

V.289

Unterrichtsmagazin

## “Let’s celebrate!”: U.S. American holidays and traditions – Eine landeskundliche Materialsammlung (Teil 2)

Annie Caldwell



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Amerikanische Feste und Traditionen sind tief in der Kulturgeschichte des Landes verankert. Pompöse Paraden, traditionelle Familienfeiern und die multikulturelle Vielfalt sind nur wenige Aspekte, die amerikanische Feste besonders machen. Im zweiten Teil der insgesamt zweiteiligen Materialsammlung sind acht Einheiten enthalten. Dazu gehören nationale Feste wie *Independence Day*, christliche Traditionen wie *Easter*, ethnische Repräsentationen wie *Cinco de Mayo* oder exzessive Feiern wie *St. Patrick’s Day* und *St. Jordi Gras*.

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### KOMPETENZPROFIL

Klassenstufe/Lernjahr: 8–10; Lernjahr 4–6

Dauer: 1–10 Unterrichtsstunden (Materialien einzeln einsetzbar)

Kompetenzen:

1. Interkulturelle Kompetenz: Faktenwissen zu den bekanntesten Feiern demonstrieren und in Texten und Diskussionen anwenden;
2. Leseverstehenskompetenz: Kernaspekte aus Informationstexten verstehen

Thematische Bereiche: *USA, culture, holidays, traditions, multiculturalism*

Medien: Videolinks

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## Auf einen Blick

### Baustein 1

**Thema:** Exploring the traditions of Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Louisiana

**M 1** **Mardi Gras – Celebrating carnival in New Orleans** / einen Lückentext mit Hilfe eines Videos ausfüllen, die Popularität der Festlichkeiten recherchieren und mit Fasching vergleichen (EA, GA, PL)

**Benötigt:**

- Internetfähige Endgeräte zum Abspielen des Videos und zum Recherchieren
- Ggf. ZM1\_M1\_leicht



### Baustein 2

**Thema:** Historical roots and present festivities on St. Patrick's Day

**M 2** **Happy St. Patrick's Day! – Celebrating Irish pride** / zentrale Elemente aus Bildern, einem Video und einem Text erschließen und in eigenen Worten wiedergeben (EA, PA, PL)

**Benötigt:**

- Internetfähige Endgeräte zum Abspielen des Videos und zur Nutzung des Aussprachetools des Cambridge Dictionary



### Baustein 3

**Thema:** The origins and traditions on April Fools' Day

**M 3** **April Fools' Day – Pranks, jokes and hoaxes** / einen Text lesen und verstehen, über Aprilscherze diskutieren und entweder ein Rollenspiel oder eine Geschichte zu Aprilscherzen gestalten (EA, GA, PL)

### Baustein 4

**Thema:** The religious holiday and present-day Easter customs

**M 4** **Easter – Egg hunt, Easter bunny and the resurrection of Jesus** / eine Mindmap zu „Ostern“ erstellen, sich darüber austauschen, einen Text zum amerikanischen Osterfest verstehen und das religiöse Fest diskutieren (EA, PA, GA, PL)

**Baustein 5**

**Thema:** The origins and traditions of Cinco de Mayo

**M 5** **Cinco de Mayo – Celebrating Mexican American culture** / einen Text lesen und das Verständnis mithilfe einer *True-False*-Aufgabe überprüfen; die Kommerzialisierung und den Einfluss der *Chicano identity* diskutieren (EA, GA, PL)

**Baustein 6**

**Thema:** Memorial Day and Veterans Day

**M 6** **Memorial Day and Veterans Day – Honouring America's heroes and heroines** / einen Text lesen und das Verständnis mithilfe einer *Multiple-Choice*-Aufgabe überprüfen; die Bedeutung der Ereignisse recherchieren und diskutieren (EA, GA, PL)

**Benötigt:**

- Internetfähige Endgeräte zum Recherchieren

**Baustein 7**

**Thema:** The Fourth of July – The background and present-day customs of the historic date

**M 7** **Independence Day and American patriotism – Celebrating the founding of the USA in 1776** / zwei Texte lesen und verstehen, eine Internetrecherche zur Unabhängigkeitserklärung und zum amerikanischen Patriotismus durchführen, Auszüge eines Textes von Frederick Douglass lesen und über das eigene Verständnis von Unabhängigkeit schreiben (EA, PA GA, PL)

**Benötigt:**

- Internetfähige Endgeräte zum Recherchieren

**Baustein 8**

**Thema:** The historical roots of Juneteenth; "freedom"

**M 8** **Juneteenth National Independence Day – Commemorating the ending of slavery in the USA** / einen Text lesen und in 25 Worten zusammenfassen; ein Statement zum persönlichen Verständnis des Themas „freedom“ schreiben (EA)

# Happy St. Patrick's Day! – Celebrating Irish pride

M 2



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### Tasks

1. Look at the pictures. What elements might be part of St. Patrick's Day? Describe them. If you need help, check out the TIP boxes.
2. Think-pair-share: Watch the video and read the text about St. Patrick's Day. Look at the words in the table and come up with your own definitions. You can also watch the video here: <https://raabe.click/St.PatricksDay>.
3. Check out the TIP box "Listening to the correct English pronunciation" and learn how to research the pronunciation of English vocabulary.



