**The United States of America**

**Basic facts**

-It lies on the North American continent

-It borders on Mexico in the south, the Atlantic ocean in the east, Canada in the north and the -Pacific ocean in the west

-Alaska and Hawaiian are parts of the USA

-Washington D.C. is the capital

-It consists of 51 states

**Mountains**

Cordilleras in the west

**Rivers**

The Mississippi, the Missouri, the Colorado, the Columbia, the Rio Grande

**Lakes**

Great Lakes, Lake Michigan, Lake Ontario

**Climate**

Climate is varied, from Arctic in the north to subtropical in the south

**Population**

More than 300 million people

There live a lot of origins: Afro-Americans, American Indian, Japanese, Chinese...

Official language is English

**Valid currency**

1 dollar which has 100 cents

**Industry**

The USA is rich in metals and minerals

The most important products are coal, oil, natural gas, iron, steel, glass, kaolin,

The USA is leading country in agriculture

It has the first place in the world in chemicals, the production of lorries and cars, computers...

**System of government**

Is based on the principles established in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

The Government is divided into 3 branches:

***the Executive branch*** – is headed by the President, he is elected every four years

***the Legislative*** *branch* – Congress – consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Senator is elected for six years and each Representative for two.

***the Judical branch*** – is headed by the Supreme Court which consists of the Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices.

**Washington DC**

Washington DC (District of Columbia) is the national capital of the USA. It is the seat of the federal government of the United States. The site for the capital was chosen by President Washington himself. More than 5 million people live there.

**Places of interest:**

**The Capitol** – there are the Senate Chamber, the House of Representatives

**The Supreme Court** – is situated across the street from the Capitol

**The Library of Congress** – it is the largest library which contains 90 million items.

**Washington Monument** – it is the white marble obelisk

**Pentagon** – it is the headquarters of the Department of Defence

**The White House** – it is the president’s residence

**New York**

New York is the largest city in the USA. It lies on the Hudson River. NY consists of 5 parts: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island (Richmond). More than 8 million people live in the central area and more than 18 million people live in the whole metropolitan area.

**Places of interest:**

**The Statue of Liberty** – it stands on Liberty island in New York Harbor. It is a symbol of freedom and the United States itself. It also commemorates French-American friendship.

**Museum of Immigration** – it is situated on Ellis island. In the past all immigrants came here.

**Manhattan** – the heart of New York, it is famous for its skyline (panoráma) with a large number of skyscrapers (mrakodrapy).

**The Empire State Building** – the highest building in NY

**The Chrysler Building** – the seat of the Chrysler automobile company

**Rockefeller Center** – complex of 14 buildings

**Central park** – the largest in the NY

**Broadway** – is the centre of cultural life

In the southern part of Manhattan Island used to be a wall against Indians, now there is **Wall Street** - the centre of financial life

East Village is a multicultural area with many ethnic restaurants, funky boutiques, rock and jazz clubs. **Greenwich Village** is the home of artists, writers and New York University students. New York is famous for a large number of skyscrapers. Famous rock concerts take place in Central Park. The most world known bridge is **Brooklyn Bridge**. There are many galleries - **The Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum**

New York is also called the „Melting Pot“ because of its cosmopolitan society. More than 80 languages are spoken here. Spanish is the second most common. New York is also called the „Green Apple“.

**Interesting places to visit**

**Niagara falls** – two waterfalls on the Niagara River on the USA-Canada border

**The Grand Canyon** – multicolored-rock valley

**Yellowstone National Park** – the largest and the oldest nature reserve, it has about 3000 geysers (gejzíry) and hot springs and it is the world’s widest geyser area

**NASA – Kennedy Space Center´s Spaceport** – at Cape Canaveral in Florida, it is the place from which space shuttles (vesmírny raketoplán) are launched (štartovať, odpáliť raketu)

**Dallas** – it is known for its oil industry (ropný priemysel) and cotton market (bavlnový trh). J. F. Kennedy was assassinated (zavraždený, bol na neho spáchaný atentát) here.

**Las Vegas** – it is famous for rodeo festivals and casino gambling (hazardná hra)

**Los Angeles** – it is known for Hollywood, the center of film industry, Disneyland – the first park opened by Walt Disney

**San Francisco** – it is known for the Golden Gate Bridge, the prison Alcatraz which is situated on the island in San Francisco Bay

**Canada**

-It is the second largest country in the world

-It is bordered by (hraničí s) the USA in the south, the Pacific Ocean and Alaska in the west, the Arctic Ocean in the north -and the Atlantic Ocean in the east.

