**Lecture 1. History and geography of the United States of America**.

**Plan:**

New World. Natives and Explorers.

The first English settlements.

Geographical divisions of the USA.

The New World.

America was discovered so long ago that no one can remember the details. It appears to have happened about 15,000 years ago, when a tribe of Siberians or Mongolians crossed a land bridge that joined Asia to Alaska at the time. Later the natural bridge was covered with water the Bering Strait appeared. So the continents were isolated and the migration stopped. Modern Europeans knew nothing about American continent till the 15th century when Christopher Columbus discovered it.

In 1492 C. Columbus, an Italian sailor, whose life-time dream was to find a new way to India sailed westwards with three little ships. It was a very difficult voyage but in three months the ships reached and landed on one of the Bahama Islands. Until the end of his life Columbus thought that the is Island and the mainland were part of India. That’s why they were called West Indies and the red-skinned natives – “Indians”.

In 1497 another Italian seaman Amerigo Vespucci explored the coast of South America and proved that the land discovered by Columbus was not India but the new continent. He is said to have discovered the American mainland. The “New World” was decided to name after him –America, the land of Amerigo.

For the next 100 years English, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and French explorers sailed from Europe for the New World, looking for gold, riches, honour and glory and less gold.

Only at the next beginning of the 17th century Englishmen established several colonies and called them New England. From the Atlantic coast colonists moved to the west of the continent. They became richer and stronger, but they were ruled by England. From and paid duty on different things.

At the end for the 17th century (in 1775) the colonists started the War or Independence. It lasted eight years. In 1776 the Declaration of Independence was written by Thomas Jefferson. Thirteen colonies declared themselves free and independent of England. This day (July, 4) is considered to be birthday of the American nation.

After the end of the War of Independence in 1783, 13 states were formed and they chose George Washington as their first president. At present there are 50 starts on the American flag, symbolizing 50 U.S states, the stripes represent 13 original states.

NATIVE and EXPLORERS.

Christopher Columbus was so charmed by the Bahamas that he called the Islands Paradise. Here are his impressions of what he saw there.

“This is the most beautiful Island I have ever seen. There are some large lakes, and around them is the most wonderful forest. The land around the river is covered with tress. They are beautiful and green different from ours, each with flowers and fruit. The Indians houses are the most beautiful that I have ever seen. They are swept and very clean inside, and the furniture is nicely arranged. The evening air is sweet and fragrant.The mountains are high and beautiful. This country is the best that language can describe.’’

Amerigo Vespucci added much interesting to the previous description.

“First,I will describe the people. We found so many people here that we couldn’t count them.They are gentle and friendly.They have large bodies, and their colour is almost red.I think this is because they go naked,and they are red from sun.They have long black hair.They are attractive,however the men pierce their cheeks,lips,noses and ears.They wear blue stones,beautiful crystals,and white bones in their piercings.The women pierce only their ears.

They live together without a king or a government.They have no metal except gold, and we hear they have a lot of gold. How ever we have not seen any.The Indians do not value gold.They are so rich in pearls and in birds,animals and trees.If there is a paradise,I am sure it is not far from here.”

And here is a glimpse of an Indian to the discoverers.

“The White people never cared for land or deer or bear. When we Indians kill meat,we eat it all up.When we dig roots or build houses we make little holes.We shake down acorns and pine nuts.We don’t chop down the trees.We only use dead wood.But the white people plow up the ground,pull down the trees,kill everything.The tree says, “Don’t hurt me.I’m sore.”But they chop it down and cut it up.The Spirit of the Land hates them.The Indians never hurt anything,but the white people destroy all.They blast rocks and scatter them on the ground .The rock says , ”Don’t .You are hurting me” . But the white people pay no attention . Everywhere the white man has touched the earth,it is sore.

We didn’t ask you,white men,to come here. The Great Spirit gave us this country as a home .You had yours.We didn’t interfere with you.The Great Spirit gave us plenty of land to live on, and buffalo , deer , entelope and other game(wild animals used for food) . But you have come here; you are taking my land from me , you are killing off our game , so it is hard for us to live . Now you tell us to work for a living , but the Great Spirit did not make us to work , but to live by hunting . You , white men , can work if you want to . We do not interfere with you . We do not want your civilization . We want to live as our fathers did, and their fathers before them.

Check your comprehension.

1.What did Columbus like about the land he found ?

2 . What were the natives’ houses like, according to Columbus ?

3. How does Vespucci describe the natives?

4.What did Vespucci admire about the natives he met ?

5.What does it mean that the men “pierce” their cheeks , lips and noses ?

6. In what are the impressions of two discoverers similar?

2. The First English Settlements

The English had visited America at different times .But they had never stayed very long . John Cabot came to Newfoundland in 1498 . In 1577 Sir Francis Drake sailed along the western coast of America on his voyage around the world . In the year 1606 , some English people decided they didn’t like the way their king , James the First , was treating them . They formed a group , which they called the London Company , and sailed for America . For weeks the little boats were tossed about like corks upon the ocean . Then , in April 1607 , the people saw the green shores of the Bay in Virginia . The ships sailed up the river , which the colonists named the James in honor of their king . About thirty miles up the James , the party landed . A fort and a few log houses were built , and the settlement was named Jamestown . That was the first permanent settlement , in what was to become the United States .

