substantial amount of time in the workplace. It is predicted that a married woman with no children will work an estimated 35 years. If she has one child, she will work an average of 25 years. The mother of two will work 22 years; the mother of three, 20 years. Even a married woman with four or more children will spend seventeen years in a paid job. Only one out of ten women will never work outside her home. With our high divorce rate, there's no guarantee that a family today will be a family in the future. Women have to be prepared to stand on their own feet economically.

MYTH # 2: Women don't need their salaries; they work for pin money.

THE FACTS: Most women work because of financial need. About two-thirds of working women are single, widowed, divorced, separated, or are married to men who earn less than \$10,000 annually. Because so many women are the sole earner in their family and because inflation has made everything so expensive, most women need to work. If someone wants to buy a house, two incomes are very often necessary.

MYTH # 3: Working women are not as well educated or well trained as working men.

THE FACTS: Actually, the average working woman and her male counterparts have completed about the same amount of schooling, 12.7 years. "In school, women do at least as well as men," says Rita Simons, professor of sociology, law, and communications at the University of Illinois. "They are as likely as men to be members of honorary societies and get good grades."

MYTH # 4: Women aren't physically capable of holding certain jobs.

THE FACTS: Women, stereotyped as the weaker sex, have been denied jobs because of assumptions about their physical abilities. But recent tests of stamina often find that women excel. Research on potential astronauts found that women can more readily endure the tumbling and disorientation of space without showing signs of shock than men can. And when tasks that involve mental ability are added to the test, women really blossom.

MYTH # 5: Women are less effective as managers than men.

THE FACTS: In a study of 950 female managers and 966 male managers by researchers Susan Donnell and Jay Hall, they looked closely for sex differences in management style. They found no significant differences between men and women managers. The low number of women in management isn't justified, since they manage as well as men do," says Susan Donnell. "Companies are not justified in saying, 'I wouldn't mind having women work in management, but they don't work out as well as men do.' Women managers practice the same brand of management that men do."

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT WORKING WOMENSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

Give each student a list of the "myths" from the reading (without the word myth). Have them indicate on their papers whether they feel the statements are true or false. Tabulate the results according to male and female answers to see if there is any difference. Also tabulate by country to note any differences of opinion according to culture. Ask students to explain their answers.

After Reading:

Speaking

Have a debate on the issue "Should women and men hold the same jobs and be paid equally?"

Writing

Many people believe certain "myths" about America. For example, "All Americans are rich." Have students write some "myths" that outsiders hold about their countries.

THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUEby Neil Simon¹⁵

Mel and Edna live on Second Avenue in New York City. Mel has lost his job and Edna has had to return to work as a secretary. In this scene, Mel emerges from the bedroom. He is wearing khaki slacks, a pajama top, a bathrobe with the belt half open, and a pair of slippers. His eyes seem to be sunken into his sockets; he has rings under his eyes and seems to shave only sporadically. He comes into the living room aimlessly. Someone puts a key in the door; opens it. Edna rushes in, dressed smartly in a suit and carrying a small bundle of food in a brown paper bag.

EDNA: "Mel?. . .Mel, I'm home. You must be starved. I'll have your lunch in a second. (She takes things out of the package.) I couldn't get out of the office until a quarter to one and then I had to wait fifteen minutes for a bus. . . . God, the traffic on Third Avenue during lunch hour. . .I got a cheese souffle in Schrafft's, is that all right? I just don't have time to fix anything today, Mr. Cooperman wants me back before two o'clock, we're suddenly swamped with work this week. . .He asked if I would come in on Saturday from now until Christmas, but I told him I didn't think I could. I mean we could use the extra money but I don't think I want to spend Saturdays in that office too. We see each other little enough as it is. . .Come in and talk to me while I'm cooking, Mel, I've only got about thirty-five minutes today. (Edna has put the casserole on the table and is now going into the kitchen, setting up two places with dishes and silverware.) My

feet are absolutely killing me. I don't know why they gave me a desk because I haven't had a chance to sit at it in a month Hi, love. I bought you Sports Illustrated. . . Mr. Cooperman told me there's a terrific story in there about the Knicks, he thought you might be interested in it. (Mel tosses the magazine aside with some contempt.) Come on, sit down, I've got some tomato juice first. (She pours tomato juice into two glasses. Mell listlessly moves over to the table and sits down. Edna sits down, picks up her glass of juice and takes a sip.) Oh, God, that's good. That's the first food I've had since eight o'clock this morning. We're so busy there we don't even have time for a coffee break. . . He's going to ask me to work nights, I know it, and I just don't know what to say to him. . . I mean he's been so nice to me, he buys me sandwiches two or three times a week, not that I don't deserve it, the way I've been working this past month, but I just don't want to spend any nights down there because I don't even have the strength to talk when I get home anymore. . . I don't know where I'm getting the energy, I must have been saving it up for the past twenty-two years. I've got to stop talking because I'm wound up and I'll never stop. . . How are you darling? You feeling all right? (Mel sits, staring into his tomato juice.) Mel? You all right?"

THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUESuggested activities

Before Reading:

1. Have native speakers tape the reading, including the introduction and Edna's monologue. Play it for the class and do a comprehension check, written or oral. Ask the students why they think Mel isn't talking. Talk about how most men don't like to be supported by their wives. Ask if this is true in the students' own countries, as well.
2. Give students the following idioms and expressions:

to be starved
in a second
to be swamped
little enough
my feet are killing me
to take a sip
to be wound up
You all right?

