

## 7. Sports and games in our school and elsewhere.

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Sports belong (patří) to most popular leisure time activities. This is mainly due to the fact that they help people to keep fit both physically and mentally. Sports as a form of relaxation are refreshing, can help take off some weight (zhubnout), and to make use of one's skills and strength. (schopnosti a síla). Last but not least, during sports events one can meet a lot of new people and see how it feels to be a winner or a loser.

We can divide all sports into two groups according to where they can be practised. Indoor sports include for example gymnastics, table tennis, boxing, wrestling etc. On the other hand, among outdoor sports there are skiing (down- hill, cross-country, slalom, ski jumping) sledging, sleighing, (tobogány) hiking, rock climbing, horse riding, golf and some aquatic sports such as rowing and windsurfing. Non-professional cycling, or riding a mountain bike, which is one of the most popular activities, can be also enjoyed outdoors on the roads or paths. but most sports and almost all games can be done both indoors and outdoors. We can divide sports to winter and summer sports.

The games are usually all season activities, and they are practised both indoors and outdoors. The most numerous group of games are the ball games. Football is the most wide spread (nejrozšířenější). The purpose (účel) of this game is to kick the ball in into the opposite goal (brány).

In the USA most sports and games have been to a great extent (do velké míry) commercialized. The four foremost (nejhlavnějšími) professionals are the American football, baseball, basketball and ice-hockey. (it has its roots in Canada, though.) These games are turned into big shows in which the sports stars make a lot of money.

Before you start to exercise it is good to do some warm-up exercise. In our school lessons of physical exercise we usually play volleyball, basketball, football, or baseball. If the weather is good we go to the playground and play some games there. But we have only two lessons a week.

Once in two years we have Olympic Games, winter games and summer games. Important disciplines in winter games are: Ice-hockey, skiing downhill, cross country, slalom, ski jumping, skating, and figure skating. In summer games it is: athletics, rowing, football, cycling, ball games etc.

## 9. Clothes and fashion.

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People have different opinion to fashion. Some of them are indifferent, they don't care what they wear, others, especially women, are very choosy and particular about what to wear and like to spend a lot of money on clothes. Some people buy ready-made clothes, others prefer to buy them at second-hand shops, some have excellent taste in dress and are always dressed perfectly, others are slovenly in dress. There are some people who want to be dressed according to the latest fashion at all costs even if it doesn't suit them. It seems that it's hobby for them to follow the fashion magazines and see what a few leading designers in Paris, Rome, London or New York present.

Fashion includes not only clothes, but also hair style, make-up and accessories, such as shoes, handbags, gloves, belts, hats, scarfs or jewellery and glasses. Their design can be plain or patterned (flowered, geometric, striped, checked or spotted).

There is also a variety of materials the dress can be made of traditional natural materials such as cotton, wool, silk etc. There are many differences in dressing. The major contrast is between men and women. I mean the underwear: for example the men wear briefs or gym pants. On the other side, as underwear women put on panties, bra or body shirt, slip and body robe.

How we dress also depends on our taste, on the season and the occasion. In summer we wear light summer dresses, t-shirt with short sleeves or without sleeves, shorts or Bermuda shorts and on our feet we pull on sandals, slippers or sneakers. When we go swimming we put on a swim suit (bikini, one-piece or two-piece) or trunks, sometimes a straw hat. In winter we need to wear something warm – suits, pants, jeans, woollies, cardigans, sweaters, anoraks, winter coats and jackets, sometimes even gloves and mittens, caps, hoods, hats, scarfs and boots of course.

On special occasions we like to be dressed properly too. When we go to a concert or to the theatre we prefer to be dressed up. We wear an evening dress, which consists of a dark suit, a light shirt and a tie or a bow-tie. For sports we put on sportswear, such as jeans, shorts, T-shirts and to the mountain a waterproof jacket or anorak and sports shoes (trainers, heavy boots or ski shoes). At home we like to feel comfortable, and so we prefer leisure wear – slacks, jeans, T-shirts and on our feet slippers. To school we wear something practical and plain. The most favorite wear of teenagers includes jeans or pants, shirts and T-shirts of different colors, sweatshirts or pullovers and trainers. For workshop or cleaning jobs we must put on an apron, overall or overalls.

# 10. Nature and environment.

## How can we make our town a better place to live in?

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The nature is everything around us, what was not made by people. All the plants, trees, animals, rocks, mountains, rivers, lakes, oceans etc. are nature.

In different parts of the World, the nature looks differently. In the tropical rain forests along the equator there are high trees, many species of other plants and animals, and the air is usually very humid – hot and wet. Further away from the equator, there are savannas, flat countryside with few trees and bigger animals, like zebras, elephants and lions. The large areas with an ideal soil for planting and without any trees are called steppes, in North America prairies. Desert is the name for a sandy and dusty place with extremely high temperature during the day and low temperature in the night, where only a few plant and animal species can survive.

Especially in Europe, there are forests – some contain only deciduous trees, some only needle-leaved trees (Russian or Canadian taiga) and some both of them – like many forests in the Czech Republic. Many animals, for example furry mammals, live in these forests, which covered a much larger area in the history. On the far north, there are tundras – cold places with only a few inhabitants and plants, like elks and lichens. Around the poles, the land is covered with ice the whole year. However, some animals, like ice bears, penguins and walruses live there. And we can't forget the fauna and flora of the seas and oceans, which is very varied – there are large animals like sharks and whales, some ridiculously-looking animals like octopuses, medusas and mussels, and many others.

### *Environment*

Environment is the space surrounding places people live in. That means the whole nature of course, towns, our houses and flats and other people, too. When we say "environment" we usually think about destroying it and this is what a part of this theme is going to be about.