Life was very hard in the little colony . Nearly all the men had come from the well-to-do families , and couldn’t work . They believed the stories of the riches , which lay everywhere in the New World , as they had been told . Many people died as they hadn’t enough food . The Indians gave them some corn and taught the colonists to grow tobacco . And soon ships with tobacco sailed for England and returned with things that the colonists needed .

Twenty Negroes were brought to Jamestown in 1619 and sold to the tobacco planters. This was the beginning of slavery in America .

In the north – east the Pilgrim Fathers, who came there on board the Mayflower , founded another colony in Plymouth , in 1620 . The English crown supported the foundation of colonies in North America and looked upon them as an effective means of extending English influence against French and Spanish competition and of increasing their incomes .

To the end of the 17 century thirteen colonies were established on the Atlantic coast of North America , - New York , New Hampshire , Massachusetts , Maryland , Connecticut , Pensylvania , Georgia and others were among them .

Check your comprehension .

1.Who of Europeans came to the coast of America first ?

2.What was the London Company ?

3.When did the London Company sail for America ?

4.Where did they settle ?

5.What settlement did the English build and how was it named ?

6.Why did many of the first settlers die in America ?

7.How did the Indians meet the settlers ?

Geographical Divisions of the U .S.

The East and the Gulf Coast

The Atlantic – Gulf (of Mexico) Coastal Plain extends along the east and southeast coast of the United States from Long Island to the Rio Grande . Although narrow in the north , the Atlantic Coastal Plain widens in the south , merging with the Gulf Coastal Plain in Florida . The Atlantic and Gulf coasts are coast-lines of submergence , with numerous estuaries , embayments , islands , sandpits and beaches backed by lagoons . The northeast coast has many fine natural harbors , such as New York Bay and Chesapeake Bay .

The Atlantic Coastal Plain rises in the west to the rolling Piedmont falls , a hilly transitional zone leading to the Appalachian Mountains .These ancient mountains extend southwest from Canada to the Gulf Coastal Plain in Alabama .

The Plains and Highlands of the Interior

Extending more than 1000 miles from the Appalachians to the Rocky Mountains

and lying between Canada in the north and the Gulf Coastal Plain in the south are the undulating Interior Plains . Almost all of the region is drained by one of the world’s greatest river systems – the Mississippi- Missouri . The Interior Plains may be divided into two sections: the fertile central lowlands, the agricultural heartland of the United States; and the Great Plains ,a treeless central plateau that gently rises from the central lowlands to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains

The Western Mountains and Great Basin

West of the Great Plains are the lofty Rocky Mountains. This geologically young and complex system extends from Canada and runs south into New Mexico. There are numerous high peaks in the Rockies; the highest is Mountain Elbert, more than 4 thousand metres high. Between the Rocky Mountains and the ranges to the west is the Intermontane Region, an arid expanse of plateaus, basins and ranges. The Columbia Plateau, in the north of the region, was formed by volcanic lava and is drained by the Columbia River and its tributary the Snake River. The enormous Colorado Plateau is drained by the Colorado River, which forms here the Great Canyon, one of the world's most impressive scenic wonders. The Canyon was formed over mil lions of years by the Colorado River cutting through layers of rock. West of the plateaus is an area of extensive semidesert. The lowest point in North America is Death Valley (86 m. below sea level). The largest basin in the region is the Great Basin, an area of numerous salt lakes, including the Great Salt Lake.

The Pacific Coast, Alaska and Hawaii

The Pacific Coastal Plain is narrow, and in many cases the mountains plunge directly into the sea. There are few good harbours besides San Francisco Bay and San Diego Bay.

Alaska may be divided into four physiographic regions: the Arctic Lowlands (the coastal plain of the Arctic Ocean); the Rocky Mountain System; the Central Basin and Highlands region, which is dominated by the Yukon River basin; and the Pacific Mountain System. The islands of Alaska and those of the Aleutian Islands chain are partially submerged parts of the Pacific Mountain System and are frequently subjected to volcanic activity and earthquakes. These islands like those of Hawaii are the tops of volcanoes that rise from the floor of the Pacific Ocean. Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa on Hawaii are active volcanoes; the other Hawaiian islands are extinct volcanoes.

Check your comprehension.

1. Where is the Atlantic-Gulf Coastal Plain situated?

2. What harbours are there along the northern coast of America?

3. Where are the Appalachian Mountains?

4. Where are the Interior Plains located?

5. Where are the Rocky Mountains situated?

6. What rivers flow through the Columbia Plateau?

7. On what plateau is there the Great Canyon?

8. Describe the Pacific Coastal Plain.

9. What is the major river in Alaska?

10. What do islands of Hawaii represent?

MAJOR RIVERS and LAKES in the UNITED STATES

The United States has an extensive inland waterway system, much of which has been improved by navigation and flood control and developed to produce hydroelectricity and irrigation water. Some of the world's largest dams, manmade lakes, and hydroelectric power plants are on the U.S. rivers. The Mississippi-Missouri river system (6,300 km. long) is the longest in the United States and the second longest in the world (after the Nile). With its hundreds of tributaries, chief among which are the Ohio and the Arkansas, the Central Mississippi Basin drains more than half of the United States. The Yukon, Columbia, Colorado and Rio Grande also have huge drainage basins.