As students read, have them look for these expressions.

After Reading:

Writing

Have students change the monologue to a dialogue by writing in a part for Mel. They can work in pairs (male and female) on this activity.

Speaking

Have students act out the dialogues they have written with their partners.

RISING IMMIGRATION TIDE STRAINS NATION'S SCHOOLS

from The New York Times¹⁶

America's classrooms, confronted by the biggest influx of immigrant students since early in the century, are once again feeling the heat that turned them into melting pots for previous generations of newcomers. The nation's face is being changed by waves of fresh arrivals from Latin America, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia, as well as from the more traditional European sources. The impact is especially apparent in elementary and secondary schools, which are struggling to absorb immigrant youngsters by the hundreds of thousands each year.

Experts are not sure precisely how many school-age children are among the new arrivals, but they know that the numbers are large and that the task of helping them fit into American society is falling primarily on the nation's schools. It is a responsibility that in some parts of the country, notably Florida, Texas and California, has taken on overwhelming proportions.

Much of the attention surrounding today's new arrivals focuses on language and the best way to teach them English. Related to this issue is the controversy over how much responsibility the schools have for helping newcomers preserve their former language and culture. "At the turn of the century, and even when I was going to school in the 1930's and 1940's," said Jesse M. Soriano, head of bilingual education for the United States Department of Education, "teachers just assumed that you were going to become an American and they weren't sensitive to cultural differences. The attitude was, 'It's not up to us to

understand you, but it is up to you to understand us.' That isn't necessarily the case now."

Higher education has also been affected by the influx of immigrants, and some colleges and universities are making allowances for gaps in the backgrounds of prospective students who have had only a portion of their earlier schooling in this country.

City College of New York had an enrollment of 13,500 last year, of which 42 percent were not born in the United States. They came from more than 80 countries, and it was necessary to offer classes in English as a second language to 1,812 of the students.

Immigrant students have usually been absorbed without incident, but sometimes animosity toward the newcomers has stirred tensions. Thong Hy Huynh, who emigrated from Vietnam three years ago, was stabbed to death during a fight with white students at Davis High School in California.

Of all the questions involving immigrants, whatever their country or origin, those related to bilingual education are the most controversial. The Supreme Court ruled in 1973 that such students were entitled to special attention. In the years following that verdict there has been constant debate over whether children are best served by teaching them subjects in their native language until they learn English or by immersing them in the regular program and giving them English lessons on the side.

Sandra and Soledad Arguelles, who arrived in Florida with

their family just three years ago from Cuba not knowing any English, were graduated this year as co-valedictorians of their junior high school with straight-A averages. Sandra, who was taught mathematics and science in Spanish for more than a year before shifting to a curriculum entirely in English, now studies Spanish only as a foreign language, much as an American-born student would. She is grateful both for the original bilingual instruction and for the chance to continue studying Spanish. "All of the teachers helped a lot," she said. "They were always there for me when I didn't understand something. I owe a lot to my teachers — and this country."

RISING IMMIGRATION TIDE STRAINS NATION'S SCHOOLSSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Talk about the education system in the U.S. Teacher can put an outline on the board as students contribute what they know about the American school system. Include pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, Jr. high, high school, vocational school, college, university, graduate school. Ask students to compare this system with the systems in their countries.
- 2) Talk about bi-lingual education in the United States and in general. Ask students if they have an opinion about the merits of bi-lingual education.

After Reading:

Speaking/Listening

- 1) Field Trip - visit an American school, if possible, either in the U.S. or abroad. Observe a bi-lingual program, if offered at the school.
- 2) Have a debate on the general concept of bi-lingual education, pro and con.

Writing

If students are planning to study in an American university, have them practice filling out college applications.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

LONELY AMERICANSby Suzanne Gordon¹⁷

Life in America has exploded, and loneliness is one main ingredient in the fallout. What was once a philosophical problem, spoken of mainly by poets and prophets, has now become an almost permanent condition for millions of Americans, not only for the old or divorced but also for the men and women filling singles bars and encounter groups, the adolescents running away from home or refusing to go to school, the corporate transients who move every two or three years, and the people calling suicide and crisis hotlines in search of someone to talk to. Knowing no limits of class, race, or age, loneliness is today a great leveler, a new American tradition.

To begin to understand the origins of the problem, one need only look at New York's high-rises, Los Angeles' pedestrianless streets, suburbia's front-porchless houses. The halls of large apartment buildings do not encourage conversation, nor do the aisles of supermarkets, the noise of factory assembly lines and factory-like offices, or the forbidding streets of the metropolitan areas that house 69 percent of the American population.

Mobility has a great deal to do with this erosion of American life. People move with such astounding frequency (40 million Americans change their residence once a year, and the average person will move 14 times in his or her lifetime) that they lose family ties, friends, and themselves. Mobility does more than effect close friendships; it changes the whole tone of a neighborhood. When people lived in the same place for years,

residents in a community knew one another. When someone moved onto the block you brought cake or candy. Today it is not unusual for people not to know their neighbors at all. Why should one make the effort of a welcome when the new arrivals will be leaving in a year.

LONELY AMERICANSSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

Survey the students, in written form or orally, in regard to the following questions:

- 1) Do you live at home?
- 2) Do you live near your parents (within 25 miles)?
- 3) Are you friendly with your neighbors?
- 4) How many times did your family move when you were growing up?
- 5) What type of dwelling do you live in? House, apartment, etc.?

