

5. On Easter Monday, to the great joy of little children, the President searches for Easter eggs in the park of the White House. (to hunt)

.....

6. Most Americans spend New Years' Day by watching TV and eating large meals. (to feast)

.....

**7** Answer the following questions in writing.

1. In what respect does American patriotism differ from patriotism in other countries?
2. What is an important symbol of the country's unity?
3. What is a uniquely American Easter tradition?
4. List some differences in Christmas customs between the US and Hungary.
5. How do Americans celebrate New Years' Eve?

READING C

**American Holidays II. - Uniquely American celebrations**

**1** Read the following text with special attention to the words in bold.

Besides the three celebrations recognized worldwide, there are eight uniquely American holidays that are observed in all fifty states. **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, the world famous civil rights leader and advocate of non-violent social change was assassinated on April 4, 1968. To honor him, each year memorial services were held on his birthday, January 15. In 1986, that day was replaced by the **third Monday of January**, and it was declared a federal holiday. **President's Day** commemorates two outstanding Presidents: George Washington, the country's first president, and Abraham Lincoln, who led the country through the Civil War. Both men's birthdays fall in February, and thus are celebrated together on the third Monday of the month. In recent times the holiday has been expanded to commemorate all past Presidents. **Memorial Day**, celebrated on the fourth Monday of May, originally commemorat-

ed the casualties of the Civil War. Nowadays this holiday has become a day on which the dead of all wars are remembered.

The **Fourth of July**, or **Independence Day**, is considered by many as the most important American holiday. This day marks the **adoption of the Declaration of Independence** in 1776, in which the American colonies declared their independence from Britain. It is celebrated all over the country with family picnics, **parades**, and fireworks at night. Many homes and institutions fly the American flag and decorate their buildings in colors of red, white, and blue. **Labor Day** falls on the first Monday in September, and it honors the American worker. With Franklin D. Roosevelt's words: "Labor Day symbolizes our determination to achieve an economic freedom for the average man which will give his political freedom reality". The school year starts in most cases on the



following day. Another national holiday is Columbus Day, held on the second Monday in October. It marks the event of October 12, 1492, when the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus discovered the New World. A further federal holiday, Veterans Day (formerly called Armistice Day), falls on November 11. This day marks the end of World War I in 1918, and it honors both those Americans who had served in that war and the veterans of all wars fought by the US. On this day, the President places a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington.

Thanksgiving Day is held on the fourth Thursday in November. It was declared a national holiday by Abraham Lincoln in 1863. The first American Thanksgiving was held in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621, a year after the arrival of the first Puritan settlers. They expressed their gratitude to God for the successful harvest. Since many of the first arrivals starved to death during their first winter in the new land, the settlers asked help from the Indians who taught them to grow maize and other crops. When they harvested their crops in autumn they realized that they had enough to live on through the second winter, and so they had a feast of thanksgiving with the Indians. Today, it is usually a family day, with hearty meals and happy reunions. In fact, more Americans travel to see their families on this than any other day of the year. The traditional Thanksgiving dinner includes foods served at the first feast, such as roast



Children in Halloween costume

turkey with stuffing and gravy, sweet potato, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie. Sweet potato is a vegetable that looks similar to potato but has bright orange flesh. Besides these federal holidays, there are also various religious and traditional holidays that are not legally observed. One of them is Halloween, celebrated on October 31, on the evening before All Saints' Day. Children in both Britain and the US dress up as witches, ghosts, monsters, pirates, all kinds of scary creatures, and they knock on people's doors and call out "trick or treat!". The person at the door gives each child a treat, usually some sweets, that is, he "treats the children to some sweets". If, however, he refuses to give them something, they might play some small trick on him. At Halloween the windows of many houses are decorated with jack-o'-lanterns, that is, pumpkins that have been carved with strange faces and have a candle inside them. Both children and adults may have a Halloween party, where they play games.

- 2 Transform the following sentences by using the words in brackets.
1. The world-famous civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. is celebrated on the third Monday of January. (to commemorate)

