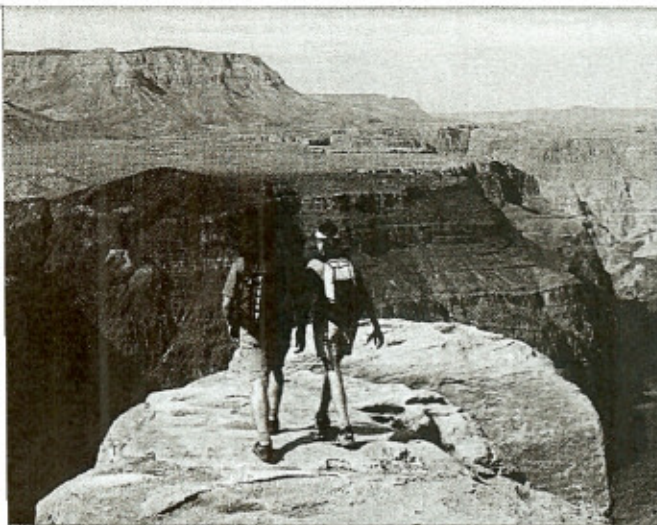


# The United States of America



## Geography

09 The United States of America, in central North America, is the fourth largest country in the world. It is 2,575 kilometres from north to south and 4,500 kilometres from east to west. Because the country is so big, every state has different laws and traditions and there are four different time zones.

The USA borders Canada in the north and Mexico in the south and it is a country of great scenic and climatic contrast. There is an arctic climate in Alaska and a subtropical climate in Florida.

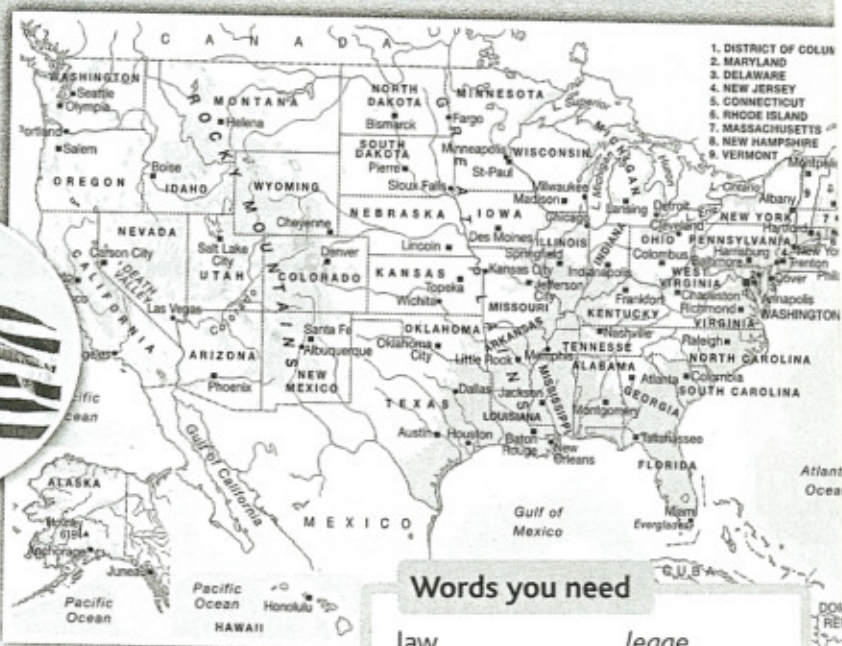
The USA is a federation of fifty states. Forty eight are on the mainland and there is Alaska on the north west of Canada and the Hawaiian islands in the Pacific Ocean.

The capital city is Washington DC.

The flag of the United States of America is called 'The Stars and Stripes'. The thirteen stripes represent the thirteen original colonies and the fifty stars represent the fifty actual states. The colours of the flag are blue for justice, red for courage and white for innocence.

American English is the first language and the second language is Spanish.

The currency is the American dollar.



### 1 09 Ascolta i testi *Geography* e *Government* e sottolinea l'alternativa corretta.

- 1 The USA is the *fourth/fifth* largest country in the world.
- 2 The USA is a federation of *50/15* states.
- 3 The capital city is *New York/Washington DC*.
- 4 The President of the USA must be *under 35/over 35* years old.
- 5 There are *two/three* main political parties.

### 2 Leggi i testi *Geography* e *Natural Wonders* e rispondi alle domande.

- 1 How many time zones are there in the USA?
- 2 Which countries border the USA?
- 3 What do the stars and stripes on the American flag represent?
- 4 Which place is one of the driest and hottest in the world?
- 5 Why is Yellowstone National Park famous?
- 6 Where is Niagara Falls?

### 3 Parla con un compagno.

- Are there any natural wonders in your country? Tell your classmate about them.

#### Words you need

law	legge
time zones	fusi orari
border	confinare con
mainland	continente
rim	bordo

## Natural Wonders

The **coast redwoods** of California's north coast are the tallest living things in the world. They can grow over 90 metres in only a couple of hundred years. The *giant sequoias* are not quite as tall, but they are bigger.

**Death Valley** is one of the driest and hottest places in the world. Temperatures can rise to 57° C. Death Valley is the largest national park and it is 300 feet below sea level. It is surrounded by mountains and rain rarely arrives here.

**Yellowstone National Park** is famous for its hot springs and geysers, especially *Old Faithful*, which sends 41,640 litres of hot water into the air every 40 to 70 minutes. Bears live in this park.

**Niagara Falls** is a famous waterfall on the border between Canada and the state of New York. The falls are not very high, but they are over 1 kilometre wide.

The Colorado River formed the **Grand Canyon** over millions of years. In some parts of the canyon it is 30 kilometres wide, so the north and south rims have very different vegetation. The south rim is dry desert country and the north rim is covered with forest.

## GOVERNMENT

**09** The United States is a Federal Republic of 50 states. The federal government is made up of the President who is the executive branch, Congress which is the legislative branch and the Supreme Court which is the judicial branch. There is a presidential system of government. The President:

- cannot be younger than 35;
- must be a native born American;
- must be a resident of the USA for 14 years.

One person cannot have too much power, so Congress must approve the President's decisions. Congress makes laws and there are two parts to Congress:

- the House of Representatives (435 members elected for two years)
- the Senate (100 members, two from each state, elected for six years).

There are two main political parties: the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

4 Leggi il testo *Government* e completa la tabella con le informazioni mancanti.

THE PRESIDENT		
Congress		
The _____ of Representatives.	must approve the President's decisions.	The _____.
_____ members.		_____ members; _____ from each state.
Elected for _____ years.		Elected for _____ years.