TIP: Talking about pictures	
In the top left/right corner, I can see ...	What strikes me most is ...
In the bottom left/right corner there is ...	This picture makes me think of ...
The person is standing/lying/looking at/ pointing at ...	I guess ...
The colours are bright/dark/vivid ...	I ask myself how/why/what ...
It could/might/may be a ...	The shape/size/colour/style makes me feel ...



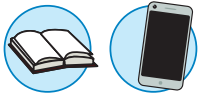
TIP: Helpful vocabulary
<p><b>coins:</b> die Münzen – <b>hat:</b> die Kappe – <b>leaf:</b> das Blatt – <b>garland:</b> die Girlande – <b>pub:</b> die Kneipe, die Bar – <b>(to) dress up:</b> sich verkleiden</p>



### Origins of St. Patrick's Day – Key terms

vocabulary	definition
1. patron	
2. shamrock	
3. parade	
4. leprechaun	
5. (to) dye	

M 7



# Independence Day and American patriotism – Celebrating the founding of the USA in 1776



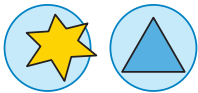
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**Tasks**

1. Read the text "Independence Day then and today" and take notes on the most important pieces of information.
2. Independence Day and American patriotism. Search online for more about the Declaration of Independence. Work with a partner and consider the following questions:
  - a) What are the key principles of the Declaration?
  - b) Who signed the Declaration? What were their functions?
3. What are some of the national symbols, traditions and songs etc. in the United States? Research online.
4. What does independence mean to you? Write an essay (150 words) about your thoughts on the topic. You can choose from what perspective you want to look at the concept (e.g., personal, political, economic, cultural etc.).
5. "For whom is independence?" Read segments from Frederick Douglass's "Fourth of July" speech from 1852 and answer the questions.
  - a) How is Douglass's sentiment in the speech?
  - b) What is the purpose of this speech and to whom do you think is his speech directed?
  - c) After reading the segments: How can this speech be relevant today? Discuss in small groups.



**TIP: Useful phrases for discussions**

**Giving your opinion**

- In my opinion/view, ...
- I think/believe/feel that ...
- ... finally, I ...
- I'm absolutely convinced that ...

**Agreeing**

- I totally agree with ...
- I agree entirely/with some of the things you said.

- You are absolutely right.
- That's exactly what I mean.

**Disagreeing**

- I'm not sure whether you can really ...
- I disagree (entirely) with/that ...
- I'm not convinced that ...
- I see your point, but ...
- I have got my doubts about that.

## Independence Day then and today

**Fourth of July** or Independence Day is one of the most celebrated holidays in the United States. It commemorates<sup>1</sup> the adoption of the **Declaration of Independence** on 4 July 1776. This historic document declared the thirteen American colonies free from British rule, marking the **birth** of the United States of America.

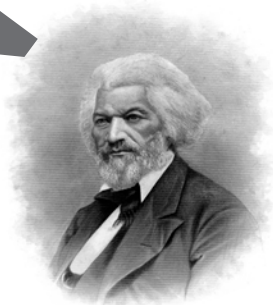
5 This day unites the idea of **American freedom, democracy and patriotism**. It is a day when Americans reflect on the values of liberty and justice upon which the nation was founded. As part of the holiday, **various festivities** and traditions, such as the famous fireworks, concerts featuring patriotic music and readings of the Declaration of Independence are held to educate the people. Additionally, towns and cities host parades, which often feature marching bands, floats, military units and local organisations, creating a festive atmosphere. Particularly major cities like New York, Washington, D.C. and Boston host grand fireworks shows that attract large crowds.

In smaller **gatherings**, families and friends organise barbecues and picnics and enjoy classic American foods like hot dogs, hamburgers, corn on the cob<sup>2</sup> and apple pie.

15 Particularly, during this time many Americans also express their patriotism by **decorating** their homes and streets with red, white and blue, thus demonstrating their national pride through American flags, bunting and banners.

## "For whom is independence?" – Excerpt from a speech by Frederick Douglass, an American social reformer, abolitionist and the most important leader of the movement for African American civil rights in the 19th century (1852)

"Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here today? What have I, or those whom I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? and am I, therefore, called upon to bring our humble offering to the national altar, and to confess the benefits and express devout gratitude for the blessings resulting from your independence to us? [...]"



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10 But, such is not the state of the case. I say it with a sad sense of the disparity between us. I am not included within the pale<sup>3</sup> of this glorious anniversary. Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice<sup>4</sup>, are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance<sup>5</sup> of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed<sup>6</sup> by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought life and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn<sup>7</sup>."

Source: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/nations-story-what-slave-fourth-july> [last accessed 21/01/25]

## Vocabulary

1 **(to) commemorate**: (to) remember – 2 **corn on the cob**: gekochte Maiskolben – 3 **pale**: (here) part of sth. – 4 **(to) rejoice**: (to) be happy – 5 **inheritance**: sth. received from so. who has died – 6 **(to) bequeath**: (to) arrange for money or property to be given to so. after your death – 7 **(to) mourn**: (to) feel great sadness, especially after a loss

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