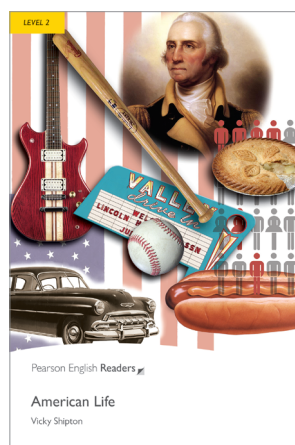


## American Life

Vicky Shipton



### About the author

Vicky Shipton is from Michigan, in the northern United States. She has lived in Turkey and Britain, where she learned about other cultures, which opened her eyes to the way people live in America. She lives in Cambridge, England, with her husband and two daughters.

### Summary

*American Life* offers an enormous amount of interesting information and statistics about the way Americans live, how the United States and its people developed as a nation, and the passions and problems in American society today. This magazine-style Pearson English Reader includes a general knowledge test, a map of the country, a comic strip story on High School Life, and many short articles on everything in America today. The statistics clearly show that white Americans and African Americans do not live in a society that always believes in equal pay for equal work. The brief history of America's favorite sports gives information on the most famous and the highest paid athletes. Movies, music and television are big money-spinners and Americans are hooked on all three. Entertainment plays a big part in American life, but so does hard work. It may take years before a worker gets more than one or two weeks' annual vacation. And some people earn only the minimum wage—\$5.75 per hour. It is a country where people work hard and play hard.

**Pages 1–6:** This section of the book introduces the United States through a map, some statistical information and a brief account of its early history.

People came into the United States via Alaska. Europeans came to the country after Columbus arrived in North America in 1492. The United States became independent from Britain in 1776. Settlements then advanced toward the West, gradually pushing the Native Americans into smaller and smaller areas. The growing differences between the north and the south led the United States to a war that ended with the abolition of slavery in 1865.

After the Second World War and the Cold War, the United States emerged as a powerful country and some of its people see it as the “world policeman”.

**Pages 7–11:** This section of the book introduces statistical information about the population and their habits and the first part of the comic strip about High School life.

The early immigration into the United States was European, mainly British. Africans, known today as African-Americans, were brought into the United States from Africa as slaves. Between the 1880s and the First World War, millions of immigrants arrived, mainly from Europe. Today there are also Asian and Hispanic groups.

There are many shopping centers (malls) in the United States, and they are an important feature of American life. There are also many and varied restaurants and, of course, “fast food”. Food isn't expensive and fifty per cent of the population is overweight. Houses are mostly made of wood and in general spacious. Many people pursue the “American dream” and expect to become wealthy, but although there is little unemployment, not all salaries are good and jobs are time-demanding. The average income varies with ethnic origin and gender.

The comic strip introduces Marcos, an exchange student, who arrives in Chicago and goes to High School, where he wants to become part of the football team.

**Pages 12–19:** This section of the book introduces information about the Americans' love of cars, some of the problems that the United States faces today and the most popular sports.

Cars are not only popular but also necessary in the United States. Very few people use buses and trains, which are not available everywhere. Cars are so much part of life that in some places people can even get married or do their shopping without getting out of their car.

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Some of the problems that Americans face are the difference in income between the rich and the poor as well as between white and African Americans. The generalized use of guns is also a problem, although the number of crimes is lower than in the 1980s.

There are several popular sports in the United States: baseball, probably of English origin; American football, so popular that the most important game, the "Super Bowl", is one of the biggest shows on television; basketball, which was invented by an American teacher that wanted a new game; and ice hockey, of Canadian origin. Many children also play soccer. NASCAR—car racing—started in 1948.

**Pages 20–26:** This section of the book introduces information about entertainment and holidays.

The movie industry is very important in the United States. In 1910, movie makers moved to Hollywood and in 1927 *The Jazz Singer* became the first movie with sound. Today, 600 movies are made every year and some stars earn as much as \$20,000,000 for being in a film. People listen to all sorts of music, and some albums are sold by the million. Country music is very popular.

