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ИСТОРИЯ И КУЛЬТУРА ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ

Учебное пособие

Челябинск

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Учебное пособие представляет собой тематический сборник текстов на английском языке, взятых из оригинальных источников. В нем даются сведения о географии, истории, культуре Великобритании. Пособие знакомит с различными сторонами общественной и культурной жизни страны, с национальными традициями и обычаями народов, населяющих Соединенное Королевство. Послетекстовые вопросы и задания направлены на проверку понимания и усвоения прочитанного материала. Учебное пособие состоит из 3 частей и приложения.

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CONTENTS (СОДЕРЖАНИЕ)

INTRODUCTION (ВВЕДЕНИЕ)	4
PART I. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN ISLAND	5
PART II. HISTORY OF BRITAIN FROM ANCIENT TIMES TILL PRESENT DAYS	106
PART III. BRITISH TRADITIONS AND CULTURE	180
APPENDIX	339
The most important dates in British history	339
British Prime Ministers	348
Holidays and Notable Special Days in Great Britain	351
The Greatest Britons of all Time	352
Imperial Measures & Old Money	356
GLOSSARY OF TERMS, NAMES AND CONCEPTS	361
TOPICS FOR ABSTRACTS AND REPORTS	363
CONCLUSION (ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ)	365
REFERENCES (БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ СПИСОК)	366

•~• INTRODUCTION (ВВЕДЕНИЕ) •~•

Цель данного пособия — это, в первую очередь, развитие умений и навыков чтения и понимания текстов страноведческой культурологической тематики. Оно также направлено на совершенствование умения адекватно воспринимать и оценивать информацию, выражать собственные суждения и отношение к прочитанному.

В текстах пособия подробно описываются история Великобритании, ее достопримечательности, культура, традиции и обычаи, система образования, политическое устройство. Есть тексты, посвященные выдающимся ученым, писателям и политическим деятелям этой страны. Все тексты взяты из оригинальных источников. Пособие состоит из 3 глав, каждая из которых содержит тексты определенной тематики:

Part I. General information about the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island.

Part II. History of Britain from ancient times till present days.

Part III. British traditions and culture.

Послетекстовые вопросы и задания облегчают понимание прочитанного. Они направлены на проверку понимания текстов, а также способствуют активному усвоению информации об англоязычной культуре.

Вопросы одновременно могут служить темами для обсуждения на занятиях по страноведению.

Дополнительная информация по истории, географии и культуре представлена в приложении: хронологический список важнейших дат и событий в истории Великобритании, имена премьер-министров страны, перечень основных праздников, имена выдающихся британцев, таблица соответствия британской и международной систем мер и весов, глоссарий терминов и понятий.

•~• PART I •~•

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN ISLAND

•~• General Information about the United Kingdom •~•

Great Britain is a country in the north-west of Europe, located on the island of the same name and also occupying the northern part of the island of Ireland and many smaller archipelagos. The official name of the country is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Great Britain is one of the leading countries in the world, which is a parliamentary monarchy. The country has a land border with Ireland and maritime borders with France, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal (Gibraltar), Spain (Gibraltar), Iceland, Belgium and the Faroe Islands. The territory of Great Britain is washed by the seas of the Atlantic Ocean: the Northern, Irish, Celtic and Hebridean.

The UK is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. This small country has an exciting history and rich cultural traditions. Historical monuments are found here at almost every step: from prehistoric buildings of the Neolithic and Roman Empire to beautiful ancient castles and atmospheric medieval cities. Great Britain has wonderful natural landscapes and a picturesque province that has preserved its historical character and traditional way of life for several centuries.

It is a country in Europe, which includes England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Kingdom is located on the island of Great Britain, the northeastern part of the island of Ireland and several smaller islands. Northern Ireland has a land border with the Republic of Ireland. The country is located in the Atlantic Ocean and

is bordered by the North Sea to the east, the Celtic Sea to the southwest and the Irish Sea to the west. The English Channel and the Pas de Calais Straits separate Great Britain from continental Europe. The country's area is 244 thousand km². As of 2013, 63 million 396 thousand people lived in the country. The highest point is Mount Snowdon, located in Gwyneth (Wales), rising to 1085 m.

Since 1952, the United Kingdom has been a nuclear power. The country's economy is the 6th in the world. The country ranks 8th in terms of purchasing power parity. According to the Human Development Index, Britain is ranked 13th in the world. Great Britain was the world's first industrially developed country. In the late XIX – early XX centuries, the country was an advanced world power. The country's military spending is the fourth in the world. The country has great political, cultural and economic influence.

The United Kingdom has been a permanent member of the UN Security Council (since 1946), a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the G7, the Group of Ten, the G20, NATO, AUKUS, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Interpol, and the World Trade Organization. In 1973, the United Kingdom became a member of the European Communities. Subsequently, this organization was transformed into the European Union, from which the United Kingdom withdrew in 2020.

History

In 1603, Queen Elizabeth I of England died and the Scottish Stuart dynasty came to power. Although England and Scotland remained separate states for some time after that, they have since been united by a personal union. In 1689, the Stuarts were overthrown, and William III of Orange established himself on the throne. In 1707, the Act of Union was passed, according to which

England and Scotland became a single state. At the same time, a single bicameral parliament was created.

In 1713, according to the Treaty of Utrecht, which summed up the results of the War of the Spanish Succession, Britain received Gibraltar, Menorca and previously French-owned lands on the shores of Hudson Bay. She also gained the right to trade with the Spanish colonies and a monopoly on the importation of slaves into these colonies.

In 1714, representatives of the Hanoverian dynasty George I (1714–1727) and George I (1727–1760) ascended to the British throne. Being Germans, they did not perceive Britain as their homeland and did not even attend Council meetings. The political role of Prime Ministers has increased.

As a result of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), the Paris Peace Treaty was concluded, according to which Britain ceded a significant part of the American colonies of France and the Florida Peninsula belonging to Spain. By the same treaty, the British East India Company drove France out of India, which marked the end of the French colonial system.

In the 1760s, the industrial revolution began in the country. The first mechanical machines appeared, factories began to be created all over the country, and industrial centers began to grow rapidly in Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, and Birmingham. Rationally organized grain and livestock farms began to appear.

In 1776, the war with the North American colonies began, which ended in 1783 with the fact that these colonies gained independence from Great Britain and formed a new state – the United States of America. This and other failures of the government led to a decline in its prestige and the emergence of demands for the

democratization of public institutions and the introduction of universal suffrage. The idea of abolishing slavery also began to spread. At the end of the XVIII - beginning of the XIX century, a number of reforms were carried out in Britain, among which were the liberalization of the management system in the colonies with the creation of parliaments in some of them, and the restriction of the arbitrariness of British companies engaged in management and economic activities in the colonies.

In 1789, the Great French Revolution took place in France, which caused an increase in radical trends, including in Britain. Fearing the strengthening of France and the destabilization of the internal situation, Britain launched a war against it. She seized part of the French colonies, financed the states that were at war with France. At the same time, there was a tightening of domestic policy: the law on personal inviolability was temporarily suspended, workers' organizations were banned, and in 1797 the performance of sailors was suppressed.

The fighting was unsuccessful for Britain and in 1802, according to the Peace of Amiens, it lost almost all its acquisitions and lost its allies on the continent. Nevertheless, Britain continued to fight France. The "continental blockade" declared by Napoleon I was not successful, as Britain's trade with the American continent was successfully developing. After Russia's victory in the Patriotic War of 1812, Britain's position improved and she was able to regain her influence on the European continent. As a result of the Napoleonic Wars and the Paris Peace Treaty, many French colonies in Africa, Asia, America and Australia were ceded to Britain. Britain has become the largest empire in the world.

In Great Britain itself, in the middle of the XIX century, under the influence of the British labor movement and revolutionary events

in Europe, serious changes took place. In 1833, the use of child labor was restricted, in 1834 slavery was abolished in the colonies, at the same time a labor inspectorate was established to monitor the working conditions of workers; in 1835, an elected system of local government was established. But the opposite trends also remained strong. Only the elderly and the disabled were eligible for social support. "Workhouses" were created for the unemployed, conditions in which were close to hard labor. Petitions submitted by workers demanding tax cuts, salary increases, shorter working hours, universal suffrage, and secret ballot were rejected by the authorities, and their protest actions were suppressed.

Government structure

The country is a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy. The King of Great Britain is Charles III, who ascended to the British throne after the death of his mother Elizabeth II in 2022. The British King is the head of all three branches of government. He has the right to dissolve Parliament, appoint ministers, and, as Commander-in-Chief, declare war. The British Constitution is not a single written document, but consists mainly of a collection of various written sources, including statutes, judicial precedents and international treaties, along with constitutional customs.

The Windsor dynasty rules in Great Britain. Only Protestants have the right to the British throne. The throne is inherited by the eldest of the monarch's sons. In the absence of sons, power is transferred to the eldest daughter. The British monarch is the head of state, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief and the secular head of the official Church of England.

The UK Parliament consists of an elected House of Commons and an appointed House of Lords. Any document adopted by Parliament must be approved by the Monarch. The head of

Government is the Prime Minister, who is appointed by the Monarch from among the members of Parliament who have received the support of the majority of deputies of the House of Commons. The Cabinet of Ministers of the United Kingdom is recruited by the Prime Minister from members of his party in both houses of Parliament, but mainly from the House of Commons.

There are four main political parties in the UK: the Conservative, Labour, Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democrats. There are dozens of other parties in the country, which, however, do not manage to get more than two or three dozen seats out of 650 possible in Parliament.

The flag of Great Britain

Anyone in the world is familiar with the national flag of Great Britain, but not everyone knows its true history and its historical significance for Great Britain as well as the image of the flag.

The flag of Great Britain shows the image of three crosses: the white St Andrew's and two red ones – St George and St Patrick, this image has great historical significance and symbolizes the unification of three countries: England, Scotland and Ireland.

Since ancient times, St George has been considered the patron saint of the English, St George became the patron saint of England in the XIII century, the cross of St George was almost the first of the famous emblems of England. It gained its fame in the Middle Ages, during the Crusades, and then it became the official English symbol. According to one historical theory, the Cross was used as a national emblem, not a flag, but only an emblem, during the Welsh War of 1275. There is an opinion that the Cross was adopted by England in order to endow the fleet with individual symbols. King Richard the Lionheart of England chose St George as his patron saint. Then the military and merchant navy of England raised a white flag with a red

cross, with the expectation of a certain benefit: at one time the Cross was the symbol of Genoa, and England, thus, fell under the protectorate of a powerful fleet.

The symbol of Scotland is the oblique St Andrew's Cross. According to an unofficial version, the image of the flag of Scotland is associated with a legend. In 832, King Angus II, the leader of the united tribes of Picts and Scots, made a vow in prayer with the Angles. He promised God "that if the Scots win, he will declare Andrew the First-called the patron saint". On the morning before the battle began, the clouds rose in the form of an oblique cross, similar to the one on which the first of Christ's disciples was crucified.

This natural phenomenon had a demoralizing effect on the Angles, while the Picts and Scots, on the contrary, were inspired. As a result, the King of the Angles, Athelstan, with his soldiers, was defeated, and King Angus, as promised, proclaimed St Andrew the First-called the patron saint of all Scottish lands. However, the image of the oblique cross as a full-fledged symbol of Scotland dates back to the end of the XIII century, at which time it appeared on the seal of the Scottish Guards.

Two centuries later (1542), the white oblique St Andrew's cross was placed on a blue (the color of the sky) background, in such a variation it has reached modern times and exists to this day.

In 1603, it was combined with the flag of England, thus the first national flag of Great Britain appeared – a red straight cross on a white background superimposed on a white oblique cross on a blue one. However, a less common but common version of the flag could be found – it had a white Scottish cross on top, but over the next century it outlived its usefulness in Scotland.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, Oliver Cromwell abolished the royal flag, but eleven years later it was restored along

with the monarchy. Initially, the Union Jack was a naval flag. According to the order of James Charles I, the royal flag was raised only on ships belonging to the Navy. In the UK, it is still considered a criminal offense to raise the Union Jack in civil courts.

The Cross of St Patrick is a symbol of Northern Ireland. The connection of this flag with ancient Ireland and St Patrick is controversial. The origin of the cross is not completely clear; there are two versions of its origin, according to the first, it was simply taken from the Fitzgerald coat of arms, according to the other – the symbolism is based on the cross of the Order of the Garter, rotated 45 degrees. The cross is used in the Order of St Patrick's, founded by King George III in 1783 (in honor of the Constitution of 1782), after the adoption of the Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and represents Ireland on the flag of Great Britain, in this regard, it is not recognized by many Irish nationalists as a British invention.

The British call their flag the Union Jack, According to one version, the word "jack" in this case can be considered a tribute to the maritime rules, according to which sailors on warships call their flag that way, which means "union of flags".

The Royal family

The British Royal Family is a group of close relatives of the monarch of Great Britain.

In 1917, George V, due to the war with Germany, renounced all German titles for himself and his heirs and renamed the Saxe-Coburg-Gotha dynasty the House of Windsor.

There is no clear legal or formal definition of a member of the royal family in the UK. As a rule, members of the royal family are considered to be: the monarch, the spouse of the monarch, the widowed spouse of the monarch, the children of the monarch, the grandchildren of the monarch in the male line, the spouses and

widowed spouses of the sons and grandchildren in the male line of the monarch.

Historically, members of the British royal family represented the monarch throughout the British Empire and held responsible and representative positions. Today, they perform ceremonial and social functions both in the UK and abroad, and, apart from the monarch, have no constitutional role in government affairs.

Members of the British royal family are called Their Majesties (the reigning monarch, the wife of the reigning King, the Dowager Queen) and Their Royal Highnesses (the husband of the reigning Queen, the younger members of the family). Male family members on the eve of the wedding receive, as a rule, one of the Royal Ducal titles, historically belonging to the Crown:

- The Duke of Edinburgh (the bearer was Elizabeth II's husband Prince Philip, after his death in 2021, Prince Charles inherited the title, in 2022 he became king under the name "Charles III" and the title was attached to the crown; in 2023, Charles III recreated it for his younger brother, Prince Edward), however, it was agreed that this title is not inheritable.

- Duke of Gloucester (bestowed on younger family members, currently borne by Prince Richard, grandson of George V).

- The Duke of Kent (usually bestowed on the youngest sons of the monarch, the bearer is Prince Edward, grandson of George V).

- The Duke of York (as a rule, it is received by the second sons of monarchs, the bearer is Prince Andrew, the second son of Elizabeth II, the brother of Charles III).

- The Duke of Cambridge (also bestowed on younger family members, the bearer is Prince William of Wales, grandson of Elizabeth II, son of Charles III).

- The Duke of Sussex (received by the younger children of the monarch, was intended for the youngest son of Elizabeth II, Prince Edward, who, however, preferred the specially created title of Earl of Wessex, the bearer is Prince Harry, grandson of Elizabeth II, son of Charles III).

The heir to the throne traditionally receives the title of Prince of Wales and at the same time the titles of Duke of Cornwall and Duke of Rothesay (as heir to the Scottish throne).

The reigning monarch is simultaneously the bearer of the title of Duke of Lancaster (being titled “Duke” regardless of gender) and Duke of Normandy in relation to the Channel Islands

The title of Duke of Windsor stands out – it was created by King George VI for his older brother Edward, known as King Edward VIII before his abdication, and was not created before. Edward left no children, so with his death in 1972, the title returned to the Crown.

The Royal Family of Great Britain is an integral part of the history and culture of this country. The United Kingdom is known for its royal traditions and monarchical system of government, and the royal family plays an important role in this context. This family serves its people and performs various duties at various levels.

The royal family is headed by the monarch of Great Britain. Currently, this is Charles III, who ascended the throne in 2022. Before him, this place belonged to Queen Elizabeth II. She ascended to the throne in 1952. She is the longest-lived and longest-serving monarch in British history. Together with Prince Philip, she performed her duties and represented Great Britain as the head of state.

The royal family also includes younger members – princes and princesses. Prince William and his wife Kate Middleton, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, as well as their children – Prince

George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis – are cheerful and energetic members of the royal family. They attract a lot of attention both inside and outside the country.

The Royal family also plays an important role in preserving Britain's cultural heritage and traditions. Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, actively support charities and engage in community activities. They also brought a fresh breeze to the royal family and attracted a new generation to this institution.

The Royal family of Great Britain attracts intrigue and attention both inside and outside the country. Her appearances in public, royal weddings and anniversaries are expected and commented on by numerous absolutely at different times and at different venues. The royal family embodies British history and traditions, giving them a modern look and continuing to captivate us with its irresistible attractiveness and dignity.

The population of the country

According to the results of the 2011 census, 63.2 million people lived in the UK (3rd place in the European Union and 21st place in the world). According to 2008 data, the population of England was 51.44 million, Wales – 2.99 million, Scotland – 5.17 million, Northern Ireland – 1.78 million. The largest cities in the country: London (8.9 million – 2020), Birmingham (1.14 million – 2019), Glasgow (621 thousand – 2017), Liverpool (513 thousand – 2016), Leeds (782 thousand – 2016).

In 1950, there were less than 20,000 non-white people living in the country, while almost all of them were born outside the UK. In 1945, due to the process of the collapse of the British Empire, immigration from the British colonies (Africa, South Asia, the Caribbean Islands) began, which led to an increase in the share of

this population in the total number of Britons. After the collapse of the socialist camp, a flood of migrants from Eastern European countries poured into Britain[, but since 2008, reverse migration flows have become predominant.

Britain's population is characterized by a high level of urbanization: 90 % of residents live in cities, of which more than a third live in so-called "big cities" (cities with suburbs). With the exception of London, all large cities are located near coal deposits. London is the political, cultural, financial and commercial capital of the country. The so-called "Black Country" is located in the county of the West Midlands – an area of light and metalworking industry. Manchester is the center of the textile industry. Liverpool is the second largest and most important seaport in the country after London. On the south coast of the country, from Portsmouth to Eastbourne, there are resort centers and the major ports of Southampton and Portsmouth.

Climate

Great Britain is an island country in the north-west of Europe with a temperate climate, which varies greatly depending on the geographical location and the influence of the Atlantic Ocean. The climate of Great Britain is characterized by moderate warmth, high humidity, changeable weather and abundance of precipitation.

One of the notable features of the UK climate is its variability and instability. Due to the island's location in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, the country is subject to air masses, bringing with them a variety of weather conditions. Because of this, the weather can change quickly from a clear and sunny day to cloudy and rainy. Winds play a significant role in the UK's climate, especially in the more northern regions.

Average temperatures in the UK vary depending on the time of year and region. Winters are usually mild, with average

temperatures around 2–8°C. In summer, the climate becomes warmer, with an average temperature of about 15–25°C. However, in some areas of Scotland and Wales, summers can be cool and average temperatures are lower.

Precipitation in the UK is evenly distributed throughout the year, although the western parts of the country often receive more rain than the eastern ones. November and December are considered the wettest months, and July and August are the driest. The total precipitation varies from 700 mm to 1.300 mm per year.

It is important to note that the UK is also known for its foggy and cloudy climate, especially in the northern regions and in mountainous areas such as the Scottish Mountains and the Welsh Mountains.

International relations

Great Britain, as one of the leading world powers, plays an important role in international relations. Its geopolitical position, economic power, historical heritage and cultural influence make it a key actor in the global arena.

The UK is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and plays an active role in supporting peace processes, conflicts and resolving global problems. It is the founding country of the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO), which cooperates with other members of the alliance to ensure the security of Europe and the North Atlantic region.

The UK is also one of the key participants in the European Union (EU). The UK's membership in the EU provided access to the single internal market, freedom of movement, security cooperation and other benefits. However, in 2020, the UK left the EU after the Brexit referendum. This historic step has led to changes in international relations.

The United Kingdom has close ties with the United States and is considered an important ally in the field of defense and security. Both countries have a long history of interaction and cooperation in various fields, including defense, intelligence, trade and cultural exchanges.

The United Kingdom also maintains close ties with other countries of the Commonwealth, a community of former colonies of the British Empire. This community plays a role in ensuring cooperation and assistance in various fields, including economics, culture and politics.

Nature and geography

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland or Great Britain is a sovereign state located off the northeastern coast of continental Europe. It occupies the island of Great Britain, one sixth of the island of Ireland (Northern Ireland), as well as many nearby small islands. The main territory of the country is located between 49°N and 59°N (the Shetland Islands are located near 61°N) and 8°W and 2°E. The Greenwich Observatory, located in south-east London, is the starting point of geographical longitude, the zero meridian passes through it.

Great Britain is washed by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea. The minimum distance to Europe is 35 km. The country is separated from France by the English Channel and the Pas-de-Calais Straits. Northern Ireland has a 360 km long land border with the Republic of Ireland. A tunnel has been laid under the Pas-de-Calais Strait between Great Britain and France.

The United Kingdom, which includes the island of Great Britain, the northeastern part of the island of Ireland and a number of nearby small islands, has an area of 243,610 square kilometers. The area of England, the largest country in the United Kingdom, is

130,410 km², the area of Scotland is 78,772 km². Wales and Northern Ireland are significantly smaller in area – 20,758 km² and 13,843 km², respectively.

The geographical position of the United Kingdom is marked by the meridian zero, which passes through the international time zone at Greenwich east of London, 50° north latitude in the south-east of England and 60° north latitude in the Shetland Islands.

The area of Great Britain is about 240,842 km². Most of it is land, and the rest is rivers and lakes. The area of England is 129,634 km², Wales – 20,637 km², Scotland – 77,179 km² and Northern Ireland – 13,438 km². Thus, England is much larger than other countries of the United Kingdom and has the largest population. These factors explain the dominance of England in British history.

Geographically, the United Kingdom consists of three main regions: England, Scotland and Wales, and also includes Northern Ireland. The diversity of these territories forms an amazing mosaic of natural landscapes.

The southern part of England is characterized by rolling hills, green meadows and lush gardens. A distinctive feature of this region is its unique tennis meadows. Famous places include Dartmoor National Park, the coast of Cornwall and the South Downs.

Scotland offers impressive mountain ranges and expanses of high-altitude plateaus. The mountains of the Cumbrians and Highlands are spread out in all their majestic beauty and offer travelers stunning landscapes. Scotland is also known for its lakes, among which the famous Loch Ness can be distinguished.

Wales attracts with its picturesque nature, mountain ranges, valleys and misty landscapes. The northern mountains of Wales, including Snowdonia National Park, are an ideal place for hiking and adventure. Wales is also known for its coastal areas, where you can enjoy beautiful beaches and protected areas.

National parks and reserves such as the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and Cairns provide refuge for a variety of plant and animal species, including deer, grouse and eagles.

The climate is mostly temperate, but with differences between cold and mild. Altitude affects the temperature, so it is colder in the hills and mountains than in the valleys. Thus, most of Scotland, as well as the rolling hills of Wales and England, are cooler in summer and colder in winter compared to the rest of England.

The temperature rarely reaches 32 °C in summer or falls below -10 °C in winter. However, there is a noticeable difference between north and south. The average monthly temperature in the Shetland Islands ranges from 3 °C in the winter months to 11 °C in the summer months. The corresponding temperatures for the southernmost point of the islands, Isle of Wight, are 5 °C and 16 °C. Of course, there are exceptions that go beyond these temperatures throughout the year and in different parts of the country.

The maximum rainfall is observed in the north and west (more than 60 inches or 1,600 mm), mainly in autumn and winter. The hills in the west protect the lowlands in the south and east of the country, so the annual rainfall here is much lower (30 inches or 800 mm), with an increase in intensity in summer. The overall average rainfall is over 40 inches (1,100 mm) per year. The period from March to June is the driest, and from September to January is the rainiest. Droughts are not frequent, but they do happen, which creates problems for farmers and residents of arid areas.

Low pressure fronts can cause very different weather conditions. They usually pass over the northern part of the British Isles, and since southwesterly winds blow almost all year round, the weather is windy, rainy and unstable as a result. But the high pressure areas that also peek at the islands throughout the year are

relatively stable and move more slowly than the low pressure areas, resulting in Britons enjoying warm and dry weather with light winds.

The amount of sunlight in the UK varies by region. It decreases from south to north, from the seashore into the land and depending on altitude. In summer, the sun shines from five hours a day in northern Scotland to eight on the south coast of England, and in winter – from one hour at the northernmost point to two in the southernmost.

These data show that the UK is not the sunniest country, although there are periods of rest from the usual greyness and nebulosity. Frequent clouds over the British Isles complicate weather events, so that even on a hot summer day the sun can hardly be seen through the clouds, which creates a very humid, sticky atmosphere.

Major cities

Great Britain is a country with a rich cultural heritage and history, and its cities carry a unique character and charm.

London. The capital of the United Kingdom, London, is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. This multifaceted city offers a wealth of cultural attractions, including Big Ben, the British Museum, Tower Bridge and Buckingham Palace. London is also the financial and business center of the UK, attracting entrepreneurs and professionals from all over the world.