**Destroying** the environment is a result of mankind's activity. The air pollution is caused by the industry, rivers and soils may be polluted by factories that release their waste waters into river streams.

**Acid rains** are caused by the air pollution. Gases in the air, such as dinitric oxide ( $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ ) and sulfuric dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ ), mix with water steam in the atmosphere and create nitric acid and sulfuric acid which rains down to Earth and pollutes water, soil and green plants, which has an effect on health of the organisms on the Earth.

**Greenhouse effect** is caused by carbonic dioxide ( $\text{CO}_2$ ) that is accumulated in the atmosphere and creates a continuous layer which allows sunrays to penetrate through the atmosphere towards the Earth but doesn't allow them to go out. That means that the heat carried by sunrays stays in the atmosphere and the average temperature on Earth rises up. This influences the glaciers which melt, the sea level rises, and that causes floods.

**Ozone hole** is caused by dangerous gases containing chlorine and fluorine, used in sprays of all kinds. In the past, people believed they had discovered a chemical material without any by-effects, but later they realized how these gases cauterize the ozonosphere. Ozone is a three-atomized oxygen which protects the Earth and life on it against dangerous radioactive gamma sunrays. One molecule of chlorine can destroy 1000 molecules of ozone. The ozone layer in the atmosphere is becoming thinner and thinner. The situation is extremely bad above the southern hemisphere, esp. above Antarctic, Australia and New Zealand.

# 12. The Czech Republic

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The Czech Republic is a state in Central Europe. It occupies an area of 80 thousand square kilometers and has about 10 million inhabitants. The capital of the Czech Republic is Prague, the seat of the President, government and parliament and the political, cultural and economic center of the country.

Our state has a varied landscape. Bohemia is surrounded by a ring of mountains – the Šumava range, the Czech Forest, the Ore Mountains, the Jizerské mountains, the Giant Mountains and the Eagle mountains. In the Moravia are Jeseníky and Beskydy. Of course we have some several important rivers for example the Vltava and the Elbe (flowing into the North Sea), the Oder (flowing into the Baltic Sea) and the Morava (flowing into the Danube and thence into the Black Sea). The climate is mostly continental; the warmest area is in the south of Moravia.

The Czech Republic is an industrial country. The greatest percentage is represented by the engineering industry. Besides this there are the chemical industry, food industry, textile industry, metallurgy and other sorts of industry.

Our country has very rich sources of black coal and anthracite, mainly in the Ostrava Coal Basin and in the area of Kladno. The most significant supplies of brown coal and lignite are in the North Bohemia Coal Basin and in the Western Bohemia in the Sokolov Basin.

The history begins in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, when the Slavonic tribes came in our territory. The first state was Sámó's Empire, that was destroyed by the Avars. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century there existed Great Moravian Empire. After its desintegration, state activities were concentrated in the Czech Lands. The first leading dynasty was Přemysl dynasty, and the first historically documented Czech prince was Bořivoj the I. The Czech princes and later kings played an important role in Central Europe. The latest king of Přemysl dynasty was Wenceslas III., who died in year 1306. With him the Přemysl dynasty had died out by the sword.

After several years of instability, John Luxemburg got the Czech throne and after him his son - Charles IV. During the reign of Charles IV., the Czech Kingdom became a head of the Holy Roman Empire and Prague grew into one of the largest European metropolises of that era, and was a significant center of education (thanks to Charles University), architecture and the arts.

The first part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century is marked by the Hussite Movement. It is named after John Huss, professor, dean and later rector of Charles University, who was burnt as a heretic in Constance. The leading representatives of the Hussite Movement were John Žižka (he was never defeated), Prokop Holý, Prokop Malý and John Roháč of Dubé. The first king, who was elected by the Czech estates, was Jiří of Poděbrady and Kunštát. After his reign the new leading dynasty came in our country. It was Jagiellonian dynasty from Poland.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century Habsburg dynasty got the Czech throne (their reign was almost 400 years). In 1620 The Czech estates were defeated in the Battle of the White Mountain, and so the re-catholicization, germanization and liquidation of Czech culture and literature followed the time after Thirty Year's War.

Nevertheless the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought a time of national revival, so when World War I ended in 1918, the Czech nation was able to take its fate into its own hands in the newly established Czechoslovak Republic. After the German occupation in year 1939 and World War II the Czech state was under the domination of Soviet Union till the time of "velvet revolution" in 1989. The following development led to the splitting of the republic, and in 1993 two new states appeared – the Czech Republic (it is Bohemia, Moravia and part of Silesia) and The Slovak Republic.

# 12. The Czech Republic

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The Czech Republic is the state we live in, and in which most of us were also born. It is our native country. The Czech Republic is situated in Central Europe. It is said that it lies in the heart of Europe. The Czech Republic is an inland country. It is located in the temperate climatic zone.

Our republic has four neighbours. In the north it borders on Poland and in the south on Austria. The shortest border is with Slovakia in the east and the longest with Germany in the west. Our country has three parts: Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

Our country's borders are natural. They are formed by Mountain ranges. The border is lined by the Šumava mountains in the South-west, the Ore in the north-west, the Luž mountains, the Jizera mountains, the Giant mountains and the Eagle mountains in the North and the Hrubý Jeseník and the Moravian-Silesian Beskids in the North-East. The highest mountain is Sněžka in Giant mountains, which is 1 602 meters high.

The longest rivers are the Vltava, the Elbe and the Morava. Cascades of dams were built on the Vltava River which flows from the Šumava mountains. The Elbe flows from the Giant Mountains. South Bohemia is rich in ponds (e.g. Rožmberk). Bohemia and Moravia are quite rich in mineral springs and spas - Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně, Františkovy Lázně, Kynžvart, Poděbrady, Luhačovice, Jeseník, etc.