Ask students to read the article to see how their answers compare with the way most Americans live.

After Reading:

Speaking

- 1) As a class, discuss the differences between the students' own experiences and what they have read about Americans. Find out if the same thing is happening in their countries as they become modernized.
- 2) Songs by Simon and Garfunkel are appropriate. "I am a Rock," "Sounds of Silence," "Bridge Over Troubled Water," and "America" all talk about loneliness.

Writing

Have students write about a time they remember feeling lonely.

OLD IN AMERICA

from a short story by Bernard Malanud¹⁸

Kessler, formerly an egg candler, lived alone on social security. Though past sixty-five, he might have found well-paying work with more than one butter and egg wholesaler, for he sorted and graded with speed and accuracy, but he was a quarrelsome type and considered a trouble maker, so the wholesalers did without him. Therefore, after a time he retired, living with few wants on his old-age pension. Kessler inhabited a small cheap flat on the top floor of a decrepit tenement on the East Side. Perhaps because he lived above so many stairs, no one bothered to visit him. He was much alone, as he had been most of his life. At one time he'd had a family, but unable to stand his wife or children, always in his way, he had after some years walked out on them. He never saw them thereafter, because he never sought them, and they did not seek him. Thirty years had passed. He had no idea where they were, nor did he think much about it.

In the tenement, although he had lived there ten years, he was more or less unknown. The tenants on both sides of his flat on the fifth floor, an Italian family of three middle-aged sons and their wizened mother, and a sullen, childless German couple named Hoffman, never said hello to him, nor did he greet any of them on the way up or down the narrow wooden stairs. Others of the house recognized Kessler when they passed him in the street, but they thought he lived elsewhere on the block. Ignace, the small, bent-back janitor, knew him best, for they had several times played two-handed pinochle; but Ignace, usually the loser

because he lacked skill at cards, had stopped going up after a time. He complained to his wife that he couldn't stand the stink there, that the filthy flat with its junky furniture made him sick. The janitor had spread the word about Kessler to the others on the floor, and they shunned him as a dirty old man. Kessler understood this but had contempt for them all.

OLD IN AMERICA

Suggested Activities

Before Reading:

Ask students where their grandparents live, how they spend their time, if they are retired, and if they have any authority in family matters. Ask them what they have heard about the elderly in the U.S. Talk about age of retirement, social security, senior citizen discounts, retirement communities, homes for the elderly, relationships with the children, etc. Ask students why they think so many senior citizens in America live apart from their families. Discuss the American value of personal independence.

After Reading:

Listening

Show a movie on the elderly, like The Sunshine Boys, Harry and Tonto, or On Golden Pond.

Speaking

Have an American senior citizen (or several) visit the classroom. Students can ask questions about the person's lifestyle and feelings toward being a senior citizen in the U.S., etc.

Writing

Have students write a short essay on "How I Plan to Spend My Retirement Years."

THE REAL MAN'S VOCABULARYby Bruce Feirstein¹⁹

If you're truly going to be a Real Man, you've got to sound like it.

Therefore, keep the following in mind when speaking:

Real Men do not relate to anything. They do not have meaningful dialogues. They do not talk about personal space, vibes, Karma, bummers, or shared experiences.

A Real Man does not get behind anything. They are not trying to get in touch with their feelings; they don't care where anybody's coming from. And they would surely never say anything like "I'm trying to get my act together."

Further, Real Men do not do drugs. They don't go for it, catch rays, crash, party, boogie, get down, or kick out the jams.

Real Men don't interact, hyperventilate, or obsess; they don't talk about dieting, raising their consciousness, or trying to work things out.

Real men do not have mother, father, sister, brother, or inferiority complexes.

Real men don't lay raps on people; they refuse to go with the flow, repress, O.D., cope, or have mid-life crises.

Real Men do not mellow out. They don't talk about opening up more lines of communication with a girl friend. And Real Men are certainly never laid back.

They never flash on anything, or agree with somebody by saying, "I hear you."

Real Men do not get wasted. They don't have lovers,

shrinks, surrogate parents, or soul-mates. Real Men don't think anything is neat; and they never refer to movies as films!

THE REAL MAN'S VOCABULARY

Suggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Explain to the students that they will be reading a passage that contains a lot of current popular expressions that are used particularly by young Americans. They may not understand many expressions because they are very idiomatic and not used in context. Ask them to read, knowing that the vocabulary will be clarified later on.
- 2) Talk about writing that is "tongue-in-cheek." Explain that this passage comes from a book that jokes about the way men are today as compared with "real men" from the past, like John Wayne.

After Reading:

Writing

Present each student with a list of the vocabulary words and expressions from the reading. (As there are a lot, you may want to present a few at a time). Ask them to write sentences, on their own or working in pairs, for each of the expressions as they understand them. Many students will, of course, give the literal meaning to these words, but they should not be corrected at this point.

Listening

Have students listen to a pre-recorded dialogue (or dialogues), by native speakers, which incorporate these ex-

pressions, and which help to clarify their meaning. Then have them return to their sentences, making any changes necessary, based on the meanings they derived from the dialogues. Have students write the sentences on the blackboard for further clarification.

Speaking

Have students, in pairs or small groups, choose 5 to 8 words from the reading and write a dialogue incorporating these words. Dialogues can then be presented to the class.