Edinburgh. The capital of Scotland is Edinburgh, known for its majestic history and architecture. The majestic Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile and Arthur's Seat are just some of the many attractions in the city. Edinburgh hosts an Arts Festival every August, when the city comes alive with cultural events.

Bath. Bath is a famous city with ancient Roman historical monuments. Bath is home to one of the best preserved Roman baths

in the world, which have been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city also offers beautiful Georgian architecture and picturesque landscapes.

Oxford. Famous for its university, the city of Oxford attracts many students and scientists from around the world. It is famous for its historical architecture, libraries and colleges, which create a special atmosphere of knowledge and scholarship.

Manchester. Manchester is a large city in the northern part of England, known for its industrial heritage and football clubs. It is home to the Old Trafford and Etihad Stadium football stadiums, the home arena of Manchester United and Manchester City. Manchester also offers a rich cultural scene, museums and an active nightlife.

The economy of the country

The UK economy is one of the largest and most developed in the world. The deep roots and dynamic nature of the British economy provide a significant impact on the global financial system.

The UK is one of the world's leading financial centers. The city of London plays a special role as an international financial hub, attracting large banks, investment companies and other financial institutions. The London Stock Exchange (LSE) is one of the largest in the world.

The UK is also one of the world's leading exporters of goods and services. It is known for its diverse industries, including the automotive industry, pharmaceuticals, aerospace, and fashion. Major international companies such as Rolls-Royce, BP, HSBC and Unilever have their headquarters in the UK.

Services are the main sector of the British economy, making up a significant part of GDP. Financial, legal, consulting and information and communication services are all due to the developed business environment and the strong legal climate in the UK.

Tourism is also an important component of the UK economy. The country attracts millions of tourists every year with its historical and cultural attractions, including the British Museum, Buckingham Palace, Edinburgh Castle and London's West End. Tourism creates jobs and promotes economic growth.

However, as a result of Brexit, the country's exit from the European Union, the UK economy faced challenges and uncertainty. This has led to changes in trade, investment and freedom of movement.

Transport

The transport infrastructure in the UK is well developed. According to the World Economic Forum, the country ranks 14th in the world in terms of the quality of railways, 15th in terms of the quality of port infrastructure and 28th in terms of the quality of roads and the level of development of air transport. However, trips are not cheap: according to the statistics of the Expatistan website. For example, transport costs in London are on average three times higher than in Moscow.

Air transport

British Airways is the UK's leading international airline. It operates flights to Moscow, St Petersburg and Yekaterinburg. Aeroflot flies to London from Moscow and St Petersburg, British Midland Airways Limited (BMI) and Transaero – only from Moscow. You can also get to the British capital with a transfer in European cities – Budapest, Copenhagen, Prague and Frankfurt. There are no direct scheduled flights to Edinburgh from Russia. You can get there with a transfer in Europe – via Amsterdam, London or Frankfurt with the help of KLM, British Airways, BMI or Lufthansa airlines.

There are about 450 civilian airports in the UK. International flights are accepted by London Heathrow (32 km from London) and Gatwick (46 km) airports. In recent years, more and more traffic from continental Europe has been carried out through Stansted (48 km from London) and London City (14.5 km) airports. A transfer to the center of the capital on the Heathrow Express train will cost 14 pounds, and on the Gatwick Express – 12 pounds. You can get to the center by taxi for 50–80 pounds. In addition, Heathrow Airport is connected to the city center by the London Underground line (Piccadilly line), trains on which depart every few minutes. The cost of the trip is 3.8 pounds.

Railways

Great Britain's rail transport is the oldest in the world. The first public locomotive-hauled railway opened in 1825. Almost all railway tracks are managed by the Association of Railway Transport Companies of Great Britain (Network Rail). Some cities also have developed rail public transport, including the extensive London Underground network. There are private and historical railways; these are usually short lines aimed at tourists.

Most of the country's major cities have commuter rail service. Among them are Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow, Cardiff, Liverpool, Leeds, London, Manchester, Sheffield and Edinburgh.

Water transport

The main transport hubs are seaports. The largest of them are London, Southampton, Liverpool, Hull and Harwich. The UK is connected to the continent by a tunnel under the English Channel and two railway ferries (Dover – Dunkirk and Harwich – Ostend).

Navigation is open all year round on the Thames in London. The busiest place is the stretch between Westminster and Greenwich.

A one-way ticket costs 5–6 pounds. Excursions along the Thames are in great demand among tourists.

Cars

There is left-hand traffic in the UK. Three minutes of parking in London costs 20 pence. The maximum parking time is two hours. The parking fine is 40–80 pounds. Road markings play an important role. One yellow stripe along the curb means that parking is allowed at certain hours indicated next to the sign. Two yellow stripes indicate that parking is prohibited here.

A fee of 5 pounds is charged for car travel within the inner ring road of central London. The penalty for non-payment is 5–80 pounds, depending on the repayment time.

Cars are rented to persons at least 23 years old. The rental price is 18–40 pounds per day. It is not recommended to rent a car in London, as the traffic is too heavy, and it is not always possible to find a parking place.

Public transport

Glasgow, Liverpool, London and Newcastle have metros. The metro is the most reliable transport that does not mind traffic jams. In London, the entire metro is divided into six zones – from the 1st, located in the center, to the 6th on the outskirts.

It is convenient to travel around the capital on red double-decker buses (doubledeckers), which have long become one of the symbols of the city. When traveling short distances, they are more convenient to use than the subway. The only drawback is that the names of the stops are not announced. There are also night bus routes connecting Trafalgar Square, Victoria Station, Westminster, Piccadilly Circus, theaters, cinemas and other places of recreation and entertainment. Night buses run from 23:00 to 6:00, with all stops on demand.

The London Travel Card company sells single travel tickets for one or three days. They are valid on the subway, buses and trains. You can buy tickets at metro stations. The penalty for a stowaway is 20 pounds sterling.

There are two main types of taxis in London: Black cabs and Minicabs. The latter are cheaper, and their drivers are less professional.

Questions

1. What is the official name of Great Britain?
2. How does Great Britain's location contribute to its maritime borders with other countries?
3. Why is Great Britain considered one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world?
4. What historical monuments can be found in Great Britain?
5. Which countries make up the United Kingdom?
6. What are some key economic and political aspects that highlight Great Britain's influence in the world?
7. When did the United Kingdom become a nuclear power?
8. How did the Stuart dynasty come to power in England after Queen Elizabeth I's death?
9. What significant event led to England and Scotland becoming a single state in 1707?
10. How did the Treaty of Utrecht impact Britain in terms of territorial gains and trade rights?
11. Why were the Hanoverian monarchs George I and George II not actively involved in British politics?
12. What were some key outcomes of the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War for Britain?

13. When did the industrial revolution begin in Britain, and what were some notable developments during this time?

14. How did the war with North American colonies affect Britain and lead to demands for democratization and abolition of slavery?

15. Who is the current King of Great Britain and how did he ascend to the throne?

16. What are the powers of the British King in the government?

17. How is the British Constitution structured, and what does it consist of?

18. How is the British monarchy inherited according to the text?

19. What are the two main houses that make up the UK Parliament?

20. How is the Prime Minister appointed in the United Kingdom?

21. Can you name at least three political parties in the UK mentioned in the text?

22. What led to the renaming of the Saxe - Coburg - Gotha dynasty to the House of Windsor in 1917?

23. How are members of the British royal family defined, according to traditional rules?

24. What roles did historical members of the British royal family play within the British Empire?

25. What functions do current members of the British royal family perform today, both domestically and internationally?

26. How are male family members of the British royal family typically addressed based on their status?

27. Can you explain the significance and inheritance rules associated with the title “Duke of Edinburgh”?

28. Why did Prince Edward choose the title “Earl of Wessex” instead of the traditional title “Duke of Sussex”?

29. What titles does the heir to the throne traditionally receive in Great Britain?

30. How did the title of Duke of Windsor come into existence and what happened to it after Edward’s death?

31. Who is currently the monarch of Great Britain and when did they ascend to the throne?

32. How has Queen Elizabeth II contributed to British history as a monarch?

33. Describe the role of younger members of the royal family, such as Prince William and Kate Middleton.

34. How do Prince Harry and Meghan Markle contribute to the royal family’s image and activities?

35. In what ways does the Royal Family of Great Britain preserve the country’s cultural heritage and traditions?

36. How does the population of the UK compare to other countries in the European Union and globally?

37. What were the population figures for England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland according to 2008 data?

38. How has immigration from British colonies affected the demographic composition of the UK over time?

39. What impact did the collapse of the socialist camp have on migration flows into Britain?

40. Why is Britain’s population considered highly urbanized?

41. What are some key characteristics of London as a city?

42. How do the cities in Britain differ in terms of their industries and economic activities?
43. How would you describe the climate of Great Britain?
44. What are some notable features of the UK climate?
45. How do air masses influence the weather in Great Britain?
46. Why is the weather in the UK known for its variability and instability?
47. What role do winds play in the climate of the UK?
48. How do average temperatures vary between winter and summer in the UK?
49. Which months are considered the wettest and driest in the UK?
50. What factors contribute to Great Britain's role as a key actor in international relations?
51. How does the UK participate in supporting peace processes and resolving global problems?
52. What is the significance of the UK being a permanent member of the UN Security Council?
53. How has the UK's membership in NATO contributed to ensuring security in Europe and the North Atlantic region?
54. What were some benefits that the UK gained from its membership in the European Union?
55. How did the Brexit referendum impact the UK's international relations?
56. Why are the United States and the United Kingdom considered important allies in defense and security matters?
57. What are some of the cultural attractions in London mentioned in the text?

58. How does Edinburgh stand out in terms of history and architecture?

59. Why is Bath considered a famous city with ancient Roman historical monuments?

60. What makes Oxford a popular destination for students and scientists?

61. What are the main features that define Manchester's identity according to the text?

62. How does the Arts Festival in Edinburgh contribute to the city's cultural vibrancy?

63. What role does London play as the financial and business center of the UK?

64. How does the UK rank in terms of the quality of railways, port infrastructure, roads, and air transport according to the World Economic Forum?

65. What is the average difference in transport costs between London and Moscow based on statistics from the Expatistan website?

66. Which airlines operate flights between the UK and Russia, specifically to Moscow, St Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg?

67. How many civilian airports are there in the UK, and which ones accept international flights?

68. What are the different modes of transportation available from Heathrow Airport to the center of London, and how much do they cost?

69. When did the first public locomotive-hauled railway open in Great Britain, and who manages most of the railway tracks in the country?

70. Which major cities in the UK have commuter rail services available for residents and visitors?
71. What are the main transport hubs for water transport in the UK?
72. How is navigation on the Thames in London described?
73. What are the rules and penalties associated with parking in London?
74. What is the fee for car travel within the inner ring road of central London?
75. What types of public transport are available in Glasgow, Liverpool, London, and Newcastle?
76. How are zones divided in the London metro system?
77. What are the differences between Black cabs and Minicabs in London?
78. How has literature influenced British culture?
79. Who are some famous British writers and what are their notable works?
80. What role does music play in British culture?
81. Can you name a few iconic British musicians or bands?
82. Why is theatre considered an integral part of UK culture?
83. What makes London's West End famous in the world of theatre?
84. How do art and architecture contribute to UK culture?
85. How did the national cuisine of Britain evolve over many centuries?
86. What were some traditional foods consumed by the Celts in ancient Britain?

87. How did the importation of smoked fish from Denmark and Norway impact British cuisine?

88. When did bakeries first appear in Britain, and what measures were taken to regulate bread prices?

89. What influence did other countries have on British cuisine during the heyday of the British colonies?

90. How did Indian traditions influence British cooking, and what popular dish became part of English cuisine?

91. How did the geography of Britain contribute to the popularity of certain foods in the country's cuisine?

92. What are the components of a traditional British breakfast?

93. How does English lunch differ from breakfast in terms of heaviness?

94. What is the significance of 5 p.m. in British culture when it comes to meals?

95. Describe the traditional Sunday Roast Carvery dinners prepared by the British.

96. Why is cooking Sunday dinners considered a subtle and complex science?

97. What are some meat dishes commonly used for Sunday Roast Carvery dinners?

98. Can you explain the possible origins of the Sunday lunch tradition in Britain?

99. Which two varieties of fish are mentioned as the most popular in Britain?

100. What is the main ingredient used to make gravy, a classic English sauce?

•~• The main outline of the country •~•

The United Kingdom is an island country off the northwest coast of mainland Europe. The United Kingdom comprises the whole island of Great Britain, including England, Wales and Scotland, and the northern part of the island of Ireland. The name 'United Kingdom' is sometimes used to refer to the whole of the United Kingdom. The capital is London, one of the world's leading centers of commerce, finance and culture. Other major cities include Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester in England; Belfast and Londonderry in Northern Ireland; Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland; and Swansea and Cardiff in Wales.

In the early 10th century AD, the Anglo-Saxon king Athelstan consolidated the allegiance of neighboring Celtic kingdoms and, according to contemporary chronicles, 'ruled for the first time over lands that until then had been shared by many kings'. During the centuries of conquest that followed, far-flung kingdoms also came under British rule. Wales, a confederation of Celtic kingdoms in the southwest of Great Britain, was formally united with England by the Acts of Union of 1536 and 1542; Scotland, ruled from London since 1603, was formally united with England and Wales in 1707; and the United Kingdom of Great Britain, ruled from London since 1603, was formally united with England and Wales in 1707, forming the United Kingdom of Great Britain. ('British' came to be used as an adjective to refer to all peoples in the kingdom at this time).

Ireland came under British rule in the 1600s and was formally united with Great Britain by the Act of Union of 1800. The Republic of Ireland became independent in 1922, but six of the nine counties of Ulster remained part of the United Kingdom as Northern Ireland. Relations between these constituent counties and the UK were contentious, sometimes openly rebellious and even at war; these

tensions eased somewhat in the late 20th century with the introduction of devolved legislatures in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

However, even after referendums and the establishment of devolved parliaments in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, relations between Unionists (those in favor of continued British sovereignty over Northern Ireland) and Nationalists (those in favor of union with the Republic of Ireland) in Northern Ireland remained tense well into the 21st century. Tense well into the 21st century.

The UK has made significant contributions to the global economy, particularly in technology and industry. Since the Second World War, however, the UK's most important exports have been in the cultural spheres, including literature, theater, film, television and popular music, which are now spoken in all parts of the UK. Perhaps Britain's greatest export is the English language, which is now spoken all over the world and is one of the main international vehicles for cultural and economic exchange.

The UK maintains ties with parts of the former empire through the Commonwealth. It also has historical and cultural ties with the United States and is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The United Kingdom also joined the European Union in 1973. However, as the great wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill said, "There is only good and hope for a richer, freer and fuller European Community. But we have dreams and a mission. We are with Europe, but we are not part of Europe. We are connected but not united. We are interested and involved in Europe, but we do not absorb Europe". Indeed, in the June 2016 referendum on whether the UK should remain in the EU, 52 % of UK voters chose to leave. After long negotiations, several extensions of

time, protracted internal political disputes and two changes of Prime Minister, the 'Brexit' deal satisfied both the EU and the parliamentary majority. Thus, on January 31, 2020, the UK will be the first country to leave the EU.

The United Kingdom is geographically and historically divided into four parts: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom includes most of the area and population of the British Isles, a geographical term referring to Great Britain, Ireland and many small islands.

England, Wales and Scotland together make up Great Britain, the larger of the two main islands, while Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland make up the second largest island, Ireland. Covering most of the south of Great Britain, England includes the Isles of Scilly off the southwest coast and the Isle of Wight off the south coast. Scotland, which covers the northern part of Great Britain, includes the Orkney and Shetland Islands off the north coast and the Hebrides off the northwest coast. To the west of England is Wales and to the northwest is the Isle of Anglesey.

Except for the border with the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom is surrounded by sea. To the south of England is the English Channel, between England and France. To the east is the North Sea. To the west of Wales and northern England and to the south-east of Northern Ireland, the Irish Sea separates Ireland and the United Kingdom, while south-west England, the north-west coast of Northern Ireland and western Scotland are bordered by the Atlantic Ocean. The United Kingdom is 300 miles (500 km) long at its widest point. From the northern tip of Scotland to the south coast of England is about 600 miles (1,000 km). No place is more than 75 miles (120 km) from the sea. The capital, London, is located in the southeast of England on the River Thames.

The archipelago, consisting of the island of Great Britain and many smaller islands, is irregular in shape and varied in geology and landscape. This diversity is largely due to the nature and arrangement of the rocks, a westward extension of European structures, with the Strait of Dover and the shallows of the North Sea concealing ancient land connections. In Northern Ireland, there is a westward extension of Scottish rock structures. These common rock structures are broken by the bottlenecks of Northern Ireland.

On a global scale, this natural wealth covers a small area, comparable to Oregon in the USA or the Republic of Guinea in Africa. Its internal diversity, often accompanied by rapid changes in its beautiful landscapes, can give visitors from larger countries an impressive sense of compactness and integration. Over the centuries, the peoples who have inhabited the Atlantic coast of the Eurasian continent have left their distinctive mark on this environment.

Relief

Great Britain is traditionally divided into a highland and a lowland zone. A line running from the mouth of the River Exe, in the southwest, to that of the Tees, in the northeast, is a crude expression of this division. The course of the 700-foot (213-metre) contour, or of the boundary separating the older rocks of the north and west from the younger southeastern strata, provides a more accurate indication of the extent of the highlands.

The creation of the highlands was a long process, yet elevations, compared with European equivalents, are low, with the highest summit, Ben Nevis, only 4,406 feet (1,343 m) above sea level. In addition, the really mountainous areas above 2,000 feet (600 m) often form elevated plateaus with relatively smooth surfaces, reminders of the effects of former periods of erosion.

Scotland's three main topographic regions follow the northeast-to-southwest trend of the ancient underlying rocks. The northern Highlands and the Southern Uplands are separated by the intervening rift valley, or subsided structural block, called the Midland Valley (or Central Lowlands). The core of the Highlands is the elevated, worn-down surface of the Grampian Mountains, 1,000–3,600 feet (300–1,100 m) above sea level, with the Cairngorm Mountains rising to elevations of more than 4,000 feet (1,200 m).

In comparison with the Scottish Highlands, the Southern Uplands of Scotland present a more subdued relief, with elevations that never exceed 2,800 feet (850 m). The main hill masses are the Cheviots, which reach 2,676 feet (816 m) in elevation, while only Merrick and Broad Law have elevations above the 2,700-foot (830-metre) contour line.

In Northern Ireland, structural extensions of the Scottish Highlands reappear in the generally rugged mountain scenery and in the peat-covered summits of the Sperrin Mountains, which reach an elevation of 2,241 feet (683 m). The uplands in the historic counties Down and Armagh are the western continuation of Scotland's Southern Uplands but reach elevations of more than 500 feet (150 m) only in limited areas. The one important exception is the Mourne Mountains, a lovely cluster of granite summits the loftiest of which, Slieve Donard, rises to an elevation of 2,789 feet (850 m) within 2 miles (3.2 km) of the sea. In the central region of Northern Ireland that corresponds to Scotland's Midland Valley, an outpouring of basaltic lavas has formed a huge plateau, much of which is occupied by the shallow Lough Neagh, the largest freshwater lake in the British Isles.

The highland zone of England and Wales consists, from north to south, of four broad upland masses: the Pennines, the Cumbrian

Mountains, the Cambrian Mountains, and the South West Peninsula. The Pennines are usually considered to end in the north at the River Tyne gap, but the surface features of several hills in Northumberland are in many ways similar to those of the northern Pennines.

The general surface of the asymmetrically arched backbone (anticline) of the Pennines is remarkably smooth because many of the valleys, though deep, occupy such a small portion of the total area that the windswept moorland between them appears almost featureless. This is particularly true of the landscape around Alston, in Cumbria (Cumberland), which – cut off by faults on its north, west, and south sides – stands out as an almost rectangular block of high moorland plateau with isolated peaks (known to geographers as monadnocks) rising up above it. Farther south, deep and scenic dales (valleys) dissect the Pennine plateau.

The Cumbrian Mountains, which include the famous Lake District celebrated in poetry by William Wordsworth and the other Lake poets, constitute an isolated, compact mountain group to the west of the northern Pennines. Many deep gorges, separated by narrow ridges and sharp peaks, characterize the northern Cumbrian Mountains, which consist of tough slate rock.

The Cambrian Mountains, which form the core of Wales, are clearly defined by the sea except on the eastern side, where a sharp break of slope often marks the transition to the English lowlands. Cycles of erosion have repeatedly worn down the ancient and austere surfaces. Many topographic features derive from glacial processes, and some of the most striking scenery stems largely from former volcanism. The mountain areas above 2,000 feet (610 m) are most extensive in North Wales.

Gauged by the 700-foot (210-metre) contour line, the lowland zone starts around the Solway Firth in the northwest, with a strip of

low-lying ground extending up the fault-directed Vale of Eden (the valley of the River Eden). Southward the narrow coastal plain bordering the Lake District broadens into the flat, glacial-drift-covered Lancashire and Cheshire plains, with their slow-flowing rivers.

The main drainage divide in Great Britain runs from north to south, keeping well to the west until the basin of the River Severn. Westward-flowing streams empty into the Atlantic Ocean or Irish Sea over relatively short distances.

The important rivers flowing into the English Channel are the Tamar, Exe, Avon, Test, Arun, and Ouse. The major rivers in Northern Ireland are the Erne, Foyle, and Bann.

Soils

The regional pattern of soil formation correlates with local variations of relief and climate. Although changes are gradual and soils can vary locally, a division of Britain into four climatic regimes largely explains the distribution of soils.

At the higher altitudes of the highland zone, particularly in Scotland, the weather is characterized by a cold, wet regime of more than 40 inches (1,000 mm) rainfall and less than 47°F (8°C) mean temperature annually; these areas have blanket peat and peaty podzol soils, with their organic surface layer resting on a gray, leached base. A regime similarly wet but with a mean annual temperature exceeding 47°F characterizes most of the remainder of the highland zone, particularly on the lower parts of the Southern Uplands, the Solway Firth – Lake District area, the peripheral plateaus of Wales, and most of southwestern England. These areas are covered by acid brown soils and weakly podzolized associates. On the lower-lying areas within the highland zone, particularly in eastern Scotland and the eastern flanks of the Pennines, a relatively

cold, dry regime gives rise to soils intermediate between the richer brown earths and the podzols.

Over the entire lowland zone, which also has a mean annual temperature above 47°F but less than 40 inches of rainfall, leached brown soils are characteristic. Calcareous, and thus alkaline, parent materials are widespread, particularly in the southeast, so acid soils and podzols are confined to the most quartz-laden parent materials. In Northern Ireland at elevations of about 460 feet (140 m), brown earths give way to semipodzols, and these grade upslope into more intensively leached podzols, particularly in the Sperrins and the Mournes. Between these mountains in the Lough Neagh lowland, rich brown earth soils predominate.

Climate

The climate of the United Kingdom derives from its setting within atmospheric circulation patterns and from the position of its landforms in relation to the sea. Regional diversity does exist, but the boundaries of major world climatic systems do not pass through the country. Britain's marginal position between the European landmass to the east and the ever-present relatively warm Atlantic waters to the west exposes the country to air masses with a variety of thermal and moisture characteristics. The main types of air masses, according to their source regions, are polar and tropical; by their route of travel, both the polar and tropical may be either maritime or continental.

For much of the year, the weather depends on the sequence of disturbances within the midlatitude westerlies that bring in mostly polar maritime and occasionally tropical maritime air. In winter occasional high-pressure areas to the east allow biting polar continental air to sweep over Britain. All of these atmospheric systems tend to fluctuate rapidly in their paths and to vary both in frequency and intensity by season and also from year to year. Variability is

characteristic of British weather, and extreme conditions, though rare, can be very important for the life of the country.

The polar maritime winds that reach the United Kingdom in winter create a temperature distribution that is largely independent of latitude. Thus, the north-to-south run of the 40°F (4°C) January isotherm, or line of equal temperature, from the coast in northwestern Scotland south to the Isle of Wight betrays the moderating influence of the winds blowing off the Atlantic Ocean. In summer polar maritime air is less common, and the 9° difference of latitude and the distance from the sea assume more importance, so that temperatures increase from north to south and from the coast inland. Above-average temperatures usually accompany tropical continental air, particularly in anticyclonic, or high-pressure, conditions. On rare occasions these southerly or southeasterly airstreams can bring heat waves to southern England with temperatures of 90°F (32°C). The mean annual temperature ranges from 46°F (8°C) in the Hebrides to 52°F (11°C) in southwestern England. In spring and autumn a variety of airstreams and temperature conditions may occur.

Rain-producing atmospheric systems arrive from a westerly direction, and some of the bleak summits of the highest peaks of the highland zone can receive as much as 200 inches (5,100 mm) of rainfall per year.

