Report Card: American Democracy

Much is being written about the state of democracy in the US. The Pew Research Center, a non-partisan group that studies public attitudes, has just released a major study reporting on the attitudes of 4,656 US Americans, representative of the US population in age, gender, political preferences and race. Here in July, with our celebration of the birth of the US, it is a good time to look at Americans’ evaluation of what is important to them and how they think they are doing.

In the chart to the right, note that for every value except the last two (“People are free to peacefully protest” and “Military leadership does not publicly support a party”), participants think the US is not living up to its ideals.

Republicans and Democrats were quite similar in what they viewed as important. However, Republicans gave the country a better grade than Democrats did for how the US is doing on having an equal opportunity to succeed; respecting the rights/freedoms of all people; having a non-partisan military; allowing people to protest peacefully; and respecting minority viewpoints. Democrats gave the US a higher grade for having news organizations free from government influence.

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**Country viewed as falling short on a range of widely supported democratic values**

% who say each is very important for the US and describes the country very/somewhat well ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NET Very/ Somewhat well</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reps and Dems work together on issues</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elected officials face serious consequences for misconduct</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign contributions do not lead to greater political influence</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Govt. is open and transparent</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>News organizations do not favor a party</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Judges are not influenced by political parties</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
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<td><strong>Rights and freedoms of all people are respected</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
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<td><strong>Tone of political debate is respectful</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
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<td><strong>News organizations are independent of government</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed</strong></td>
<td>52</td>
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<td><strong>People agree on basic facts even if disagree on politics</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
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<td><strong>Govt. policies reflect views of most Americans</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
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<td><strong>Views of those not in the majority on issues are respected</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Balance of power between govt. branches</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>People are free to peacefully protest</strong></td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military leadership does not publicly support a party</strong></td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 29-Feb. 13, 2018

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
US Symbols

Flag. The 13 red and white stripes on the US flag stand for each of the original 13 colonies. The 50 white stars on the blue field each stand for one state.

Official Seal. Notice the seal on a dollar bill. The bald eagle, the official symbol of the US, is holding spears in one claw and an olive branch of peace in the other. There is the unfinished pyramid, standing for our unfinished work. That’s God’s eye watching over the country. The Latin phrases mean, “From many, one,” “God has smiled on our attempt,” and “A new order for the ages.”

Donkey and Elephant. In 1874 a cartoonist represented the Republican Party as an elephant and the Democrats as a donkey. Is the donkey “tough but long-lived” or “ridiculous?” The elephant “clever and majestic” or “easy to control until he is frightened?” Depends on your politics!

Pledge of Allegiance. Here are the words to the Pledge of Allegiance that many American children recite every day in school:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands — one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

continued on page 3

The Fourth of July

The most patriotic holiday in the US is Independence Day, or The Fourth of July (celebrated on that date whenever in the week it falls, not as a Monday holiday). Americans remember that day in 1776 when the Declaration of Independence from Britain was adopted. With the passing of time, the US and England have become allies. Today, the holiday is a happy, friendly celebration. (See page 4 for a brief history of the American Revolution.)

Stars and stripes from the US flag are everywhere on this holiday. Food, clothes, balloons, hats, and signs are decorated in red, white, and blue. Friends and families gather for picnics. Hamburgers, hot dogs, watermelon, potato chips, and ice cream are the traditional meal. (See page 6 for more details on this all-American meal.) Almost every town — large and small — has a fireworks display after dark. Find where your closest (or largest) fireworks show will be, take a blanket to sit on, and prepare to join the crowd in saying, “oh-h-h-h-h” and “ah-h-h-h-h” after each display.

Gift-giving and cards are not a traditional part of this holiday. Federal, state, and local government offices and many stores and businesses will be closed. Stores that sell hamburger meat, charcoal, and watermelon will ... stay open!