Americans love television and watch an average of nearly 4 hours a day. The percentage of the audience that watches the most popular TV shows, however, is lower than it used to be because of the increasing number of channels. PBS is the only free channel with no commercials, and Americans help finance it.

Martin Luther King Jr's birthday, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Halloween and Thanksgiving are some of the American holidays.

### Background and themes

**America before Columbus:** America used to be a wild and beautiful country with very few people and many wild animals. Native Americans lived off the land. They were called "Indians" by Europeans because Christopher Columbus thought he had landed in India when he reached North America.

**Europeans arrive:** When Europeans first arrived in the "New World," the Native Americans were friendly and helpful. But these white men took land away from them, and they became bitter enemies. More and more immigrants from Europe poured into America, especially from England, France, Germany, Holland, and later Ireland. People from Africa were brought to America from as early as the 1600s to work as slaves for the white men.

**The Civil War:** Between 1861–65, Americans in the north fought Americans in the south in a very bitter Civil War. The North won and the slaves were freed. But, for the most part, they lived separately from white people until the 1960s.

**Immigration:** Many immigrants to the United States today are from Latin America and Asia. People go to America for a better life, more freedom, and many people think they will become rich. However, life in the United States today is not always easy for immigrants. If they do not speak much English, they cannot get good jobs.

**Life in the United States:** Although there are a lot of Spanish speakers in the southwest, English remains the first language. The United States is a big country, with four time zones, and there are a lot of differences between different parts of the country. Not everybody lives the same way. There are big cities, like New York and Los Angeles, but a great part of the country is farmland, desert, and mountainous regions. Some people live near oceans or great lakes while others have never even seen an ocean. Nearly everybody in the country, except vegetarians, eat hot dogs and hamburgers, but some people eat food that other Americans have never tasted—and never will unless they go to that part of the country. Nearly everybody has one or more cars, TVs and music systems, and everybody celebrates the same national holidays. But some people are very, very rich and others are very, very poor. It is a country wishing for unity and peace, but many people own guns—and use them to hurt or kill other people. It is a country full of possibilities and promise; it is a country of striking contrasts.

### Discussion activities

#### Pages 1–6

##### Before reading

- Group work:** Tell students: *On page vi, Vicky Shipton says: "When I lived outside the US, I saw my country with other eyes." Do we see places differently when we are outside them? Have students talk about things that they saw differently in their own town or country after they had visited another town or country and say why.*
- Discuss:** Write these questions on the board. Divide students into small groups and have them talk about them. *What does the average person in your country dream of? Are people in your country very different from Americans, do you think? Why (not)?*

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### After reading

- 3 **Research and role play:** Ask students to find information about slavery in the US and the reasons why the South was interested in keeping it. Then have them imagine that they are representatives from the North and the South in a meeting in the 1850s and talk about keeping slavery or putting an end to it.
- 4 **Debate:** Write the following question on the blackboard: *Is it a good idea to have a "world policeman"?* Why (not)? Divide the class into two groups. One group is for and the other against the motion. Give the groups a few minutes to prepare their arguments. When the debate is over, the students vote for or against the motion.
- 5 **Pair work:** After students have done Activity 4 in the Activity worksheets, write the following on the blackboard and have pairs of students solve the problems. They use their answers in the Worksheet to replace the letters. Tell them: *The answer is a year. What happened in that year?*  
 $(e.a)^2 + (e.c) - (e.a) - a - f = \dots$

### Pages 7–11

#### Before reading

- 6 **Guess:** Ask students: *Where do the people in the United States come from? Do you know?* After they answer, read out the following sentences and ask them if they are true or false:  
*In the United States there are ...*
- more European people than African-American, Asian and Hispanic people.
  - more Asian people than Hispanic people.
  - more African-American people than Asian people.
  - fewer Hispanic people than African-American people.