Part of the boundary between the United States and Cana da is formed by four of the five Great Lakes. These are: Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. From Lake Erie the Niagara River rushes over the famous Niagara falls into Lake Ontario, out of which flows the St. Lawrence River. Lake Michigan is entirely in the U.S. territory. All the Lakes are connected by canals to form the largest body of fresh water in the world. The Illinois Waterway connects the Great Lakes with the Mississippi River. The Intercoastal Waterway provides passage for shallow draft vessels along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts.

The Great Salt lake, situated in the state of Utah, and Alaska's Iliamna are the largest U.S. lakes outside the Great Lakes. The Illinois Waterway is so salty that the man cannot sink in it. In the 17th century it was 300 miles in circumference. Its present area is much smaller, partly because of evaporation, partly due to the diversion for irrigation of some of the rivers which fill it. The saltness of the lake has increased as its area has decreased, and today the lake is about six times as salty as the ocean.

Check your comprehension.

1. How was the inland waterway system in the U.S.A. improved?

2. What is the largest river in the world?

3. Name seven large rivers in the U.S.A.

4. Which of the five Great Lakes form the boundary between the U.S.A.

and Canada?

5. Where are the Niagara Falls situated?

6. What canal connects the five Great Lakes with the Mississippi River?

7. What other lakes excepting the Great Lakes are there on the territory of

the U.S.A.?

8. What provides passage for vessels along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts?

9. Where is the saltiest water in America?

10. Why did the Illinois Waterway decrease greatly?

Read the following proper nouns.

San Francisco [,sænfrǝn'sıskou] - Сан-Ораншиско

New York ['nju: 'jɔ:k] Нью-Йорк

Sierra Nevada ['siǝrǝnı'va:dǝ] - Сьерра-Невада

Nebraska [nr'bra:skǝ] Небраска

Chicago[fr'ka:gou] – Чикaго

Pennsylvania [,pensil'vernjǝ] - Пенсильвания New Jersey ['nju: 'də:zi]

Hью-Джерси

A TRIP from SAN FRANCISCO to NEW YORK

The U.S.A. is a country of great differences. There are high mountains and flat prairies in it, tropical heat and arctic cold. To make a trip from San Francisco to New York, you must pass through four time zones, go over three continental mountain ranges, cross hundreds of rivers and lakes, farms and ranch es, large cities and small towns. The distance from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean is more than three thousand miles (as Paris is from Baghdad). The trip by train takes three days and nights.

In California, where you begin your trip, the climate is usually mild all year. California oranges, grapefruit and lemons, as well as many other fruits and vegetables, are sent all over the United States and to other parts of the world.

Soon the train leaves those green plains and goes up into the Sierra Nevada mountains covered with snow. Here and there you can see clear mountain lakes. As the train goes east you cross the Salt Lake Desert.

For miles and miles you will see nothing but salt and salt. Flat plains covered with short dry grass go for miles and miles. This is sheep and cattle country, the land of the cowboys. From time to time you may see a few cattle on the plain or the wagon of a cowboy, but most of the country is empty.

As the train crosses Nebraska, you leave the empty country and enter the rich farming region of America. Nebraska has many golden wheat fields. In Iowa wheat and corn are important products. After two days the train arrives in Chicago, the second largest city in the United States.

Then you cross Pennsylvania and New Jersey - the richest industrial states of the country and at last arrive in New York, the largest city in the U.S.A.

The CLIMATE of the UNITED STATES.

It the well-known that the United States America occupies a large area in the central part of the North America Continent. Its climate is mostly temperate but varies from tropical in Hawaii to arctic in Alaska. There are places that are warm all the year round, and there are places covered with ice and snow where summer never comes.

But the greater part of the territory of the United States of America is situated between 30 degrees and 49 degrees North Latitude. The coast of the Gulf of Mexico is more south than the city of Tashkent.

The climate of the U.S.A is affected by many things, such as the distance from the Equator, Landforms, Oceans. For example, a great belt of mountainous land stretches along the western edge of North America, from Alaska south to Panama. Some of these mountains are so high that snow can be seen on their peaks even in summer. Summer days are often bright and warm it the mountains, but nights are cold.

Hudson Bay in Canada is a great reservoir of cold because of its connection with the Arctic Ocean.

Check your comprehension.

In what state does your trip begin?

2. What is the distance between San Francisco and New York?

3. How much does it take you to get from San Francisco and New York by train?

4. What areas must one cross during the trip?

5. What state represents the land of cowboy?

6. Where are wheat and corn the most important plants?

7. What are the richest industrial state?

8. Does and cross any mountains on ones way the west to the east of

America?