2. Abraham Lincoln is celebrated on the third Monday of January. (to commemorate)
3. Match the words in the box with the definitions.
1. pumpkin  
2. to harvest  
3. gravy  
4. gratitude  
5. a feast  
6. reunion  
7. stuffing  
8. hearty
2. Abraham Lincoln is celebrated on the third Monday of January. (to commemorate)
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4. At Halloween, children dress up as witches, ghosts, monsters, pirates, and they knock on people's doors and call out "trick or treat". The person at the door gives each child a treat, usually some sweets, that is, he "treats the children to some sweets". If, however, he refuses to give them something, they might play some small trick on him. At Halloween the windows of many houses are decorated with jack-o'-lanterns, that is, pumpkins that have been carved with strange faces and have a candle inside them. Both children and adults may have a Halloween party, where they play games.
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6. Many of the first settlers starved to death during their first winter in the new land, the settlers asked help from the Indians who taught them to grow maize and other crops. When they harvested their crops in autumn they realized that they had enough to live on through the second winter, and so they had a feast of thanksgiving with the Indians. Today, it is usually a family day, with hearty meals and happy reunions. In fact, more Americans travel to see their families on this than any other day of the year. The traditional Thanksgiving dinner includes foods served at the first feast, such as roast
7. Veterans Day is celebrated on the third Monday of January. (to commemorate)
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2. Abraham Lincoln, who brought the country through the Civil war, was murdered in 1865.  
(to assassinate)

.....

.....

3. There are seven holidays that all the states celebrate. (to observe)

.....

.....

4. At Halloween, adults give chocolate or sweets to the children who knock on their doors.  
(to treat)

.....

.....

5. On October 12, 1492, the Italian navigator Christopher Columbus discovered the New World. (to land)

.....

.....

6. Many of the first settlers died of hunger during their first winter in the New World.  
(to starve to death)

.....

.....

7. Veterans Day falls on November 11, and it honors the veterans of all wars fought by the U.S. (to pay tribute)

.....

.....

**3 Match the following words with their definitions.**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1. pumpkin pie | a. the juice that comes from meat while it is cooking and the sauce made from it |
| 2. to harvest  | b. an unusually large meal   |
| 3. gravy       | c. (1) large; (2) showing warm and friendly feelings                             |
| 4. gratitude   | d. a mixture of food put inside a chicken or turkey                              |
| 5. a feast     | e. pumpkin cooked in a dish lined with pastry                                    |
| 6. reunion     | f. the feeling of being grateful   |
| 7. stuffing    | g. the act of cutting and gathering crops  |
| 8. hearty      | h. a meeting after a long period of separation                                   |



**A**merican football originated as a college sport more than 75 years ago. It is still played by almost every college and university in the country, and the football stadiums of some of the largest universities have seats for more than eighty thousand people. There are professional football teams in many major cities of the United States. Their players are almost always former college football players. The game differs from European football or soccer. In American football there are eleven players on each team, and they are dressed in padded uniforms and helmets

because the game is rough and injuries are likely to occur. The object of the game is to carry or pass (that is, to throw from one person to another) the football forward across the opponent's goal, or scoring line. The team with the ball has four chances, called "downs" to gain a minimum of ten yards. If the team is unsuccessful, the ball is turned over to the opposing team, which also has four chances to advance the ball the minimum 10-yard distance. If one team manages to get the ball behind the other team's scoring line, they have made a "touchdown," which is worth several

**1** Read the following text with special attention to the words in bold.

## American Football - The College Sport

### READING D

**M**agyarországon nyolc hivatalos nemzeti ünnep van. Az év első napján, újkorábban az 1848-as forradalom kitörésére emlékezik az ország. A hazákat és a legtöbb közműzményt fellobogózzák, és a Nemzeti Múzeum előtt beszédeket mondanak a vezető politikusok, mindennekelőt a közteraszági elnök és a miniszterelnök. Március vagy április hónap valamelyik vasárnapja és hétfője a keresztyén vallás hűsvéti ünnepé, amely Krisztus keresztre feszítésére emlékezik, és amely évszázadok óta nemzeti ünnep. Május elseje a XX. század közepe óta a munka ünnepé, de a múltban ugyancsak ekkorjái ünnepelek a tavasz eljövetelet. Ezen a napon a családok közül sokan a szababban rendezett vásárokon és ünnepegeken szórakoznak. Pünkösd ünnepé szintén régi egyházi ünnep, amelyet pontosan hét héttel hűsvét után, vasárnap és héton ünnepelek, ezért általában május végére vagy júniusra esik. A hagyomány szerint Krisztus halála után ennyi idővel szállt alá a Szentlélek az apostolokra, akik aztán hirdetni kezdték a keresztyén hitet. Augusztus 20-a Szent István király és az államalapítás ünnepé, ezt a napot minden évben látványos üzjűtűk zárja. Október 23-a 1990 óta nemzeti ünnep, az 1956-os forradalom kitörésére emlékezik. Végül az év utolsó ünnepe a karácsony, Krisztus születésének ünnepe, amely hagyományosan a szeretet ünnepe is. December 24-e, karácsony előestéje még nem munkaszüneti nap, de Magyarországon ezen a napon disztük fel az embereket a karácsonyfájúkat, és este megajándékozzák egymást. December 25-e és 26-a egyaránt ünnepe, amelyet családi körben töltenek az emberek.