#### After reading

- 7 **Group work:** Divide the class into groups. Ask them to write a list of reasons why the United States is a nice country for immigrants and a list of reasons why it is not. Groups share their ideas and say if they would like to live in the United States.
- 8 **Pair work:** Put students into pairs. Ask them to solve these problems: *Americans eat 20,000,000,000 hot dogs in a year. This is 60 hot dogs for every person in the country.*
- How many people are there in the country?
  - How often does a person eat a hot dog?
- Students then say if they have tried hot dogs and whether they like them.
- 9 **Write:** Ask students to look up in their dictionaries the words "fact" and "opinion". Ask them: *Is the information on pages 8 and 9 facts or opinions? Write one "opinion sentence" at the end of each paragraph. For example, at the end of "Shopping", write: "I like shopping malls!"*

### Pages 12–19

#### Before reading

- 10 **Guess and artwork:** Write the list below on the blackboard. Tell students: *Americans love cars and use them a lot. Which of these things do you think they can do in their cars?*
- drive through a bank / shop at stores / get married / say good bye to a dead friend / watch a movie
- In groups, students choose one of the items in the list and make a poster for a publicity campaign by a bank, store, etc. that offers this service.

#### After reading

- 11 **Pair work:** Put the students into pairs. They look at the section "Problems in the US". Tell them: *These problems are not new. Are these problems today the same as in the past? Are they getting worse? How do you know?*
- Students share their conclusions with the class.
- 12 **Read carefully and group work:** Divide the class into three groups. Ask them to read carefully their section of the book. Have them close the books and give each group a slip of paper with the following numbers:
- Baseball: 1935 – 1947 – 1954 – 1976 – 755 – 47
  - American football and soccer: 1874 – 2.01 – 177 – 10,000,000 – 3,200,000 – 2007
  - Basketball: 1981 – 2,29 – 1992 – 1996 – 2000 – 18 – 90,000,000
- Groups have 10 minutes to prepare a short oral presentation with the information to which the numbers refer.

### Pages 20–26

#### Before reading

- 13 **Write and research:** In groups, students make a few notes on what they know about *Hollywood, the Oscar, MTV and PBS*. At school or at home, they search the Internet for more information about them and share it with the class.

#### After reading

- 14 **Research and artwork:** Students search the Internet for information about any of the famous TV shows mentioned in the book and make a poster to announce the last episode.
- 15 **Group work and write:** Divide the class into three groups, to work on "Movies", "Music" and "TV". Groups write a brief outline of their section with the most outstanding information. They can use subheadings, such as "Important Numbers", "Important Names", "Important Dates", etc.

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## While reading

Pages 1–6

1 Complete the sentences. Then write the numbers.

states Washington Britain

- a The year the US wins the war against (1) ..... + the number of (2) ..... in the new country = the year that (3) ..... becomes president. .... + ..... = .....

British first west wins Sioux Britain

- b the year the US (1) ..... the war against Britain + the year Washington becomes the (2) ..... president – the year people from (3) ..... come to America – the number of (4) ..... people that come to America – (the number of (5) ..... who died at Wounded Knee ÷ 5) = the year that Jefferson buys land in the (6) .....  
 ..... + ..... – ..... – ..... –  
 (..... ÷ 5) = .....

2 The answers are words or phrases from the book. What are they?

- a a month + a living thing = .....
- b a king + a place = .....
- c the opposite of "hot" + the opposite of "peace" = .....
- d the place where we live + a job = .....

3 What is the correct answer?

- a There is a 520-meter-tall tower in .....  
 1) Illinois.  
 2) New York State.
- b The state with the largest number of people is in the .....  
 1) east.  
 2) west.
- c Washington DC, the country's center of government, is in the .....  
 1) east.  
 2) west.

- d The state of Washington is in the .....  
 1) east.  
 2) west.

4 Write the numbers from the box in the right place.

4000 2 13 3200 3 11

- a How many hours difference is there between the East and the West? .....
- b How many kilometers are there between the Atlantic and Pacific ocean? .....
- c How many people live in 1 km<sup>2</sup> in Alaska? .....
- d How many kilometers is it from California to Hawaii? .....
- e How many states were there when Washington was the president of the US? .....
- f How many states are not next to the others? .....