The Czech Republic has a population of about 10,3 million. The major nationalities living here are Czech and Moravian, but there are minority groups such as the Silesians, the Slovaks, the Roominess, the Poles, the Germans, the Ukrainians and the Russians. The capital is Prague with its population about 1,2 million people.

Now I would like to tell you something about our history. The country was settled by the Slavs in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century they founded the first state formation - the Great Moravian Empire. One of the most important historical periods in our past is the rule of one of the best and most important rulers Charles IV. who ruled in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. During his reign the Prague University was founded and Prague New Town was built. In 1357 was built the Charles Bridge.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century here was the Hussite movement led by the reformation teaching of Master John Huss, who was burnt to death in 1415.

The beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was marked by the Thirty Years' War. After the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620, the country was Germanised and many artists and scientists had to leave the country (e.g. Jan Amos Comenius and Václav Hollar).

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Age of Reason. Czech literature was born by Mácha, Němcová, Neruda, Arbes, Jirásek and others.

At the end of the World War I the Austrian-Hungarian Empire fell and on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 1918 the independent Czechoslovak Republic was proclaimed with T. G. Masaryk as the first president. From 1939 to 1945 Czechoslovakia was occupied by the Germans. In 1945 Czechoslovakia was liberated by the Red and US Armies. From February 1948 after the Communist Party seized the power the socialist era began. Lots of people emigrated, were imprisoned and even executed. In November 1989 the people threw out the communists. Now the country is trying to follow democratic principles, which is not always easy. The country still suffers from a lack of political and moral culture.

On January the 1<sup>st</sup>, 1993, Czechoslovakia split into two countries - the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Both countries adopted new constitutions.

The head of the Czech Republic is the President. The present President is Václav Klaus. He is elected for five years. Parliament and the government have the main power.

The state flag consists of two horizontal stripes (white on the top and red on the bottom) and a blue wedge.

The currency in the Czech Republic is The Czech crown. The crown consists of 100 hallerers.

# 13. The Czech system of Education.

## My school – Business Academy.

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School attendance in the Czech Republic is compulsory from the age from 6 to 15. Most children attend state schools, but there are also newly established private and church schools. Education at state schools is free of charge, but students at secondary schools must pay for their textbooks. Private and church schools charge schools fees. Children in our schools system don't wear uniforms. Handicapped children are educated separately.

The school year starts on 1<sup>st</sup> September and ends on 30<sup>th</sup> June of the following year. The school year is divided into two terms (September – January, February – June). A school day is different at different types of schools. The average number of lessons at a secondary school is around thirty a week, primary schools have fewer lessons, while specialized schools often have more. Classes begin at 8 o'clock and there are from 4 to 6 lessons in a row, followed by a lunch break and then afternoon classes. Breaks between the lessons are last from 5 to 15 minutes.

Pupils and students are evaluated by marks from 1 to 5, 1 is the best, 5 is the worst. Each term students get their schools report with marks from both compulsory and elective subjects. Education in our country includes these stages: pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary.

Pre-school education is provided by nursery school for children up to 3 years of age and the kindergarten for children aged 3 to 6. At 6 children start to go to primary schools and they stay there until 15. At 15 the pupils transfer from primary to secondary school. Some pupils, whose parents wish then to, can transfer to grammar school or high school at the age of 11 after they have passed an entrance examination.

At 15 pupils can choose among a variety of secondary schools:

- grammar schools (high schools) with general and rather academic education which prepare students for university study
- special schools which include technical colleges, specialized in building, chemistry and engineering business
- vocational schools training would-be workers for practical jobs.

Secondary schools usually lasts for 4 years and at grammar and specialized schools it is finished with a school leaving examination, which is required by all universities and colleges. The examination is taken in four subjects at grammar schools (Czech, a foreign language and two optional subjects chosen from foreign languages, science subjects or humanities) and in five or more subjects at specialized schools. The examination is held in May and is mostly oral except Czech in which an essay is written about a month before. The oral part of the exam takes about two hours, half an hour for each subject. A student chooses one of 25 to 30 topics by drawing a number and after 15 minutes preparation he speaks on the topic and solves given tasks. After the graduates have passed their school-leaving exam they receive the School-Leaving Certificate and they can apply for study at universities and colleges.

Universities and colleges provide tertiary education which lasts from 4 to 6 years. Each secondary school graduate can apply for as many universities and colleges as he likes but before he is accepted they have to pass an entrance examination in subjects in which the university specialized. The exam consists of a written test and an interview. Undergraduates can study a variety of subjects for example: economic, history, journalist, English, architecture etc. The university students can enroll at three-year courses for a Bachelor's Degree or four and five-year courses for a Master's Degree. The university or college study is finished with a state examination and every undergraduate also has to write a thesis in order to receive a diploma in a certain field of study. The diploma is handed over at a graduation ceremony. Doctoral Degrees are awarded after another few years of study, which may be also individual, and completion of another thesis.

For those who don't want to enter the university there are various types of two-year training courses.

## 14. Public holidays in Bohemia. My school year

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In the Czech Republic we have three different kinds of celebrations. There are public holidays, religious holidays and family celebrations.

I think the most popular holidays are Christmas and Easter. In the Czech Republic we celebrate Christmas on the 24<sup>th</sup> December in honour of the birth of Jesus Christ. We start to prepare for Christmas four weeks before Christmas Eve. This period of time is called Advent. Children have a special calendar called a Christmas Calendar. It is usually made out of paper and it has twenty four windows. Every day the children open one of them to find a picture and a piece of chocolate.