8 Tips for Smart Gasoline Buying

1. First, reduce your car use dramatically. Walk or bike, take public transportation, or carpool. Ask about tele-commuting from home at least one day per week.
2. Do not buy a higher octane level than you need. Most cars only require Regular Unleaded gasoline. You may have heard that it is a good idea to fill your tank with Premium gas every once in a while, even if you usually use Regular. The US Federal Trade Commission says this is not true and is a waste of money.
3. Maintain your car. Check your tire pressure, change your air filter, keep your engine tuned, and be sure you use the right kind of oil — each of these can increase efficiency 10-20%!
4. Open your windows. Air conditioning uses more gasoline, especially for city driving. Save up to three miles per gallon by turning it off. On the highway, open windows cause so much drag that the fuel savings are less.
5. Drive efficiently. In traffic jams, keep moving slowly rather than starting and stopping. Try not to speed up suddenly. Don’t speed: driving at 75 mph (miles per hour) instead of 55 lowers fuel efficiency by 45%. In newer car models, it may be most efficient to turn your engine off if you are going to be sitting for as little as 30-60 seconds; read your car manual.
6. Be skeptical about products that claim to save gasoline. You may see ads for products like air bleed devices and mixture enhancers that claim to save gasoline. For the Federal Trade Commissions’ list of the [very] few products that seem to improve efficiency [a small amount], go to: www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/autos/aut10.pdf.
7. Shop for the best price. Prices for the same octane level gasoline differ from station to station. Consumer advocates say the gasoline itself does not differ much from company to company. Try the free GasBuddy app on your smartphone to comparison shop.
8. Keep your car light. Even an extra 100 pounds can cost a mile per gallon. So take that bag of bricks out of the trunk today...

continued on page 3
Vocabulary for Today’s News: Laws

Here is a bit of background to help you understand the news coming out of Washington, DC:

**attorney-client privilege:** In the US, attorneys (lawyers) are not generally required to tell a court anything their client has told them (or to share written communication), even if the client has admitted to committing a crime. This rule, called attorney-client privilege, is designed to encourage people to be open and honest with their lawyers so the lawyers can do the best possible job defending them. There are exceptions to this rule. If you ask a lawyer if something would be illegal and the answer is ‘yes,’ and you then go do that crime, your communication with the lawyer is not protected by attorney-client privilege. And the only documents protected by this privilege are those concerning the legal advice given to the client. A lawyer’s personal tax or banking records, for example, are not protected. There are detailed rules that a prosecutor must follow to obtain documents, to ensure that this important privilege is protected where it should be.

The office of President Trump’s personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, was searched recently, as part of the special counsel’s investigation into Russia’s role during the 2016 presidential election. Trump said this search was an abuse of attorney-client privilege. The government said it had, in fact, followed the rules.

**witness tampering:** It is illegal to try to prevent someone from testifying in court, or to try to convince them not to tell the truth. Just trying to do this is a crime; the witness does not need to then lie.

Paul Manafort, President Trump’s campaign manager during the summer of 2016, is being investigated by the special counsel for several crimes; he was recently put in jail because he was accused of witness tampering.

**plea bargain:** A person accused of a crime can, sometimes, arrange to get a smaller (or no) penalty by agreeing to a plea bargain. For example, he might agree to plead guilty to a lesser crime in exchange for having other bigger charges dismissed. Or, he might agree to help the court understand a bigger network of crime (or learn the identity of other criminals or crimes) in exchange for having charges against him dismissed. If a person does agree to help the court in this way, he is said to have flipped.

As the investigation into the role of Russia in the 2016 election proceeds, you will read many discussions about whether those accused will flip as part of a plea bargain.

**Inspector General:** Seventy-three federal government offices have an Inspector General: a person chosen to investigate possible fraud, waste, misconduct or mis-use of money; and to ensure that all rules and security laws are being followed.

The Inspector General of the Department of Justice (one of these 73) recently filed a report about the FBI’s conduct during the 2016 presidential election.

**zero tolerance policy:** Law enforcement officers often decide how strenuously to enforce a law. For example, in a 55mph zone, they may give speeding tickets only to those driving 65mph or higher. Or, if they decide to ticket anyone driving 56mph, that is, accepting no level of illegal behavior, they would be using a zero tolerance policy.