SOCIAL ISSUES

THE OTHER AMERICA: POVERTY IN THE UNITED STATES

by Michael Harrington²⁰

There is a familiar America. It is celebrated in speeches and advertised on television and in the magazines. It has the highest mass standard of living the world has ever known.

The other America, the America of poverty, is hidden today in a way that it never was before. Its millions are socially invisible to the rest of us.

To be sure, the other America is not impoverished in the same sense as those poor nations where millions cling to hunger as a defense against starvation. This country has escaped such extremes. That does not change the fact that tens of millions of Americans are, at this very moment, maimed in body and spirit, existing at levels beneath those necessary for human decency. They are without adequate housing and education and medical care.

There are perennial reasons that make the other America an invisible land:

Poverty is often off the beaten track. It always has been. The ordinary tourist never left the main highway, and today he rides the interstate turnpikes. He does not go into the valleys of Pennsylvania where the towns look like movie sets of Wales in the thirties. He does not see the company houses in rows, the rutted roads.

Clothes make the poor invisible too: America has the best-dressed poverty the world has ever known. It is much easier in the United States to be decently dressed than it is to be decently housed, fed or doctored. Even people with terribly depressed

incomes can look prosperous.

These, then, are the strangest poor in the history of mankind. Their misery has continued while the majority of the nation talked of itself as being "affluent" and worried about neuroses in the suburbs. In this way tens of millions of human beings became invisible. They dropped out of sight and out of mind; they were without their own political voice.

In a nation with a technology that could provide every citizen with a decent life, it is an outrage and a scandal that there should be such social misery.

THE OTHER AMERICA: PROVERTY IN THE UNITED STATES

Suggested Activities

Before Reading:

Talk about the class system in the U.S., i.e., upper class, middle class, working class, and lower class. Use pictures from magazines of the various housing and lifestyles represented by each social class to promote discussion. Have students describe the distribution of wealth in their own countries.

After Reading:

Listening

Show a movie depicting poverty in the U.S., like Midnight Cowboy, Harlan County, U.S.A., Coal Miner's Daughter (rags to riches), Living off the Land, etc.

Writing

Have the students imagine that they are politicians. Ask them to write a speech on the subject "My Proposals for Helping the Poor." They can write about the poor people in the U.S., their own countries, or in general.

Speaking

Have a few students volunteer to read their speeches to the class. Discussion can follow.

NATIVE AMERICANS

from "Touch the Earth," edited by T. C. McLuhan²¹

We did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, and winding streams with tangled growth, as "wild." Only to the white man was nature a "wilderness" and only to him was the land "infested" with "wild" animals and "savage" people. To us it was tame. Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery. Not until the hairy man from the east came and with brutal frenzy heaped injustices upon us and the families we loved was it "wild" for us. When the very animals of the forest began fleeing from his approach, then it was that for us the "Wild West" began.

Chief Luther Standing Bear
of the Oglala band of Sioux

We were lawless people, but we were on pretty good terms with the Great Spirit, creator and ruler of all. You whites assumed we were savages. You didn't understand our prayers. You didn't try to understand. When we sang our praises to the sun or moon or wind, you said we were worshipping idols. Without understanding, you condemned us as lost souls just because our form of worship was different from yours.

We saw the Great Spirit's work in almost anything: sun, moon, trees, wind, and mountains. Sometimes we approached him through these things. Was that so bad? I think we have a true belief in the supreme being, a stronger faith than that of most whites who have called us pagans. . . . Indians living close to nature and nature's ruler are not living in darkness.

Did you know that trees talk? Well they do. They talk to each other, and they'll talk to you if you listen. Trouble, is white people don't listen. They never learned to listen to the Indians so I don't suppose they'll listen to other voices in nature. But I have learned a lot from trees: sometimes about the weather, sometimes about animals, sometimes about the Great Spirit.

Tatanga Mani (Walking Buffalo)
Stoney Indian

NATIVE AMERICANS

Suggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students if there are Indians or other indigenous peoples living in their countries. Discuss how these people are viewed or treated by the rest of the population.
- 2) Ask students if they know anything about the history of Native Americans, where they live now, and how they are treated. Talk about any American movies they have seen depicting the white man's view of Indians.
- 3) Look at a detailed map of the U.S. and point out all of the states, towns, cities, rivers, etc., that have Indian names. Locate some of the major existing tribes or have students research this information.

After Reading:

Writing

Try to obtain pictures of Native Americans (modern day or historical). Put these on the wall of the classroom. Have students write a poem or short story based on feelings evoked from the pictures.

Speaking

This would be a good time to discuss prejudice in the U.S. of other persecuted groups, including blacks (and the whole slavery issue), immigrants and refugees, women, etc. Pictures could again be used to provoke discussion.

ARE ILLEGAL ALIENS GOOD FOR US?

from Parade Magazine²²

Out of a total population of 230 million, this country harbors from 3.5 million to 6 million people who don't belong here. Some slipped over the border, some are tourists who never went home, some are students who deliberately overstayed their allotted time.

These illegal aliens come from 60 different countries throughout the world, with perhaps 2 million from Mexico alone. Because of their fear of discovery and deportation, they lead secret lives, talk as little as possible to strangers, stay in the shadows as much as they can.

"It is not that they are bad people — their status is bad," says Lawrence Fuchs, professor of American Studies at Brandeis University. "They are an exploitable — and exploited — underclass that threatens the very integrity of American Society."