During the time of Advent women are very busy cleaning the house, cooking and baking Christmas cookies and cakes.

It has become a tradition to have a Christmas tree. It is usually a spruce tree, but it can also be a pine or a fir tree. The whole family decorates the tree with gingerbread and Christmas ornaments. According to tradition those who abstain from eating meat on the day of Christmas Eve will see the "golden pig" later in the evening as a reward.

Christmas dinner starts around 6 p.m. We usually have fish soup and deep fried carp with potato salad. The meal is followed by cookies. The best part of the day comes after dinner: opening the presents. Children wait to hear a ringing bell signal from the "Infant Jesus". Some people have a tradition of going to church for midnight mass. After the Christmas Eve we usually spend the rest of the Christmas holiday visiting our friends and relatives.

Another celebration during this same time of year is that of St. Nicholas held on 6<sup>th</sup> December. St. Nicholas, angels and devils walk from house to house on the evening before St. Nicholas Day and give presents to the children who have behaved well. Parents warn their children throughout the year that if they misbehave, they will be taken away by the devil on St. Nicholas day.

The second most celebrated religious holiday is Easter which we celebrate in early spring. On Easter Monday all men and boys go from house to house and whip the women with a stick made of woven willows. The women in return give them decorated eggs or ribbons.

In the Czech Republic we celebrate many public holidays: New Year's Eve. We call it Silvester and we celebrate the beginning of the New Year. Everyone enjoys the last hours of the year. At midnight people drink champagne and toast for happiness and prosperity in the New Year, hoping that it will be better than the previous year. Many people make New Year's resolutions promising themselves to give up bad habits in the following year.

The 1<sup>st</sup> of January is called the New Year's Day. On 1<sup>st</sup> May we celebrate a holiday of working. The 8<sup>th</sup> of May is the day of the liberation of Czechoslovakia from the Nazis and marks the end of the Second World War. The 5<sup>th</sup> of July is the day of St. Cyril and St. Method who came from Byzantia to teach the people of Great Moravia how to read and write.

Master Jan Hus, a Catholic preacher of the commons was burned to death at the stake as a heretic on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1415. The day of the rise an independent Czechoslovakia in 1918 we celebrate on 28<sup>th</sup> October. The day of our ancestors is on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. This day is dedicated to honouring deceased family members. We go to the cemetery to place flowers and candles on their graves.

We also have a couple of special celebrations. There is the 14<sup>th</sup> of February which is the day of St. Valentine, honouring love and lovers. Symbols of love, such as chocolate hearts and flowers, are exchanged by lovers.



# 15. Prague – the Capital of the Czech Republic

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Prague is the capital of the Czech Republic, the seat of the President, government and parliament and the political, cultural and economic center of the country. It spreads out on both banks of the river Vltava in the center of Bohemia. It occupies an area of almost 500 square kilometers and has 1.2 million inhabitants. The whole city consists of 10 administrative districts. The oldest parts are the Old town, The Lesser Town, the New Town, Josefov, Hradčany and Vyšehrad.

A legend connects the foundation of Prague with Princess Libuše of the Přemysl dynasty who prophesied the future glory of Prague which “would touch the stars”. The oldest settlement of this area goes back to the Stone Age but the Slavic tribes came to the Prague valley in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century Prince Bořivoj I. founded a castle on a headland above the Vltava valley and it became the seat of princes of the Přemysl dynasty. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century another castle, Vyšehrad, was built and it became temporarily a seat of the Přemysl Princes too. Prague became the imperial residence of Charles IV. and during his reign it flourished and grew. Charles IV. established an Archbishopric, founded Charles University and the New Town, and promoted the construction of Charles Bridge and St. Vitus Cathedral. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century Prague was the center of Hussite Movement. In year 1420 John Žižka defeated the first anti-Hussite crusade on Vítkov Hill. At the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Prague regained its cosmopolitan character again when it became the seat of Rudolph II, who invited artists and scientists there (Tycho de Brahe, Johannes Kepler).

On November 8, 1620 the Czech estates rose up against the Habsburgs and were defeated in the Battle of the White Mountain, near the place, where the Star Summer Palace and Enclosure stands until now. A few months later, in 1621, 27 representatives of the uprising were executed in the Old Town Square. The Thirty Year's War, re-catholicization and germanization followed. At the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century it became the center of Czech cultural life when Czech scholars and writers began the process of national revival. In 1918 Prague was the capital of the independent Czechoslovak Republic again. In 1939 it was occupied by German troops and in 1942 severely persecuted after the assassination of the Nazi deputy protector Reinhardt Heydrich. After the Prague Uprising against the fascists the town was liberated by the Russians on 9<sup>th</sup> May, 1945. The August occupation of Prague in 1968 stopped the democratic reforms in the country and began the process of “normalization”. On 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1989, the Velvet Revolution began democratic changes in our society. The whole process continued with the splitting of former federal Czechoslovakia into two independent states and thus, on 1st January, 1993, Prague became the capital of the Czech Republic.

Without any doubt, the Prague Castle, the seat of the President is the dominant of the city. The monumental complex of the Castle includes three courtyards and over 700 rooms. The most impressive building at the Castle is St. Vitus Cathedral. It was completed in year 1299, a thousand years after the foundation of the first church on this site. Besides that there are other significant buildings. For example: Vladislav Hall, Spanish Hall, Rudolph Gallery, Basilica of St. George, Royal Summer Palace Belvedere in the castle Garden and the Golden Lane made up of tiny houses with colored facades.