In many respects the British Isles are an ornithologist's paradise. The islands lie at the focal point of a migratory network, and the coastal, farmland, and urban habitats for birds are diverse. Some 200 species of birds occur in the United Kingdom, of which more than one-half are migratory. The most common game birds are the wild pigeon, pheasant, and grouse. Most numerous are the sparrow, blackbird, chaffinch, and starling.

Many British rivers, once renowned for their salmon, trout, roach, perch, pike, and grayling, have become polluted, and inland fisheries have consequently declined. Freshwater fishing is now largely for recreation and sport. The Dogger Bank in the North Sea, one of the richest fishing grounds in the world, has provided excellent fishing for centuries. Other good waters for fishing lie in the Irish Sea and also off the western coast of Scotland. Chief offshore species are cod, haddock, whiting, mackerel, coalfish, turbot, herring, and plaice.

Ethnic groups

For centuries people have migrated to the British Isles from many parts of the world, some to avoid political or religious persecution, others to find a better way of life or to escape poverty. In historic times migrants from the European mainland joined the indigenous population of Britain during the Roman Empire and during the invasions of the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes, and Normans. The Irish have long made homes in Great Britain. Many Jews arrived in Britain toward the end of the 19th century and in the 1930s.

After 1945 large numbers of other European refugees settled in the country. The large immigrant communities from the West Indies and South Asia date from the 1950s and '60s. There are also substantial groups of Americans, Australians, and Chinese, as well as various other Europeans, such as Greeks, Russians, Poles, Serbs, Estonians, Latvians, Armenians, Turkish Cypriots, Italians, and Spaniards. Beginning in the early 1970s, Ugandan Asians (expelled by Idi Amin) and immigrants from Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Sri Lanka have sought refuge in Britain.

People of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi origin account for more than half of the total ethnic minority population, and people of

West Indian origin are the next largest group. The foreign-born element of the population is disproportionately concentrated in inner-city areas, and more than half live in Greater London.

Languages

All the traditional languages spoken in the United Kingdom ultimately derive from a common Indo-European origin, a tongue so ancient that, over the millennia, it has split into a variety of languages, each with its own peculiarities in sounds, grammar, and vocabulary. The distinct languages in what became the United Kingdom originated when languages from the European continent developed independently in the British Isles, cut off from regular communication with their parent languages.

Of the surviving languages the earliest to arrive were the two forms of Celtic: the Goidelic (from which Irish, Manx, and Scottish Gaelic derive) and Brythonic (from which the old Cornish language and modern Welsh have developed). Among the contemporary Celtic languages Welsh is the strongest: about one-fifth of the total population of Wales are able to speak it, and there are extensive interior upland areas and regions facing the Irish Sea where the percentage rises to more than half. Scottish Gaelic is strongest among the inhabitants of the islands of the Outer Hebrides and Skye, although it is still heard in the nearby North West Highlands. Because less than 2 percent of Scots are able to speak Gaelic, it has long since ceased to be a national language, and even in northwestern areas, where it remains the language of religion, business, and social activity, Gaelic is losing ground. In Northern Ireland very little Irish is spoken. Similarly, Manx no longer has any native speakers, although as late as 1870 it was spoken by about half the people of the Isle of Man. The last native speakers of Cornish died in the 18th century.

The second link with Indo-European is through the ancient Germanic language group, two branches of which, the North Germanic and the West Germanic, were destined to make contributions to the English language. Modern English is derived mainly from the Germanic dialects spoken by the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes (who all arrived in Britain in the 5th century CE) and heavily influenced by the language of the Danes (Vikings), who began raiding the British Isles about 790 and subsequently colonized parts of northern and eastern England.

The Humber became an important linguistic as well as a geographic boundary, and the English-speaking territory was divided into a Northumbrian province (roughly corresponding to the kingdom of Northumbria) and a Southumbrian province (in which the most important kingdoms were Mercia, Wessex, and Kent). In the 8th century Northumbria was foremost in literature and culture, followed for a short time by Mercia; afterward Wessex predominated politically and linguistically until the time of King Edward the Confessor.

Although the French-speaking Normans were also of Viking stock, the English population initially regarded them as much more of an alien race than the Danes. Under the Norman and Angevin kings, England formed part of a continental empire, and the prolonged connection with France retained by its new rulers and landlords made a deep impression on the English language. A hybrid speech combining Anglo-Saxon and Norman French elements developed and remained the official language, sometimes even displacing Latin in public documents, until the mid-14th century, when late Middle English, a language heavily influenced by Norman French, became the official language. This hybrid language subsequently evolved into modern English. Many additions to the

English language have been made since the 14th century, but the Normans were the last important linguistic group to enter Britain.

The British tradition of religious tolerance has been particularly important since the 1950s, when immigrants began to introduce a great variety of religious beliefs. There are large and growing communities that practice Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism. The largest number of Muslims came from Pakistan and Bangladesh, with sizable groups from India, Cyprus, the Arab world, Malaysia, and parts of Africa. The large Sikh and Hindu communities originated in India. There are also many Buddhist groups.

Settlement patterns

British culture preserves regional variations, though they have become more muted over time. Still, the cultural identities of the Northern Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and Cornish – to say nothing of the rivalry between a North and South Walian or a Highland and Lowland Scot – are as distinct as the obvious geographic identities of these parts of the highland zone.

Rural settlement

The diverse forms and patterns of settlement in the United Kingdom reflect not only the physical variety of the landscape but also the successive movements of peoples arriving as settlers, refugees, or conquerors from continental Europe, along with the changing economic contexts in which settlement has occurred. Social and economic advantages led some people to cluster, whereas others had an equally strong desire for separateness. Both tendencies mark settlement forms in Britain from very early times, and regional contrasts in the degree of dispersion and nucleation are frequent.

Single farmsteads, the many surviving old clachans (clusters or hamlets), and occasional villages and small towns still characterize

much of the highland zone. Some nucleated settlement patterns, however, have undergone radical change. In Wales hamlets began to disappear in the late Middle Ages through the related processes of consolidation and enclosure that accompanied the decline in the size of the bond (feudally tied) population. The Black Death of 1349, which spread quickly among poorer inhabitants, reinforced this trend. Many surviving bondsmen fled their servile obligations amid the turmoil of the nationalistic uprising led by Owain Glyn Dŵr. Thus, many Welsh hamlets had fallen into decay by 1410, when the rebellion was crushed. In Scotland great changes accompanied the late 18th century Highland clearances, in which landlords forcibly evicted tenants and converted their holdings to sheep pastures. As late as the 1880s many clachans disappeared in Northern Ireland as part of a deliberate policy of reallocating land to new dispersed farmsteads. Great changes have also occurred in the lowland zone, where the swing to individual ownership or tenancy from the medieval custom of landholding in common brought about not only dispersion and deserted villages but the enclosure of fields by hedges and walls. Villages remain remarkably stable features of the rural landscape of Britain, however, and linear, round, oval, and ring-shaped villages survive, many with their ancient greens still held in common by the community.

Urban settlement

By any standard the United Kingdom is among the most urbanized of countries, for towns not only typify the national way of life but are unusually significant elements in the geography of the country. The greatest overall change in settlement was, in fact, the massive urbanization that accompanied Britain's early industrial development. The increasing percentage of employees in offices and service industries ensures continued urban growth. Of every

10 people in the United Kingdom, about eight live in towns—more than three of them in one of the country's 10 largest metropolitan areas.

The Greater London metropolitan area — the greatest port, the largest centre of industry, the most important centre of office employment, and the capital city — is by far the largest of these. The need for accommodating business premises has displaced population from Inner London, and this outward movement, in part, has led to the development of new towns outside the 10 mile (16 km) wide Green Belt that surrounds London's built-up area.

Large metropolitan areas also formed in industrial areas during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Although coalfields or textile manufacture underpinned the initial growth of many of these urban areas, coal mining had virtually ceased in all of them by the end of the 20th century, and the economic predominance of heavy industry and textile production had given way to a more diverse blend of manufacturing and service activities. Birmingham dominates the extensive built-up area of the West Midlands metropolitan area, but the industrial Black Country — named for its formerly polluted skies and grimy buildings — also has several large and flourishing towns. In Greater Manchester, with a similar number of inhabitants, urbanization accompanied the mechanization of the cotton textile industry. Across the Pennines similar mechanization of wool textiles created the West Yorkshire metropolitan area, with Leeds and Bradford as its twin centres. The metropolitan area of Tyne and Wear (centred on Newcastle upon Tyne) and the Greater Glasgow metropolitan area are also located on coalfields. Greater Glasgow houses about one-third of Scotland's people. Merseyside (centred on Liverpool) has traditionally served as a seaport and distribution centre for Greater Manchester and the rest of Lancashire. Other large

metropolitan areas in Great Britain include South Yorkshire (centred on Sheffield), Nottingham, and Bristol. About one-fifth of Northern Ireland's population live in Belfast. In addition to these large metropolitan areas, there are many other minor urban agglomerations and large towns, several of which line the coast.

With so much urban and suburban concentration, the problems of air, water, and noise pollution have attracted much concern in the United Kingdom. Clean-air legislation has brought considerable progress in controlling air pollution, partly by establishing smoke-control areas in most cities and towns, and there has been a shift from coal to cleaner fuels. Pollution of the rivers remains a large problem, particularly in the highly industrialized parts of the United Kingdom, but vigilance, research, and control by the National River Authorities and general public concern for the environment are encouraging features of contemporary Britain. Several statutory and voluntary organizations support measures to protect the environment. They aim to conserve the natural amenity and beauty not only of the countryside but also of the towns and cities.

Population growth

The population of the United Kingdom has been increasing since at least 1086, the date of Domesday Book, which provides the earliest reasonable estimate of England's population (the survey did not cover other areas). This growth has continued despite some setbacks, by far the most serious of which was the Black Death of the mid-14th century, in which it is estimated that about one-third of the population died. There is little concrete information, however, concerning birth or death rates, immigration, or emigration until 1801, the date of the first official census. The assumption is that a population of about three million lived in what became the United Kingdom at the end of the 11th century and that this figure had

increased to about 12 million by 1801. This slow growth rate, in contrast with that of more modern times, resulted mainly from the combination of a high birth rate with an almost equally high death rate. Family monuments in old churches show many examples of men whose “quivers were full” but whose hearths were not crowded. It is estimated that in the first half of the XVIII century three-fourths of the children born in London died before they reached puberty. Despite the appalling living conditions it produced, the Industrial Revolution resulted in an acceleration of the birth rate. Gradually the greater medical knowledge, improved nutrition, and concern for public health that characterized the 19th and 20th centuries yielded a lower mortality rate and an overall increase in population, even as birth rates began to drop.

Since the 1930s the population has experienced a complete cycle in its pattern of growth. A low rate of increase during the 1930s was followed by a post-World War II marriage boom that accelerated the rate of growth, culminating in a peak during the mid-1960s. After 1964 a considerable fall in the birth rate brought about a dramatic decline in growth, with a small absolute decline in population between 1974 and 1978. However, modest population growth resumed during the 1980s, and the population of the United Kingdom rose from 56 million in 1980 to about 60 million by the end of the 20th century. The main cause of these abrupt shifts was the erratic nature of the birth rate, with the interaction of two opposing trends: on one hand, a long-term general decline in fertility and, on the other, a rising longevity and a decline in death rates. Such processes also have affected the age composition of the population, which has grown decidedly older. There has been a decline in the proportion of youths and an increase in the proportion of older people, especially those age 85 and older.

Agriculture

The United Kingdom is unusual, even among western European countries, in the small proportion of its employed population (about 2 percent) engaged in agriculture. With commercial intensification of yields and a high level of mechanization, supported initially by national policy and subsequently by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EU, the output of some agricultural products exceeded demand during much of the United Kingdom's tenure in the European Union. Employment in agriculture has declined gradually, and, with the introduction of policies to achieve reduction of surpluses, the trend is likely to continue. Efforts have been made to create alternative employment opportunities in rural areas, some of which are remote from towns. The land area used for agriculture (about three-quarters of the total) has also declined, and the arable share has fallen in favour of pasture.

Official agricultural policy aimed to improve productivity, to ensure stable markets, to provide producers a fair standard of living, and to guarantee consumers regular food supplies at reasonable prices. Under CAP a system of minimum prices for domestic goods and levies on imports to support domestic prices was provided. Exports were encouraged by subsidies that made up the difference between the world market price and the EU price. For a few products, particularly beef and sheep, there were additional payments made directly to producers. Other policies included milk quotas, land set-asides (to compensate farmers for taking land out of agricultural use), and reliance on the price mechanism as a regulator.

The most important farm crops are wheat, barley, oats, sugar beets, potatoes, and rapeseed. While significant proportions of wheat, barley, and rapeseed provide animal feed, much of the remainder is processed for human consumption through flour

milling (wheat), malting and distilling (barley), and the production of vegetable oil (rapeseed). The main livestock products derive from cattle and calves, sheep and lambs, pigs, and poultry. The United Kingdom has achieved a high level of self-sufficiency in the main agricultural products except for sugar and cheese.

Energy

By contrast, the United Kingdom has relatively large energy resources including oil, natural gas, and coal. Coal, the fuel once vital to the British economy, has continued to decrease in importance. Compared with its peak year of 1913, when more than one million workers produced more than 300 million tons, current output has fallen by more than four-fifths, with an even greater reduction in the labour force. Power stations are the major customers for coal, but, with growth in the use of other fuels and the increasing closing of pits that have become uneconomical to operate, the industry remains under considerable pressure.

Since offshore natural gas supplies from the North Sea began to be available in quantity in 1967, they have replaced the previously coal-based supplies of town gas. A national network of distribution pipelines has been created. Proven reserves of natural gas were estimated at 26.8 trillion cubic feet (760 billion m³) in the late 1990s.

Self-sufficiency in oil and natural gas and the decline of coal mining has transformed Britain's energy sector. Nuclear fuel has slightly expanded its contribution to electricity generation, and hydroelectric power contributes a small proportion (mainly in Scotland), but conventional steam power stations provide most of the country's electricity.

Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector as a whole has continued to shrink both in employment and in its contribution (about one-fifth at the beginning of the XXI century) to the GDP. The decline in manufacturing largely accounted for the rapid rise in unemployment in the early 1980s. Once economic growth returned, however, there was great improvement in productivity and profits in British manufacturing.

In terms of their relative importance to the GDP, the most important manufacturing industries are engineering; food, beverages (including alcoholic beverages), and tobacco; chemicals; paper, printing, and publishing; metals and minerals; and textiles, clothing, footwear, and leather. The fastest-growing sectors have been chemicals and electrical engineering. Within the chemical industry, pharmaceuticals and specialty products have shown the largest increases. Within the engineering industry, electrical and instrument engineering and transport engineering – including motor vehicles and aerospace equipment – have grown faster than mechanical engineering and metal goods, and electronic products have shown the fastest growth

During the 1980s imports of manufactured products increased dramatically, and, although exports of finished manufactured products increased in value, the surplus in the balance of trade disappeared and was transformed into a large deficit. Nevertheless, after a period of restructuring in the 1980s, Britain's manufacturing sector increased its productivity and competitiveness, and the trade balance improved and stabilized during the 1990s.

Private industrial and commercial construction and public projects account for the remainder of construction. During the 1980s and '90s the United Kingdom embarked on a series of major

infrastructure projects, including the Channel Tunnel between Britain and France, the rebuilding of large parts of London's traditional Docklands as a new commercial centre, and extensions to London's rail and Underground systems.

Finance

The United Kingdom, particularly London, has traditionally been a world financial centre. Restructuring and deregulation transformed the sector during the 1980s and '90s, with important changes in banking, insurance, the London Stock Exchange, shipping, and commodity markets. Some long-standing distinctions between financial institutions have become less clear-cut. For example, housing loans used to be primarily the responsibility of building societies, but increasingly banks and insurance companies have entered this area of lending. Two related developments have occurred: the transformation of building-society branch offices into virtual banks with personal cashing facilities and the diversification of all three of these types of institutions into real estate services. Building societies also participate to a limited extent in investment services, insurance, trusteeship, executorship, and land services.

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy. The country's head of state is the reigning king or queen, and the head of government is the prime minister, who is the leader of the majority political party in the House of Commons.

The British constitution is uncodified; it is only partly written and is flexible. Its basic sources are parliamentary and European Union legislation, the European Convention on Human Rights, and decisions by courts of law. Matters for which there is no formal law, such as the resignation of office by a government, follow precedents (conventions) that are open to development or modification. Works

of authority, such as Albert Venn Dicey's Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Law of the Constitution (1885), are also considered part of the constitution.

The main elements of the government are the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. There is some overlap between the branches, as there is no formal separation of powers or system of checks and balances. For example, the lord chancellor traditionally was a member of all three branches, serving as a member of the cabinet (executive branch), as the government's leader in the House of Lords (legislative branch), and as the head of the country's judiciary (judicial branch). However, constitutional reforms enacted in 2005 (and entering into force in 2006) stripped the office of most of its legislative and judicial functions, with those powers devolving to the lord speaker and the lord chief justice, respectively. That reform also created the Supreme Court, which in October 2009 replaced the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords as the venue of last resort in the British legal system.

The UK broadly supported the United States' approach to the "war on terror" in the early 21st century. British troops fought in the War in Afghanistan, but controversy surrounded Britain's military deployment in Iraq, which saw the largest protest in British history demonstrating in opposition to the government led by Tony Blair.

The 2008 global financial crisis severely affected the UK economy. The Cameron - Clegg coalition government of 2010 introduced austerity measures intended to tackle the substantial public deficits. Studies have suggested that policy led to significant social disruption and suffering. A referendum on Scottish independence in 2014 resulted in the Scottish electorate voting by 55.3 to 44.7 % to remain part of the United Kingdom.

In 2016, 51.9 per cent of voters in the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. The UK left the EU in 2020. On 1 May 2021 the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement came into force.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on the UK's economy, caused major disruptions to education and had far-reaching impacts on society and politics in 2020 and 2021. The United Kingdom was the first country in the world to use an approved COVID-19 vaccine, developing its own vaccine through a collaboration between Oxford University and AstraZeneca, which allowed the UK's vaccine rollout to be among the fastest in the world.

On 8 September 2022, Elizabeth II, the longest-living and longest-reigning British monarch, died at the age of 96. Upon the Queen's death, her eldest child Charles, Prince of Wales, acceded to the British throne as Charles III

Questions

1. What countries make up the United Kingdom?
2. How did the Anglo-Saxon king Athelstan consolidate neighboring Celtic kingdoms in the early X century AD?
3. When was Wales formally united with England, and how did it come under British rule?
4. How did Scotland become formally united with England and Wales to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain in 1707?
5. What event led to Ireland coming under British rule in the 1600s?
6. What were the Acts of Union of 1800, and how did they impact Ireland's relationship with Great Britain?
7. How did relations between Northern Ireland and the UK change in the late 20th century?

8. What are some of the cultural exports that the UK is known for?
9. How has the English language contributed to the UK's global influence?
10. Besides the Commonwealth, what other international organizations is the UK a part of?
11. Who famously stated that the UK is "with Europe, but not part of Europe"?
12. What was the result of the June 2016 referendum on EU membership in the UK?
13. How many parts is the United Kingdom historically divided into?
14. What geographical areas does the term "British Isles" refer to?
15. Which islands are included in England's territory?
16. What bodies of water surround the United Kingdom, except for the border with the Republic of Ireland?
17. How long is the United Kingdom at its widest point?
18. Where is the capital city, London, located?
19. What contributes to the diversity of geology and landscape in the United Kingdom?
20. How does the size of the United Kingdom compare to other regions globally?
21. What bodies of water surround the United Kingdom?
22. How long is the United Kingdom at its widest point?
23. Where is the capital city, London, located in the UK?
24. Why is the landscape of the UK diverse and irregular?
25. How does the geology of Northern Ireland differ from that of the rest of the UK?

26. What is the size of the United Kingdom compared to other regions like Oregon in the USA or the Republic of Guinea in Africa?
27. How have the peoples living on the Atlantic coast of the Eurasian continent influenced the environment of the UK over the centuries?
28. How is the UK's topography traditionally divided?
29. What are the UK highlands?
30. What is the height of the highest point in Northern Ireland?
31. What plateaus can be observed in mountainous areas above 600 meters?
32. What are the main topographic regions of Scotland?
33. Which Cheviots are the main peaks in the hilly region?
34. What are the main characteristics of the Northern Highlands and Southern Foothills of Scotland?
35. What role does the Midlands play in the geography of Scotland?
36. What mountain ranges predominate at elevations around 2,700 feet?
37. How does the United Kingdom's location between the European landmass and the Atlantic Ocean influence its climate?
38. What are the main types of air masses that affect the weather in the United Kingdom?
39. How do the midlatitude westerlies impact the weather in the United Kingdom?
40. How does the distribution of polar maritime winds in winter create a peculiar temperature distribution in the United Kingdom?

41. What are the factors that influence temperature variations in the United Kingdom in summer?
42. How does tropical continental air affect temperatures in southern England during anticyclonic conditions?
43. Why are the British Isles considered an ornithologist's paradise?
44. What are the most common game birds found in the United Kingdom?
45. How has pollution impacted freshwater fishing in British rivers?
46. Where are some of the rich fishing grounds located around the United Kingdom?
47. What major historical events have contributed to the diversity of the population in the British Isles?
48. Which communities have a long history of making homes in Great Britain?
49. How have the settlement patterns of foreign-born individuals in the British Isles changed over time?
50. Which ethnic groups make up more than half of the total ethnic minority population in the British Isles?
51. What are some of the significant immigrant communities in the British Isles besides those from the West Indies and South Asia?
52. How have migration patterns to the British Isles shifted since the 1950s and '60s?
53. What factors have historically driven people to migrate to the British Isles?
54. How has the presence of foreign-born individuals impacted the cultural diversity of the British Isles?

55. In what ways has the immigrant population in the British Isles shaped urban areas, particularly in Greater London?

56. What role does the history of migration and settlement play in shaping the social landscape of the British Isles today?

57. How did the distinct languages in the United Kingdom originate?

58. What were the two forms of Celtic that were the earliest languages to arrive in the United Kingdom?

59. What were the two forms of Celtic that were the earliest languages to arrive in the United Kingdom?

60. Which Germanic dialects heavily influenced the development of Modern English?

61. How did the English language evolve from late Middle English into modern English?

62. What was the linguistic impact of the French-speaking Normans on England?

63. How has the British tradition of religious tolerance evolved since the 1950s?

64. Why did Scottish Gaelic lose ground as a national language over time?

65. What role did the Vikings play in the linguistic development of English?

66. What were the two main areas of English-speaking territory in the United Kingdom during the 8th century?

67. How have changing economic contexts influenced settlement patterns in the United Kingdom over time?

68. What factors have contributed to the disappearance of hamlets in Wales during the late Middle Ages?

69. In what ways did the late 18th century Highland clearances impact settlement patterns in Scotland?

70. How has the shift from communal landholding to individual ownership affected settlement patterns in the lowland zone of the United Kingdom?

71. What role did coalfields and textile manufacture play in the growth of urban areas in the 19th and early 20th centuries in the United Kingdom?

72. How has the development of new towns outside London's Green Belt impacted population distribution in the Greater London metropolitan area?

73. What are the key characteristics of Birmingham and the West Midlands metropolitan area in terms of urban settlement?

74. How have clean-air legislation and shifts in fuel sources influenced pollution control in urban areas of the United Kingdom?

75. What measures have been taken to protect the environment in urban and rural areas of the United Kingdom?

76. How has the population of the United Kingdom evolved over time?

77. What were the main factors contributing to the slow population growth of the United Kingdom prior to the 19th century?

78. How did the Industrial Revolution influence the population growth of the United Kingdom?

79. What were the demographic trends in the United Kingdom post-World War II that influenced population growth?

80. What efforts have been made to address the decline in agricultural employment in the United Kingdom?

81. What are the main objectives of the official agricultural policy mentioned in the context?

82. How did the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) support domestic prices and encourage exports in the agriculture sector?

83. What are the major farm crops mentioned in the context, and how are they utilized?

84. How has the energy sector in the United Kingdom evolved over the years in terms of resources and usage?

85. What has been the trend in the manufacturing sector's contribution to the GDP and employment in the United Kingdom?

86. Which manufacturing industries are highlighted as the most important in terms of their contribution to the GDP?

87. How did the trade balance of the United Kingdom's manufacturing sector transform during the 1980s and 1990s?

88. What characterized the growth of the fastest-growing sectors within the manufacturing industry mentioned in the context?

89. What were some major infrastructure projects undertaken by the United Kingdom during the 1980s and 1990s?

90. How has the agricultural landscape in the United Kingdom contributed to the country's self-sufficiency in various products?

91. What were some of the major changes that occurred in the UK's financial sector during the 1980s and '90s?

92. How has the lending landscape evolved in the UK with regards to housing loans?

93. What are some of the key characteristics of the UK's political system as a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy?