Not only are illegal aliens not bad people, they are also, for the most part, self-selected for drive — highly motivated, ambitious people seeking a better life for themselves and their families: the American dream.

Eduardo Rodriguez came to the United States in 1977 on his honeymoon and never went home. Eduardo is 32 with a fifth-grade education. His wife, Manuela, is 30, with 11 years of schooling. They live with their 3 children in two small rooms in El Paso, Texas. Eduardo explains why they came to the United States.

"Since I was in school, I wanted to come here. Even if we are illegal, even if we live in two small rooms, things are better

here than they were at home."

Eduardo has a job in a factory in El Paso. He works 6 days a week — sometimes 13 hours a day. He earns \$3.75 an hour. His boss knows he is illegal and once hid him during a raid by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service so that he wouldn't be deported. Eduardo says he hired a lawyer to help him apply for legal status, but the lawyer disappeared with his money.

"They are why we are here," says Eduardo, looking at his children playing. "I pay my bills, I don't want government help. I just want to work. What we wanted was for our children to be born here. To go to school here. To be Americans."

ARE ILLEGAL ALIENS GOOD FOR US?

Suggested Activities

Before Reading:

If students are in the U.S., ask them what procedure they went through to obtain a visa to come to the U.S. Talk about the different kinds of visas, work permits, and requirements for obtaining citizenship in the U.S. Discuss the role of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and define the term "illegal alien."

After Reading:

Speaking/Listening

If students are residing in the U.S., ask them to tell the class why they have chosen to live there. Or, bring recent immigrants into the classroom for the same purpose.

Outside the U.S. — Give each student a card on which is printed the name of a fictitious person from a certain country, with a short biographical sketch on that person. Have them tell why they (the fictitious person) want to move to the U.S. Give such reasons as economic, political and personal.

Writing

- 1) Students can write on the theme, "Why I would/wouldn't like to live in the U.S."
- 2) Have the class compose a letter to be sent to the Immigration and Naturalization Service inquiring for information about obtaining a visa or permanent resident status.

37 WHO SAW MURDER DIDN'T CALL THE POLICE

from The New York Times²³

For more than half an hour 38 respectable, law-abiding citizens in Queens watched a killer stalk and stab a woman in three separate attacks in Kew Gardens.

Twice the sound of their voices and the sudden glow of their bedroom lights interrupted him and frightened him off. Each time he returned, sought her out and stabbed her again. Not one person telephoned the police during the assault; one witness called after the woman was dead.

That was two weeks ago today. But Assistant Chief Inspector Frederick M. Lussen, in charge of the borough's detectives and a veteran of 25 years of homicide investigations, is still shocked.

He can give a matter-of-fact recitation of many murders. But the Kew Gardens slaying baffles him — not because it is a murder, but because the "good people" failed to call the police.

"As we have reconstructed the crime," he said, "the assailant had three chances to kill this woman during a 35-minute period. He returned twice to complete the job. If we had been called when he first attacked, the woman might not be dead now."

This is what the police say happened beginning at 3:20 a.m. in the staid, middle-class, tree-lined Austin Street area:

Twenty-eight-year-old Catherine Genovese, who was called Kitty by almost everyone in the neighborhood, was returning home from her job as manager of a bar in Hollis. She parked her red Fiat in a lot adjacent to the Kew Gardens, Long Island Railroad Station, facing Mowbray Place. She turned off the lights of her

car, locked the door and started to walk the 100 feet to the entrance of her apartment at 82-70 Austin Street. Miss Genovese noticed a man at the far end of the lot. She halted. Then, nervously, she headed up Austin Street towards Lefferts Boulevard, where there is a call box to the 102d Police Precinct in nearby Richmond Hill.

She got as far as a street light in front of a bookstore before the man grabbed her. She screamed. Lights went on in the 10-story apartment house at 82-67 Austin Street, which faces the bookstore. Windows slid open and voices punctured the early-morning stillness.

Miss Genovese screamed: "Oh, my God, he stabbed me! Please help me! Please help me!"

From one of the upper windows in the apartment house, a man called down: "Let that girl alone!"

The assailant looked up at him, shrugged and walked down Austin Street toward a white sedan parked a short distance away. Miss Genovese struggled to her feet.

Lights went out. The killer returned to Miss Genovese, now trying to make her way around the side of the building by the parking lot to get to her apartment. The assailant stabbed her again.

"I'm dying!" she shrieked. "I'm dying!"

Windows were opened again, and lights went on in many apartments. The assailant got into his car and drove away. Miss Genovese staggered to her feet. It was 3:35 a.m.

The assailant returned. By then, Miss Genovese had crawled

to the back of the building, where the freshly painted brown doors to the apartment house held out hope of safety. The killer tried the first door; she wasn't there. At the second door, 82-62 Austin Street, he saw her slumped on the floor at the foot of the stairs. He stabbed her a third time — fatally.

It was 3:50 by the time the police received their first call, from a man who was a neighbor of Miss Genovese. In two minutes they were at the scene. The neighbor, a 70-year-old woman and another woman were the only persons on the street. Nobody else came forward.

The man explained that he called the police after much deliberation. He phoned a friend in Nassau County for advice and then he crossed the roof of the building to the apartment of the elderly woman to get her to make the call.

"I didnt' want to get involved," he sheepishly told the police.

It was 4:25 a.m. when the ambulance arrived for the body of Miss Genovese. It drove off. "Then," a solemn police detective said, "the people came out."