Pages 7–11

5 Are the sentences right (✓) or wrong (X)? Is it the same (=) in your country, or is it different (≠)?

- a Some stores are always open.
- b There are many Mexican, Italian and Asian restaurants in the United States.
- c You can buy an average house for \$100,000.
- d Americans often go to shopping centers.
- e More than half the people are fat.

6 Which is the right word in each sentence? Complete the puzzle.

Across

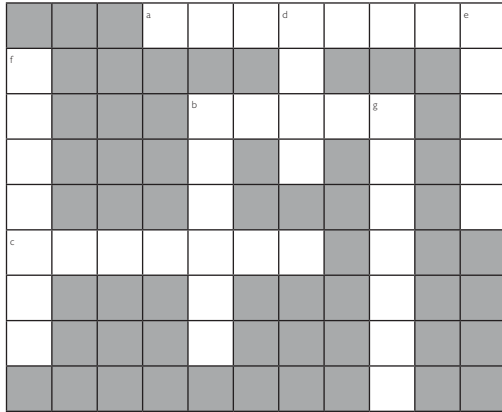
- a Marcos knows American ... because he saw it in a movie.
- b Marcos can see the ... Tower.
- c In the first picture Marcos is at the ...

Down

- b Marcos and Kelly go to ...
- d The boys in blue and yellow are in the school's football ...
- e Marcos arrives in the United States and goes to school two days ...
- f Marcos arrives in the city of ...
- g Kelly can drive because she is ...

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**7 Complete the sentences.**  
 Some immigrants come to the United States because they have **(a)** ..... in their countries; others come because they want to have a big **(b)** ....., a big **(c)** ..... and a lot of **(d)** ..... But life in the US is **(e)** ..... Some immigrants have to **(f)** ..... a lot and get very little **(g)** .....

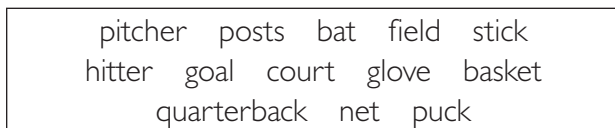
**Pages 12–19**

**8 What happens first? What happens next?**

Write the numbers 1–5.

- a  American Football started.
- b  NASCAR was born.
- c  The “Dream Team” played in the Olympics.
- d  An African-American played in a big baseball team for the first time.
- e  An American teacher invented a game with a ball and a basket.

**9 a Look at the pictures on page 15. Write the words in the box next to the right sport.**



- 1 baseball: .....
- 2 American football: .....
- 3 basketball: .....
- 4 hockey: .....
- b Which words in the box are names of players?  
 .....

**10 Answer the questions.**

Which is the sport that ...

- a started in 1948?  
 .....
- b Native Americans played?  
 .....

**Pages 20–26**

**11 Find in the book.**

- a a country that makes more movies per year than the United States: .....
- b the name of the first film with sound:  
 .....
- c a very famous movie from 1933:  
 .....
- d a famous country singer: .....
- e a woman with 32 songs in the top ten:  
 .....

**12 Make the letters into words and write them in the right sentences.**

aegerva lothsec sainlam octryun ntiat urhcch ofod

- a ..... made a lot of money.
- b The movie companies make money with movies, books, food, and .....
- c Faith Hill is a ..... singer.
- d The ..... American watches television 3.59 hours a day.
- e Some TV channels have shows only about ..... or .....

**13 Correct the mistake.**

- a The makers of King Kong used computers for the movie.  
 .....
- b After 1910, movie makers moved to New York because they liked its weather.  
 .....
- c Los Angeles is the center of country music.  
 .....
- d In the 1950s, television only showed Elvis Presley's face.  
 .....

**14 Complete the sentences.**

Marcos is in the school's **(a)** ..... because he is **(b)** ..... He has a **(c)** ..... on Friday night. The game is on **(d)** ..... Marcos's team **(e)** ..... the game in the last minute. He feels very **(f)** .....

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## Pages 1–6

### 1 Find the mistake.

- a Black Elk's people's dream is about a big house, a big car, and a lot of money.
- b California is the biggest state in the United States.
- c New England and the first 13 states are the same.
- d The slaves in the south were American "Indians".
- e The Midwest is very hot and dry.
- f The oldest states are in the southeast.