It is illegal to enter the US without the proper visa, and anyone accused of such a crime can be put in jail; any children may then be put in foster care. In the past, border control officers did not always enforce this rule when children were involved. The Trump administration has been using a zero tolerance policy, to great public outcry.

If your children feel uncomfortable about the pledge but pressured to recite it, talk with them about respectful ways to remain silent.

**Star-Spangled Banner:** The US may have the most un-singable national anthem in the world. You need a huge vocal range to sing it properly. Here are the words (to the first verse — there are three more, although they are rarely sung):

> Oh, say can you see
> By the dawn’s early light,
> What so proudly we hailed
> At the twilight’s last gleaming?
> Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
> Through the perilous fight,
> O’er the ramparts we watched,
> Were so gallantly streaming?
> And the rockets’ red glare,
> The bombs bursting in air,
> Gave proof through the night
> That our flag was still there.
> O say, does that Star-spangled Banner yet wave
> O’er the land of the free
> And the home of the brave?

**Liberty Bell.** This large bell was rung in 1776 in Philadelphia after independence from England was declared.

However, the bell wasn’t named the Liberty Bell until 1839 — in reference to freedom for slaves. The Liberty Bell is often shown with a large crack. The bell has cracked often in its history — try not to think about the symbolism of that (or maybe, think about the fragility of liberty...).
The American Revolution (Briefly)

You need to know something about the American Revolution to understand America’s gun laws, attitudes toward government, and, of course, its Fourth of July celebration. Here are the basics:

- During the Seven Years’ War (1754-1763), Britain gained control of the North American colonies, taking power away from France and Spain. Britain now had a huge war debt. It taxed the colonies in North America to help pay for the war.

- These new taxes uncovered a deep philosophical difference between Britain and the colonies about government. The British leaders believed that its Parliament represented all English subjects, even if they lived in North America, and even if they could not vote. (In the mid-1700s, only one man in England out of 30 could vote — it was a privilege of the rich.) People living in North America did not feel represented by Parliament. They believed that people elected to a government should represent those specific voters who had elected them, not simply the country as a whole.

- Under the Stamp Act, Britain required North American colonists to put a tax stamp on all printed materials, including newspapers, wills, loans, and even playing cards. In addition, the Tea Act charged a tax on tea, and included laws that favored the East India Company. (This company was important to Britain’s economy and to many British politicians.) Colonists objected to this taxation without representation (being forced to pay taxes by a group for whom they could not vote). In Boston in 1773, a group of colonists decided to show their feelings about the Tea Act. They threw 342 chests of tea (worth about £10,000) from a British ship into the Boston harbor rather than pay the tax. Today, we call this the Boston Tea Party — and this rejection of a centralized government is the basis for the new political movement, the Tea Party, you may have been reading about.

A major change happened in the thinking of the colonists as a result of these taxes and laws. Although most colonists still did not favor independence in 1773, the seeds of a new nationalism were planted.

- On April 19, 1775, British soldiers in Massachusetts marched from Boston to Lexington and Concord to take the colonists’ guns. William Dawes and Paul Revere rode by horseback to warn the colonists. The legend says they shouted “The British are coming!” but this is probably not true. Dawes, Revere, and all the other colonists still considered themselves British; they more likely shouted “The regulars are coming!” The British regulars (professional soldiers) met the colonists’ militia, called the Minutemen (farmers and merchants who were prepared to fight “in a minute”).

- In the picture on this page, notice the Minuteman’s gun in one hand and the farm tool by his side. Every child in the US learns the story of these farmers and shop owners, fighting the highly skilled British soldiers. They could not have done so if they did not have their own guns. Our gun laws today are rooted in this history. The memory of the Minuteman as an ordinary citizen fighting a far-away government is also alive today among a small group of Americans who reject the government and resist it.

- In January 1776, Thomas Paine published a pamphlet called Common Sense. He rejected the idea that the colonies needed Britain, and strongly supported an independent America. Within three months, 120,000 copies of Common Sense were sold. By late spring 1776, independence seemed possible and necessary.

continued on page 5
Fact, Fake Fact or Opinion?