Along Neruda Street we can go from the Castle to the Lesser Town below. The jewel of Baroque architecture is St. Nicholas Church in the Lesser Town Square, the masterpiece of Ignatz Kilian Dientzenhofer and Lurago. From the square we can easily get to the Charles Bridge over the river Vltava. It is long 520 meters and is decorated with 30 sculptures. Along Charles Street we can go to the Old Town Square, the center of the Old Town. The best known buildings in the square are the Old Town Hall, Kinský Palace, Týn Church and John Huss Monument too.

But Prague is not only historical city. It is mainly cultural city of the year 2000.



# 17. The USA – geography, economics, industry, agriculture, culture

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The USA is the fourth largest country of the world after Russia, Canada and China. It occupies an area of 9 million square kilometers and has about 270 million inhabitants. The capital of the USA is Washington, the seat of the president, government and parliament and the political, cultural and economic center of the country.

United States of America are a varied landscape. There are The Appalachian Highlands, Rocky Mountains, Sierra Nevadas and Cordilleras. The highest peak of the USA, however, is in Alaska – is Mt. McKinley. Of course there are several important rivers, for example the Mississippi with the Missouri. The Mississippi is the third longest river in the world. In the west we can mention the Colorado, the Columbia and the Rio Grande on the Mexican borders. The biggest river in Alaska is the Yukon. In the States there are very interesting places, for example the Great Lakes, which make up the biggest reservoir of fresh water in the world, another significant area is the Death Valley, the Grand Canyon and the Niagara Falls. The climate in the vast areas of the USA can't be same everywhere. The most agreeable climate is on the Hawaiian Islands.

The history of the United States of America is referred to as the period of more than 500 years that have passed since Christopher Columbus reached the coast of the Bahamas Islands. But before him, other people had come to the American continent. The Native Americans were named Indians. From October 12<sup>th</sup> in 1492 to July 4<sup>th</sup> in 1776, North America served exclusively as a colonial land to many European countries. The explorers couldn't find gold as they had expected, also they brought home new plants such as corn, beans, potatoes, and tobacco. Soon they decided to establish settlements in this New World. The first American colonies were Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Islands, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

On July 4<sup>th</sup> in 1776 the Declaration of Independence was signed and after the War for Independence, the United States of America were accepted as the independence state. The first president of this new state became George Washington. After several years the USA joined another states: Florida, Texas, Louisiana, California, Oregon and Alaska. In the years 1861-1865 broke up the Civil War and the USA were divided into the Union (North) and the Confederate States of America (South). In this time the president was republican Abraham Lincoln. The Civil War ended in the battle of Appomattox, where General Lee was defeated by Union general Grant. In the period 1865-1877 the reconstruction of the South was carried out. It included industrialization and improvements in the transportation system.

The first strong president after many years was Theodore Roosevelt. He wanted to make cooperation between big business and government. In the times of World War I. was the president Woodrow Wilson. After World War II., the Cold War against the Soviet Union began because of the domination of Eastern Europe. The last election to the president's office won republican George Bush.

The United States of America consist of 50 states, which are symbolized on the American flag as 50 yellow stars in the blue field. Thirteen red and white stripes symbolize the first thirteen American colonies. The currency in this state is US dollar and the official language is English but several people in some areas speak Spanish too.

The United States of America always mean a country of unlimited opportunities.

## 18. London – the Capital of the UK

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London, the capital city of the U. K. is situated on the Thames in the southeast of England. The city was probably founded 2,000 years ago. Later London became an important port, industrial centre and the seat of kings and queens.

The name London probably comes from Celtic Llyn = lake and Dun = fort.

London is a cosmopolitan city; there are people of many nationalities. Today the population is about 7 million inhabitants. It consists of three parts: the original historical City, West End – centre of entertainment and the East End, rather an industrial area. London is a major world financial centre with a number of banks and the well-known London Stock Exchange (LSE).

London transport is one of high quality so unless you feel like walking in the city's parks, you may take one of the means of transport used in London for example world-famous red double-decker buses. Another alternative is the underground, or tube, as it is known in London. Tube is the oldest and one of the most perfect underground networks in the world. Traditional black taxis, or cabs, are another symbol of London.

The Tower of London stands on the north bank of the Thames and its history has been made nearly a thousand years. The Tower has been put to many uses such as a royal resident, fortress, a prison, an execution place, royal treasury and museum. 37 Yeomen or Beefeaters guard the Tower. Every evening the Ceremony of the Keys takes place, the gates are locked and keys are passed to the resident Governor and no one can enter the Tower without the password. Today the Tower is a museum of historical weapons and there are coronation jewels.

The Tower Bridge is a great symbol of London. The bridge opens in the middle and goes up when huge ships want to pass through.

St. Paul's Cathedral is one of the largest in the world. It is the residence of bishop of London. Many famous people are buried there, among others the Duke of Wellington.

The city of Westminster is a district which occupies about 4 square miles. This is the centre of the administration, with Parliament and Government offices. The Houses of Parliament are officially called the Palace of Westminster. There is the Victoria Tower, the highest Gothic tower in the world and the Clock Tower with the famous bell Big Ben. The sound of the bell can be heard in the tune on the BBC Radio.

Buckingham Palace has been home of the sovereign since Queen Victoria. The Changing of the Guards is one of the biggest London's spectacles and it takes place every day at 11.00 a.m.

Downing Street number 10 has been the home of British Prime Ministers since 1732. Now is the home of Gordon Brown, the British Prime Minister.

Windsor Castle, built by William the Conqueror, is the oldest continuously inhabited royal residence in Britain. In nearby Eton there is Britain's most famous public school.

## 20. Being ill, seeing a doctor. What we must do to keep fit.

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The health is the most precious gift that people have. Only then, when a person is really sick, he finds out what great fortune is to be healthy.

