



ULE American Culture: An Upper Level Elective

- Course Hours:** 76.5 hours for Morning Intensive
72 hours for Afternoon/Evening Intensive and Semi-Intensive Programs
36 hours for Saturday Program
- CEFR C1/C2:** Students are at advanced Common European Framework of Reference level
- C1** - Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
- C2** - Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
- Course Goal:** Students will gain a better understanding of American Culture through the explorations and study of different US regions. Students will read and discuss, give oral presentations, listen to movie clips and internet segments, write on various topics; all related to US culture.
- Textbooks:** Spotlight on the USA by Randee Falk (Oxford American English, pub. 1993), Academic Word List
- Other Material:** Understanding and Using English Grammar by Betty Azar, Lado Writing Rubrics and Rubrics for Presentations, blank maps for identifying US Regions and States. Classroom copies of text American Ways by Datesman, Crandle and Kearny are available for in class use. The teacher can choose readings from 12 chapters or can let the students decide the topic that they're interested in. Of special interest are the following sections in each chapter: Ask Americans, Proverbs and Sayings, Books to Read, Movies to See, Use the Internet.



Assessment:

Grades are recorded as percentage grades that correlate to letter grades in Axess. Successful completion: Criteria that determine successful completion of a course are:

- Satisfactory attendance – students may not miss more than three days per session
- Up to 10% satisfactory class participation documented in the Class Participation Rubric
- Up to 10% satisfactory completion of homework assignments documented in the Homework Rubric
- Up to 40% score on mid-term assessments calculated in AXESS;
- Up to 40% score on final assessments calculated in AXESS, and
- At least an overall grade of 70% to pass.

Grade Components	
Homework	10%
Class Participation	10%
Mid-session Assessment	40%
End-of-session assessment	40%
Total	100%

Assessments:

Writing Assignments graded with Writing Rubric

Mid-session assessment graded with Presentation Rubric

Paper and/or Mini Presentations. Student choice

Final assessment components graded with Presentation Rubric

- Individual Presentation to the class on a Famous American
- Class Project (Class as a group gives their Mini Presentations to Lado center during break, or,
- Class presents a program on a special holiday during or around the class session



Description: An exploration of American Culture through the study of different US regions, using an integrated skills approach.

The core chapters in “Spotlight on the USA” to be used in class are the following:

Introductory Chapter (The American People)

Ch. 1 (New England)

Ch. 4 (The South)

Ch. 5 (The Midwest)

If the teacher finds that the students have been able to cover the Introductory chapter and Ch. 1 (New England) and have time to cover material from an extra chapter, then the class can cover Ch. 3 (The Mid-Atlantic Region). See section on Optional Material.

The chapters used as a basis for student Mini-Presentations are the following:

Ch. 2 (New York City and State)

Ch. 3 (The Mid-Atlantic Region) (unless used as an extra chapter for the core curriculum)

Ch. 6 (The Southwest)

Ch. 7 (The Rocky Mountain Region)

Ch. 8 (The Pacific Northwest)

Ch. 9 (California and Hawaii)

Scope and Sequence:

Week 1:

Reading and Speaking

Students will read material from the Introductory Chapter in the text and will be able to identify and discuss the following:

- Native Americans and Early Immigration
- Why the US has recently been referred to as a “Mosaic” and how Immigrant groups add to this “Mosaic”
- The basis of the US Political System and the Two-Party System
- The US Economy and the Free Enterprise System

- Religion in the US and the Separation of Church and State
- The Changing American Family
- The US Educational System
- American Leisure, Entertainment and Sports



- US Holidays

*Supplemental Reading: American Ways, Ch1, p.9&10, p.17 (Ask Americans), p.17 (Think, Pair, Share)

Students will identify a region to study for the Mini-Presentation (Mid-term)

Writing

- In pairs students will write a list of American Immigrants, why and when they came to the US. What groups have immigrated to the US in recent years.
- Students will write an essay on the differences between the educational system in the US and the educational system in their country. (Compare and Contrast Essay with Rubric)
- Supplemental reading, writing and speaking material can be added from the in classroom text American Ways by Datesman, Crandle and Kearny.

Listening

- Students will listen to a student video on the US - a Melting Pot or a Salad
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eq0mRjv4DdA>:
- Students will watch and listen to a clip on the American Dream and what it means.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QL64pNdzLk>
- Students will watch and listen to a documentary on Immigration Through Ellis Island -
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-6r5D7Samg>

Week 2:

Reading and Speaking

Students will read material from Ch. 1 (New England) in the text and will be able to identify and discuss:

- The Location of New England and its States on a US Map
- The meaning of “Yankee”
- Two New England Writers (their literary contributions)
- The Sea and the Development of New England
- Three Main Vacations
- The American Revolution (Boston and the Freedom Trail)
- The Role of Cambridge in American Intellectual Life
- The Boston Brahmins (the New England Elite)
- Vermont’s Sugaring Time
- Students will give Mini-Presentations on a chosen US region.(Rubric for Presentation)
- **Supplemental** reading, writing and speaking material can be added from the in classroom text American Ways by Datesman, Crandle and Kearny.