94. How does the UK constitution differ from a codified constitution?

95. What are the main sources of the UK constitution?

96. How does the UK government structure its branches of power?

97. What role did the Lord Chancellor traditionally play in the UK's government?

98. What constitutional reforms were enacted in the UK in 2005?

99. How does the Supreme Court in the UK function within the legal system?

100. What are some examples of how building societies in the UK have diversified their services?

•~• Geography •~•

The United Kingdom is an island nation located off the northwest coast of continental Europe. The island is separated from the continent by the English Channel. The distance from the country's southeast coast to the northern coast of France is only 35 km. The United Kingdom consists of the four geographical and historical parts of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, located in the British Isles (group of islands: the United Kingdom, the northeastern part of the island of Ireland and many small islands and archipelagos in the Atlantic Ocean).

The capital of United Kingdom, London, is one of the world's leading trade, financial and cultural centers. The distance between the Russian and British capitals is 2,500 km. The flight from the central part of Russia usually takes less than four hours.

The country, with a population of 62.8 million, is the 78th largest globally with an area of 242,514 km².

United Kingdom is within just one time zone. London Greenwich is located on the prime meridian and is officially the zero point of reference for time zones.

Questions

1. What are the four geographical and historical parts that make up the United Kingdom?
2. How far is the United Kingdom from the northern coast of France?
3. How far is the distance between the Russian and British capitals?
4. What is the significance of London Greenwich in relation to time zones?

•~• Climate •~•

The climate of United Kingdom is temperate oceanic, mild and humid (more humid in Northern Ireland, and Scotland, colder and drier). The weather is mainly influenced by the warm oceanic current of the Gulf Stream. The sea, surrounding the country from all sides, does not allow the air over land to heat up or cool too much. Therefore, sudden temperature changes rarely occur, but the weather conditions change often. Four different regions represent the climate throughout the territories:

- Southeast – cold winters and warm, dry summers.
- Southwest – soft and very wet winters and warm and humid summers.
- Northwest – mild winters, cool summers and frequent rain all year.
- Northeast – cold winters, cool summers and steady rain throughout the year.

Northern Ireland has a mild, humid climate with mild winters and cool summers. The warmest month is July, with an average temperature of 19 °C. The coldest month is January, and the average

temperature is 8 °C. There is less rainfall and fewer foggy days than in England. On average, annual precipitation ranges from 1,200 mm to 1,600 mm.

Scotland is the coldest region in the UK. The instability of the weather is associated with a varied topography. In mountainous areas, temperatures can reach 10 degrees below zero in winter. January and February are the coldest months, with an average temperature of 3 °C. There is heavy fog and it rains 250 days a year. The warmest months are July and August with an average temperature of 19 °C. About 3,810 mm of precipitation per year falls in the west of the region, while the eastern parts see about 635 mm per year.

The climate in England is unstable, with frequent fogs and stormy winds. The average temperature in winter is + 5 °C. There is less precipitation in spring, but cold north winds blow. In summer, the temperature ranges from +16 to +32 °C. The largest amount of precipitation falls in August. In autumn, cyclones prevail and the fog begins.

London has a mild and temperate climate. It is warm in summer, but not hot, though temperatures have risen in recent years. In 2003, the temperature reached a record high of +38 °C. And the autumn of 2011 set new temperature records – at the end of September, the temperature rose to +29 °C. Fog formation occurs most often in January and February. There are only about 45 foggy days in London, but half of the days are cloudy and overcast. The average temperature in summer is about +19 °C. Winter is cool but not frosty. On average, the temperature does not drop below 7 °C. It rarely snows, the snow cover is only about 25 mm. And the average annual rainfall is less than in Rome or Sydney – about 584 mm. Read more about Cities of United Kingdom

Wales has a mild and humid climate similar to England. In January, the average temperature is about 5 °C and 16 °C in July. The area of the Snowdon massif is the wettest, getting 2,540 mm of rainfall, and about 762 mm per year in the central coastal area.

Questions

1. What are the main factors influencing the climate of the United Kingdom?
2. How does the climate of Northern Ireland differ from that of Scotland?
3. What are the characteristics of the climate in the Southeast region of the UK?
4. How does the climate in London compare to that of the rest of England?

•~• **Communication** •~•

Verbal

Indirect Communication: The British are relatively indirect communicators; they strongly avoid creating conflict and therefore take all necessary measures to remain polite throughout discussion. This involves making indirect statements that vaguely communicate their message without “rocking the boat” (upsetting the status quo). As a result, people often have to read between the lines since what is said is most likely an understatement of what is actually meant (e.g. “not bad” means something is in fact quite good).

Self-deprecation: The British are quite self-deprecating in conversation in an effort to come across as humble, honest and relaxed about themselves. Feel free to join in with the jokes by criticising yourself in a similar matter. However, agreeing with self-

deprecating comments or jokes too enthusiastically can become insulting to the person making them.

Humour: Humour is used a lot throughout British communication, so expect some light-hearted joking to be involved in most conversations. Jokes about situational circumstances are often used to lighten moods or approach difficult topics in an indirect way. That being said, British sarcasm and understatements can be very subtle and nuanced, sometimes making it difficult for outsiders to detect whether they are kidding or not. In this case, remember these communication habits and know that they're most likely joking.

Listening: Avoid interrupting a person speaking. The British are polite listeners, rarely interrupting others unless they need clarification about something.

Voicing Displeasure: British people are not likely to complain, and will tolerate bad service or food in order to avoid making a scene. Therefore, they might become very nervous if you voice your dissatisfaction in public.

Criticism: Personal criticism should be voiced in an indirect way as well. Otherwise, this will only make your British counterpart hostile and defensive, and your criticism will be ineffective.

Non-Verbal

Expression: The British do not always give away their emotions via facial expressions. For example, they may not show it if they have been offended. On the other hand, keeping a straight, serious face can be the punch line to many sarcastic jokes

Personal Space: The British like to be given a fair amount of personal space, and may feel uncomfortable if someone sits or stands too close when other space is available. It is polite to maintain an arm's length distance between yourself and the person speaking.

Physical Contact: British culture is generally quite reserved. People are generally comfortable touching those they know well (e.g. backslapping is common among close friends). However, women tend to be more physically affectionate with one another than men.

Gestures: Gestures are usually quite reserved, polite and less demonstrative. For example, tapping the side of one's nose means that something is confidential or to be kept secret. It is considered offensive to make a V-sign with your index and middle finger, the palm facing inwards and the top of the hand facing the other person. This is another way of saying "up yours" in their culture. However, the V-sign with the palm facing outwards is understood as the sign for victory or peace.

Eye Contact: It is best to make direct eye contact that breaks away now and again. Prolonged eye contact can make people feel uncomfortable, and staring is impolite. If talking to a group, be sure to make equal eye contact with all who are present.

Questions

1. How do British people typically express displeasure in public situations?
2. In what ways do the British use humor in their communication?
3. How do the British prefer to be approached in terms of personal space and physical contact?
4. What non-verbal gestures should be avoided in British culture, and why?

•~• Physical geography of the UK •~•

The official name of Britain is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. But people often make this name

shorter – they call this country “the United Kingdom”, or even “the UK”.

The United Kingdom is situated to the north-west of Europe. Actually it is separated from Europe by the Channel. The Channel is not very broad, only about 40 km. Now a tunnel constructed under the Channel lines up the UK with its nearest continental neighbor, France. So it is much easier to reach the UK from Europe than earlier, when it could be done only on board the ship. Since 1973 the United Kingdom is a member of the European Union.

The United Kingdom is situated on the British Isles. The UK occupies the Island of Great Britain (which is the largest island in Europe), a number of small islands to the west of Scotland and the northern part of the Island of Ireland. The southern part of the Island of Ireland is the Republic of Eire.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland consists of four almost independent countries. These are England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. England is bigger than other parts of the country in both its territory and population. Over 60 million people live in Britain, and about 75 percent of the British population lives in England. The capital of England as well as of the whole United Kingdom is London, which is situated in the south-east of England.

London and is more than a thousand years old. Scotland occupies the northern part of the Island of Great Britain. The area of Scotland is more than half as big as England. But Scotland has the lowest population density in the UK. Scotland has its own legal, banking and education systems. The capital of Scotland is Edinburgh. It is an old beautiful city. Glasgow is the main industrial centre of Scotland. Scotland is well-known for its beautiful mountainous scenery.

Wales is lying in the western part of the Island of Great Britain. It is not so populated as England – only about two million people live in Wales. Wales is one of the most beautiful parts of the British Isles – with hills and high mountains, deep rivers and valleys. The capital of Wales is Cardiff. It is the biggest city in Wales and also an important port.

Northern Ireland occupies the northern part of the Island of Ireland. The capital of this country is Belfast. Northern Ireland is the most problematical part of the UK. Some people in Northern Ireland want the independent of the UK. That is why there are permanent conflicts and terrorist acts organized by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in the Northern Ireland and in other parts of the UK.

Foreigners often call everyone in the UK “English”, but the Irish, the Welsh and the Scots don’t like this, because they are Celts by the origin, and the English are the Tautens. Every part of the UK has its own language which is not like the English language.

Like its own language, each part of the United Kingdom also has its own national flower. The national emblem of England is the rose. The rose was adopted as England’s emblem in the 15th century, around the time of the War of the Roses. The symbol of Wales is a daffodil, a beautiful white-and-yellow spring flower. And the Scots consider a thistle to be their symbol. A legend runs that this flower has saved an old Scottish castle from enemies, because one of them stepped over a thistle with big thorns and cried out of pain. Citizens of the UK call their banner the Union Flag or Union Jack. It is blue, red and white. This banner consists of the flags of Scotland, England and Ireland. The flag of Scotland is the Cross of Saint Andrew, the flag of England is the Cross of Saint George and the flag of Ireland is the Cross of Saint Patrick. And every cross is represented in the Union Jack.

The capital of the UK is London. It is a very old and big city. London is situated at the mouth of the Thames river. First mentions about a settlement there date back to the time when Celtic tribes lived on the British Isles, and it was long before Christ. In the first centuries of the Christian era London became an important city of the Roman empire. And in the 12th century it already was the capital of England.

London consists of several main districts, and also includes numerous suburbs. The main districts were formed during the long life of the city. For example, the City is the centre of business life with many banks, offices and different enterprises except for industrial ones. In the Westminster historic buildings and other places of interest are concentrated, and this is also the district where the Queen lives. There also such districts as West-End, East-End, Cheap-Side, and their names are well-known in the world due to English literature. There are many historic buildings, various museums, galleries, and other places of interest in London.

The Tower is a world-famous symbol of London, it is more than 900 years old. During long centuries it was a fortress, a royal palace, a prison... But now it is one of the most popular museums. The Tower is guarded by Yeomen Warders who wear splendid scarlet and gold uniforms. The Tower is famous for the ravens, too – a legend has it that without them the Tower will fall. This is why all the employees of the museum as well as the tourists take care of these birds.

Almost all English Kings and Queens had been crowned in Westminster Abbey. It is one of the most beautiful buildings of London. Inside memorials to great English poets and writers, as well as to scientists and other outstanding English people. For example, William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton are buried here.

The beautiful Buckingham Palace is the London home of the Queen. It was built in the 18th century and rebuilt in the 19th century by architect John Nash.

Every day the traditional ceremony of Changing the Guards takes place there. The Houses of Parliament is, in fact, the seat of the British Parliament. It was first built in the 12th century and then it changed its appearance many times. The last rebuilding was made in 1857. The Houses of Parliament has two towers. One of them is the Clock Tower, or Big Ben – a famous London landmark.

England's great architect Sir Christopher Wren is the author of St Paul's Cathedral, which was built instead of the old cathedral that was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666. There is a golden ball and cross on the top of the Cathedral that can be seen from far away.

The world-famous Natural History Museum is known for its beautiful galleries and expositions, for example "Human biology", "History of the Earth", "Discovering mammals", and so on. The Museum was opened in April 1881.

Western European paintings created in the period from about 1250 to 1900 are represented in the National Gallery's permanent collection. There are paintings by Italian masters such as Raphael and Veronese, as well as Rembrandt, Rubens and El Greco.

The British Museum was founded in 1753 due to the efforts of three rich men – Sir Robert Cotton, Sir Hans Sloane and King George II. They donated their private collections and libraries to the museum. No one can see items from ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt, China and Japan in the British Museum.

Mark statements as True/False/Not stated

1. The capital of the UK is Cardiff.
2. The British Museum was founded in 1753.

3. Each part of the United Kingdom also has its own national flower.
4. Over 90 million people live in Britain.
5. London is situated at the mouth of the Eve river.
6. The Tower is a world-famous symbol of London, it is more than 1500 years old.
7. The official name of Britain is the United Kingdom of Northern Ireland.
8. Since 1973 the United Kingdom is a member of the European Union.
9. The United Kingdom is situated to the north-west of Europe.
10. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland consists of three almost independent countries.
11. Since 1977 the United Kingdom is a member of the European Union.
12. The flag of Scotland is the Cross of Saint Andrew.
13. The flag of England is the Cross of Saint Paul.
14. The flag of Ireland is the Cross of Saint Patrick.
15. In the fifth centuries of the Christian era London became an important city of the Roman empire.
16. The beautiful Buckingham Palace isn't the London home of the Queen.
17. The beautiful Buckingham Palace was built in the 18th century.
18. The beautiful Buckingham Palace was rebuilt in the 19th century by architect John Nash.
19. The beautiful Buckingham Palace was rebuilt by architect Pitter Nash.
20. The Tower is a world-famous symbol of Wales.
21. During long centuries The Tower was a prison.
22. Now The Tower is one of the most popular galleries.

23. The Tower is guarded by Yeomen Jack.
24. The world-famous Natural History Museum is known for its beautiful galleries and expositions.
25. The Museum was opened in April 1881.
26. England's great architect Sir Christopher Wren is the author of St Paul's Cathedral.
27. St Paul's Cathedral was built instead of the old cathedral.
28. St Paul's Cathedral was destroyed by war of 1666.
29. English Kings and Queens had been crowned in Westminster Abbey.
30. The rose was adopted as England's emblem in the 16th century.
31. The national emblem of England is the rose.
32. The symbol of Ireland is a daffodil.
33. The Scots consider a thistle to be their symbol.
34. William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton are buried in Westminster Abbey.
35. In the 11th century London already was the capital of England.
36. The Houses of Parliament has one tower.
37. Since 1973 the United Kingdom is a member of the European Union.
38. London consists of several main districts, and also includes numerous suburbs.
39. The Tower is a world-famous symbol of London.
40. The capital of the UK is London.

•~• British Food •~•

One thing that would probably cause a strike in any country is British food, particularly in most company canteens and restaurants,

where everything is served with chips or ice-cream. Of course, British food isn't always as bad as it's painted by foreigners. (What can people who eat anything that crawls, jumps, swims or flies, possibly know about real food?). While it's true that British food is often bland, may look terrible and can make you sick, for most people it's just a matter of getting used to it. After all, it's usually necessary to become acclimatised to the food in most foreign countries.

However, it's difficult not to have some sympathy with foreigners who think that many British 'restaurants' should post health warnings and be equipped with an emergency medical centre. It may come as a surprise to many foreigners to learn that British bookshops are bursting with cookery books and they aren't all written by foreigners. The UK also has many popular television cookery programmes that usually feature eccentric (and excellent) chefs and scrumptious looking food. The British can console themselves with the knowledge that they (or some of them) at least know how to behave at the table, even if they don't have much idea what to serve on it.

To compensate for their deficiencies in the kitchen, the British are famous for their love of wine (or anything alcoholic) and are among the world's foremost experts on the character and qualities of good wine, although they're often better talkers than drinkers. In the UK, a wine may be described as having intense aromas and flavours of berries, bramble-jelly, morello cherries, peppery spices, mint, toffee and a hint of honey. The secret of dining in the UK is to drink a lot as, when you're drunk, most food tastes okay. The British even make their own wine; not only home-brewed stuff made from elderberries and other strange fruit, but also real commercially-produced wine made from grapes.

Questions

1. What are some common criticisms of British food mentioned in the text?
2. How does the text suggest that foreigners perceive British food?
3. What are some ways in which British food culture is portrayed positively in the text?
4. How do the British compensate for their deficiencies in the kitchen, according to the text?

•~• English Etiquette •~•

Whilst the English penchant for manners and socially appropriate behavior is renowned across the world, the word etiquette to which we so often refer actually originates from the French *estiquette* – “to attach or stick”. Indeed the modern understanding of the word can be linked to the Court of the French King Louis XIV, who used small placards called *etiquettes*, as a reminder to courtiers of accepted ‘house rules’ such as not walking through certain areas of the palace gardens.

Every culture across the ages has been defined by the concept of etiquette and accepted social interaction. However, it is the British – and the English in particular – who have historically been known to place a great deal of importance in good manners. Whether it be in relation to speech, timeliness, body language or dining, politeness is key.

British etiquette dictates courteousness at all times, which means forming an orderly queue in a shop or for public transport, saying excuse me when someone is blocking your way and saying please and thank you for any service you have received is *de rigueur*.

The British reputation for being reserved is not without merit. Overfamiliarity of personal space or behavior is a big no-no! When meeting someone for the first time a handshake is always preferable to a hug and a kiss on the cheek is reserved for close friends only. Asking personal questions about salary, relationship status, weight or age (particularly in the case of more 'mature' ladies) is also frowned upon.

Traditionally, one of the best examples of the British etiquette is the importance placed on punctuality. It is considered rude to arrive late to a business meeting, medical appointment or formal social occasion such as a wedding. As such it is advisable to arrive 5-10 minutes early to appear professional, prepared and unflustered as a mark of respect to your host. Conversely, should you arrive too early to a dinner party this could also appear slightly rude and ruin the atmosphere for the evening if the host is still completing their preparations. For the same reason an unannounced house call is often frowned upon for risk of inconveniencing the home owner.

Should you be invited to a British dinner party it is customary for a dinner guest to bring a gift for the host or hostess, such as a bottle of wine, a bouquet of flowers or chocolates. Good table manners are essential (particularly if you want to be invited back!) and unless you are attending a barbeque or an informal buffet it is frowned upon to use fingers rather than cutlery to eat. The cutlery should also be held correctly, i.e. the knife in the right hand and the fork in the left hand with the prongs pointing downwards and the food pushed onto the back of the fork with the knife rather than 'scooped'. At a formal dinner party when there are numerous utensils at your place setting it is customary to begin with the utensils on the outside and work your way inward with each course.

As the guest it is polite to wait until everyone at the table has been served and your host starts eating or indicates that you should do so. Once the meal has begun it is impolite to reach over someone else's plate for an item such as seasoning or a food platter; it is more considerate to ask for the item to be passed to you. Leaning your elbows on the table whilst you are eating is also considered rude.

Slurping or making other such loud noises whilst eating is completely frowned upon. As with yawning or coughing it is also considered very rude to chew open-mouthed or talk when there is still food in your mouth. These actions imply that a person was not brought up to adhere to good manners, a criticism against not only the offender but their family too!

Questions

1. What are some examples of British etiquette mentioned in the text?
2. Why is punctuality considered important in British etiquette?
3. What are some key points to remember about table manners at a British dinner party according to the text?
4. Why are actions like slurping, chewing open-mouthed, or talking with food in your mouth considered rude in British etiquette?

•~• UK parliament: tradition and change •~•

In the 14th century, the British parliament split into two divisions, the House of Lords, which included the bishops and the aristocracy (or 'peers'), and the House of Commons, which included representatives of the ordinary people.

The Lords, whose members are not elected and who traditionally inherited their seat in the House from their fathers, no longer have the automatic right to block new laws. The British parliament is

the one of the oldest parliamentary systems in the world, and the foreigners are often puzzled by some of its ancient customs. During debates in the House of Commons, for example, members are not permitted to refer to each other by name, but must use the title “The Honorable Member”. This is just one of radical changes that have been imposed on the 700-year-old parliament in recent years, including the creation of separate Scottish Parliament and Welsh and Northern Irish Assemblies.

Questions

1. Which has the most political power – the House of Lords or the House of Commons?
2. Which House has members who used to inherit their places in parliament?
3. What must members of the House of Commons call each other during debates?
4. Who sits on ‘the woolsack’?
5. What is its symbolic meaning?

•~• The ups and downs of the British monarchy •~•

The British people have had a monarchy for over a thousand years. The relationship between the monarch and the people has suffered some serious crises in the country’s history, but the monarchy always seems to recover.

The biggest crisis in the monarchy’s history came in 1649 when the king was actually condemned to death by parliament. In 1642 a Civil War broke out between the Royalists and the supporters of parliaments, the Roundheads under Oliver Cromwell. The Roundheads won, Charles I, who wanted the monarchy to have more power, was beheaded and the monarchy abolished. But in 1660 the

age of the Restoration began when Charles's son, Charles II, was made king.

When Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, died in 1861, the Queen suffered a terrible depression. She withdrew from public life and spent more time at her palace in Scotland. For over 20 years she performed no national duties. People became critical of the monarchy and in a time of huge industrial and scientific progress, members of parliament began to talk about republicanism.

When George V died in January 1936, his heir Edward was in love with a twice-divorce American women, Wallis Simpson. His family and the government disapproved of Mrs. Simpson, but Edward wanted to marry her. In the end he was forced to choose between his love and the throne, and he chose to abandon the throne.

In modern times, people began to see the monarchy outdated, but the royal family was given a tremendous boost in 1981, when Prince Charles married the popular Princess Diana. Diana became an international superstar, more popular than her husband from whom she divorced in 1996. When she died in a car crash in 1997 many people accused the royal family of treating her badly during her marriage and abandoning her after her divorce. Celebrations for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 were deliberately kept low-key, as the organizers feared that the public would not be interested.

Questions

1. What was the biggest crisis in the monarchy's history, and how did it impact the relationship between the monarch and the people?

2. How did the age of Restoration begin after the monarchy was abolished in 1649?

3. Why did Queen Victoria withdraw from public life after Prince Albert's death in 1861?

4. What led to George V's heir, Edward, choosing to abandon the throne in 1936?

5. How did the royal family receive a boost in popularity in 1981, and who played a significant role in this?

6. Why were celebrations for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 deliberately kept low-key?

7. What are some examples of crises that have tested the relationship between the British monarchy and its people throughout history?

•~• Sport in Britain •~•

In the UK, there are only three subjects required throughout school – these are mathematics, English and physical education

In addition to traditional physical culture, students are additionally offered various sports there. Almost all schools have swimming pools, tennis, basketball and football courts, golf lawns, cricket or squash courts, beloved by the British.

Secondary schools have a program called “Physical education as a preparation for life”.

Starting from the age of 11-13, schoolchildren decide for themselves what kind of sport they will do in the current trimester. The list of sports that can be practiced in a British school is huge. These are field hockey, cricket, badminton, fencing, golf, swimming, rowing, water polo, sailing, squash, sport shooting, equestrian polo, archery, yoga, rock climbing and much more.

The most popular sport at school is football, and both boys and girls play it. Team games such as rugby, field hockey, cricket, squash, netball, rounders, dodgeball, ultimate frisbee are also very popular.

Football. In England and Scotland, football is the national sport, and it is the passion of many Britons. The teams of the Scottish

Premier League are at a high level, and the English Premier League is considered the best in the world. There are fans of famous English clubs all over the world, such as Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea, and broadcasts of matches involving these teams sometimes attract an audience of more than a billion people.

Each of the four countries that make up the United Kingdom has its own national football association, which manages football issues within the borders of its territory.

1. It is the Football Association of England, founded in 1863.
2. The Scottish Football Association, founded in 1873.
3. The Football Association of Wales, founded in 1876.
4. The Irish Football Association, founded in 1880.

These are the four oldest football associations in the world, they occupy four out of eight seats in the International Council of Football Associations (IFAB), which determines the rules of the game of football (the remaining four seats on the council belong to FIFA).

Cricket is a team non-contact sport, part of a family of games in which bat and ball are used. Cricket originated in the XVI century in the south of England. By the end of the XVIII century, the game became one of the national sports. The expansion of the British Empire contributed to the spread of the game around the world. Cricket was invented in England and is very popular throughout the country and in the former colonies. Wales does not have its own national team and plays together with England, as well as representatives of Scotland and Ireland, whose cricket teams have only recently begun to develop. Cricket is the main summer sport in the UK. It is played by athletes of different levels of training – from teams of small towns to the national team of England. The rules of the game of cricket appeared in the XVIII century, and still this game is very popular among young people. The England national team

holds tournament matches at home, one-day international matches, plays various 20 cricket games every summer, and travels to matches outside the country in winter. The main event is, of course, the biennial Ashes Cup competition between England and Australia.

Rugby is a contact team sport that originated in the XIX century in England. In addition, some elements of rugby have been incorporated into the rules of American and Australian football and their derivatives. A rugby match is a competition between two teams, each of which is represented by fifteen fielders. The main task of each of the opponents is to perform effective actions, that is, to defeat the goal (kick above the crossbar) or to bring the ball into the opponent's scoring zone. The rules allow touching the ball with your hands, which determines the main difference between rugby and football. At the same time, a restriction is imposed on the game with your hands: the ball cannot be passed by hands if the receiving player is closer to the opponent's scoring zone than the passer. "Harlequins".