Soon after birth every child is vaccinated against such sicknesses as tuberculosis, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and later smallpox. Then later in the school age, a child is under medical supervision which means that he or she has to undergo a series of preventive medical and dental checkups where his body is examined, his teeth checked and eyesight tested.

When we grow out of our children's diseases such as cold and measles we don't have to go to the doctor so often. If we are not hypochondriacs we try to get over our cold easily by staying in bed, taking pills, keeping warm, sweating and drinking herbal tea with honey and lemon. But sometimes if a patient is trying to overcome a feverish sickness without staying in bed and curing it properly he takes a risk, as the sickness often leaves very dangerous aftereffects. If we still feel unwell, we finally decide to see a physician who is called a General Practitioner. The doctor diagnoses the case and therapy and prescribes a medicine. If we can't go to the doctor's office, we can call the doctor to our home. Sometimes we may be taken by an ambulance to hospital, where we are under the perpetual medical supervision.

Our present world is bringing new discoveries and inventions. Together with them, however, new diseases are appeared. We are talking mainly about the group of sickness that called diseases of civilization. These are, for example, allergies, migraines, asthma etc. Unfortunately, new diseases keep appearing. Some people say that diseases are the retribution for human sins. Let's mention at least leukemia, AIDS, heart attack or notorious cancer.

Leukemia causes increasing of white blood corpuscles in number. The bone marrow is attacked. Leukemia is a very serious and dangerous disease. AIDS involves infection with HIV virus. There are more means of transmission. Some of the known ways of its transmission are through sexual intercourse, infected hypodermic needles, and from the mother to its fetus. No cure has been found for this disease yet. Despite a high level of awareness among the population and extensive publicity campaigns, new cases of infection, however, keep on appearing.

We have to protect our health as if it was our most precious possession. Health is the most important thing in the world. Let's wish to everyone health and happiness – and maybe our wish will come true.

## *Health – Medical Care in the Czech Republic (and some other country)*

Everybody in our country has the right to choose a doctor and many people go to one family doctor (that's not common in Czech Republic). At present time two types of health facilities operate in this country: state and private ones.

Medical care is provided for our citizens from birth to death. Soon after birth every child is vaccinated against such sicknesses as tuberculosis, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and later smallpox. Then later in the school age, a child is under medical supervision which means that he or she has to undergo a series of preventive medical and dental checkups where his body is examined, his teeth checked and eyesight tested.

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Although medical care in our country is basically free of charge, the government encourages all citizens to be responsible for their health and has introduced a system in which the patient partly shares the cost of some treatment and medicine. According to law, all citizens are covered by health insurance. Though there are several health insurance companies, both state and private, most people belong to the General Health Insurance Company. The Health Insurance System is currently undergoing some changes. Employers pay health insurance for their employees but private persons must pay for their insurance themselves while the state pays the insurance for children and retired people.

In Britain, the National Health Service provides free health care to all people in the country. Everybody is free to choose a general practitioner in his own home area and be registered on his list. In towns it is usual for three or four physicians to join together in partnership and thus share the cost of expensive medical technology. If you need special treatment, the doctor will send you to see a specialist at the local hospital. In an emergency you can call an ambulance by dialing 999 from any telephone. In England, the companies also pay insurance for their employees and the government for other people.

In the United States, there are two different types of health insurance. Most people have private health insurance. If you have a fractured arm, a heart attack, or even a blister, it is possible to choose your doctor and have treatment. You pay the doctor, and then send a bill for the treatment to your insurance company. They will then send you the money. The problem is that private health insurance is expensive, especially for treatment that needs specialists, such as treatment for heart attacks. If one is poor, the government will pay the doctor for treatment. Many people, however, are not poor, don't have the money to pay for private health insurance because it is very expensive. If they fall sick, they must pay for it themselves. This is a big problem now in the USA, because a hospital must take care of people, if they fall very sick, even if they don't have the money, and this is difficult for many hospitals.

### *At the Doctor's Office, the Dentist*

Soon after birth every child is vaccinated against such sicknesses as tuberculosis, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and later smallpox. Then later in the school age, a child is under medical supervision which means that he or she has to undergo a series of preventive medical and dental checkups where his body is examined, his teeth checked and eyesight tested.

If we feel unwell, we decide to see a physician who is called a General Practitioner. It's better to make an appointment with the doctor in his surgery time (during his office hours) if we want to avoid long waiting in the waiting room which may be often crowded. Then the nurse says „Next please“ and invites us into the consulting room. The nurse has to look for our medical record and wants to see our insurance card and then takes our temperature. Then we are ready to enter the surgery (consulting room).

The doctor usually asks what the trouble is and then asks us to strip to the waist because he or she must examine our chest and throat. The doctor wants to know if we have a temperature, a good appetite and where we feel pain. Then he or she listens to our lungs and heart and we have to take a deep breath or stop breathing according to his orders. He also wants us to open our mouth and say „Ah“ to see if our tonsils are red. Sometimes he or she checks the blood pressure and feels the pulse, takes the blood count and throat culture or puts urine through lab tests. We have to say how we feel, if we have a headache, a sore throat, a cold, a cough, or if we are sick and hoarse.

We usually go to see a doctor when we are invited to yearly check-up. Doctor has to weight us that's why he or she has a scale and then he measures us. Physician also examines our eyes (sight) and ears (hearing).

Finally the doctor diagnoses the case and therapy and prescribes a medicine. Most often we suffer from a common infection such as flu, tonsillitis, bronchitis or pneumonia. At the pharmacy we get antibiotics, vitamins, pain relievers and gargle.