Writing

- Students will write an essay on New England Shipping; answering the questions what, when, where, why and how. (Writing Rubric)
- Students will do research on and write about a chosen US region (Writing Rubric)

Listen

- Students will watch and listen to Christopher Columbus (National Geographic Kids)
- Student will watch and listen to Native Americans (National Geographic Kids)

Week 3

Reading and Speaking

Students will read material from Ch. 4 (The South) in the text and will identify and discuss the following:

- The location of The South and its states on a Map
- The Agrarian South and Slavery
- The North v. s. South and American Civil War
- The Effect of the War and Civil Rights
- The Mississippi River – the most important geographic feature in the eastern US
- Elvis and Rock and Roll
- New Orleans and its Unique Culture
- Florida – America’s Vacationland
- The Okefenokee Swamp
- Atlanta, “Capital” of the New South

*Supplemental Readings: American Ways, p.71-71

Students will give Mini-Presentations on a chosen US region.

Writing

- Students will write an opinion essay on whether real change can happen without violence. See p. 70 (Ch. 4)(Discussion Points)(Rubric for Opinion Essay)
- Students will do research on and write about a famous American

Supplemental reading, writing and speaking material can be added from the in classroom text American Ways by Datesman, Crandle and Kearny.

Listen

- Students will listen to a clip from the film “Summersby”, identify certain resulting aspects of the American Civil War and how this community resolved some of these issues.
- Students will listen to talk on Martin Luther King Jr. (National Geographic Kids)
- Students will listen to a talk on Mardi Gras (National Geographic Kids)



Week 4

Reading and Speaking

Students will read material from Ch. 5 (The Midwest) and will identify and discuss the following:

- The Midwest as the Heartland
- The Importance of the Great Lakes and Chicago
- Abraham Lincoln – “A house divided against itself cannot stand”
- Detroit – Motor City
- Wolverines and Buckeyes – Fierce Rivals
- The Iowa State Fair
- The Indians of the Great Plains – A clash of cultures

Students will give a presentation on a famous American (Presentation Rubric).

Students as a group will give a performance based on combined Mini-presentations from the mid-term project

Or

Students as a group will present a program on a special holiday during or around the class session. (Thanksgiving, Presidents Day, St. Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day’, Independence Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, etc.) (Presentation Rubric)

Writing

- Student will identify and write the 8 US regions and the states within those regions on a map.
- Students will write an essay on how white settlers and the US Army nearly destroyed the Plains Indian.

Supplemental reading, writing and speaking material can be added from the in classroom text American Ways by Datesman, Crandle and Kearny.

Listening

- Students will listen to an excerpt from “Dances with Wolves”, and identify and discuss the fragile life style of the plains Native American Indians
- Students will listen to a talk on Abraham Lincoln (National Geographic Kids)

Optional Material – Ch. 3 (the Mid-Atlantic)

Reading and Speaking: Students will read material from Ch. 3(The Mid-Atlantic) in the text, and will identify and discuss the following:

- The Hudson River Valley – then and now
- Cooperstown and Baseball
- Niagara Falls



- The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution
- Benjamin Franklin – writer, philosopher, inventor, US Ambassador
- 20th Century Philadelphia
- Washington, DC – The Nation’s Capital
- West Virginia – An Appalachian State
- Handicrafts and Traditions

Writing:

- Students will imagine that they have fallen asleep for 20 years and write a paragraph describing what you might see and experience upon waking.
- Students will write out some frequently asked questions by visitors at the Air and Space Museum.
- Students will use the Discussion Point question on p. 62 and write an essay on how a geographically isolated area in their country developed strong traditions of its own.

Supplemental reading, writing and speaking material can be added from the in classroom text American Ways by Datesman, Crandle and Kearny.

Listening:

- Students will listen to a Voice of America, Learning English, Columbia Records turns 125 on the computer and do interactive exercises.
- Students will watch and listen to a segment from the movie, “The Witness”, answer questions, and discuss the Amish culture (quilting, farming) and why it has survived in our changing world.

Teaching Tips:

- Teachers should use some discussion questions before the readings as a warm-up to the readings. In addition, some vocabulary in back of each unit can be identified and reviewed before readings. Activities in the book do not always need to be followed in chronological order. Some can be used as warm-up activities or follow up activities.
- Remember that many activities and projects integrate several skills together.
- Because this book was written in 1993 chart and maps can be reviewed and then teacher can ask students to look up current information on the internet to complete the discussion/activity.
- Writing and Listening Topics are suggestions. If the teacher finds a more relevant, interesting topic/piece for writing or listening, he/she is encouraged to be creative.
- Encourage students to ask questions and come up with their own related discussion topics.