-There are lots of lakes, e.g. Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, Great Bear Lake

-There are also a lot of rivers, e.g. St. Lawrence River, Columbia, Yukon

-Canada is divided into seven regions (regióny, správne oblasti), each with a very different landscape (krajina - výzor)and climate (podnebie):

The Pacific Coast – it has the most moderate (najmiernejšie) climate

The Cordillera – there are the Rocky Mountains, the Coast Mountains and there are Canada´s highest peaks

The Prairies – there are the richest (najbohatšie) grain-producing regions (regióny s pestovaním obylia)

The Canadian Shield – it includes (zahŕňa) a huge inland sea (obrovské vnútrozemské more) called Hudson Bay (záliv)

The Great Lakes – it contains Canada´s two largest cities Montreal and Toronto

The Atlantic Provinces – are the richest fishing areas in the world

The Arctic – it is no longer inaccessible (už nie je neprístupná), the winters are long, very cold and dark

-Ottawa is the capital

-Other cities: Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Quebec

-Official currency is Canadian dollar which has 100 cents

-English and French are spoken languages

**Political system**

Canada is a constitutional monarchy, a federal state and parliamentary democracy with two official languages and two systems of law: civil law and common law. The Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state. She is represented by the Governor General. The Parliament is composed of the Senate and the House of Commons.

***Interesting places to visit:***

Niagara Falls – the most popular tourist attraction, lie on the border between Canada and the USA, Canadian part of Niagara Falls is bigger than one in the USA

Montreal – is the world´s second largest French speaking city

Lake Louise – is one of the most beautiful lakes in the world

Quebec city – has the part called Old Town which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Toronto – is a trendy city with great entertainment, restaurants and several attractions

**Commonwealth of Australia**

**(Austrálsky zväz)**

-is the world´s smallest continent situated between the Pacific and the Indian oceans

-along the east coast there is the Great Barrier Reef (veľký koralový útes) which is the biggest coral reef on the Earth

-Tasmania, Flinders Island are the nearest islands

-The surface (povrch) of Australia is mostly flat (prevažne rovinatý)

**Parts:**

The Great Western Plateau - there are 3 deserts in central Australia – the Great Sandy Desert, the Gibson Desert and the Great Victoria Desert.

The Central-Eastern Lowland (nížina) – it is mostly covered by the tropic forests and savannah, rivers and lakes like Lake Eyre, Lake Torrens.

The Australian Cordilleras – they are along the eastern coast

* There are six states and two territories in Australia (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, island state Tasmania and territories: Australian Capital Territory, Northen Territory
* Australia has some animals not to be seen in the rest of the world (koala, kangaroo, dingo, Tasmanian devil, ...)
* Aboriginals are Australian´s native inhabitants
* The existence of the continent is set in 13th century
* Canberra is the capital
* Other towns: Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth
* Currency – Australian dollar which has 100 cents
* The official language is English, there are also Aboriginal languages spoken

**Political system**

Australia is an independent sovereign nation within the Commonwealth (Britské spoločenstvo národov). The head of state is the Queen Elizabeth II and is represented by governor general.

The parliament consists of two chambers: Senate and House of Representatives.

Australia is divided into several states and territories (e.g. New South Wales,Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, ...). Each state has its own constitution, governor, executive and legislative and judicial system.

***Interesting places to visit:***

The Opera House in Sydney – it has its typical architecture

Sydney – it is the oldest and largest city in Australia

Great Barrier Reef – coral reef, is the top Australia´s attraction, it is the world´s largest feature

Red Centre – it is a reddish rock that is the world´s largest monolith

Melbourne – it is considered to be the most stylish of Australian cities

**New Zealand**

* It consists of two main islands, the North and the South.
* In area it is almost the same size as Italy.
* It lies in the Southern Hemisphere and is surrounded by the Pacific ocean and the Tasman sea.
* Wellington is the capital.
* Other main towns are Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin.
* The country is mainly rolling (zvlnená) and hilly (kopcovitý) but with several lowland areas.
* There are several mildly active volcanoes (e.g. Ruapehu)
* There are several lakes, and Taupo, which is in the North Island, is the largest.
* Maoris are New Zealand´s native inhabitans.
* Population consists of mainly British and Polynesian.
* Valid currency is New Zealand dollar which has 100 cents.
* Official language is English but Maori is also spoken.

**Political system**

New Zealand is an independent member of the Commonwealth. The monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, is represented by a Governor General. The political system is democratic and was modelled on that of Britain. The head of government is the Prime Minister.

***Interesting places to visit:***

Fiordland National Park – it is one of the largest in the world with deep fiords and steep mountains

Abel Tasman National Park – there are many white sandy beaches

Queenstown – is the home of bungee jumping and jet boating