Sometimes we may be taken to hospital by an ambulance. In the hospital the injured people are examined and X-rayed at an emergency room. Serious cases are immediately operated on in the operating room. Before the operation the patient must pass several tests and then just before the operation he is anaesthetized by means of an injection or inhalation of a narcotic. After the operation a scar often remains. The patient is sometimes sent to a health resort or a spa for rehabilitation. There he undergoes water treatment, takes baths, massage, remedial exercises and drinks the waters.

## 21. Role of literature, newspapers, magazines and TV in everyday life.

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Nowadays, television viewing is by far the most popular activity in most countries in Europe and America, where there are television sets in practically every home and it is probably that the average number of viewing time is at least fifteen hours a week. Some film makers supposed that people would stop going to see films at the cinema when a variety of TV programs on several channels were brought to people's homes. Although that did not happen, the number of people who go to the cinema has gone down very much. But a lot of people still prefer to see films in color at the cinema rather than on a small TV screen.

Television includes large number of viewers. It has been calculated that some popular operas, such as *Rusalka* and *Libuše*, were seen by more people on TV in one evening than at all theatre performances since these operas were composed. Each week, Czech television shows several feature films. Several times a day there are news broadcasts, with both national and international news, documentary programs about the success of the economy and the arts and the sciences, discussions of present affairs, interviews with famous people, live sports programs and programs for schools and further education. Children wait for their bedtime story in the evening and their fairy tale on Sunday morning. Music lovers never miss any concert or performance. Often a successful serial is discussed by people over their lunch in the canteen or on their way to work. Various programs in which the members show their knowledge and talents are popular too.

Everybody in our country has at home TV. It is usually middle big object of cubic form. In the lower part of TV, there is usually control panel with which we can control the TV, for example we can turn up or down volume, switch over to programs, turn off the volume or all the TV and you can set your TV programs. Nowadays almost every TV is color, but in the past time there wasn't color TV but they were only black and white. TV has various types of size. You can have every type you want. Small, normal size or gigantic. Nowadays almost every TV has its own remote control. You can comfortably sit in your couch and control your TV from your position.

Everyday I go home I usually listen to the radio. For me it is a way of relaxation. In the evening I watch TV news with my family and then I go to the bedroom and read, listen to music or write some letters. Sometimes I watch an interesting film or music program on TV or a video. From time to time I travel to the city and go to the cinema or to some interesting concert or theatre with my friends. When I go to the cinema there are almost always showing some good movie. I like comedies and romantic films. I don't enjoy action movies at all. Most often I go to the cinema with my boyfriend. Sometimes it is quite difficult to select the movie that we both like. I usually go to the cinema once a month, because in these days it is a little expensive hobby. I think that cinema is useful not just for our hobby and relaxation, but through film and the movie screen we learn a lot of new and interesting things.

## 22. Travelling.

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In the case that we decided to travel, we have to know destination. Even a longer walk, a visit with relatives in the next village or a bicycle ride can be thought as a travelling. We can travel in many ways. The simplest way would be to go everywhere on foot. We don't need to worry about missing the bus, running out of gas our car breaking down or getting into a car accident.

Another possibility for our travelling is to go by car. Almost every family today owns a car. Travelling by car is convenient because the car can take us quickly to wherever we want to go at the moment. Another popular means of transportation is the bus. Travelling by bus may sometimes be a little uncomfortable, but the situation is gradually improving. Buses are usually equipped with better seats, dark glass against the sun, air-conditioning, television and radio and often with toilet as well.

We can get around the city also by streetcars, trolleybus and in Prague also by subway. In this case, however, it's not really a question of travelling. But we can't mention the transportation by train, that's not too reliable in our country. When we want to get to a distant country or to a different continent, we can travel by car, bus, ship or airplane. The most attractive option is usually to travel by ship and airplane. Airplanes can take us to our destination in a relatively short period of time.

When we want to travel abroad, we have to have a valid passport and an international health insurance card. For the time of our vacations we may live in a boarding house or a hotel. Of this things (transport, accommodation and boarding) usually takes care the travel agencies.

After our arrival at the hotel we can have our baggage brought into the hall. We inform the receptionist of our arrival and then we get a key with our room number. A porter has to bring our luggage to our room. If our room is on one of the higher floors, we can take the stairs or use the elevator. Our room's furnishings depend on the category of hotel we're staying at. It can be a single room, a double or have even more than two beds. Close to the bed is there is usually a telephone to reception, in case we need something.

There is also a restaurant at the hotel where we have our breakfast, lunch and dinner. Playground or sporting facility is designed for guests who like sports. Staying at the hotel is certainly very comfortable but it's rightly said that there's no place like home. Everybody likes sleeping in his own bed best of all.



## 23. Food, meals, shopping at supermarket.

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Shopping is usually connected mostly with girls and women. Frankly, men don't take shopping very seriously and for them it is a waste of time. In my eyes I'm an average man, who takes it exactly this way. But sometimes everybody has to go shopping even if it means suffering for someone.

If we need to buy something to eat we have to go to the supermarket. It is a large store full of groceries. After we enter to the supermarket, we take a basket purchase. That's very important, because without the basket purchase, we are not allowed to go shopping. We walk through a lot of aisles, which offer us a big variety of groceries. We can buy there fruits, for example: Apples, pears, apricots, peaches, plums, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, watermelons, honeydew melons, cantaloupes, nuts, currants, grapes and gooseberries. If we can some tropical fruits, we can choose bananas, oranges, kiwis, mangoes, coconuts, avocados, nectarines, lemons, limes, grapefruits, pineapples, papayas, fig and dates.

Besides fruits we can also find there vegetables. Lettuce, cabbage, onions, garlic, watercress, tomatoes, potatoes (new, baking, sweet), peppers (green, red), cucumbers, cauliflower, spinach, beans, eggplants, asparagus, broccoli, corn, ginger, parsnips, leek, dill, Brussels sprouts, peas and mushroom. Root crop: celery, carrots, radishes, horseradish, turnips.