In today’s news environment, we have to ask, all the time, “Is what I am reading a fact or an opinion? If it’s presented as a fact, is it accurate? If it’s an opinion, do I agree with it?” It turns out we are not very good at making these distinctions. The Pew Research Center just completed a study of 5,035 adults living in the US. The researchers read participants a series of statements (see below) and asked them to say whether each was an “opinion” or was “factual” (that is, could be proven true or false by data). (Take the test yourself before looking at the chart below: www.pewresearch.org/quiz/news-statements-quiz.) See chart for results.

You may or may not agree with the “opinion” statements; all the “factual” statements were, in fact, true. Overall, people were not very good at knowing what is opinion and what is something that can be fact-checked. Notice that both Republicans and Democrats were more likely to label a statement “factual” if it was something they (or at least their party) tended to agree with.

This is a big, big problem. (Fact or opinion?!!)

continued from page 4: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION (BRIEFLY)

- In the meantime, many war-related and government decisions were being made in Philadelphia by a group of political leaders from all 13 colonies. On July 4, 1776, this group adopted the Declaration of Independence, written mostly by Thomas Jefferson. The preamble (introduction) to this Declaration is one of the most important statements of the US philosophy of government.

- France became an ally of the colonists during the Revolutionary War. It sent soldiers, ships, guns, clothes, and blankets. And it fought the British outside the colonies, making the British strength in the colonies weaker. The British Parliament voted to stop fighting in 1781. However, fighting did not completely stop until the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783.

Birthday Biography: George Eastman

George Eastman, the founder of Eastman Kodak Company, was born on July 12, 1854. He did not invent photography. But, with several inventions, he did more than anyone in history to make photography something that millions could enjoy.

First, he made photography portable. Until he came along, cameras were several cubic feet in size. They required the photographer to carry a [heavy] tripod, liquid chemicals, glass tanks and a jug of water. Eastman invented a way to use dry plates and a machine for preparing large numbers of them.

Eventually, he replaced glass altogether — first with coated paper on a roll and then (because the grain of paper showed up in the photograph)... with transparent film. Eastman trademarked his new camera in 1888 with the name Kodak. (He made the name up — the letter K was his favorite so he wanted to use it twice in the name of his new product. He experimented with different letters in between and finally chose Kodak.) The Brownie camera, released in 1900, sold for $1 and truly brought photography to anyone interested.

Kodak estimated that 80 billion photographs had been taken around the world in the year 2000. Then came smartphones. Current estimates are that we take over 1 trillion photos/year.

Eastman was generous with his fortunes, endowing a school of music, dental clinics, and MIT.

Happy Birthday, Mr. Eastman.
Question from Reader: Sunscreen

From a French reader: I went to buy sunscreen. As usual, there are too many choices in the US stores, plus I don’t see the ingredient I use at home. What should I know?

Yes, European and US regulations for sunscreens are slightly different, so you may not find the ingredients you like from home (or, you will find them listed as “inactive ingredients” because they have not passed US testing.)

One important part — but not the only important part — of the choice in sun screen is the SPF: the higher the number, the more protection from UVB rays you will get. The exact meaning of the SPF number depends on your skin and where you live. SPFs of 15 or 30 may be good enough for adults. Lotions for children usually have an SPF of 30 or higher. The US Food and Drug Administration’s advice is that higher SPFs are not worth the extra cost. Some doctors recommend higher SPFs, though, for people with unusually high risk and/or those who will be exposed to sun for several days in a row. Ask your doctor what is the best level for you, especially if you have very sensitive skin or unusual living conditions.

Be sure to use enough lotion. The SPF ratings assume adults wearing a bathing suit use one ounce (one fourth of a small bottle!) all over their bodies. Also, the lotions work best if you put them on 15-30 minutes before going outside.

continued on page 7

The All-American Picnic

There are two days each year when all Americans eat almost the same thing: the fourth Thursday in November (Thanksgiving: turkey, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie), and the Fourth [day] of July, a celebration of Independence from England. Like most aspects of American culture, the Fourth of July picnic has its roots in other cultures. But, taken as a whole, it’s an American feast.