37 WHO SAW MURDER DIDN'T CALL POLICESuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students to name some crimes. Make a list on the blackboard, i.e., murder, robbery (theft, burglary), bribery, larceny, rape, etc. Also, talk about various terms relating to crime like white collar crimes, hit and run, shooting, stabbing, hold-up (stick-up) etc.
- 2) Have students talk about crime in their own countries. What are the worst offenses? Is there organized crime? What are the most common criminal acts? How are criminals treated once they've been caught? etc.

After Reading:

Speaking

- 1) Ask students if people in their countries would react the same way or differently, as compared to the New Yorkers in the article. Ask them why they believe this indifference to crime happens in the U.S.
- 2) Have students find other newspaper articles describing various crimes. They can either retell the story or roleplay the crime.

Listening

- 1) Watch the T.V. show "Hill Street Blues" or any police movie.
- 2) Listen to mystery radio programs that are played on many stations.

Writing

Rewrite the New York Times article in condensed form (one or two paragraphs). It can be in the form of a news broadcast, short story, etc.

CORNERby Ralph Pomeroy²⁴

The cop slumps alertly on his motorcycle,
Supported by one leg like a leather stork.
His glance accuses me of loitering.

I can see his eyes moving like a fish
In the green depths of his green goggles.

His ease is fake. I can tell.

My ease is fake. And he can tell.

The fingers armored by his gloves
Splay and clench, itching to change something.

As if he were my enemy or my death,

I just standing there watching.

I spit out my gum which has gone stale.

I knock out a new cigarette—

Which is my bravery.

It is all imperceptible:

The way I shift my weight,

The way he creaks in his saddle.

The traffic is specific though constant.

The sun surrounds me, divides the street between us.

His crash helmet is whiter in the shade.

It is like a bull ring as they say it is just before the fighting.

I cannot back down. I am there.

Everything holds me back.

I am in danger of disappearing into the sunny dust.
My levis bake and my T shirt sweats.

My cigarette makes my eyes burn.
But I don't dare drop it.

Who made him my enemy?
Prince of coolness. King of fear.
Why do I lean here waiting?
Why does he lounge there watching?

I am becoming sunlight.
My hair is on fire. My boots run like tar.
I am hung-up by the bright air.

Something breaks through all of a sudden,
And he blasts off, quick as a craver,
Smug in his power; watching me watch.

CORNERSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Discuss the role of the police in the student's own countries. Are police officers respected? Are they honest? How do they deal with the poor as compared to those with money?
- 2) Introduce vocabulary related to the police: cop, goggles, crash helmet, uniform, badge, etc. Students should be able to come up with most of the words on their own. A picture of a police officer would be helpful.
- 3) Talk about poetry — What makes it different from prose? Are there any famous poets from the students' own countries?

After Reading:

Listening

Using a native speaker, pre-record the poem. Have students listen to the recording without the poem in front of them.

Speaking

- 1) Discuss the tone of the poem. What kind of person is the speaker in the poem? Why are the cop and the writer enemies?
- 2) Have one or two students read the poem aloud to the class in a dramatic way, putting emotion and feeling into it.

- 3) Ask volunteers to say a favorite poem in their native language, and then translate it into English for the class.

Writing

Have students write a short poem about a person that they know or know of. It could be a friend, relative, celebrity, politician, etc. They may need some guidance if this is the first time they have written a poem. Have them choose a title, decide on the tone of the poem and write down a few ideas as an outline. Vocabulary will be very important. They may want to use a dictionary or thesaurus. Poems can be read aloud to the class, if the students wish.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

PHYSICAL FITNESSfrom Readers Digest²⁵

There are plenty of people around who will swear that the United States is caught up in a fitness boom — and that Americans have become fitter as a result. The evidence, however, strongly suggests otherwise. Whatever wonders the fitness boom may have worked for certain individuals, it hasn't made society as a whole fitter at all. As Guy G. Reiff, a University of Michigan physical-education professor, puts it, "They say that everybody's running and working out, and maybe guys with money are. But I'm not sure much of this is reaching the shoe clerks and the guys carrying lunch buckets."

Even when people are engaged in worthwhile exercise programs, the benefits tend to be offset by the increasing sedentariness of American Life. We watch more TV and walk less. Because of the swivel chair, computer terminal and industrial robot, we get less exercise on the job. Owing to our inactivity, we are unable to work off tension, properly exercise the heart and other muscles or burn off calories we consume in gargantuan quantities.

By all accounts, the typical American adult can't climb a flight of stairs without experiencing shortness of breath. More than 80 million adults suffer back pains. One-third of the population complains of sleep disorders. According the National Center for Health Statistics, approximately a fifth of the U.S. adult public is at least 20 percent above desireable weight.

"The real American epidemic is that every fifth man has a

heart attack by age sixty," says Dr. William P. Castelli, director of a long-running federally funded study of heart disease. "This is a disease that doesn't exist for 3/4 of the people on Earth." To Castelli, the situation is typified by a neighbor of his who owns a sit-down lawn mower equipped with a holder for a beer can and an ashtray so that "he not only avoids exercise but takes in calories and carcinogens."

Most experts agree that the one sure-fire antidote to "life-style" disease is life-style change, such as quitting smoking, making fundamental dietary changes and following a regular, balanced exercise program. Just as important is the need to engineer more activity into daily life. Use stairs instead of elevators. Leave your car at the far end of the parking lot. Walk more. Good health isn't effortless.