Golf is a sports game in which individual participants or teams compete, driving a small ball into special holes with strokes of clubs, trying to pass the allotted distance in the minimum number of strokes. It is believed that the game of golf originated in Scotland and was invented by shepherds who used staves to hammer stones into rabbit holes. Presumably the game existed already in the XIV century, and in the XV century in Scotland there were several laws prohibiting playing "golf". The game in its modern form was formed in the XIX century in Scotland. Great Britain is the birthplace of golf. There are hundreds of beautiful playing fields where world-class competitions are held. Wentworth, Belfrey and Carnoustie, as well as the course at St Andrews, are some of the best golf courses in the world. The British Open Golf Championship, held annually in

July, is the oldest and most famous of the four golf championships. Competitions are held on different fields in the UK.

Athletics. In the UK, many international athletics competitions are held every year, including the London Marathon and the annual London Grand Prix competition. Athletics competitions were a significant part of the program of the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Squash is another extremely popular sport in the UK. Among the best squash players in the world are James Willstrop and Nick Matthew. The history of squash has its roots in the distant past of England, where it still remains one of the most prestigious and popular sports. At the end of the last century, squash began to spread around the world, which was largely facilitated by the small size of the court and the possibility of creating indoor courts. Squash is a sport in which an athlete uses a racket and a soft ball. The name comes from the English word squash, meaning “crushed”, and is associated with the use of a small hollow ball with a diameter of 4 cm in the game. Squash is played on an indoor court by two or four people

Curling is a team sport in which players take turns launching granite projectiles (stones) into a “house” (a special target). The goal of the game is to launch as many shells as possible into the center of the “house” or push out the shells of opponents, depriving opponents of earned points. Many of us now know about such a sport as curling, which is included in the Olympic Games program. It turns out that it originates in Scotland. It comes from the English word curl – “spiral, curl”. The first mention of curling dates back to the distant sixteenth century. A fragment of a stone with an engraved date was found in the highlands of Scotland. Therefore, Scotland is now considered the birthplace of curling.

In winter, on the frozen lakes between the wars, the mountaineers trained and played this game. At first, ordinary stone fragments were used, but in the eighteenth century, English soldiers “optimized” the stones, giving them the look they have now. Over time, the game transformed, the rules changed and developed. The first European Curling Championship was held in 1975 (France). Fifteen teams took part in the competition. The Men’s World Curling Championship was held in 1959 (Edinburgh) under the name “Scottish Cup Competition”. The first women’s championship was held in Perth (1979), the Swiss national team won. The year 924 was a significant one in the history of curling – it first appeared at the Olympic Games. But officially it was recognized as an Olympic sport only in 1998, until that time only demonstration competitions were held.

Snooker is a relatively popular game and the most developed type of billiards. It is believed that snooker was invented by the British colonel of the British colonial troops in India, Neville Chamberlain. Until the 20s of the XX century, this game was inferior in popularity and development to English billiards, but soon became the most famous type of billiards in the country. Since the 1970s, snooker tournaments have been broadcast on national television (mainly by the BBC). At the peak of the popularity of the game, most professional snooker players were British, and, accordingly, most major tournaments were also held in this country. Currently, snooker remains perhaps the most famous type of billiards in England, and at the same time it is in England that it is most popular. The most titled and famous snooker players of this country: Steve Davis, Jimmy White, etc.

Test

1. Name 3 important subjects in the British school.
2. At what age do students decide what kind of sports they want to do?
3. "Summer is not summer" means:
 - a) without cricket;
 - b) without football;
 - c) without golf.
4. The most famous boat race in England is between:
 - a) professional sportsmen from all over the world;
 - b) boat teams from London;
 - c) students from Oxford and Cambridge.
5. The London Marathon:
 - a) is an international competition for athletics;
 - b) is an international competition for runners;
 - c) is an international competition for tennis.
6. The British:
 - a) don't care about sports;
 - b) are crazy about sports;
 - c) go in for sport time to time.
7. The British queen enjoyed:
A lawn tennis; b) golf; c) racing
8. Explain the word: Wimbledon Derby Highland Games IFAB.
9. There are all kinds of it in England:
 - a) racing; b) tennis; c) wrestling
10. Name the most popular British sports games.

11. At English schools children learn how to play:
a) football; b) golf; c) cricket; d) racing.
12. The main summer sport in the UK is _____ .
13. A rugby match is a competition:
a) one team; b) two teams; c) three teams.
14. It is believed that the game of golf was originated in:
a) Germany; b) Scotland; c) Russia.
15. In the XV century in Scotland there were several laws prohibiting playing:
a) golf; b) football. c) tennis
16. Squash is a sport in which an athlete uses:
a) a racket and a hard ball;
b) a racket and a soft ball;
c) the ball.
17. Squash, translated as:
a) soft; b) crushed; c) crumpled.
18. The diameter of the squash ball:
a) 6 cm; b) 20 cm; c) 4 cm.
19. Squash is played on:
a) closed court two or four people;
b) closed court three or six people;
c) open court two or four people.
20. Curling is a team sport where players _____ .
21. From what word did the name Curling come from:
a) curl; b) throw.
22. The birthplace of curling:
a) Germany; b) Scotland; c) Libya)

23. The first European Curling Championship was held in:
 a) 1975; b) 1985; c) 1945.
24. The first women's championship was held in:
 a) France; b) Perth; c) Scotland.
25. What is the most famous type of billiards?
26. Name the famous snooker players.
27. The sport of kings is:
 a) golf; b) horse racing; c) tennis.
28. The only major tennis tournament in the world is _____ .
29. The traditional Wimbledon treat is:
 a) fish and chips;
 b) strawberries with cream;
 c) sweet apples.
30. The annual 1.5 mile race is held:
 a) on the first Saturday of June;
 b) on the last Sunday of June;
 c) every Monday.
31. Oxford and Cambridge Boat racing is held on the river _____ .
32. The English aristocrat founded Derby is _____ .

•~• **British national identity** •~•

In the UK, there are several national symbols. The most famous is probably the Union Flag (or Union Jack), which is a combination of the flags of England, Scotland and Ireland. The flag has been used since 1606, but it was only called the 'Union Jack' from 1707, when the Scottish and English parliaments joined together with the Act of Union. Northern Ireland joined the United Kingdom in 1801, when

Ireland became part of the UK, so the Irish flag was included in the Union Jack.

The national symbol of England is St George's Cross, a red cross on a white background. St George is the patron saint of England, and his day is 23 April. In the past, people celebrated St George's Day as much as St Patrick's Day in Ireland, but now it is not a public holiday and people don't celebrate it very much. The English like to support their national football team, but they don't usually wear the flag or talk about being English.

St Andrew's Cross is the national symbol of Scotland. It is a blue cross on a white background. St Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, and his day is 30 November. People celebrate St Andrew's Day more than St George's Day, and some people want it to be a public holiday. There is also a special celebration of Scottish culture every year on 25 January called Burns Night. People eat haggis (a traditional Scottish food) and recite poems by the Scottish poet Robert Burns. Many Scots are proud of being Scottish, and they often wear kilts (a type of skirt for men) and play the bagpipes (a musical instrument).

The national symbol of Wales is the Red Dragon. The dragon is on the Welsh flag and is also the symbol of the Welsh rugby team, which is one of the best teams in the world. The Welsh love music and singing, and there is a famous music festival in Wales every year called the Eisteddfod. The Welsh language is also very important to the Welsh people, and many people speak it as their first language. The English, Scottish and Irish are not usually able to speak Welsh.

There is no national symbol of Ireland because it is divided into two countries: Northern Ireland (which is part of the UK) and the Republic of Ireland (which is an independent country). The flag of Northern Ireland has a red hand on it, and the flag of the Republic of

Ireland is green, white and orange. The people of Northern Ireland are mainly Protestant, and they often support the English football team. The people of the Republic of Ireland are mainly Catholic, and they have their own football team, which is one of the best teams in Europe. There are also many Irish people in England, Scotland, Wales and the USA, so the Irish football team has a lot of supporters around the world.

Questions

1. What is the significance of the Union Flag (Union Jack) in the UK?
2. How did the Union Jack come to include the Irish flag?
3. Who is the patron saint of England and what is the national symbol associated with him?
4. Why is St George's Day not celebrated as much as St Patrick's Day in Ireland?
5. What is the national symbol of Scotland and who is its patron saint?
6. How do people celebrate St Andrew's Day in Scotland?
7. What is the significance of Burns Night in Scottish culture?
8. What is the national symbol of Wales and how is it represented?
9. Why is there no national symbol for Ireland?

•~• The system of elections in Great Britain •~•

In Great Britain, there are two main political parties: the Labour Party and the Conservative Party. There is also a third political party, the Liberal Democrats, but this party has fewer seats in Parliament than the other two parties.

The country is divided into 650 areas called constituencies. Each constituency elects one Member of Parliament (MP). The MP represents the people who live in that area. In a general election, British citizens can vote for the MP they want to represent them in Parliament. The candidate with the most votes in each constituency becomes the MP for that area.

There are many candidates in a general election. Some of these candidates belong to a political party, and others do not. The candidates who belong to the Labour Party are called Labour Party candidates. The candidates who belong to the Conservative Party are called Conservative Party candidates. The candidates who belong to the Liberal Democrats are called Liberal Democrat candidates. The candidates who do not belong to any political party are called independent candidates.

The leader of the political party that wins the most seats in a general election usually becomes the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister chooses other MPs from his or her party to be ministers in the government. The leader of the political party that wins the second most seats in a general election usually becomes the leader of the opposition. The leader of the opposition chooses other MPs from his or her party to be shadow ministers. Shadow ministers watch the work of the ministers and criticize the government's plans.

A general election is held every five years. However, the Prime Minister can call an election before this time if he or she wants to. This is called calling a snap election. The next general election is scheduled to take place on Thursday 7 May, 2015.

The UK Independence Party (UKIP) is another political party in Great Britain. This party wants the United Kingdom to leave the European Union. In the 2014 European Parliament elections, UKIP won the most seats of any political party in Great Britain. The Green

Party is another political party in Great Britain. This party wants to protect the environment.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) is a political party in Scotland. In the 2011 Scottish Parliament elections, this party won the most seats of any political party in the Scottish Parliament. The SNP wants Scotland to become an independent country. The Scottish Independence Referendum was held on Thursday 18 September, 2014. The people of Scotland voted against becoming an independent country.

Questions

1. How many main political parties are there in Great Britain?
2. What is the role of an MP in British politics?
3. What happens in a general election in terms of candidate selection?
4. How does the leader of the winning party in a general election become the Prime Minister?
5. What is the significance of shadow ministers in the government?
6. When is a general election typically held in Great Britain?
7. Can the Prime Minister call for an early general election? If so, what is it called?

•~• The UK system of Government •~•

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy, and this institution dates back in Britain to the Saxon king Egbert. Its Constitution is an unwritten constitution, however it is unwritten only in the sense that the documents upon which it is based have not been brought together in a single legal document. The major elements comprising this unwritten constitution are historic documents (such as the Magna Carta, signed by King John in 1215,

Habeas Corpus Act (закон о неприкосновенности личности), signed by Charles II in 1679, the Bill of Rights, signed after James II lost his throne in 1689 by his daughter Mary II and her husband William III, the Act of Settlement (закон о престолонаследовании) of 1701), decisions taken by courts of law on constitutional matters, judicial interpretations, privileges of Parliament, other customs and conventions, and can be modified by a simple Act of Parliament. There are two basic principles of the British Constitution: the Rule of Law and the Supremacy of Parliament. Power in Great Britain is divided on the principle of the separation of powers among three branches: the legislative branch (by which laws are made), the executive branch (by which laws are put into effect) and the judicial branch (by which laws are interpreted).

The legislative branch is represented by Parliament, which has existed since 1265 and is the supreme legislative authority. The British Parliament is considered to be the oldest parliament in the world. It consists of two chambers, or houses: the House of Commons and the House of Lords, which share the Palace of Westminster. The third element of the British Parliament is the Queen who is its head. These three elements have different roles in the government of the country, and they only meet together on symbolic occasions, such as the coronation of a new monarch or the State opening of Parliament.

In reality, the House of Commons is the only one of the three which has true power. Its main function is to legislate, but the strong party system in Britain has meant that the initiative in government lies not with Parliament but with the Government (most bills are introduced by the Government, although they may be introduced by individual MPs) and party members almost automatically pass whatever is put before them by their party. So Parliament plays the major role in law-making. It is here that new bills are introduced and

debated (bills as well may be introduced and debated also in the House of Lords, apart from bills, connected with taxation and finance). A bill has to go through three stages (readings) in order to become an Act of Parliament. If the majority of the members are in favour of a bill it goes to the House of Lords to be debated and finally to the monarch to be signed, or to get the Royal Assent. Only then it becomes law. The life of the House of Commons is fixed at five years. It consists of Members of Parliament (MPs), each of whom represents an area in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. MPs are elected either at a general election (for this the whole country is divided into constituencies, every one of which chooses one delegate), or at a by-election following the death or retirement of an MP. The minimum voting age is 18, and the voting is taken by secret ballot. The election campaign lasts about three weeks. The election is decided on a simple majority – the candidate with most votes wins. The British parliamentary system depends on political parties.

The political parties choose candidates in elections. The party which wins the majority of seats forms the Government and its leader usually becomes Prime Minister (and heads the executive branch, the main function of which is to administer the laws or actually to rule the country). The size of government is over 100. The Prime Minister chooses about 20 MPs from his or her party to become the Cabinet of Ministers (which is part of the executive branch). The composition of the Cabinet is left to the personal choice of the PM. Each minister is responsible for a particular area of the government. The main functions of the Cabinet are: the final determination of policy, supreme control of the executive, and continuous coordination of the activities of state. The Cabinet's meetings may be held at the Cabinet Room at 10 Downing Street (an official London residence of Prime Minister), at the House of

Commons or at Chequers (the Prime Minister's country residence). The second largest party becomes the official Opposition with its own leader and a "Shadow Cabinet". Leader of the Opposition is a recognized post in the House of Commons. The House of Commons is made up of some 650 elected members. The House of Commons is presided over by the Speaker, a member acceptable to the whole House. MPs sit on two sides of the hall, one side for the governing party and the other for the opposition. The first two rows of seats are occupied by the leading members of both parties (called "front-benchers"), the back benches belong to the rank-and-file MPs ("back-benchers"). Each session of the House of Commons lasts for 160-175 days. Parliament has intervals during its work, known as recesses or adjournments.

The House of Lords, before its reforming started at the beginning of the 21st century, had been made up of the Lords Spiritual (representatives of the Church of England: the archbishops of Canterbury and York and other bishops) and the Lords Temporal: hereditary peers and life peers (who are named by the Sovereign on the advice of the Prime Minister and don not pass on their title when they die). But in November, 1999 the House of Lords Act removed the right of hereditary peers to be members of the chamber. In April 2001 the first new lords were selected, chosen by the committee. The government, reforming the House of Lords, has appointed so called people's peers, who are not chosen for their affiliation to any political party, but are, in theory, appointed on merit, by an independent committee. Members of this Upper House are not elected. The House of Lords is the only non-elected second chamber in the parliaments of the world, and some people in Britain would like to abolish it. But the reforms which started at the beginning of this century will have the following results in the future: they will remove the last of the

hereditary peers from Parliament; they will introduce the first ever elected peers into the House of Lords; they will put the appointment of independent members outside political patronage; they will secure a political balance in the House of Lords. The members of the House of Lords debate a bill after it has been passed by the House of Commons. Changes or amendments may be recommended, and agreement between the two Houses is reached by negotiations. The Lords' main power consists of being able to delay non-financial bills for a period of a year, but they can also introduce certain types of bill. The House of Lords is presided over by the Lord Chancellor. He or she is responsible for the administration of justice and is also an automatic member of the Cabinet. Following the latest act of 1999, the House of Lords now consists of some 675 peers in total (2001) as compared to 1200 peers (1999).

The judicial branch interprets the laws. The highest judicial body is the Supreme Court of Judicature, which consists of two divisions: the High Court of Justice and the Court of Appeal. It is often said that English law is superior to the law of most other countries. Indeed, the English judicial system contains many rules which protect the individual against arbitrary action by the police and the government.

Tasks

Task 1. Translate into Russian.

1. The Magna Carta.
2. The Rule of Law.
3. Case law.
4. The Bill of Rights.
5. Law Lords.
6. Lords Temporal.
7. With complete impartiality.

8. A tied vote.
9. Free from liability.
10. Backbench revolt.

Task 2. Translate into English.

1. Королевская санкция.
2. Совместный комитет.
3. Министр внутренних дел.
4. Парламентские каникулы.
5. Председательствовать.
6. Преемственность.
7. Роспуск (парламента).
8. Исполнительная власть.
9. Отменять.
10. Должностное лицо.

Task 3. Answer the questions.

1. What are the three branches of power?
2. What is a Private Bill?
3. What are the main political parties in Great Britain?
4. When does the Bill become an Act?
5. What is the minimum voting age?

Task 4. State whether the following statements are true or false.

1. There are three basic principles of the British Constitution: The Rule of Law, Bill of Rights and the Supremacy of Parliament.
2. Power in Great Britain is divided on the principle of the separation of powers among four branches.
3. The British Parliament is consisting of two chambers, or houses: The House of Commons and the House of Lords, which share the Palace of Westminster.
4. The House of Commons is made up of some 650 elected members.
5. The House of Lords is presided over by the Lord Chancellor.

Task 5. Choose the right variant.

1. The ... branch is represented by Parliament.
a) legislative; b) executive; c) judicial.
2. The life of the House of Commons is fixed at ... years.
a) six; b) five; c) four.
3. The minimum voting age is:
A) 18; b) 21; c) 20.
4. What parts does UK consists of?
a) England, Scotland. Wales;
b) England, Scotland. Wales, Ireland;
c) England, Scotland. Wales, Northern Ireland.
5. What kind of state is Great Britain?
a) A republic;
b) A parliamentary monarchy;
c) An absolute monarchy.
6. Who heads the government of Great Britain?
a) The Queen; b) President; c) Prime Minister.
7. Parliament has existed since:
a) 1265; b) 1625; c) 1465.
8. The party which wins the majority of seats forms the Government and its leader usually becomes:
a) Main judge; b) Prime Minister; c) Foreign Secretary.
9. The highest judicial body is:
a) the High Court of Justice;
b) the Court of Appeal;
c) the Supreme Court of Judicature.
10. The Lords Temporal have:
a) hereditary peers and life peers;
b) only hereditary peers;
c) only life peers.

•~• Religion •~•

The United Kingdom is a multi-faith society. The largest religion is Christianity. There are also large communities of Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Jews.

Christianity

The United Kingdom was founded as a Christian country. The Church of England (Anglican) is the established church (officially recognized). The Queen is the head of the Church of England. The Church of England is Protestant. It separated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 under King Henry VIII. There are also many other Christian groups in the UK such as Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Catholics. Many people in the UK say they are Christians, but they do not go to church regularly.

Islam

Muslims make up the largest non-Christian religious group in the UK. Most British Muslims live in England. There are significant Muslim communities in Birmingham, Bradford, London and Manchester. The majority of British Muslims are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin. There are also many Arabs, Turks, Iranians and Somalis. There are over 1,500 mosques in the UK. The East London Mosque in Whitechapel, London, is one of the biggest in Europe. Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the UK.

Sikhism

There are over 400,000 Sikhs in the UK. Most British Sikhs live in London or the Midlands. The majority of British Sikhs are of Punjabi origin. There are over 200 gurdwaras (Sikh temples) in the UK. Gurdwaras provide free food for anyone who wants it. This is called langar. The most famous gurdwara in the UK is the Golden

Temple in Southall, London. Sikhism is the world's fifth-largest religion. It began in the Punjab region of India in the 15th century.

Hinduism

There are over 800,000 Hindus in the UK. Most British Hindus live in London or Leicester. The majority of British Hindus are of Gujarati origin. There are over 100 Hindu temples in the UK. The most famous Hindu temple in the UK is in Neasden, London. It is called the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir. Hinduism is the world's third-largest religion. It began in India over 4,000 years ago.

Judaism

There are about 300,000 Jews in the UK. Most British Jews live in London or Manchester. There are over 300 synagogues in the UK. The most famous synagogue in the UK is Bevis Marks Synagogue in the City of London. It is the oldest synagogue in the country. Judaism is one of the oldest religions in the world. It was founded over 3,500 years ago in the Middle East by Abraham.

Other Religions

There are also smaller communities of Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians in the UK. There are over 150 Buddhist temples and centres in the UK. The largest Buddhist temple in the UK is in Wimbledon, London. It is called the Buddhapadipa Temple. There are also many other religions and beliefs in the UK such as atheism (no belief in God) and agnosticism (not sure if there is a God).

Questions

1. What is the largest religion in Great Britain?
2. Who is the head of the Church of England?
3. Which religious group is the fastest-growing in the UK?
4. How many mosques are there in the UK?

5. Where is the most famous gurdwara located in the UK?
6. What is the oldest synagogue in the UK?
7. Are there any other religions mentioned in the text besides Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Judaism?
8. When did the Church of England separate from the Roman Catholic Church?
9. Which non-Christian religious group is the largest in the UK?
10. Where do most British Muslims live?
11. What are some of the ethnic origins of British Muslims?
12. Why is Islam considered the fastest-growing religion in the UK?
13. How many Jews in the UK?
14. What religion is one of the oldest in the world?
15. How many Buddhist temples and centres are in the UK?
16. Where did Hinduism begin?
17. How many Hindus are there in the UK?
18. Where did Sikhism begin?

•~• **Accent** •~•

An interesting feature of the class structure in Britain is that it is not just, or even mainly, relative wealth or the appearance of it, which determines someone's class. Of course, wealth is part of it. But it is not possible to guess a person's class just by looking at his or her clothes, car or bank balance. The most obvious sign comes when a person opens his or her mouth, giving the listener clues to the speaker's attitudes and interests.

But more indicative than what the speaker says is the way that he or she says it. The English grammar and vocabulary used in

public speaking, radio and television news broadcasts, books, and newspapers is known as 'standard British English'. Most working-class people, however, use lots of words and grammatical forms in their everyday speech which are regarded as 'non-standard'.

Nevertheless, nearly everybody in the country is capable of using Standard English or something close to it when the situation demands it. They are taught to do so at school. Therefore, the clearest indication of a person's class is often his or her accent, which most people do not change to suit the situation. The most prestigious accent in Britain is known by linguists as 'Received Pronunciation' (RP). It is the combination of Standard English spoken with an RP accent that is usually meant when people talk about 'BBC English' or 'the Queen's English'. RP is not associated with any particular part of the country. The vast majority of people, however, speak with an accent which is geographically limited.

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, the way that people identify themselves with regard to class changed. The English upper-class accent, as spoken by the Queen or announcers on the BBC World Service, was accepted until twenty years ago as the guide to correct pronunciation for Britain as a whole. A study of British accents during the 1980s found that a posh voice, sounding like a BBC news-reader, usually spoken by a person from the south-east of England, was viewed as the most attractive voice. Most respondents said this accent sounded 'educated' and 'soft'. Now the BBC goes out of its way to use regional accents; in Hollywood, a posh British accent is a cliché for Brutality, arrogance and stupidity. Consumers no longer see it as a sign of trustworthiness and authority. Some call-centers prefer regional accents to RP because of the negative reactions RP arouses.

Posh – someone who is posh talks or behaves in a way that is typical of people from a high social class. This word often shows that you do not like people like this. It is normally used with negative connotations. To accuse someone of being posh is to accuse them of being distant and pretentious.

Because of greater mass communication and some increased mobility, regional variations are more commonly understood throughout Britain than they were in previously ‘closed’ communities. However, if you want to get ahead in Britain, you would be well advised to lose a regional accent.

Questions

1. How does class structure in Britain differ from what is commonly perceived based on wealth alone?
2. What role does language play in determining a person’s class in Britain?
3. How does the use of Standard English and accents contribute to the perception of social class in Britain?
4. Why is accent considered a clearer indicator of social class than clothing or possessions in Britain?
5. How has the perception of the “posh” accent evolved over time in British society?
6. In what ways has the acceptance of regional accents changed in British media and society?
7. Why do some call-centers prefer regional accents over Received Pronunciation (RP) accents?
8. How does the term “posh” carry negative connotations in British society?
9. What impact does the association of a posh accent with negative traits have on perceptions of trustworthiness and authority?

10. How does the use of language and accent reflect changing attitudes towards social class in Britain during the late 20th century?
11. How has mass communication contributed to the understanding of regional variations in Britain?

•~• Politics •~•

The UK's electoral system is of course unique (nobody would be daft enough to copy it) and elections are decided by the first horse (or ass) past the post. This means that the party in power rarely has more than around 40 per cent of the total vote and minority parties can poll 25 per cent of the vote and end up with only a handful of seats. Of course, nobody in the UK actually votes for a political party, particularly the one that wins the election (or at least nobody admits to it). Most are registering a protest vote or voting for the party they hope will do the least damage. Despite their singular lack of success, the minority parties battle manfully on and include such defenders of democracy as the Monster Raving Loony Party (the only British political party with an honest name).