In the refrigerators and iceboxes we can find frozen foods – frozen vegetables, frozen dinner, frozen orange juice or meat and poultry. For example: bacon, roast, pork chops, chicken, rooster, ground meat steak, lamb chops, veal, turkey, goose, duck, sausages and also, game, venison, pheasant, partridge, hares and rabbits.

We cannot forget dairy, for example yogurt, processed or natural cheese, eggs, butter, margarine and mainly milk and baked goods – bread, rolls, buns, cakes, pies.

Some groceries are in a can (soup, tuna fish), in a box (cereal), in a pound (bacon) or in a carton (milk). A lot of goods are packaged, cereals, cookies, crackers or pasta (macaroni, spaghetti and noodles). At the supermarket we can buy some candies, chocolate or other sweets.

As soon as we choose all goods, which we wanted, we have to get to the check-out area. There sits cashier with the register and check our purchase. Then we pay and put our purchase into bag or sack. We take back the basket purchase and walk away.

## 24. Seasons and weather. My favourite season.

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There are several climatic zones on the earth – arctic, temperate and tropical. Spreading out from the equator is the tropical zone, then comes the temperate zone and finally the arctic one. The same thing applies in the northern and southern hemispheres. Our country is situated in the central temperate zone. Other countries that are located in this zone also enjoy a European-type continental climate. It means that the winters are not too cold and summers are not too hot.

In the moderate continental climate are some differences between summer and winter, but they are not so big. A year is divided into four seasons: spring, summer, fall (autumn) and winter. Each season lasts about three months and is attractive in some way.

Spring begins on the 21<sup>st</sup> March. Many people consider spring and summer the most beautiful seasons of the year and that's why they usually fall in love in spring and take their holiday in summer. Nature begins to awake from its long winter sleep and new life begins. Nights get shorter and days get longer. There is more sunshine and it becomes warmer and warmer. Soon in gardens and woods the first flowers appear: white snowdrops and snowflakes, colored tulips, purple violets etc. The weather in spring, especially in April is really unpredictable and changeable. Sometimes the sun shines or is overcast or it rains or it may even snow.

June 21<sup>st</sup> is the date when summer begins. Schoolchildren love this season because they have two months holidays. Everybody starts to interest in the weather because people set out on journeys and take vacations. The temperature rises to 25°C or more and we may have fine days in a row. Sky is clear and bright, it's sunny and dead calm. Very often is long dry weather. In summer rain often comes in the form of storm. Then there is a crash of thunder and a flash of lightning. Summer is also the time for strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and the harvest of corn.

At the beginning of September when the new school year begins, summer in reality is over and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September fall comes. In autumn the sun sets earlier and rises later and days get shorter. We can see the colored leaves, later the trees are bare. The weather becomes wet, rainy and it may drizzle. Many people go mushrooming. No wonder that in such weather one may get cold easily and catch a cold or flu.

According to the calendar, winter comes on December 21<sup>st</sup>, but in fact it often begins earlier. Typical winter weather brings snowfall, icy wind and hard frosts. We can enjoy skiing in the mountains and hills covered with a thick layer of snow. Sometimes it's sunny, sometimes it's cloudy. Children like this season, because they can throw snowballs, build snowman or sled.

As the climate gets warmer, we miss a real winter more and more. That's why the spring comes earlier, but only to the lowlands. In the highlands the winter lasts to the April.

## 25. The Internet

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The Internet is an international network of computers – it includes electronic mail (email), the World Wide Web (www), discussion groups and online chatting. To go online, you need a browser, such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer. These programs let you see web pages and download information onto your computer. The World Wide Web is a collection of web pages. Each page has links to other pages which you can get by clicking on words or pictures.

A website, or web page, is a document available on the World Wide Web. To look for information, type key words into a search engine, such as Google, which gives you list of useful websites. If you find a good website, you can save it for future reference – put it in your favorites or bookmarks.

### ISP - Internet service provider.

The organization that provides an Internet connection for a fee.

## 25. The Internet

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The Internet is without doubt one of the most important inventions in history. It was started in 1968 by the US government, but at first it was used mainly by scientists. Since 1990, when the World Wide Web was created, it has changed the world, and its uses are growing every day.

The Internet is a network (several networks, in fact) of millions of computers around the world, connected by phone lines, satellite or cable, so that all the computers on the net can exchange information with each other.

That's the same thing as a Web, isn't it? Not quite. The Internet links computers, and the World Wide Web is a system, which links the information stored inside these computers.

What is a website, and how do I visit one? A company or organization stores its information in electronic documents on one of the Internet computers, somewhere in the world. This computer space – the company's web site – has an address, in the same way that every telephone has a number. To visit a web site, you simply enter the address. Your computer is connected to the web site, a document is downloaded, and a page appears on your computer screen.

How do I "surf the net"? When you visit a web site looking for information, some words on the page may be underlined, showing that there's more information about the subject in another document. If you click on one of these words, the Web automatically connects your computer to a new document or web site, even if this is stored thousands of kilometers away. You're surfing the net!

What can I use the Internet for? The main use of the Internet is to find information – for your schoolwork or job, or just to find out more about your hobbies, sports or current events. You can also use the Internet to read newspapers and magazines, play games, plan your holiday or buy things from your favorite shop. E-mail makes it possible to send electronic messages anywhere in the world in seconds, and you can use the Internet to "chat" with people and make new friends.

What do I need in order to use the Internet? If you don't already use the Internet, all you need to get started is a computer, a modem and a phone line. Using the Internet is getting cheaper and easier all the time.