Of course, families differ a bit in what they put in their picnics. But the traditional meal is: hot dogs and hamburgers (grilled outside), potato chips, watermelon, soda, and ice cream.

Here’s some background:

Hot dogs. German immigrants brought sausages to the US, made from beef, pork, and natural spices. Today, American hot dogs (also called frankfurters or wiener, from these European cities) can be made from beef (the traditional one), turkey, chicken, or soy beans.

It is surprising to me how similar these taste. I guess I now know what autolyzed yeast, sodium erythorbate, oleoresin, and sodium nitrites taste like — that’s what’s in most of them. Otto von Bismarck said that there are two things you do not want to watch being made: laws and sausage...

I say that if you are offered a hot dog on the Fourth of July, and you can find one that fits your religious beliefs, close your eyes, eat it, and consider it an important cultural experience. One hot dog per year probably will not hurt you. By the way, the name hot dog comes from a newspaper cartoonist who thought the sausages looked like a dachshund, but did not know how to spell it.

Hamburgers. Germans also brought this sandwich to the US, again naming it after their city. If the only hamburgers you have eaten come from McDonald’s, try a real one on the Fourth of July. Americans have strong opinions about what a real hamburger is. Here’s mine: just beef (though some people add salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce, garlic, fresh parsley, thyme, chives and/or onion, for flavor), about an inch thick and 3-4 inches across, grilled outside, on a good (toasted or crusty) bun (bread) from a bakery. Lamb-burgers are also tasty, though not traditional.

Potato Chips. In a restaurant in Saratoga Springs, NY, in 1853, a customer sent back some French fried potatoes because they were too thick. The cook kept trying to make them thinner. Finally, frustrated by the customer, he shaved off a slice and fried it, as a joke. The customer loved the new invention, potato chips. Millions of people agreed — Americans eat an average of 4 pounds of potato chips each year.

New trends in US potato chips focus on making them healthier — baked, organic, gluten-free, lower fat. Countries around the world have potato chips, of course, but the flavors differ; the most popular US ones are salt and vinegar, sour cream and onion, and barbecue.

Watermelon. Back in the good old days (when I was a child, of course), watermelons meant the...
The recipe for Coca-Cola is still a secret syrup, and no one knows for sure if the recipe is still a secret. He sold Coca-Cola along with his other big product, Great Tooth Wash. Someone added soda water to the Coca-Cola syrup, and ... the world had Coke. Coke’s kick probably comes from caffeine and sugar. The other ingredients include: water; phosphoric acid (for zip); oil from orange, lemon, lime, and nutmeg; glycerin (a preservative); and vanilla.

Ice Cream. Ice cream was probably invented in Italy over a hundred years before it appeared in the US. Every American school child learns that Dolley Madison (the wife of James Madison, the fourth US President, from 1809-1817) introduced ice cream to Americans by serving it at the White House. Every school child is wrong. New Yorkers could buy ice cream as early as 1777. And the governor of Maryland served it in the mid-1700s.

Have you wondered why ice cream with a sauce on top is called a sundae? Yes, the word is related to the day of the week. There are two theories about the beginnings of this word. In one, a drugstore owner sold ice cream with syrup for five cents, in the late 1800s. He was afraid he would lose money, so he only offered it on Sundays. He called it a Sunday. When he started to make lots of money from it, he wanted to sell it every day. So he changed the name to sundae.

The other theory is my favorite. The people of Evanston, Illinois, also in the late 1800s, felt that flavored soda water was too much fun to be served on a Sunday. (Sundays were for going to church and being serious.) A store owner offered ice cream with syrup as an alternative to a soda. This was accepted as OK for a Sunday. Remember this when you read about current debates about moral issues in the US today!
That Crazy English: Lying and Laying

The word “lie” is used and mis-used frequently in the US. First, some grammar: the verb to lie means to recline or to tell a non-truth. To lay means to set down.