Surprisingly few women are MPs, which proves conclusively that they're more intelligent than men and have better things to do with their lives than hurl insults at each other (politicians are the only children who immature with age). The calibre of British politicians may have something to do with the fact that politicking is the only job that doesn't require any qualifications, training or brains. Nonetheless, as with most charlatans and confidence tricksters, there's honour among politicians who rarely stab each other in the back (when someone is looking). Although British politicians seldom tell the truth and government statistics are all but meaningless due to the myriad ways of calculating and distorting them, politicians never

in fact tell lies. A politician may accuse another honourable member only of being economical with the truth, but never of lying.

One of the favourite pastimes of British politicians (when not playing golf or holidaying in exotic places at taxpayers' expense) is sitting on committees, which after weeks of intense discussions and meetings (standing, select, joint, sitting, party, etc.), produce volumes of recommendations. So as not to waste any more time and taxpayers' money, these are promptly filed in the dustbin and forgotten about. British politics are totally incomprehensible and deadly boring to all foreigners – and almost everyone else.

Questions

1. How does the unique electoral system in the UK impact the representation of minority parties in government?
2. Why do you think there are surprisingly few women MPs in the UK, and what implications does this have on the political landscape?
3. What role do committees play in British politics, and how effective do you believe they are in influencing policy decisions?

•~• European Union •~•

Some people (usually foreigners) think that the British are out of step with their 'partners' in the European Union (EU). Of course, as any Briton will tell you, the only reason we don't always see eye to eye with the damn foreigners (who make up the insignificant part of the EU) is that they refuse to listen to us and do as we tell them. (Whatever happened to the good old days when Johnny Foreigner knew his place?). It must be obvious to everyone that we know best; just look at our manufacturing industry, modern infrastructure,

culinary traditions, public services, roads, cricket team; of course, having a transport system and things that work isn't everything.

The notion that the UK doesn't always know best is ridiculous and if there's to be a united Europe, those foreign bounders had better mend their ways. (We didn't fight two world wars so that Jerry and the Frogs – who we bailed out twice – could tell us what to do!). They can start by adopting British time, driving on the left, making English their national language, anglicising their ridiculous names and moving the EU headquarters and parliament to London – which every civilised person knows is the centre of the universe. Perhaps then we would all get on much better! If they don't agree, we can always fill in our end of the Channel Tunnel and refuse to answer the telephone. Many Britons firmly believe that the UK is still a world power, when in reality it doesn't have a lot of influence in the modern world. This 'little England' attitude means that, to most Britons, Europe is a place full of foreigners where the sun shines when they go on holiday. Most are unaware of, or choose to ignore, the fact that the UK is actually part of it (at least geographically).

Questions

1. What are some examples provided in the text that demonstrate the British belief in their superiority over their European Union partners?

2. How does the text illustrate the perception of the UK as a world power despite its limited influence in the modern world?

3. How does the text highlight the disconnect between the British perception of themselves and their actual role within the European Union?

•~• PART II •~•

HISTORY OF BRITAIN FROM ANCIENT TIMES TILL PRESENT DAYS

•~• England: a historical tour •~•

Prehistory

Two thousand years ago there was an Iron Age Celtic culture throughout the north-west European island. It seems that the Celts had intermingled with the peoples who were there already; we know that religious sites that had been built long before their arrival continued to be used in Celtic times.

For people in Britain today, the chief significance of the prehistoric period is its sense of mystery. This sense finds its focus most easily in the astonishing monumental architecture of this period, the remains of which exist throughout the country. Stonehenge is the most spectacular one.

Stonehenge was built on Salisbury Plain some time between 5,000 and 4,300 years ago. It is one of the most famous and mysterious archeological sites in the world. One of its mysteries is how it was ever built at all with the technologies of the time (some of the stones come from over 200 miles away in Wales). Another is its purpose. It appears to function as a kind of astronomical clock and we know it was used by the Druids (i.e. Celtic priestly caste) for ceremonies marking the passing of the seasons. It has always exerted a fascination on the British imagination.

The Roman period (43–410)

The Roman province of Britannia covered most of present-day England and Wales, where the Romans imposed their own way of

life and culture, making use of the existing Celtic aristocracy to govern and encouraging them to adopt Roman dress and the Latin language. They never went to Ireland and exerted an influence, without actually governing there, over only the southern part of Scotland. It was during this time that a Celtic tribe called the Scots migrated from Ireland to Scotland, where along with another tribe, the Picts, they became opponents of the Romans. This division of the Celts into those who experienced Roman rule (the Britons in England and Wales) and those who did not (the Gaels in Ireland and Scotland) may help to explain the emergence of two distinct branches of the Celtic group of languages.

The remarkable thing about the Romans is that, despite their long occupation of Britain, they left very little behind. Most of their villas, baths and temples, their impressive network of roads, and the cities they founded, including Londinium (London), were soon destroyed or fell into disrepair.

55 BC – The Roman general Julius Caesar lands in Britain with an expeditionary force, wins a battle and leaves. The first 'date' in popular British history.

61 AD – Queen Boudicca (or Boadicea) of the Iceni tribe leads a bloody revolt against the Roman occupation. It is suppressed. There is a statue of Boadicea, made in the nineteenth century, outside the Houses of Parliament, which has helped to keep her memory alive.

Hadrian's Wall was built by the Romans in the second century across the northern border of their province of Britannia (which is nearly the same as the present English-Scottish border) in order to protect it from attacks by the Scots and the Picts.

The Germanic invasions (410–1066)

The Roman occupation had been a matter of colonial control rather than large-scale settlement. But during the fifth century, a number of tribes from the European mainland invaded and settled in large numbers. Two of these tribes were the Angles and the Saxons. These Anglo-Saxons soon had the south-east of the country in their grasp. In the west, their advance was temporarily halted by an army of (Celtic) Britons under the command of the legendary King Arthur. Nevertheless, by the end of the sixth century, they and their way of life predominated in nearly all of present-day England. Celtic culture and language survived only in present-day Scotland, Wales and Cornwall.

King Arthur is a wonderful example of the distortions of popular history. In folklore and myth (and on film), he is a great English hero, and he and his Knights of the Round Table are regarded as the perfect example of medieval nobility and chivalry. In fact, he lived long before medieval times and was Romanized Celt trying to hold back the advances of the Anglo-Saxons – the very people who became ‘the English’!

When they came to Britain, the Anglo-Saxons were pagan. During the sixth and seventh centuries, Christianity spread throughout Britain from two different directions. By the time it was introduced into the south of England by the Roman missionary St Augustine, it had already been introduced into Scotland and Northern England from Ireland, which had become Christian more than 150 years earlier.

Britain experienced another wave of Germanic invasions in the 8th century. The invaders, known as Vikings, Norsemen or Danes, came from Scandinavia. In the ninth century they conquered and settled the islands around Scotland and some coastal regions of Ireland. Their conquest of England was halted when they were

defeated by King Alfred of the Saxon kingdom of Wessex. As a result, their settlement was confined mostly to the north and east of the country.

King Alfred was not only an able warrior but also a dedicated scholar (the only English monarch for a long time afterwards who was able to read and write) and a wise ruler. He is known as 'Alfred the Great' – the only monarch in English history to be given this title. He is also popularly known for the story of the burning of the cakes. While he was wandering around his country organizing resistance to the Danish invaders, Alfred travelled in disguise. On one occasion, he stopped at a woman's house. The woman asked him to watch some cakes that were cooking to see that they did not burn, while she went off to get food. Alfred became lost in thought and the cakes burned. When the woman returned, she shouted angrily at Alfred and sent him away. Alfred never told her that he was her king.

However, the cultural differences between Anglo-Saxons and Danes were comparatively small. They led roughly the same way of life and spoke different varieties of the same Germanic tongue. These similarities made political unification easier, and by the end of the tenth century, England was a united kingdom with a Germanic culture throughout. Most of Scotland was also united by this time, at least in name, in a (Celtic) Gaelic kingdom.

The Medieval period (1066–1458)

1066 – This is the most famous date in English history. On 14 October of this year, an invading army from Normandy defeated the English at the battle of Hastings. At the end of it, most of the best warriors of England were dead, including their leader, King Harold. On Christmas day that year the Norman leader, Duke William of Normandy, was crowned king of England. He is known in popular history as 'William the Conqueror' and the date is remembered as the last time that England was successfully invaded.

The successful Norman invasion of England brought Britain into the mainstream of western European culture. Previously, most links had been with Scandinavia. Throughout this period, the English kings also owned land on the continent and were often at war with the French kings.

Unlike the Germanic invasions, the Norman invasion was small-scale. There was no such thing as a Norman area of settlement. Instead, the Norman soldiers who had invaded were given the ownership of land – and of the people living on it. A strict feudal system was imposed. The peasants were the English-speaking Saxons. The lords and the barons were the French-speaking Normans. This was the start of the English class system.

As an example of the class distinctions introduced into society after the Norman invasion, people often point to the fact that modern English has two words for the larger farm animals: one for the living animal (cow, pig, swine, sheep) and another for the animal you eat (beef, pork, mutton). The former set comes from Anglo-Saxon, the latter from French that the Normans brought to England. Only the Normans normally ate meat; the poor Anglo-Saxon peasants did not.

In the 250 years after the Norman Conquest, it was a Germanic language, Middle English, and not the Norman (French) language, which had become the dominant one in all classes of society in England. Furthermore, it was the Anglo-Saxon concept of common law, and not Roman law, which formed the basis of the legal system.

It was in this period that Parliament began its gradual evolution into the democratic body which it is today. The word 'parliament', which comes from the French word 'parler' (to speak), was first used in England in the thirteenth century to describe an assembly of nobles called together by the king.

In 1215 an alliance of aristocracy, church and merchants force King John to agree to the Magna Carta (Latin meaning 'Great Charter'), a document in which the king agrees to follow certain rules of government. It restricted the king's power and gave new rights to the barons and the people. Some of these rights are basic to modern British law, e.g. the right to have a trial before being put in prison.

Robin Hood is a legendary folk hero. King Richard I (1189–1199) spent most of his reign fighting in the 'crusades' (the wars between Christians and Muslims in the Middle East). Meanwhile, England was governed by his brother John, who was unpopular because of all the taxes he imposed. According to legend, Robin Hood lived with his band of 'merry men' in Sherwood Forest outside Nottingham, stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. He was constantly hunted by the local sheriff (the royal representative) but was never captured.

The XVI century

In its first outbreak in the middle of the fourteenth century, bubonic plague (known in England as the Black Death) killed about a third of the population of Great Britain. The shortage of labour which it caused, and the increasing importance of trade and towns, weakened the traditional ties between lord and peasant. Moreover, the power of the barons was greatly weakened by the War of the Roses.

During the fifteenth century, the nobles were divided into two groups, one supporting the House of Lancaster, whose symbol was a red rose, the other the House of York, whose symbol was a white rose. Three decades of almost continual war ended in 1485, when Henry Tudor (Lancastrian) defeated and killed Richard III (Yorkist) at the Battle of Bosworth Field.

Both these developments allowed English monarchs to increase their power. The Tudor dynasty (1485–1603) established a system of government departments staffed by professionals who depended for their position on the monarch. The feudal aristocracy was no longer needed for implementing government policy. Of the traditional two “Houses” of Parliament, the Lords and the Commons, it was now more important for monarchs to get the agreement of the Commons for their policies because that was where the newly powerful merchants and landowners were represented.

The country had finally lost any realistic claim to lands in France, thus becoming more consciously a distinct ‘island nation’. It was in the last quarter of this century that Shakespeare began writing his famous plays, giving voice to the modern form of English.

Henry VIII (1491–1547) is one of the most well-known monarchs in English history, chiefly because he took six wives during his life. As a young man he was known for his love of hunting, sport and music, but he didn’t rule well. He was a natural leader but not really interested in the day-to-day running of government and this encouraged the beginnings of a professional bureaucracy. It was during his reign that the reformation took place. In the 1530s, Henry used Parliament to pass laws which swept away the power of the Roman Church in England. However, his quarrel with Rome was nothing to do with the doctrine. It was because he wanted to be free of his wife Catherine of Aragon, who gave him only a daughter, later Mary I, but could not give him a son. But the Pope refused to give him the necessary permission for this, so Henry took England out of the Roman Catholic Church and made himself head of the Church in England. All church lands came under his control and gave him a large source of income. Henry divorced Catherine of Aragon and married Anne Boleyn in 1533. They had a daughter, later Elizabeth I.

Elizabeth I (1533–1603), was the first of three long-reigning queens (1588–1603) in British history (the other two are Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II). During her reign the country's economy grew very strong. The arts were very active, And England became firmly protestant and confident in the world affairs. However Elizabeth is often seen as a very lonely figure and is known as the 'Virgin Queen' because she never married, although she is know to have had relationships with the Earl of Leicester and, later in life with the Earl of Essex.

The Spanish Armada, a fleet of 129 ships sent by Spain to attack England in 1588, is defeated by the English navy (with the help of a violent storm). The word 'armada' is now often used to mean any large group of ships.

The XVII century

In the seventeenth century, Parliament established its supremacy over the monarchy. Anger grew in the country at the way the Stuart monarchs raised money without, as tradition prescribed, getting the agreement of the House of Commons first. In addition, ideological Protestantism, especially Puritanism, had grown in England. Puritans regarded the luxurious lifestyle of the king and his followers as immortal.

This conflict led to the Civil War, which ended with complete victory for the parliamentary forces. Charles I became the first monarch in Europe to be executed after a formal trial for crimes against his people. The leader of the parliamentary army, Oliver Cromwell, became 'Lord Protector' of a republic with a military government which effectively encompassed all of Britain and Ireland.

By the Cromwell died, he, his system of government, and the puritan ethics that went with it (theatres and other forms of enter-

tainment had been banned) had become so unpopular that the executed king's son was asked to return and become King Charles II.

However, the conflict between the monarch and Parliament soon re-emerged in the reign of Charles II's brother, James II. James tried to give full rights to Catholics, and to promote them in his government. The 'Glorious Revolution' ('glorious' because it was bloodless) followed, in which Prince William of Orange, ruler of the Netherlands, and his Stuart wife Mary accepted Parliament's invitation to become king and queen. Parliament immediately drew up a Bill of Rights, which limited some of the monarch's power.

The XVIII century

In 1707, the Act of Union was passed. Under this agreement the two kingdoms of England and Scotland became one 'United Kingdom of Great Britain'.

Politically, the eighteenth century was stable. Within Parliament, the bitter divisions of the previous century were echoed in the formation of two vaguely opposed, loose collections of allies. One group, the Whigs, were the political 'descendants' of the parliamentarians. They supported the Protestant values of hard work and thrift, believed in government by monarch and aristocracy together. The other group, the Tories, had a greater respect for the idea of monarchy and the importance of the Anglican Church. This was the beginning of the party system in Britain.

The monarchs of the eighteenth century were Hanoverian Germans with interests on the European continent. The first of them, George I, could not even speak English. Perhaps this situation encouraged the habit whereby the monarch appointed one principal, or 'prime', minister from the ranks of Parliament to head his government. It was also during this century that the system of an

annual budget drawn up by the monarch's Treasury officials for the approval of Parliament was established.

It was cultural change that was most marked in this century. Britain gradually acquired an empire in the Americas, along the west African coast and in India. The greatly increased trade that this allowed was one factor which led to the Industrial Revolution. Other factors were the many technical innovations in manufacture and transport.

In England, the growth of the industrial mode of production, together with advances in agriculture, caused the greatest upheaval in the pattern of everyday life. Areas of common land, which had been used by everybody in a village for the grazing of animals, disappeared as landowners incorporated them into their increasingly large and more efficient farms. (There remain some pieces of common land in Britain today, used mainly as parks. They are often called 'the common'.) Millions moved from rural areas into new towns and cities. Most of these were in the north of England, where the raw materials for industry were available. In this way, the north of the country, which had previously been economically backward, became the industrial heartland of the country. In the south of England, London came to dominate, not as an industrial centre, but as a business and trading centre.

The XIX century

Not long before this century began, Britain lost its most important colonies (north American ones) in a war of independence. But nevertheless, it controlled the biggest empire the world had ever seen.

One section of this empire was Ireland. Another part of the empire was made up of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where British settlers had become the majority population. Another was

India, an enormous country with a culture more ancient than Britain's. Tens of thousands of British civil servants and troops were used to govern it. Large parts of Africa also belonged to the empire. Except for South Africa, where there was some British settlement, most of Britain's African colonies started as trading bases on the coast, and were only incorporated into the empire at the end of the century. As well as these areas, the empire included numerous smaller areas and islands. Some, such as those in the Caribbean, were the result of earlier British settlement, but most were included because of their strategic position along trading routes.

The growth of the empire was encouraged by a change in attitude during the century. Previously, colonization had been a matter of settlement, commerce, or military strategy. The aim was simply to possess territory, but not necessarily to govern it. By the end of the century, colonization was seen as a matter of destiny. During the century, Britain became the world's foremost economic power. This, together with long years of political stability unequalled anywhere else in Europe, gave the British a sense of supreme confidence, even arrogance, about their culture and civilization. The British came to see themselves as having a duty to spread this culture and civilization around the world. Being the rulers of an empire was therefore a matter of moral obligation.

The White Man's Burden. Here are some lines from the poem of this title by Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936).

*Take up the White Man's Burden –
Send forth the best ye breed –
Go, bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness
On fluttered folk and wild –
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.*

Other races, the poem says, are 'wild' and have a 'need' to be civilized. The white man's duty is to 'serve' in this role.

There were great changes in social structure. Most people lived in towns and cities. The owners of industries and the growing middle class of tradespeople and professionals held the real power in the country. Along with their power went a set of values which emphasized hard work, thrift, religious observance, the family, and awareness of one's duty, absolute honesty in public life, and extreme respectability in sexual matters. This is a set of values which are now called Victorian.

Queen Victoria reigned from 1837-1901. During her reign, altogether the modern powerlessness of the monarch was confirmed (she was sometimes forced to accept as Prime Minister people, whom she herself personally disliked), she herself became an increasingly popular symbol of Britain's success in the world. As a hard-working, religious mother of ten children, devoted to her husband, Prince Albert, she was regarded as the personification of contemporary morals. The idea that the monarch should set an example to the people in such matters was unknown before this time and has created problems for the monarchy since then.

Slavery and the laws against people on the basis of religion were abolished, and laws were made to protect workers from some of the worst excesses of the industrial mode of production. Public services such as the post and the police were begun. Despite reform, many people lived and worked in very unpleasant surroundings.

In 1829 Robert Peel, a government minister, organized the first modern police force. The police are still sometimes known today as 'bobbies' ('Bobby' is a short form of the name 'Robert').

1833. The first law regulating factory working conditions limits the number of hours that children are allowed to work.

1868. The TUC (Trades Union Congress) is formed.

The XX century

Around the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain ceased to be the world's richest country. The British Empire reached its greatest extent in 1919. By this time, however, it was already becoming less of an empire and more of a confederation. At international conferences Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa were all represented separately from Britain.

A couple of years later, Britain lost most of its oldest colony, Ireland. In 1920, the British government partitioned the country between the (Catholic) south and the (Protestant) six counties, giving each part some control of its internal affairs. But this was no longer enough for the south. War followed. The eventual result was that in 1922, the south became independent from Britain. The six counties, however, remained within the United Kingdom. They became the British province of Northern Ireland.

The real dismantling of the empire took place in the 25 years following the Second World War. In the same period, it gradually became clear that Britain was no longer a 'superpower' in the world.

At the end of the century in 1997, Britain handed Hong Kong back to China, thus losing its last imperial possession of any significance.

It was from the start of the twentieth century that the urban working class finally began to make its voice heard. In Parliament, the Labour party gradually replaced the Liberals (the 'descendants' of the Whigs) as the main opposition to the Conservatives (the 'descendants' of the Tories). In addition, trade unions managed to organize themselves. In 1926, they were powerful enough to hold a General Strike, and from 1930s until the 1980s the Trade Union Congress was probably the single most powerful political force

outside the institutions of government and Parliament. Since then, the working class has faded as a political force.

In the 1960s Britain decided to ask for membership of the newly-formed European Communities. There was opposition to the idea from those who argued that Britain was an 'island nation' and thus essentially different in outlook from nations in mainland Europe. Finally, ten years after its first application, Britain joined the European Economic Community in 1973.

Britain's colonial past. Food from the colonies

How did the following everyday foods shape the history of Britain, Ireland and the USA? How could these things have helped to spread British influence around the world?

Spices

In 1600 the East India Company was formed under Elizabeth I to compete with Dutch traders in the oriental spice trade. The company was given a monopoly on all goods imported to England from Asia. From the 1750s the company became more ambitious, starting to invade and conquer parts of India. It was now the biggest company in the world, and also the unofficial arm of the British government. When Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837, the whole of India was under the British rule, and she was made Empress of India. When she died in 1901, the British Empire had expanded so much that it included one fifth of the total population of the world.

Sugar

As tea and coffee grew in popularity in Britain in the 18th century, the demand for sugar to sweeten them also grew. Sugar plantations in the West Indies owned by European colonists needed more workers, so their owners imported slaves from West Africa. A

circular trade developed and islands such as Jamaica and the Bahamas became British colonies. Ships from Britain carried cotton and metal goods to Africa, where they were traded for slaves, who were taken on a three-month voyage to the West Indies. They were traded with the plantation owners for sugar and the sugar returned to Britain. Georgian Britain, especially the ports of Liverpool and Bristol, grew rich on the profits of the slave trade, turning a blind eye to the cruelty and suffering involved.

Tea

The East India Company also held a monopoly on the import of Chinese tea which became popular and fashionable in the 18th century. Trading posts around China such as Singapore and Hong Kong soon became colonies. At the same time, people in America, which the British had colonized in Elizabethan times, were protesting about high taxes on the import of common goods from England. A revolutionary group called the Sons of Liberty began turning back British tea ships from American ports, and in 1773 they threw tea worth thousand of pounds in Boston Harbour. The “Boston Tea Party” was the first of many acts of rebellion that quickly led to war with England and, in 1776, to American independence.

Potatoes

Potatoes, originally from Colombia, were introduced to England by Elizabethan explorers. Sir Walter Raleigh grew them on his land in Ireland, which in those days was under British rule. The Irish, poor and constantly at war internally or with the English, began to rely on this crop, which was easy to grow and produced a good yield. The poorest families ate nothing else. But in the 1840s a fungus infected the crops and more than one million people died of hunger. Another two million emigrated, mostly to North America, and a de-populated Ireland remained under British rule until 1922.

Questions

1. What is the attitude of the people in Britain to the prehistoric period in its history?
2. How great was the Roman influence on England?
3. What Germanic invasions took place in the fifth and the eighth centuries? What changes did they bring?
4. What roles did King Arthur and King Alfred play in the history of the country?
5. Why is the year 1066 the most famous date in English history?
6. What was the impact of the Norman invasion?
7. What language became the dominant one in England?
8. What was the Magna Carta?
9. When did Parliament start to evolve?
10. Who was Robin Hood?
11. What helped English monarchs to increase their power?
12. What House of Parliament was more important for the monarchs? Why?
13. What was the role of Henry VIII in English history?
14. What was the role of Elizabeth I in English history?
15. What was the political situation in the seventeenth century be like?
16. What led to the Civil War?
17. What were the results of the Civil War?
18. What happened after Oliver Cromwell's death?
19. What two parties were formed in Parliament?
20. What cultural and economic change was most marked in the XVII century?
21. How great was the British Empire in the nineteenth century?

22. What was the attitude of the British to the peoples in their colonies?
23. What social changes took place in the XIX century?
24. What was the role of Queen Victoria?
25. What values are now called Victorian?
26. What happened to the British Empire in the XX century?
27. What role did the urban working class play in the middle of the XX century? How important political force was the Trade Union Congress?
28. Who was Pero?
29. What is significant about naming a bridge after him?
30. Why was 1997 an appropriate year to put up a plaque in memory of African slaves?
31. What position did Ian White have in 1997?
32. What do you think Philippa Gregory's book is about?
33. Who was Edward Colston?
34. What does the writer of the letter think about Edward Colston?

•~• Wars of the Roses •~•

A quarrel between the families of York and Lancaster over the right to occupy the English throne brought on a series of cruel civil wars in England in the years 1455 to 1485. The emblem of the Yorkists was a white rose and that of the Lancastrians a red rose. Because of this the wars were called the Wars of the Roses.

The families of York and Lancaster were descended from King Edward III. Henry VI, head of the Lancastrians, represented the third line of descent from Edward III. Richard, duke of York, was descended through his mother from the fourth son. Thus the Yorkists had a better claim to the throne than the Lancastrians, though they

had been passed over in 1399 when Richard II was deposed. The Yorkists would have won no backing later if it had not been for the failure of the English armies in the Hundred Years' War, the mental and physical weakness of King Henry VI, and the excessive taxation and misrule at home.