**4** Translate the following passage into English.





American Football

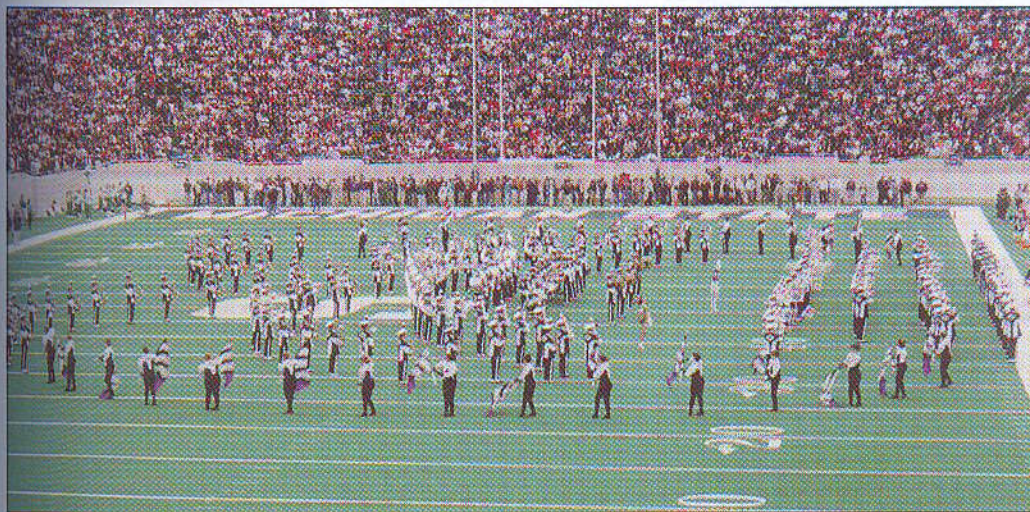
points. The expression "touchdown" has entered general usage meaning "success".

One of the most colorful events of American college life is the college football game. Between the two halves of the game, the playing field is taken over by

the cheerleader bands of the rival teams. Cheerleaders are students dressed in pretty uniforms who encourage the spectators to support their teams. They shout supportive slogans and perform acrobatic and dance-like movements.

Colleges and universities offer scholarships with free board and accommodation to outstanding high school football players. Football is so popular, and the desire to win is so strong that many colleges put great emphasis on finding the best players even if they are unfit for academic work. Thus it is not unusual that the curriculum of these students includes so-called "soft courses," such as sports sociology, or communications. The attendance at football games is so high that many colleges and universities finance their entire athletic program from ticket sales.

Cheerleader bands



Complete the following sentences with the appropriate words.

1. American football started 75 years ago as a ..... Today, there are several ..... teams in the US.
2. To protect themselves, American football players wear ..... and .....



- 3. If one team manages to get the ball behind the ..... of the other one, they have made a .....
- 4. The cheerleaders shout popular ..... to encourage ..... to support their team.
- 5. A football game is divided into two ..... In between them ..... entertain the supporters.
- 6. There are many large ..... that can ..... as many as 80,000 people.

**3** Answer the following questions in writing.

- 1. What are the so-called soft courses in a college curriculum?
- 2. What does the word "touchdown" mean in everyday usage?
- 3. Why do American football players have to wear padded uniforms and helmets?
- 4. Who are the cheerleaders? When do they perform their shows?
- 5. Why do universities and colleges offer scholarships to outstanding high school players?
- 4. By using the special vocabulary of this section, explain (in writing) the basic rules of soccer and highlight the differences between American football and soccer.

READING

# The Magic of Baseball

**B**aseball is such a popular sport in the United States that it is often called the national pastime. Besides American football, it is the only other game invented in America and played in a few countries outside the US. Its national importance is also expressed in a curious way: the national anthem is played and sung by the players and the audience at the beginning of each baseball game.

Baseball derives from English cricket, but it does not resemble any of the well-known sports in Hungary. Its rules are fairly complicated, and the game is difficult to follow for the outsider. The picture below may be helpful in understanding

**1** Read the following text with special attention to the words in bold.

the basics of the game. It is played on a field that includes a diamond (actually a square) with sides 90 feet (27.4 meters) long that connect the three bases and home plate. The equipment used is a small hard ball and a bat made of a long, rounded piece of wood.

A baseball team consists of nine players, identified by their defensive positions. There are six infielders: a pitcher, who throws the ball to the other team's batter; a catcher, who stands (or crouches) behind the home plate to catch the ball if the batter doesn't hit it; a first baseman, a second baseman, and a third baseman, who "protect" the three bases, together



Baseball  
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is also  
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gets the  
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