

Identity

1 Reading

What is the connection between hamburgers, cowboy hats, and Harley-Davidson motorcycles?
Read the text and check your ideas.

Is it American?

When we think of national identity, we often think of certain objects, food, or characteristics. Here are three things that people often think of when they hear the words *American* or *the United States of America*. Do you agree?

Hamburgers

When people talk about typical U.S. food, the hamburger, along with fried chicken and apple pie, is one of the first on the list. The hamburger is a meal that started in America, and has traveled all over the world. The name comes from the German port city of Hamburg, from where many U.S. immigrants started their transatlantic voyages. During the later part of the 19th century, many New York restaurants started offering 'Hamburg steaks', in order to appeal to German immigrants in the city. Hamburgers are made of ground beef, and are usually served in a bun with lettuce and pickles. They are often eaten as lunch or a snack, often with French fries, and can be found at any fast-food restaurant, diner, or typical American restaurant.

Cowboy hat

Ask people around the world to describe a cowboy – a traditional symbol of the North American West – and it's likely they will mention the cowboy hat first, as it is so closely associated with the cowboy image. During the 19th century, cowboys wore wide-brimmed straw hats to protect their faces from the hot sun. However, it was the hat manufacturer Stetson that first made today's typical cowboy hat that still bears its name. Today, it is still worn by many ranch workers in the southern and western U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Fans also include former U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush, who were often photographed wearing cowboy hats.

Harley-Davidson motorcycle

Although it is not the fastest or most expensive motorcycle, to many people, the Harley-Davidson is an American icon. Popularly known as "Harleys", these heavy, distinctive motorcycles are designed for cruising on the wide, open highways that cross the country, such as Route 66 that begins in Chicago and travels through the heart of America to Los Angeles on the West Coast. The Harley-Davidson company has been making motorcycles for over 100 years, and these days, you can find them all over the world. However, people still associate Harley-Davidson motorcycles with the U.S., and the freedom of the open road.



2 Comprehension

Read the text again and answer the questions.

1 What are the three typical American foods that people think of first?

.....

2 When did hamburgers first become popular?

.....

3 How do people often eat hamburgers?

.....

4 Why did cowboys originally wear hats?

.....

5 Who first made the typical cowboy hats that we can see today?

.....

6 Who wears cowboy hats these days?

.....

7 What kinds of roads were Harley-Davidson motorcycles designed for?

.....

8 When were Harley-Davidson motorcycles first made?

.....

3 Vocabulary

Find words in the text which mean:

1 a good example of its kind

.....

2 a town or city by the ocean

.....

3 that crosses the Atlantic Ocean

.....

4 made into very small pieces

.....

5 cucumber or other vegetable preserved in vinegar

.....

6 connected

.....

7 have (a name)

.....

8 large farm where sheep or cows are kept

.....

9 a famous person or object that represents something

.....

10 travel at a steady speed

.....

4 Speaking

Work in groups. Can you think of three things that represent your country or nationality?

5 Writing

Choose one of the ideas you had in exercise 4 and write a short paragraph about it.

Use the text on page 1 to help you.