- I lie (or am lying) on my bed now. Yesterday I lay on my bed. I had lain on my bed for an hour.
- I lie (or am lying) to you now when I say traffic made me late. Yesterday I lied to you. I had lied to you the other times I was late, too.
- I lay (or am laying) the book on the table now. I laid the book on the table yesterday. I had laid it there before I went for a swim.

Never say to your dog, “Lay down.” It should be “Lie down.” If you master this rule, you will be ahead of 90% of Americans!

Idiom use is easier:

- They have not noticed our mistake. Let’s just lie low and see what happens. (They have not noticed our mistake. Let’s do nothing to attract attention and see what happens.)

- I am not going to take this lying down. (I am not going to accept this without a protest.)

- She is learning the lay of the land before making any changes. (She is learning about the current situation and facts before making any changes.)

- He is lying through his teeth. (He is saying something he knows is false, and does not apologize for it.)

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VOCABULARY

Each of these verbs or verb phrases is used in *The American Revolution (Briefly)* on pages 4 and 5. Use them to replace the underlined words in the sentences below (use the correct tense). Some items have more than one good answer.

- gain control
- object to
- reject
- require
- tax
- favor
- resist
- represent
- march
- adopt
- elect
- notice
- support

1. Be sure to look at _____________ the story about us in the newspaper.

2. John got into a winning position _____________ of the tennis game when he started hitting to her backhand.

3. She was chosen by a vote _____________ to be president of the club.

4. Are you sure you want to take as your own _____________ that position?

5. The state government has decided to collect money from _____________ those who use the highways.

6. The ball players walked in a formal line _____________ onto the field.

7. I don’t feel my interests are considered _____________ by that senator.

8. The boys did not want to obey _____________ the teacher’s suggestion.

9. The children said “no” to _____________ the plan for a beach party.

10. That law benefits _____________ people who live close to the city.

11. Her parents have always encouraged _____________ her efforts.

12. If you disagree with _____________ the way I have organized the meeting, then next time you can organize it.

13. The law makes it necessary for _____________ judges to give a 5-year sentence.
WITH A PEN

1. Read [US Symbols](#) on page 2 and 3. Write a description of your home country’s flag and its symbols. Write an English translation of your national anthem. Describe any symbols on your paper money or coins. Draw then describe any other political symbols a newcomer to your country might not understand.

2. Read [The American Revolution (Briefly)](#) on pages 4 and 5. Pick one important event in your home country’s history and write an English description of it, in no more than 100 words. If this date is celebrated each year, describe how.

3. Read [The Fourth of July](#) on page 2. Write a list of holidays in your home country that are based on a historic event. Describe one in detail.

4. Read [The All-American Picnic](#) on pages 6-7. Write the menu for a traditional meal in your home country and the recipes for 1-2 dishes. Include any historic information you know about the food.

5. Read [Fact, Fake Fact or Opinion](#) on page 5. Write 5 true factual statements, 5 false factual statements (that could be disproved with data), 5 opinion statements you agree with and 5 opinion statements you disagree with.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

Read [Sun Screen](#) on pages 6 and 7. Mark each of the sentences True (T) or False (F):

1. A sunscreen with an SPF of 30 makes it safe to stay in the sun for 30 minutes. **T**  **F**

2. If you swim with a waterproof sunscreen lotion on, you must re-apply it as soon as you get out of the water. **T**  **F**

3. Skin cancer may be caused by UVA light. **T**  **F**

4. For many years, PABA was added to sunscreens to increase the SPF. **T**  **F**

5. A person with light skin living in southern California needs a sunscreen with a higher SPF than a person with dark skin living in Maine, if both will be in the sun for one hour. **T**  **F**

6. Zinc and titanium protect skin against UVA rays. **T**  **F**

7. Vitamin A is now thought to give added sun protection, especially for children. **T**  **F**

8. The higher the SPF, the better, so the US government recommends buying the highest SPF sunscreen possible. **T**  **F**

9. To get the advertised sun protection, apply one ounce of sunscreen (one fourth of a small bottle). **T**  **F**

GRAMMAR AND IDIOMS

Read [That Crazy English: Lying and Laying](#) on page 8. Fill in the blanks below:

Grammar:

1. Please go _________ down; you look very tired.
2. I had ________ the ticket on the table then forgot it there.
3. I’m sorry I ________ to you yesterday; I should have told you the truth.
4. My dog was so tired after his run; he just ________ there and panted.