PHYSICAL FITNESSSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students to define "physical fitness." Is there an equivalent expression in their native language?
- 2) Talk about the jogging craze in America, and health clubs. How do people get exercise in the students' own countries?

After Reading:

Speaking/Listening

- 1) In the U.S. — take a tour of a health club. Have students prepare questions in advance.
- 2) Do exercises in class. Have students lead each other in exercises that they know. They must describe the action: "twist your waist," "bend your knees," etc.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

by Claude Humphrey, football player²⁶

When I go out on the football field, my whole personality changes. It has to change. It's a game of skills, number one. But it's a game of aggression, too. You've got to make yourself angry. If you don't, you don't play well. You have to make up reasons to feel this way. John Williams is the offensive tackle for the Rams. He's a good friend of mine. But when I play against John, I have to tell myself that John is trying to hurt me. He's trying to take food out of my family's mouth. He's trying to embarrass me and make me look bad. By the time that I get to thinking all these things that John is trying to do to me, I'm mad. When I get mad at him, I don't feel anything for him. I can do anything I want to him. It wouldn't have made any difference if I hurt him. Do you understand what I'm saying? If he gets hurt, he won't be taking bread from a kid's family. I don't have any personal feelings towards him at all. Anything I can do to him is okay 'cause he ain't like a person.

The instant the game is over, he becomes John, my friend. I'm ready to go and have a beer with him and to talk and jive and just be buddy-buddy. But once we go out on the field, he's an enemy.

I don't have any friends out there. Even the guys on my own team, really, are the enemy. If I got to work with this guy and he don't do it right, he's taking bread out of my family's mouth. If he don't do it right, he's affecting me.

For now, I'm going to play football a couple of more years.

I hope my instinct will be more intense. When I work out, I talk to myself. I'm thinking about getting the quarterback. I'm thinking about how I'm going to grab him. If he slips me, I'm going for his foot. If I've got a good shot at him, I'm just going to take it. I could see me grabbing the guy's arm and just pulling myself by him. I can see me going inside him. I can see the fans yelling.

I got to win. But I have standards I set up for myself, and when I don't meet 'em, it doesn't make any difference that my team won. I have nothing to be happy about. If we lose a game and I did everything I set out to do, I'm sad that we lost, but I'm happy that I did what I did. You understand what I'm saying? That's more important than winning the game.

I build up the hate during the course of the week, so by the time Sunday gets here, I really am pissed off at the guy. It's not right to be able to hurt people and not feel anything. I believe in feeling — in not unnecessarily hurting someone. It's not right to go out and beat a dog or kick a cow. That isn't the way God intended for it to be. You understand what I'm saying? When I'm through with football, all those kind of feelings will be gone.

AMERICAN FOOTBALLSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students to name some sports that are played in their countries. Are they sports for everyone to participate in or mostly spectator sports? Do sports figures get paid a lot of money? Which of their sports originally came from the U.S.?
- 2) Ask students if they know any American sports that aren't played in their countries.

After Reading:

Speaking

- 1) Ask students to explain the basic rules and procedure for a sport played in their countries. Write new vocabulary on the blackboard, i.e., dribble, pass, score, make a goal, etc.
- 2) If appropriate for the situation, play a game of softball, touch football with the students.

Listening

Watch a sports movie, like "Rocky."

Writing

Students can write on the topic "Do You Approve or Disapprove of Competitive Sports? Why?"

Field Trip

Go to high school sports event or a little league game, if in the U.S.

AMERICA ON THE ROAD: COWBOY AND CAMPERS

from The New York Times²⁷

Suddenly, he was just there on the roadside, an unshaven figure from another time. He sat astride his horse in a worn, creaking saddle. He wore a plaid shirt, denims, boots, an ammunition bandoleer across his chest and a dark, dirty cowboy hat low over his eyes. He had a holster with a Colt .44 on his hip and a long rifle on the pack horse where saddlebags bulged with grub.

"Howdy," he said.

It was Jim Maher, a 24-year-old Michigan horse groom making his way, at about three miles an hour, from Phoenix to Butte, Montana. "I had the time off," he said, "I just wanted to see the country close up."

The cowboy was a dramatic reminder, if any was needed, of the annual migration of millions of vacationing Americans. They are a special breed of summertime spenders who take to the road on two feet, two wheels, three wheels, four wheels or four horseshoes.

The Dick Hook family in their air-conditioned motor home from New York were on their nightly motel hunt. They were four days and 2,000 miles into their 35-day, 12,000-mile odyssey from Vestal, N.Y., through most of the West's national parks.

For the Gustafsons in their air-conditioned car, the daily routine begins shortly after dawn with the obligatory banging of the car trunk in a motel parking lot where the sun is just starting to bake the vehicles. With clean clothes, full ice

chests and a spotless windshield not yet smeared with smashed bugs, they head out to see what there is to see for the next 300 miles.

The day ends perhaps 10 hours later in a motel parking lot with the obligatory banging of the car trunk and the race by the youngsters to shuck their clothes and leap into the heated pool of the next oasis on the march across an awesome landscape that did not look so large on the map.

They have worn half the clothes they thought they'd need and spent twice the money they thought they would.

They have done some wonderful things (listened to a river), some angry things ("I said don't touch that!") and some important things (show a little boy how to put a worm on a hook). They have laughed at the road signs ("Readlyn, Iowa — 857 Friendly People and 1 Old Grump").

