

CULTURES CONTRIBUTING TO U.S. CULTURE

What have other cultures contributed to our culture today?

The United States has been called a melting pot because people from so many other countries have come to live here. People from every country have brought many of their customs and traditions with them. Their culture is remembered and shared by many of us today.

England has given us our English language.

- We have religious freedom because of the first English settlers.
- The sport of soccer, rugby, playing checkers, and a traveling circus began in England.
- Inventions: Piggy bank, baby carriage, matches, thermos bottle, television, vacuum cleaner, magnifying glass, stapler, lawn mower
- In 1803, Richard Trevithick built the first steam locomotive to travel between London and Exeter. The first railway line opened between London and Exeter.



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- In 1843 Henry Cole was the first person to send a Christmas card with a postage stamp.
- A sandwich was first eaten in Sandwich, England. Cheddar cheese, shepherd's pie, fish and chips, and Salisbury steak also originated in England.
- The nursery rhymes Humpty Dumpty, Three Blind Mice, Jack and Jill, Little Miss Muffet, Old Mother Hubbard, and Goldilocks and the Three Bears came from England.



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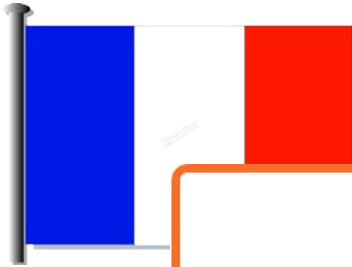
Spain - Missionaries brought Spanish architecture to our southwest.

- The words *cafeteria*, *tomato*, *cocoa*, and *coyote* are Spanish.
- The custom of putting one candle in each window originated in Spain.



France - Food such as cheese, bread, wine, crepes.

- The celebration of Mardi Gras is French for Fat Tuesday.
- The game of tennis was created in France.
- Pierre and Marie Curie discovered radioactive elements.



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Italy - Food such as
Parmesan
spaghetti

- Christmas holidays in Italy.
- Inventions: glass windows, concrete, paved roads, candles, eyeglasses, mechanical clocks, thermometer, and a battery
- In 1835, Guglielmo Marconi made the first radio.
- The games hopscotch and bocce originated in Italy.
- Musical notation, a piano, an orchestra and opera started here. Many Operas were originally written in and are still sung in Italian.
- Our word ballot comes from *ballota*, which means a little ball. Little colored balls were used to cast secret votes.



Ireland - Ireland is known as the Emerald Isle so wearing green, watching a parade, wearing a shamrock, and eating green food on St. Patrick's Day, Mar. 17, reflect a love of Irish customs.

- According to Irish legend, a leprechaun is a small mischievous magical spirit who owns a pot of gold. He will tell you where it is if you can catch him.
- Halloween originated in Ireland when families lit fires and dressed in scary costumes to frighten the spirits of the dead on All Hallows' Eve, Oct. 31. They carved jack-o-lanterns out of turnips but when they came to America they used pumpkins instead.
- Dance: American square dancing is like Irish set dancing. Tap dancing and clogging are like Irish step dancing.
- A claddagh ring which looks like two hands holding a crowned heart was first made in Ireland.
- Some foods that came from Ireland are Irish soda bread, Irish stew, potato pancakes, and barmbrack, a cake with a ring baked inside. If you get the piece with the ring in it, you will be married soon.

Mexico has

- Squares are popular in Mexico. Tacos are traditional.
- Chocolate was invented there.
- Rubber was invented there.
- The custom of breaking a pinata filled with candy and toys originated on Christmas Eve in Mexico.
- A chia pet was invented in Mexico. It is a clay animal on which you plant seeds and watch them grow.
- The smallest dog in the world, the Chihuahua, comes from Mexico.
- Many people celebrate Cinco de Mayo which means the fifth of May. In 1862 Mexico defeated French troops in a battle which is remembered with a parade and fireworks every May 5.



 **PREVIEW**

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China - Many people celebrate Chinese New Year with special foods and a dragon parade.

- Inventions: fireworks, compass, sunglasses and a wheelbarrow
- Flying a kite, playing dominoes and hacky sack are games that originated in China.
- Kung fu and acrobatics originated in China.
- Tea, rice, ginseng, and peaches were first grown in China thousands of years ago.
- The Chinese people first grew soybeans and created soy sauce.
- The first ice cream was made from rice, milk, spices and snow.
- Pasta, which you might know as spaghetti or macaroni, was invented in China.



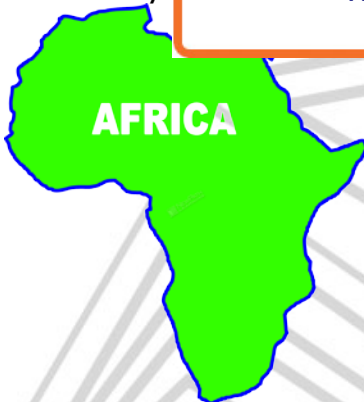
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Germany

- Johannes Gutenberg invented the first printing press for publishing books.
- Alarm clocks, watches, detergent, shampoo, aspirin, cologne and x-rays came from Germany.
- Gabriel Fahrenheit invented a way to measure hot and cold temperatures.

- German engineers, Karl Benz and Gottlieb Daimler, invented gasoline powered cars.
- Motorcycles, helicopters, and jet engines were first made in Germany.
- The customs decorating Christmas trees and celebrating birthdays with a cake and candles to wish on originated in Germany.
- Groundhog day is a German custom.
- German families first made up the fairy tales of Snow White, Hansel and Gretel, Sleeping Beauty, and the Pied Piper of Hamelin.
- Hamburgers were first served in the city of Hamburg, Germany.
- Hot dogs, also called frankfurters, were first served in the city of Frankfurt, Germany.
- Sauerkraut, pumpernickel, strudel and Black Forest cake are German foods.



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Try this!

Ask your parents about the customs celebrated in your family and where they came from.