Idioms:

5. It is important to learn the lay of the _________ when you start a new job.
6. The thief was lying through his ________ when he spoke to the policeman.
7. I’m not sure what will happen. Let’s lie ________ and see.
8. She didn’t take the criticism lying _________. She told him just what she thought.
1. Read **US Symbols** on pages 2-3. During the week before the Fourth of July, make a list of all the red, white, and blue things you see for sale in stores. Compare the display of flags and patriotism with that shown in your home country.

2. Read **Report Card: American Democracy** on page 1. Pick one of the statements in the chart and observe it in action for a few days. How do you think the US is doing?

3. Read **US Symbols** on pages 2 and 3. Look up in a dictionary every word in the Star-Spangled Banner that you don’t know. (Hint: “O’er” is short for “Over.”)

4. Read **Sun Screen** on pages 6 and 7. Go to a drug store or supermarket and read the labels on bottles of sun screen. Find one especially for children — how is it different from the others? Find one that is “waterproof” — what are its instructions for re-applying after swimming? What is the highest SPF you see? Does it cost more than the others?
IF YOU USE THE WEB

1. Read about guns in the US on page 4. Visit the websites of two active groups in the gun debate: the National Rifle Association (home.nra.org) and Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence (www.bradycampaign.com). What do you think?

2. Read The American Revolution (Briefly) on pages 4-5. View re-enactments of the Revolution at www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZgc1-nNoYU

WITH A FRIEND

1. Read the History of Gun Laws and The American Revolution (Briefly) on pages 4 and 5. Describe to a friend or partner what the laws about gun ownership are in your home country, and any history you know about why those laws exist.

2. Read US Symbols on pages 2 and 3. Think of symbols used in your home country that a newcomer might not understand. Draw a picture of each, and describe it to a partner or friend. If you know it, tell the history and/or meaning of the symbol.

3. The The American Revolution (Briefly) on pages 4 and 5. Describe one important moment in your home country’s history to a partner or friend. How has that moment influenced daily life today?

4. Read The All-American Picnic on pages 6 and 7. Describe to a friend or partner a typical outdoor meal in your home country. Describe one particular outdoor meal that you remember. Who was there? Where were you? What was the weather like? What else did you do besides eat?

5. Read the History of Gun Laws and The American Revolution (Briefly) on pages 4 and 5. Describe to a friend or partner a social problem in your home country about which people disagree strongly. Are there organizations or other groups that support one side?

6. Read Birthday Biography: George Eastman on page 5. If you have a smartphone with a camera, show a friend or partner 3-5 of your photographs and describe why you took them.

7. Read Report Card: American Democracy on page 1. Tell a friend or partner which of the statements in the chart is most important in a democracy, in your opinion. Which of the statements describes your home country the best?

8. Read Fact, Fake Fact or Opinion on page 5. Show a friend or partner the statements you wrote for exercise 5 under With a Pen (page 2 of this worksheet). Ask him/her to say whether each statement “factual” (and if so, if it is true) or “opinion” (and if so, do the two of you agree?).

ANSWER CORNER

Vocabulary
1. notice
2. gained control
3. elected
4. adopt
5. tax
6. marched
7. represented
8. resisted (or objected to)
9. rejected
10. favors
11. supported
12. object to (or resist)
13. requires

Understanding What You Read
1F 2F 3F 4F 5T
6T 7F 8F 9T

Grammar and Idioms
1 lie 2 laid 3 lied 4 lay
5 land 6 teeth 7 low 8 down