### 2 What happens first? What happens next? Write numbers 1–5.

- a  There are no more slaves.
- b  George Washington is president.
- c  There is a war between the North and the South.
- d  Asian and Hispanic immigrants come to the US.
- e  Americans start going to the West.

### 3 Write words from the box in the sentences.

money dream church house dream  
Native Americans car

In 1620, English people came to America because in America their (a) ..... could be free. These people killed many (b) ..... when they started going to the west. The Sioux's (c) ..... died and the American (d) ..... was born. This means a big (e) ....., a big (f) ....., and a lot of (g) .....

## Pages 7–11

### 4 Are these sentences right (✓) or wrong (X)?

- a In the 1700s there weren't many Hispanic or Asian people in the United States.
- b Today, most Asian and Hispanic immigrants live in the east.
- c Great Britain gave the Statue of Liberty to the United States.
- d People go to the United States because life is easy.
- e The average week at work is the same as in most European countries.

### 5 Write words from the box in the sentences.

drive family films Chicago car

Marcos is going to stay with Kelly's (a) ..... for six months. Kelly lives in (b) ..... Marcos and Kelly go to school by (c) ..... Kelly can (d) ..... because she is sixteen. Marcos knows the Sears Tower and American football because he saw them in (e) .....

## Pages 12–19

### 6 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

In the United States: ...

- a cars can drive as fast as they want.
- b many people go to work by bus or train.
- c people do not like big cars.
- d some rich people pay the police to watch their small towns.
- e many people have guns.
- f white people have fewer problems with the police than African-Americans.

### 7 Choose the right answer.

- a Some people think that in the future there will be two countries because there are differences between .....  
1) the North and the South.  
2) the rich and the poor.  
3) men and women.
- b After the year 2000, the number of crimes .....  
1) grew.  
2) fell every year.  
3) stayed the same.
- c In most states .....  
1) it is easy to buy a gun.  
2) it is difficult to buy a gun.  
3) it isn't possible to buy a gun.
- d Martin Luther King Jr's dream .....  
1) died with him.  
2) lives because some people work for it.  
3) is real today.

## Pages 20–26

### 8 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- a Some American movies are more popular in other countries than in the United States.
- b Before 1910 movie makers worked in New York.
- c Everybody loved Elvis Presley in the 1950s.
- d Today, only a few cities have country music radio stations.
- e Ordinary people can go to *The Jerry Springer Show*.

### 9 Write the month for each holiday.

January July October November

- a Thanksgiving .....
- b The start of the United States .....
- c Halloween .....
- d Martin Luther King Jr's birthday .....

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### Book key

1–2 Open answers

3 a ✗ b ✓ c ✗ d ✗ e ✗

4 a 5 b 2 c 1 d 7 e 6 f 3 g 4

5 Open answers

6 Possible answers:

a 27% b 29% c 40% d 56% e 60%  
f 50%

7 a ✓ b ✓ c ✗ d ✗ e ✓

8 a 400 b dinner c two d San Francisco  
e weeks'

9–11 Open answers

12 a 4 b 5 c 1903 d 20 e 30,000 f 1963

13 a 3 b 4 c 2 d 8 e 5 f 7 g 1 h 6

14 a Martin Luther King, Jr.  
b basketball  
c hockey  
d He was the first African-American in a top baseball team.

15 Open answers

16 a Tom Cruise  
b *Titanic*  
c *Pirates of the Caribbean*  
d Tim McGraw  
e Elvis Presley  
f *The Eagles Greatest Hits*

17–23 Open answers

### Discussion activities key

1–4 Open answers

5  $(13.3)^2 + (13.11) - (13.3) - 3 - 2 = 1521 + 143 - 39 - 3 - 2 = 1620$

The Mayflower—the first ship from England—arrived in America with 102 people.