At first Richard of York planned merely to take the government from incapable persons and secure it for himself. Later his ambition was to seize the crown. His ablest supporter was the earl of Warwick. The earl played so important a part, first on one side and then on the other, that he was called the Kingmaker. On the Lancastrian side the real head of the party was Queen Margaret, a young and beautiful Frenchwoman who fiercely resisted attempts to dethrone her husband, Henry VI, and disinherit her son, Edward.

The struggle began when Richard of York won the battle of St Albans in 1455 and secured control of the government. Four years later the contest was renewed. Richard was finally killed by the forces of Queen Margaret at Wakefield in 1460. His son, however – with Warwick's help – became king as Edward IV, the first of the Yorkist line. Henry VI was imprisoned. Then Warwick quarreled with Edward IV and helped Queen Margaret drive him from England and restore Henry VI in 1470. The next year Edward returned, and Warwick was killed in battle. King Henry's son was murdered at Tewkesbury in 1471. Queen Margaret's forces were destroyed, and she was captured. Several Lancastrians were executed. The king himself was assassinated on the day that Edward IV reentered London and seized the throne once again.

This ended the first period of the struggle. Fourteen years later war broke out again. Henry Tudor, the last Lancastrian representative, defeated and killed Richard III, the last Yorkist king, at the Battle of Bosworth Field on August 22, 1485. The victor became king

as Henry VII, thus ending the Wars of the Roses. The following year Henry married Elizabeth of York, the daughter of Edward IV. After this marriage the white and the red roses were united in the rose of the Tudors, the emblem of a new line of English kings.

The Wars of the Roses broke the feudal power of the nobles and effectively marked the end of the Middle Ages in England. Many of the ruling nobles had been slain during the wars, and their estates were confiscated by the Crown.

Lawlessness had torn England since the beginning of the Hundred Years' War. It grew even worse during the Wars of the Roses. Not enough able leaders remained to maintain law and order. It was said that "few would venture alone into the country by day and fewer still into the towns by night". The people longed for a strong government that would bring peace and prosperity. Henry VII seized the opportunity to reestablish the royal power and to launch policies that marked the beginning of modern England.

Questions

1. What were the emblems of the Yorkists and Lancastrians in the Wars of the Roses?
2. Why did the Wars of the Roses break out between the families of York and Lancaster?
3. How did Richard, duke of York, have a better claim to the throne than Henry VI?
4. Who was known as the "Kingmaker" during the Wars of the Roses and why?
5. What role did Queen Margaret play in the conflict between the Yorkists and Lancastrians?
6. How did Edward IV come to power after his father's death at Wakefield?

7. How did the marriage between Henry VII and Elizabeth of York symbolize the end of the Wars of the Roses?

•~• House of Tudor •~•

House of Tudor, an English royal dynasty of Welsh origin, which gave five sovereigns to England: Henry VII (reigned 1485–1509); his son, Henry VIII (1509–1547); followed by Henry VIII's three children, Edward VI (1547–1553), Mary I (1553–1558), and Elizabeth I (1558–1603).

The origins of the Tudors can be traced to the 13th century, but the family's dynastic fortunes were established by Owen Tudor (c. 1400–1461), a Welsh adventurer who took service with Kings Henry V and Henry VI and fought on the Lancastrian side in the Wars of the Roses; he was beheaded after the Yorkist victory at Mortimer's Cross (1461). Owen had married Henry V's Lancastrian widow, Catherine of Valois; and their eldest son, Edmund (c. 1430–1456), was created Earl of Richmond by Henry VI and married Margaret Beaufort, the Lady Margaret, who, as great-granddaughter of Edward III's son John of Gaunt, held a distant claim to the throne, as a Lancastrian. Their only child, Henry Tudor, was born after Edmund's death. In 1485 Henry led an invasion against the Yorkist king Richard III and defeated him at Bosworth Field. As Henry VII, he claimed the throne by just title of inheritance and by the judgment of God given in battle, and he cemented his claim by marrying Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV and heiress of the House of York. The Tudor rose symbolized the union by representing the red rose of the Lancastrians superimposed upon the white rose of the Yorkists.

The Tudor dynasty was marked by Henry VIII's break with the papacy in Rome (1534) and the beginning of the English Reformation, which, after turns and trials, culminated in the

establishment of the Anglican church under Elizabeth I. The period witnessed the high point of the English Renaissance. During Elizabeth's reign, too, through a generation of wars, Spain and the Irish rebels were beaten, the independence of France and of the Dutch was secure, and the unity of England was assured.

By act of Parliament (1544) and his own will and testament, Henry VIII left the crown to his three children in turn – Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I – and provided that, in the event that they died without issue, the crown would pass to the descendants of his younger sister, Mary, before those of his elder sister, Margaret, widow of James IV of Scotland. During her reign, Elizabeth refused to choose between Edward Seymour, Lord Beauchamp (descendant of Mary) and King James VI of Scotland (descendant of Margaret) – the former being the heir under Henry VIII's will and act of succession and the latter being the heir by strict hereditary succession. On her deathbed, however, she selected the king of Scotland – who became James I of Great Britain, first of the English House of Stuart.

Questions

1. Who were the five sovereigns of England from the House of Tudor?
2. What was Owen Tudor's role in establishing the Tudor dynasty?
3. How did Henry VII claim the throne and solidify his position as king?
4. What significant event marked Henry VIII's reign with regards to religion?
5. How did the Tudor rose symbolize the union between Lancastrians and Yorkists?
6. What were some key accomplishments during Elizabeth I's reign?

7. How did the succession plan for the English crown change under Henry VIII?

•~• House of Stuart •~•

House of Stuart, royal house of Scotland from 1371 and of England from 1603. It was interrupted in 1649 by the establishment of the Commonwealth but was restored in 1660. It ended in 1714, when the British crown passed to the house of Hanover.

The first spelling of the family name was undoubtedly Stewart, the old Scots version, but during the 16th century French influence led to the adoption of the spellings Stuart and Steuart, because of the absence of the letter “w” in the French alphabet.

The family can be traced back to 11th century Brittany, where for at least four generations they were stewards to the counts of Dol. In the early 12th century they appeared in England, and Walter, third son of the 4th steward of Dol, entered the service of David I, king of Scots, and was later appointed his steward, an office that was confirmed to his family by King Malcolm IV in 1157. Walter (died 1326), the 6th steward, married Marjory, daughter of King Robert I (the Bruce), in 1315, and in 1371 their son Robert, as King Robert II, became the first Stewart king of Scotland. The royal Stewarts had an unlucky history, dogged by sudden death; and seven succeeded to the throne as minors.

The direct male line terminated with the death of James V in 1542. His daughter Mary, Queen of Scots (died 1587), was succeeded in 1567 by her only son (by Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley), James VI.

In 1603 James VI, through his great-grandmother Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII of England, inherited the English throne as King James I. After the execution (1649) of James’s son Charles I, the Stuarts were excluded from the throne until the

restoration of Charles II in 1660. Charles I was succeeded in 1685 by his Roman Catholic brother James II (died 1701), who so alienated the sympathies of his subjects that in 1688 William, prince of Orange, was invited to come “to the rescue of the laws and religion of England”. James fled, and by the Bill of Rights (1689) and the Act of Settlement (1701), which denied the crown to any Roman Catholic, he and his descendants were excluded from the throne. But Stuarts still ruled in England and Scotland, for William was the son of Charles II’s sister Mary, and his wife Mary was James II’s elder daughter. They became joint sovereigns as William III and Mary II. They left no issue, and the Act of Settlement secured the succession to Mary’s sister Anne (died 1714) and on her death without issue to Sophia, electress of Hanover, a granddaughter of James I; Sophia’s son and heir became George I, first of the British house of Hanover.

The last male Stuarts of the British royal line were James II’s son James Edward (died 1766), the Old Pretender, and his sons Charles Edward (died 1788), the Young Pretender (known as Bonnie Prince Charlie), who died without legitimate issue, and Henry (died 1807), Cardinal Duke of York.

Questions

1. How did the House of Stuart come to an end in 1714?
2. What led to the adoption of the spellings Stuart and Steuart during the 16th century?
3. Who was Walter, and what role did he play in Scottish history?
4. Why were the royal Stewarts considered to have an unlucky history?
5. How did James VI become King James I of England in 1603?
6. What events led to the exclusion of the Stuarts from the English throne until the restoration of Charles II in 1660?

7. What measures were taken by the Bill of Rights (1689) and the Act of Settlement (1701) regarding the succession to the British throne?

•~• House of Hanover •~•

House of Hanover, British royal house of German origin, descended from George Louis, elector of Hanover, who succeeded to the British crown, as George I, in 1714. The dynasty provided six monarchs: George I (reigned 1714–1727), George II (reigned 1727–1760), George III (reigned 1760–1820), George IV (reigned 1820–1830), William IV (reigned 1830–1837), and Victoria (reigned 1837–1901). It was succeeded by the house of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, which was renamed in 1917 the house of Windsor.

After the English Revolution of 1688–1689, the Act of Settlement of 1701 secured the English crown to Protestants. It made Anne (of the house of Stuart) the heir presumptive; and, if she lacked issue, the crown was to go to Sophia, electress of Hanover (granddaughter of James I), and her descendants, passing over many Roman Catholics in the normal line of succession. The electress predeceased Anne by two months, and the crown went to Sophia's son, George I. The first two Georges were considered foreigners, especially by many Scots, and in 1715 and 1745 the Stuart claimants – James Edward, the Old Pretender, and Charles Edward, the Young Pretender – vainly attempted to regain the throne. George III, born in England, achieved wider British recognition.

Hanover (an electorate, which became a kingdom in 1814) was joined to the British crown until 1837. In that year Victoria inherited the British crown but, by continental Salic Law, was barred as a woman from succession to Hanover, which went to William IV's brother, Ernest Augustus, duke of Cumberland.

Questions

1. Who was the first monarch of the House of Hanover?
2. How many monarchs did the House of Hanover provide to the British crown?
3. What event secured the English crown to Protestants and led to the succession of the House of Hanover?
4. Why were the first two Georges considered foreigners by some, especially in Scotland?
5. Who was supposed to be the heir presumptive after Anne of the house of Stuart according to the Act of Settlement of 1701?
6. What attempts were made by the Stuart claimants to regain the throne during the reign of the House of Hanover?
7. How was Victoria affected by continental Salic Law in terms of her succession to Hanover?

•~• Roman Britain •~•

Roman Britain, Latin Britannia, area of the island of Great Britain that was under Roman rule from the conquest of Claudius in 43 CE to the withdrawal of imperial authority by Honorius in 410 CE.

The Roman conquest of northern Gaul (58–50 BCE) brought Britain into definite contact with the Mediterranean. It was already closely connected with Gaul, and, when Roman civilization and its products invaded Gallia Belgica, they passed on easily to Britain. British coins then began to bear Latin legends, and, after Julius Caesar's raids in 55 and 54 BCE, the Romans began to regard Britain's southern tribes as vassals. However, these tribes do not seem to have regarded themselves as such, and the direct imposition of Roman rule was delayed. The emperor Augustus planned it, but

both he and his successor, Tiberius, realized that the greater need was to consolidate the existing empire and absorb the vast additions recently made to it by Pompey, Caesar, and Augustus.

The Roman conquest of Britain

Preparations for the Roman conquest of Britain had been started and then canceled by the emperor Caligula, and the invasion was finally undertaken by Claudius in 43 CE. Two causes coincided to produce the action: Claudius desired the political prestige of an outstanding conquest; and Cunobelinus, a pro-Roman prince (known to literature as Cymbeline), had just been succeeded by two of his sons, Caratacus and Togodumnus, who were hostile to Rome. Cunobelinus's sons had expelled Verica, a Roman client king, and were blamed for raids upon Gaul which were then taking place from across the English Channel.

Aulus Plautius, with a well-equipped army of about 40,000 men, landed in Kent and advanced on the Thames, crossing at the site of Londinium (London). Claudius himself appeared there – the one emperor of the 1st century who crossed the ocean – and the army moved through Essex to capture the native capital, Camulodunum (now Colchester). From the bases of London and Colchester the legions and their auxiliaries continued the conquest. On the left wing, the 2nd Legion (under Vespasian, afterward emperor), subdued the south; in the centre, the 14th and 20th Legions pacified the Midlands; on the right wing, the 9th Legion advanced through the eastern part of the island.

This strategy was at first triumphant. The lowlands of Britain, with a partly Romanized population and easy terrain, presented no obstacle. Within three or four years everything south of the Humber estuary and east of the River Severn had been either directly annexed or entrusted, as protectorates, to native client princes.

Farther north, even the Brigantes in the area of the Pennine range came into the sphere of client realms. The peoples of Wales, notably the Silures, offered fiercer resistance, and there followed more than 30 years of intermittent fighting (47–79 CE). The precise details of the struggle are not known. Legionary fortresses were established at Gloucester, Wroxeter (until 66 CE at least), and Lincoln. Later bases included Caerleon, Chester, and York. The method of conquest was the erection and maintenance of small detached forts in strategic positions, each garrisoned by 500 or 1,000 Roman legionaries and auxiliaries.

Progress was delayed in 60–61 CE by a revolt in the nominally conquered lowlands led by Queen Boudicca of the Iceni. Boudicca's forces burned Colchester, St Albans (Verulamium), and London and destroyed the 9th Legion. Provincial Governor Suetonius Paulinus, who had been campaigning in Anglesey, returned to crush the rebellion, but the government was obviously afraid for a while to move its garrisons forward. Indeed, other needs of the empire caused the withdrawal of the 14th Legion in 69 CE. But the decade 70–80 CE was decisive. A succession of three generals commanded an army which was restored to full strength by the addition of the 2nd Legion (Legio II Adiutrix) and achieved the final subjugation of Wales and the first conquest of Yorkshire.

The third and probably the ablest of these generals, Gnaeus Julius Agricola, moved in 79 CE to the conquest of the farther north. He built forts in Cumberland and Durham, began the network of roads, held down the north, and pushed on into Scotland. There he established between the rivers Clyde and Forth a temporary frontier that was guarded by a line of posts, the most certainly identifiable of which was at Bar Hill in Dunbartonshire. He advanced into Caledonia and won a victory against the Picts at Mons Graupius,

the site of which is unidentified but was not south of the approaches to the county of Banff. He even dreamed of invading Ireland and thought it would be an easy task. He prepared for it by the conquest of southwestern Scotland with forts at Loudoun Hill, Ayrshire; Dalswinton, Dumfriesshire; and Glenlochar and Gatehouse-of-Fleet, Kirkcudbrightshire. His permanent occupation of Scotland enveloped Strathmore, the large valley in central Scotland stretching from southwest to northeast through the counties of Perthshire, Angus, and Kincardineshire.

Military areas

Geographically, Britain consists of two parts: (1) the comparatively flat lowlands of the south, east, and midlands, suitable for agriculture and open to the continent, i. e., to the rest of the Roman Empire, and (2) the area comprising Devon, Cornwall, Wales, and northern England. These latter regions lie more – often very much more – than 600 feet (183 metres) above sea level and are scarred with gorges and deep valleys. They are mountainous in character and difficult for armies to traverse. The lowlands were conquered easily and quickly, though the midlands were garrisoned until about 79 CE. The uplands were hardly subdued completely until the end of the 2nd century. They differ, moreover, in the character of their Roman occupation. The lowlands were the scene of civil life. Towns, villages, and country houses were their prominent features; troops were hardly seen in them save in some fortresses on the edge of the hills and in a chain of forts built in the 4th century to defend the south and southeast coast, the so-called Saxon Shore. The uplands of Wales and the north were an entirely different matter. There civil life straggled into Glamorgan and Pembrokeshire and even touched Brecknockshire, while in the north it penetrated as far as County Durham. The hills, however, were one extensive military frontier,

covered with forts and the strategic roads that connected them. Only the trading settlements outside the forts afforded any hint of organized Roman communities.

Roman roads

The road system was laid out to meet the strategy of Roman conquest, which was carried out in stages.

There were four main groups of roads radiating from London and a fifth which ran obliquely. These roads and their various branches provided adequate communication throughout lowland Britain. Besides these detached forts and their connecting roads, the north of Britain was defended by Hadrian's Wall.

Life in Roman Britain

Behind this formidable garrison, sheltered from barbarians and in easy contact with the Roman Empire, stretched the lowlands of southern and eastern Britain. There Roman culture spread. In the lands looking on to the Thames estuary (Kent, Essex, Middlesex), the process had perhaps begun before the Roman conquest. It was continued after that event, and in two ways. To some extent it was encouraged by the Roman government, which founded towns settled with Roman citizens – generally discharged legionaries – and endowed them with franchise and constitution like those of Italian municipalities. It developed still more by its own volition. The coherent civilization of the Romans was accepted by the British tribal notables, as it was by the Gauls, with something like enthusiasm. Encouraged perhaps by sympathetic Romans, spurred on still more by their own interests, they began to speak Latin, to use the material resources of Roman city life, and presently to consider themselves not as unwilling subjects of a foreign empire but as British members of the Roman state.

The steps by which these results were reached can to some extent be dated. In 49 CE a colonia, or municipality of time-expired soldiers, had been planted in the old native capital of Colchester, and, though it served at first mainly as a fortress and thus provoked British hatred, it soon came to exercise a romanizing influence. At the same time the British town of St Albans (Verulamium) was thought sufficiently romanized to receive the status of a municipium, which at this period differed little from that of a colonia. London became important. Romanized Britons were numerous; in the great revolt of Boudicca (60–61 CE) the rebels massacred many thousands of them along with actual Romans. The movement increased over the next 15 to 20 years. Tribal capitals sprang up, such as Silchester, laid out in Roman fashion, furnished with public buildings of Roman type, and filled with houses which were Roman in fittings if not in plan. The hot springs of Bath (Aquae Sulis) were exploited. Another colonia was planted under Domitian (emperor 81–96 CE) at Lincoln (Lindum), and a third at Gloucester in 96. The fourth, established on the west bank of the Ouse at York, belongs to the early 3rd century and marked the upgrading of an existing town. A series of judicial legates were appointed to attend to the increasing civil business.

After the 2nd century, Hadrian and his successors consolidated Roman gains despite the repeated risings in the north, and country houses and farms became common in most parts of the Romanized area. By the beginning of the 4th century, the skilled artisans and builders and the cloth and corn of Britain were famous on the continent. This probably was the age when the prosperity and romanization of the province reached its height. The town populations and the educated landowning class spoke Latin, and the people of Britain regarded it as a Roman land, inhabited by Romans. The civilization which had thus spread over half the island was identical

in kind to that of the other western provinces of the empire, and in particular with that of northern Gaul.

The administration of the Romanized part of the province, while nominally subject to the governor of all Britain, was practically entrusted to local authorities. Each Roman municipality ruled itself and a territory, perhaps as large as a small county, which belonged to it. Some districts formed part of the imperial domains and were administered by agents of the emperor. By far the larger portion of the country was divided up among the old native tribes or cantons, about 10 or 12 in number, each grouped around a country town where its council (*ordo*) met for cantonal business. This system closely resembles that of Gaul. It is a native element recast in Roman form and well illustrates the Roman principle of local government by devolution.

Urban development

London was a rich and important trading town, centre of the road system and of the finance officials of the province, while Bath was a spa provided with splendid baths and a richly adorned temple of Sulis, goddess of the hot springs, whom the Romans called Minerva. Many smaller places within the cantons, for example Kenchester (*Magna*) near Hereford, Rochester (*Durobrivae*) in Kent, Chesterton near Peterborough, Great Chesterford near Cambridge, and Alchester near Oxford, exhibited some measure of town life and served as markets or centres of tax collection.

Christianity

By the mid-20th century, archaeological evidence of Christianity had been found, notably the wall paintings discovered at Lullingstone, Kent, to supplement the isolated literary references of early date (i.e., those of Tertullian and Origen, writing at the

beginning and middle of the 3rd century, respectively). These point to the beginnings of Christianity in Britain, but the evidence, especially for the period before Constantine I (sole emperor 323–337).

Romano-British art

The term Romano-British art embraces objects of varied character and provenance because it includes not only works which were purely British – that is, made in Britain by British craftsmen – but also works made in Britain by immigrants from Gaul, the Mediterranean, and even the Middle East. Imported provincial (e.g., Gaulish and Rhenish) work shows in varying degrees the influence of Greek and Greco-Roman art, as well as a large number of imported objects of actual Greco-Roman workmanship. Art in Roman Britain includes sculpture in the round and relief sculpture (particularly on tombstones, sarcophagi, and the like) in marble and stone; sculpture in bronze; fresco painting, mosaics, carved objects in bone, ivory, and native shale and jet; ceremonial armour (such as the 1st century bronze parade masks from Ribchester, in the British Museum, and from Newstead, in the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh); vessels of metal and glass for domestic and ceremonial use and pottery; as well as a host of small objects (such as brooches, rings, and toilet articles) for personal adornment and other uses.

The naturalism which, having its origins in classical Greek sculpture, animated such works as these often prevailed over the native tendency toward the abstract and the formalized to produce in Britain works showing a high degree of naturalism and classical restraint.

Excavation of the sites of Roman villas in Britain has revealed examples of mosaic pavements, many of them depicting figure subjects chosen from classical mythology, such as the 4th century

pavements from Aldborough representing the nine Muses and that from Lullingstone, showing the abduction of Europa.

Questions

1. Who conquered Roman Britain in 43 CE?
2. What brought Britain to a certain contact with the Mediterranean?
3. What appeared on British coins?
4. Who were the southern tribes of Britain after the raids of Julius Caesar?
5. What was more important for the emperor and his successor?
6. Who started and canceled the preparations for the conquest of Britain?
7. By whom and in what year the invasion was undertaken?
8. Which territories were annexed or entrusted?
9. The peoples of which region offered the fiercest resistance?
10. What was the method of conquest?
11. Why was the progress of the conquest delayed?
12. Who returned to crush the rebellion?
13. Did the three generals achieve the final subjugation of Wales and the first conquest of Yorkshire?
14. The name of the ablest generals?
15. Name a few events that this general did (2-3).
16. How many parts can Britain be geographically divided into?
17. What is the lowland part of Britain suitable for?
18. Where was civilian life?
19. Were the hills one extensive military frontier?
20. How many main roads were there?
21. What did these roads provide?
22. What was provided to discharged legionnaires in the cities?

23. What happened in the cities under the influence of the Romans?
24. In which city was the colony founded?
25. What was this colony at first mainly?
26. What year was the great revolt of Boudicca?
27. Which tribal capital sprang at that time?
28. How many colonies were founded at that time?
29. What did become common in most parts of the Romanized area?
30. What language did the town populations and the educated landowning class speak?
31. Who ruled each Roman municipality?
32. What is the control system closely resembled?
33. Describe what London was like.
34. What did small towns serve for?
35. Have archaeological evidence of Christianity been discovered and where?
36. What does the definition of Romano-British art include?
37. Whose influence is demonstrated in imported provincial works?
38. What does the art of Roman Britain include?
39. Where does naturalism originate from?
40. What did the excavations at the sites of Roman villas reveal?

•~• Act of Settlement •~•

Act of Settlement, (June 12, 1701), act of Parliament that, since 1701, has regulated the succession to the throne of Great Britain.

Toward the end of 1700 William III was ill and childless; his sister-in-law, the prospective queen, Anne, had just lost her only

surviving child; and abroad the supporters of the exiled king, James II, were numerous and active. The need for the act was obvious. It decreed that, in default of issue to either William or Anne, the crown was to pass to Sophia, electress of Hanover and granddaughter of James I, and to “the heirs of her body being Protestants”. The act was thus responsible for the accession of Sophia’s son George I in 1714 – notwithstanding the claims of 57 persons closer by the rules of inheritance than Sophia and George.

In addition to settling the crown, the act contained some important constitutional provisions: (1) all future monarchs must join in communion with the Church of England; (2) if a future monarch is not a native of England, England is not obliged to engage in any war for the defense of territories (e.g., Hanover) not belonging to the crown of England; (3) judges were to hold office during good behaviour rather than at the sovereign’s pleasure, though they are subject to impeachment by both houses of Parliament; (4) impeachments by the House of Commons are not subject to pardon under the Great Seal of England (i.e., by the sovereign).

The act as originally passed contained four other clauses. One of these provided that “all matters properly cognizable in the Privy Council... shall be transacted there” and that all resolutions “shall be signed by such of the Privy Council as shall advise and consent to the same”. Another declared that all officeholders and pensioners under the Crown shall be incapable of sitting in the House of Commons. The first of these clauses, which was an attempt to destroy the growing power of the Cabinet, was repealed; and the second was seriously modified in 1706. Another clause, repealed in the reign of George I, forbade the sovereign to leave England, Scotland, or Ireland without the consent of Parliament. Finally a clause said that “no person born out of the kingdoms of England,

Scotland, or Ireland, or the dominions thereunto belonging (although he be naturalized or made a denizen), except such as are born of English parents, shall be capable to be of the Privy Council, or a member of either House of Parliament, or enjoy any office or place of trust, either civil or military, or to have any grant of lands, tenements, or hereditaments from the Crown to himself, or to any other or others in trust for him". By the Naturalization Act of 1870 this clause was virtually repealed for all persons who obtain a certificate of naturalization.