The bills won't come until next month, so for now all is well with vacation and life on the road again.

Rob McLaughlin is taking the economy vacation this year. The 26-year-old unemployed maintenance man is riding his used bicycle from San Jose, California to Poughkeepsie, N.Y. He was sprawled on a log at the 10,947-foot summit of Montana's Bear-tooth Pass near the entrance to Yellowstone National Park.

"When I finally saw that summit sign," he said, "I didn't know whether to dance, cry or pass out. I didn't want to pass out and I knew my legs wouldn't dance, so I just sat down here."

Mr. Maher, the cowboy, most likely will not make his trip again. He had ridden his horses 1,300 miles through desert,

farmlands, towns and Montana thunderstorms. "I met," he said, pushing his hat back a bit, "a man with 8 wives, an English nobleman who gave me a steak dinner, a lot of nice people and a few stinkers."

A fellow traveler said he envied Mr. Maher's vacation trip. "Well, come on along," said the rider over his shoulder. "The trail is wide."

AMERICA ON THE ROAD: COWBOYS AND CAMPERSSuggested Activities

Before Reading:

- 1) Ask students to describe vacations in their own countries. How much time do they take off for vacation? At what time of year do people usually vacation? Where do people like to spend their vacations, etc.
- 2) Talk about different types of vacations, like camping, motor homes, hotels and motels, renting cottages, etc.

After Reading:

Speaking

Set up a travel agency in the classroom. Get travel brochures for different vacation spots in the U.S. Students can play the parts of travel agents and vacationers planning their trips. They can practice asking for reservations at hotels, getting flight, train, bus information, buying tickets, paying with credit cards, etc. They can plan their itinerary and map out the route they will take.

Writing

Have students write a letter (or postcard) to a friend or relative from their imaginary vacation trip describing what they are doing and seeing, the weather, and if they are enjoying themselves.

ENDNOTES

¹Wallen, Carl J., Competency in Teaching Reading, SRA, Inc., Chicago, IL., 1972.

²Benet, Stephen Vincent, America, Farrar & Rinehard, Inc., N.Y., 1944, excerpted from pp.3-4.

³Steinbeck, John, America and Americans, The Viking Press, N.Y., 1966, excerpted from pp.13-14.

⁴Ibid., excerpted from pp.127-128.

⁵Ibid., excerpted from p.46.

⁶Newsweek Magazine, July 11, 1983, p.50.

⁷Simenauer, Jacqueline, & Carroll, David, Singles: The New Americans, Simon & Schuster, N. Y., 1982.

⁸Allen, Woody, Play It Again Sam, Random House, Inc., N.Y., 1968, excerpted from Act One, Scene One.

⁹Steinbeck, Op. cit., excerpted from pp.30-31.

¹⁰Garrison, Holly, "The Summer Feast, American Style," Parents Magazine, July, 1983, pp.98-106.

¹¹Viorst, Judith, "Please Bleed in the Bathroom, Alexander," Reader's Digest Magazine, July 1983, excerpted from pp.178-180.

¹²"What People Earn," Parade Magazine, July 10, 1983, pp.7-8.

¹³Minsky, Terri, "Lowell Pair Megabucks Millionaires," The Boston Globe, July 25, 1983, p.1.

¹⁴Andrews, Lori, "Myths and Facts About Working Women," Parents Magazine, July, 1983, pp.26-30.

¹⁵Simon, Neil, The Prisoner of Second Avenue, Random House, Inc., N.Y., 1972, excerpted from Act Two, Scene One.

¹⁶Maeroff, Gene, "Rising Immigration Tide Strains Nation's Schools," The New York Times, Sec. 12, p.1, August 21, 1983.

¹⁷Gordon, Suzanne, Lonely in America, Simon and Schuster, N.Y., 1976, excerpted from pp.15-19.

¹⁸Malamud, Bernard, "The Mourners," The American Tradition in Literature, 3rd. ed., Vol. 2, Grosset & Dunlap, Inc., N.Y., 1967.

¹⁹Feirstein, Bruce, Real Men Don't Eat Quiche, Pocket Books, N.Y., 1982, excerpted from pp.28-29.

²⁰Harrington, Michael, The Other America: Poverty in the United States, The Macmillan Co., N.Y., 1963, excerpted from Chapter 1.

²¹McLuhan, T.C., ed., Touch the Earth: A Self-portrait of Indian Existence, Simon & Schuster, N.Y., 1971, pp.23-45.

²²Michaels, Marguerite, "Are Illegal Aliens Good for Us?" Parade Magazine, July 17, 1983, excerpted from pp.13-14.

²³Gansberg, Martin, "37 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call The Police," The New York Times, March 27, 1964, excerpted from pp.1 & 38.

²⁴Pomeroy, Ralph, "Corner" from Some Haystacks Don't Have Any Needle and Other Complete Modern Poems, Scott Foresman & Co., Glenview, IL., 1969, p.39.

²⁵Kirshenbaum, Jerry & Sullivan, Robert, "America Is Still Unfit," Reader's Digest, July 1983, excerpted from pp.143-145.

²⁶Terkel, Studs, American Dreams: Lost and Found, Pantheon Books, N.Y., 1980, excerpted from pp.308-310.

²⁷Malcolm, Andrew, "America on the Road: Cowboy and Campers," The New York Times, August 22, 1983.