6 a T b F c T d T

7 Open answers

8 a  $20,000,000,000 \text{ hot dogs} \div 60 \text{ hot dogs for every person in the country} = 333,333,333$  people

b  $365 \text{ days in a year} \div 60 \text{ hot dogs in a year} =$   
a hot dog every 6 days (= 5 hot dogs a month)

9 Open answers

10 All can be done in a car.

11 Two Countries: the situation is worsening; some people think there will be "two countries" in the future. / Crime and Guns: not so serious as in the past;

the number of crimes lowered during the 90's and is stable; people still want to keep their guns, however. / Racism is not as serious as in the past, but there are still differences, for example in income.

- 12 a 1935: Babe Ruth stopped playing  
1947: Jackie Robinson was the first African-American in an important team  
1954: Hank Aaron started playing  
1976: Hank Aaron stopped playing  
755: number of home runs Hank Aaron hit  
47: number of home runs Hank Aaron hit in one year
- b 1874: First game of American football  
2.01: Aaron Gibson's height  
177: Aaron Gibson's weight  
10,000,000: amount of money that big American football players can make in one year  
3,200,000: number of children who play soccer today  
2007: year that David Beckham started playing in Los Angeles
- c 1981: Basketball started in the USA  
2,29: Yao Ming's height  
1992: Barcelona Olympic Games (Many people think this was the best basketball team)  
1996: The Dream team won the Olympic Games  
2000: The Dream team won the Olympic Games  
18: Age at which "King James" (LeBron James) started playing basketball  
90,000,000: amount of money in dollars that LeBron James earned from Nike

13–15 Open answers

### Activity worksheets key

- 1 a (1) Britain  
(2) states  
(3) Washington  
 $1776 + 13 = 1789$
- b (1) wins  
(2) first  
(3) Britain  
(4) British  
(5) Sioux  
(6) west  
 $1776 + 1789 - 1620 - 102 - (200 \div 5) = 1803$

## American Life

- 2 a Mayflower: British people came to America in this ship.  
 b Jamestown: British town built in Virginia  
 c Cold War: A war between the United States and the Soviet Union after the Second World War  
 d world policeman: some Americans think the United States can be this.

3 a 1 b 2 c 1 d 2

4 a 3 b 4000 c 11 d 3200 e 13 f 2

5 a ✓ b ✓ c ✗ d ✓ e ✓

6 Across

- a football  
 b Sears  
 c airport

Down

- b school  
 d team  
 e later  
 f Chicago  
 g sixteen

			F	O	O	T	B	A	L	L
C						E				A
H			S	E	A	R	S			T
I			C		M		I			E
C			H				X			R
A	I	R	P	O	R	T		T		
G			O					E		
O			L					E		
								N		

- 7 a problems b house/car c car/house d money  
 e hard/difficult f work g time
- 8 a 1 b 4 c 5 d 3 e 2
- 9 a 1 pitcher / bat / hitter / glove / field  
 2 posts / quarterback / goal / field  
 3 basket / court  
 4 net / puck / stick  
 b pitcher / hitter / quarterback

10 a NASCAR

b Hockey

11 a India

b *The Jazz Singer*

c *King Kong*

d Tim McGraw

e Madonna

12 a *Titanic* b clothes c country d average

e animals, church, food

13 a The makers of **Spiderman** and **Pirates of the Caribbean** used computers.

b They moved to **Hollywood**, in California.

c **Nashville in Tennessee** is the center of country music.

d Television showed his **top half**.

14 a team b fast c game d TV e wins

f happy / excited

### Progress test key

1 a **The American** dream is about a big house, a big car, and a lot of money.

b California **has more people than any other state**.

c **Six of the new states are called New England**.

d The slaves in the south were **African**.

e **The Southwest** is very hot and dry.

f The oldest states are in the **northeast**.

2 a 3 b 1 c 2 d 5 e 4

3 a church b Native Americans c dream d dream

e house/car f car/house g money

4 a ✓ b ✗ c ✗ d ✗ e ✗

5 a family b Chicago c car d drive e films

6 a F b F c F d T e T f T

7 a 2 b 3 c 1 d 2

8 a T b T c F d F e T

9 a November

b July

c October

d January