Questions

1. What was the main purpose of the Act of Settlement in 1701?
2. Who was next in line for the throne after William III and Anne, according to the act?
3. What were some important constitutional provisions included in the Act of Settlement?
4. How did the Act of Settlement impact future monarchs' relationship with the Church of England?
5. Why was it significant that judges were to hold office during good behavior rather than at the sovereign's pleasure?
6. What were the implications of the clause that forbade the sovereign from leaving England, Scotland, or Ireland without Parliament's consent?
7. What changes were made to the clauses of the Act of Settlement over time?

•~• Berkeley Castle •~•

There are many 19th century English castles built in the picturesque, medieval-gothic style of earlier times but Berkeley Castle is the real thing. The first motte-and-bailey castle was built at

Berkeley in Gloucestershire in 1067 just after the Norman Conquest by William FitzOsbern. The castle passed through three generations of this family before passing to Robert Fitzharding in 1153, the first of the branch of the Berkeley family that owns Berkeley Castle today.

Over the next few decades the castle was rebuilt and extended following a royal charter from King Henry II, who saw Berkeley Castle as a defensive stronghold in the protection of Severn Estuary, Welsh border and Bristol to Gloucester Road. The former motte was replaced by Fitzharding with a circular shell keep and later the curtain wall was added.

In 1327 Berkeley Castle keep became notorious as the site of the imprisonment and murder of King Edward II. Various accounts of this ghastly murder exist but in the most cited version Edward was killed not by his gaoler, Lord Thomas de Berkeley, but by Edward II's own wife Isabella of France and her lover Mortimer. Within the King's Gallery, a room dedicated to the unfortunate King's stay, there is a large hole that leads down into the dungeon. It is said that the corpses of both men and animals were thrown down this hole in the hope that any prisoners in the room would die of either disease or asphyxiation brought on by the fumes of the rotting corpses. It seems Edward survived his imprisonment in this disgusting room only to be stabbed to death with a hot poker while sleeping in his bed. With King Edward II out of the way, Isabella's lover Mortimer took the throne only to be ousted four years later by Isabella's legitimate son Edward III.

Following King Edward II's death his body lay in state at Berkeley Castle for a month in the Chapel of St John and was later escorted by Thomas de Berkeley to Gloucester Abbey for burial. Although accused of being involved in the murder, Thomas de Berkeley was later cleared of all charges. With this unpleasantness

behind him, Thomas de Berkeley spent the years between 1340 and 1361 expanding and improving his castle.

Within the inner bailey, backing onto the curtain wall, Thomas de Berkeley created a series of domestic rooms. The picture gallery, dining room and kitchen are all wonderful examples of 14th century interiors but it is the Great Hall that remains the core of the castle. Within the structure of the Great Hall's roof visitors can see the finest example of what is known as the 'Berkeley arch', an architectural quirk that consists of both curved and straight edges. The Great Hall also features a 15th century screen with original paintwork and a portrait of Admiral Sir George Berkeley by Gainsborough.

The great staircase leads up to the state rooms which include an original chapel, now used as a morning room, with wooden vaulted ceilings and a frieze featuring a 14th century translation of the bible from Latin to Norman French. The long and small drawing rooms have survived intact since the 14th century. Now adorned in tapestries and rugs of the Victorian Gothic era, the long drawing room features a portrait of Mary Cole who married the 5th Earl of Berkeley in secret. Mary's working class heritage and contests over the legitimacy of the secret wedding led to a trial over their children's claim to the castle. While it was ruled that the eldest son could not keep the Earldom, he did keep Berkeley and the castle remains in the Berkeley family to this day.

A final feature of Berkeley Castle that deserves mention is the breach in the castle walls. During the siege of 1645 Parliamentary forces led by Colonel Thomas Rainsborough fired cannons at point blank range into the keep and outer bailey of Alnwick Castle. An Act of Parliament following the battle decreed that the Berkeleys could retain ownership of the castle but must never repair the breach in the castle walls, and they never have.

Why is Berkeley Castle Famous?

Being the supposed site of the murder of King Edward II is enough to secure Berkeley Castle's place in most of the great tomes of English History as well as making it a sought after location for our nation's many Haunted House reality TV shows. But Berkeley Castle is also renowned for the remarkable feat of remaining in the same family since the 12th century and the preservation of its mostly 14th century architecture. Berkeley Castle is one of the most impressive medieval castles in the country, described by historical writer Simon Jenkins as Britain's own 'rose-red city half as old as time'.

Questions

1. Who built the first motte-and-bailey castle at Berkeley in Gloucestershire?
2. How did King Henry II view Berkeley Castle and why was it important to him?
3. What is the most cited version of how King Edward II was killed at Berkeley Castle?
4. After King Edward II's death, where was his body laid in state before burial?
5. Who expanded and improved Berkeley Castle between 1340 and 1361?
6. What architectural quirk can be seen within the structure of the Great Hall's roof?
7. Why did Parliament decree that the Berkeleys could retain ownership of the castle but must never repair the breach in the castle walls after the siege of 1645?

•~• Zadok the Priest •~•

Zadok the Priest, the most popular of George Frideric Handel's four coronation anthems for George II; the others of which are "Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened", "The King Shall Rejoice", and "My Heart Is Inditing". All the anthems, including "Zadok the Priest," premiered on October 11, 1727, when George II was coronated in London's Westminster Abbey. Although less widely famed abroad than Handel's Hallelujah Chorus, "Zadok the Priest", using texts from the King James Bible, blends voices and instruments into a potent musical statement. The anthem's majesty is such that it has been used for every English coronation since that of George II.

Though Handel was born in Germany, he spent most of his career in England, becoming a British subject in 1727. He had first arrived in England in 1710 with the expressed wish of learning London's musical developments for the benefit of his ostensible employer, the elector of Hanover, though Handel's visits to Hanover were few and far between. When England's Queen Anne died without immediate heirs, the throne passed to her German cousin, the elector himself, who was crowned George I and was pleased to again claim the attention of the long-absent Handel. George I's son, George II, also preferred the work of his father's longtime favourite, and he requested that Handel write music for his coronation.

Each of Handel's coronation anthems is a setting of a biblical text appropriate to the stages of the ceremony. "Zadok the Priest", its text drawn from the first chapter of 1 Kings (in the Hebrew Bible, or Christian Old Testament), served for the anointing of the new king. The music masterfully captures the ceremony's progression of moods: from an opening instrumental that builds a strong sense of anticipation, through the opening commanding choral declaration

“Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet”, and culminates in shouts of rejoicing.

Questions

1. What are the four coronation anthems composed by George Frideric Handel for George II?
2. When did all of Handel’s coronation anthems, including “Zadok the Priest”, premiere?
3. How does “Zadok the Priest” compare in popularity to Handel’s Hallelujah Chorus?
4. Why has “Zadok the Priest” been used for every English coronation since that of George II?
5. What was Handel’s reason for coming to England in 1710?
6. How did Handel become a British subject in 1727?
7. How does “Zadok the Priest” capture the progression of moods during the ceremony it was written for?

•~• John Bull •~•

John Bull (born c. 1562–1563, Radnorshire (Wales?)—died March 12/13 1628, Antwerp, Spanish Netherlands (now in Belgium)) was an English composer of outstanding technical ability and a keyboard virtuoso.

Bull was educated as a chorister of the Chapel Royal in London. In December 1582 he was appointed organist and the following month choirmaster at Hereford Cathedral; but in 1585 he returned to the Chapel Royal, where in 1591 he succeeded William Blitheman, his former music teacher, as organist. Bull became a doctor of music at the universities of both Oxford and Cambridge.

In 1596 he was appointed by Elizabeth I to the professorship of music at the newly founded Gresham College in London. In 1601

he traveled in France, Germany, and the Netherlands, where his virtuosity as a keyboard player was much admired. On his return to England he continued in the royal service, and although he resigned his professorship in 1607 in order to marry, he was evidently highly esteemed at court, being named doctor of music to the king in 1612. In 1613, however, he left England and entered the service of the Archduke Albert in Brussels. Bull remained in the Netherlands, becoming in 1616 organist at the Cathedral of Antwerp.

Little of Bull's vocal music survives, and his reputation rests on his extensive compositions for virginals and organ (some 150 extant pieces), published in *Musica Britannica* (1951). His music is distinguished less by emotional depth or freshness of invention than by an unflinching resourcefulness in devising keyboard figuration. Bull combined with an essentially conservative outlook a taste for technical experiment and the solution of unusual problems — enharmonic modulations, for example, and asymmetrical rhythmic patterns. His command of the English virginalists' technique undoubtedly had an influence on his friend and contemporary J.P. Sweelinck, the Amsterdam organist, and through him on Samuel Scheidt and the north German school.

Questions

1. What were John Bull's positions and roles in various musical institutions during his career?
2. How did John Bull's travels to France, Germany, and the Netherlands impact his reputation as a musician?
3. Why is John Bull considered an outstanding composer despite little surviving vocal music?
4. What are some characteristics of John Bull's compositions for virginals and organ?

5. How did John Bull's technical abilities influence other musicians, such as J.P. Sweelinck?

6. What prompted John Bull to leave England and enter the service of the Archduke Albert in Brussels?

7. What was the significance of John Bull's command of the English virginalists' technique on the development of keyboard music in Europe?

•~• The rise of the British Empire ~••

The British Empire was the first genuinely global empire, an empire that ranged, at times, from the American colonies in the West, Australia and New Zealand in the East, Canada and her dominions in the North and huge chunks of Africa in the South, including Egypt and Rhodesia. These huge landmasses, and many other smaller islands and places besides, were to be shaped, controlled, dominated and otherwise brought under the dominion of a nation which, prior to colonial ambitions, was a small and perhaps dull and uninspiring set of countries. That the British Empire significantly kick-started the world into the modern era, and gave the world a unifying language is not really in dispute; but the truth behind the image certainly is, and the ugly reality behind the ever-polished and very-rarely challenged veneer of respectability the British, and hence the British Empire, in some quarters have tried to maintain.

Far from Britain being historically a never-ending line of tyrants and wayward rulers, Britain has been, to some degree at any rate, a parliamentary democracy that reigned in kings and queens and rulers, and was the first to have a popular revolution, under Cromwell, in Europe. The Englishmen who started the first serious forays into venture capitalism, were little more than pirates and adventurers who plundered the Spanish main, and wanted a slice of

the wealth flowing out of the New World, of which ventures were often backed by Royal decree. Here begins the roots of the British Empire.

From ideas of empire rose the ideas of capitalism, free trade, enforced labour, rigid hierarchies, the criminalisation of the poor, and severe and almost unquestioned divides between those who had and those who did not have, both at home and abroad. That this process made many people seriously wealthy cannot be disproved, that it also made many many more people far worse off is, in reality, more important an issue to deal with.

That the legacies of empire are far reaching can be seen only too clearly in places like Ireland, Africa, India and much of the Middle East at this present time. It is when racism and prejudice are broached, that the Empire seems to come into its own; Ireland was the first serious attempt by the British Crown and Parliament, to begin a process of English colonisation, whose colonists would then take over the 'wilderness' of Ireland and use the land more profitably. The Irish were treated like the native 'Indians' a little later in America, as being 'in the way', nomads who were uncivilised, and, more importantly, who did not utilise, and particularly, did not 'own' the land they wandered. This is an important point to understand, and much rests on this 'belief', both in Ireland, America and much later Africa and other nations. The inference being, in English and British mindsets, that because nobody 'owned' the land, it was up for grabs. A simple point, but much laboured, and was the intellectual argument for such colonialism. The Englishman was a gentleman, the Irishman, and henceforth many other nationalities, was an uncivilised and uncultured brute. This 'excuse', compounded with other often faulty reasoning and intellectualising, was the reason why Englishmen sought to establish colonies that would

make them enormous profits, buy themselves into the gentry, win fame and glory, and establish their names. Such ideas of civilisation and 'gentlemanliness' being used to excuse ethnic cleansing, land grabbing, slavery and untold injustices have their reflections in most if not all empires, and are seen clearest in the 'nazification' of early 20th century Germany; when notions of superior and inferior excused the most barbarous and evil of practises.

Africa only really became a serious issue to the Empire at the end of the 19th century, but for centuries prior to this, was a source of wealth for Britain and Europe, primarily because of the slave trade, but also as a market for European goods, and as another outpost of European colonialism from the early 1600's. According to Iggy Kim and Peter Boyle, in their article "How the rich invented racism", racism has its historical roots in the development of capitalism. Slaves could be purchased cheaply and brought in unlimited numbers from Africa. In the racist mode of reasoning, the next logical step was to conclude that, somehow, blacks must have been "naturally" inferior to whites. Two other factors assisted the advance of racist ideas in the 19th century: the expansion of European capitalism to include huge colonial empires in Asia and Africa, and the development of early theories of human evolution. Gross manipulation of the latter helped justify the new global oppressive relations of imperialism.

Ports like Liverpool, Bristol, Cardiff and Glasgow, amongst no doubt many others, grew rich and powerful as a result of this trade, allowing merchants to expand, bankers to grow wealthy, companies to prosper, and many individuals to make more money than they knew what to do with; it was indeed a profitable trade, and also, more and more, a trade that is hidden from history. It is no exaggeration to say that the slave trade, and the profits it created,

helped cement the emergence of Capitalism, Britain's pre-eminence as a world empire, the beginnings of Britain's industrialisation, and the creation of a class of capitalists with untold wealth and power at their fingertips. Such unequal relations of wealth and power, creating vast divisions in Britain and around the world, would become uncomfortable realities for many people, and sooner or later would be justified or explained away in high-blown intellectual and scientific terms.

Desmond Kuah, of the National University of Singapore, writes that by the middle of the Nineteenth Century, the British Empire was the largest and richest empire in the world. This naturally gave rise to the belief that the British themselves were the chosen race chosen to bring the benefits of western civilization to the backward areas of the world. With India's conquest, in ways militarily, economic, social, ethnic and even religious, came then, as with other dominions, justifications and intellectual reasoning about British, and White European, 'natural' superiority and the 'natural' inferiority of conquered people's around the world.

In understanding and accepting the real reasons for empire, then a better understanding can be made of seeing the inherent divisions within the imperial system, and how racist and classist propaganda, to name but two, was heaped on top of centuries of brutal, merciless and systematic injustice for one real purpose, to make capital gain.

Anthony S. Wohl, Professor of History at Vassar College, writes that during the Nineteenth Century theories of race were advanced both by the scientific community and in the popular daily and periodical press. In his article *The Function of Racism in Victorian England* Professor Wohl goes on to argue that "to denigrate or point up the bestial, brute, savage nature of an outside group is to point up

our own advanced state and protect ourselves against inner fears or tensions. Racism and class prejudice, in other words, not only serve as agents of political power, but also serve as buffers between a community and a nature that seems to be getting too close to it for psychological comfort”.

Social Class ideas in Britain followed many of the arguments that racist classifications did, and were equally pored over by scientists and social theorists. In Britain, class became an issue by the early 19th century. These classes were identifiable groups, and were most notably understood in terms of inequalities in wealth, social power, political power, life expectancy, living conditions, types of job and so on. Race and Class often overlapped, as the Irish would be seen as inferior both racially and in terms of their low-social status. David Cody, Associate Professor of English, Hartwick College argues that early in the Nineteenth Century the labels “working classes” and “middle classes” were already coming into common usage. The old hereditary aristocracy, reinforced by the new gentry who owed their success to commerce, industry, and the professions, evolved into an “upper class”. Beneath the industrial workers was a submerged “under class” which lived in poverty. It could be argued that in some cases, this structure is still viable even today.

Questions

1. How did the ideas of empire give rise to capitalism and free trade?
2. What are some consequences of the process of empire on society, according to the text?
3. Why does the author mention Ireland as a significant example in discussing the legacies of empire?
4. How did the English colonists view the Irish people in terms of land ownership and civilization?

5. According to Iggy Kim and Peter Boyle, how did racism have its historical roots in the development of capitalism?

6. What were some factors that assisted the advance of racist ideas in the 19th century, as mentioned in the text?

7. How did the British Empire justify their conquests and dominions around the world, based on Desmond Kuah's perspective?

Test

1. The passage suggests that the primary motivation behind the English pursuit of colonialism was to ...

- A. Expand their religious influence and spread Christianity.
- B. Accumulate wealth, acquire social status, and establish their dominance.
- C. Civilize and educate the "uncivilized" native populations.
- D. Conduct scientific exploration and study of the newly discovered lands.

2. According to the text, which factor contributed most significantly to the advancement of racist ideas in the 19th century?

- A. The expansion of European capitalism and colonial empires.
- B. The development of early theories of human evolution.
- C. The need to justify the oppressive practices of imperialism.
- D. The desire to protect the British community from perceived internal threats.

3. The passage argues that the profits generated from the slave trade ...

- A. Had a negligible impact on the British economy and industrialization.
- B. Enriched only a small number of merchants and bankers.

C. Played a crucial role in the emergence of British capitalism and global dominance.

D. Were quickly reinvested to improve the lives of the enslaved populations.

4. The passage suggests that the justification used by the English to colonize Ireland was based on the belief that ...

A. The Irish were a superior race that needed to be assimilated.

B. The Irish were nomadic and did not properly utilize the land.

C. The Irish posed a threat to the stability of the British Isles.

D. The Irish were more technologically advanced than the English.

5. The passage indicates that the British Empire's conquest of India led to ...

A. The forced conversion of the Indian population to Christianity.

B. The systematic eradication of Indian cultural and religious practices.

C. The imposition of British social, economic, and political systems.

D. The establishment of a mutually beneficial partnership between Britain and India ...

6. The passage suggests that the intellectual arguments and reasoning used to justify British colonialism and racist practices were primarily aimed at ...

A. Promoting scientific understanding and advancing human knowledge.

B. Highlighting the inherent superiority of the British and European cultures.

C. Deflecting attention from the unjust and exploitative nature of these practices.

D. Encouraging cultural exchange and mutual understanding between the colonizers and the colonized.

7. According to the passage, the key argument made by Iggy Kim and Peter Boyle regarding the historical roots of racism is that ...

A. Racism emerged as a means to justify the oppressive global relations of imperialism.

B. Racism was a natural consequence of the development of capitalist economic systems.

C. Racism was a tool used by the powerful to maintain their social and economic dominance.

D. Racism was a result of the expansion of European colonial empires in Asia and Africa.

•~• The fall of the British Empire •~•

Now, I wish to look at how Britain's decline as a world empire, effectively in the middle of the 20th century, was and has been in many cases a smokescreen for Britain's continued economic domination of large parts of the globe, and how Britain itself to this very day exercises divisions and injustices that impoverish large sections of the British populace, both ethnic British and other ethnic minorities. And how tying all this together, and at its very heart, there is a moral vacuum at the heart of those who control mass wealth and power at all costs, even the cost of a peaceful world.

The reality of empire, both historically and at present, are so far from the rosy picture of a benign and benevolent undertaking, that an unlearned person might think they were discussing two completely different things. The reality of empire is power, and control of wealth and resources, always stacked unevenly and unjustly in favour of small groups of people. The story of the British

Empire, now as well as then, is the story of how this power was and is wielded to create class and wealth divisions in Britain, and how these divisions were and are promoted around the world, in 'superior' white and 'inferior' natives and dark-skinned peoples of the world, all for an agenda of mass profit and wealth creation for a relative few, and the vastly unequal power relations such wealth creates, in Britain and the rest of the world. How these divisions are promoted, accepted, subtly held onto, and reinforced by supposedly benign British institutions like the Church of England, the Judiciary, the Armed Forces with their rigid class structures and so on. In the days of Empire on the global scene, it was a belief that the white man was superior, sensitive, intelligent and fit to govern, but in Britain itself, it was a class structure, again promoted as benign, that held sway; the effete middle and upper class gentleman holding wealth and power and exercising dominance over his social inferiors. Class and Race are still at the heart of a divided Britain, and a divided world. On these injustices were huge fortunes made, lands appropriated, empires carved out, colonies settled and wholesale destructions of cultures and ways of life.

It is easy to attack a structure because you are not part of it, or because you or your family and so forth never really benefited from these structures. But it is the moral issue that is at stake here; the morals surrounding slavery, plantation systems, factory systems, enclosure acts, criminalisation of those left out of the enormous wealth created by Britain for centuries. Yes, it may be an issue of envy, but it is also one of injustice heaped upon further injustices, and of institutions in Britain like the Judiciary and the established Church of England, who rather than speaking out compounded the guilt by being ineffectual, obscure and often mouthpieces for the power and injustices meted out. The heart of the myth is the fallacy

of English fair play and justice. A mere glance at history, and at present day affairs shows there is only greed and naked self-interest, compounded with injustice and a lack of any real morals whatsoever. The real enemy is injustice.

In Mark Curtis' eye-opening book 'Web of Deceit: Britain's Real Role in the World', the realities of British power and greed are encapsulated in factual chapters, which have been written after studying declassified information of Britain's role in a number of global situations. This is truth, from the horse's mouth so to speak, and it does not make particularly edifying reading. As well as his page by page dissection of well-spread lies by the British elite when tackling popular uprisings in Africa, British Guiana and many other places throughout the 20th century, he criticises the media, even the liberal, intellectual and so-called independent media and journalists, for largely ignoring the injustices sown by Britain. This speaks of a bigger picture, and of the class structures within Britain itself, where individuals have colluded and conspired to ignore unpalatable realities so long as they in some ways benefited. In present day terms, we might well ask why in Britain, at the heart of a modern democracy, there are vast gulfs of wealth disparity between rich and poor, and we might ask why a country awash with wealth and resources should become even more divided than poorer countries, with an immoral class system that remains basically unquestioned at this time.

Mark Curtis writes, in his aforementioned book: "The reality is that British governments bear significant responsibility for global poverty-not only as a former colonial power that shaped many of the current unjust structures, but in their championing of a world trade system and economic ideology that enriches the few and impoverishes many more... Yet I do not think I have ever seen a

media article that mentions that Britain might in some way systematically contribute to poverty in the world. Is this not extraordinary?" Remarkable certainly, and extraordinary perhaps so, but somehow this tallies with everything anyone who merely wishes to be honest about the British Empire, and about the realities of empire; those of unequal power and wealth relations, and of little or no moral culpability or responsibility. The fuel of the British Empire was not coal or wool after all, but an incredible lack of concern for those trampled underfoot in the quest for bigger and bigger profits.

And just as Britain, like America, has traditionally backed right-wing dictators and right-wing monarchies and powers in other countries around the world, those regimes often denying even basic rights to the mass of their own people, so Britain has learnt these injustices well, and kept large amounts of British people in the dark, and in poor paying jobs, in run-down areas economically, whilst allowing other groups to prosper often unjustly at the expense of those who are politically, economically and socially oppressed. Sound familiar? I expect it does.

In Liverpool at this present time, one of the major ports at the height of Britain's imperial power, the reality of wealth creation, and of British civilisation and British society is unveiling itself in 'Regeneration' and the much-touted 'Capital of Culture'. Liverpool is a working class city, a town that, whilst a relative few made fortunes and good livings, has been a city traditionally poor, with low paying employment and few real prospects for the average citizen, both historically and at this time. The ball starts rolling when rich people can make more money, and most Liverpool people, those born-and-bred, and many more besides, see in Regeneration a cynical exercise in money making, and another gravy train for overpaid yuppies, consultants, city councillors, politicians and speculators of all kinds

and of every hue. I have personally interviewed lots of people in the city centre who have said they are being sidelined, and basically booted out of the city to make way for overpriced restaurants and trendy wine bars, and higher paying rents. This is just another in the long phase of injustice meted out by British wealth and power. That of poor and ordinary people being sidelined to make some rich people even richer, and of all the injustice and hypocrisy that all this entails; low wage economies in the world's 4th richest country, higher taxes for poor people, higher prices in Britain, an average wage in Liverpool of '9000 after the billions flooding in from Europe over the last decade and perhaps more. You may well ask why, in all of these capitalist speculations, a little more of the huge wealth floating around cannot be shared a little more fairly. And therein, in these questions, are answers to be found. They are uncomfortable answers, but true all the same, and they all point to greed, hypocrisy, injustice, breathtaking double-standards, corruption in places high and low and wilful immorality.

The aftermath of the British Empire can be seen clearly around the world, and in Britain itself, divided by unjust class and racist systems, and particularly in the 'gold rush' speculations of Liverpool's Capital of Culture. It's heart is empty, and its morals are non-existent.

Questions

1. What moral issue is at stake in the text?
2. How does the author view the role of institutions like the Judiciary and the Church of England in Britain's history?
3. Why does the author criticize the media, including liberal and independent journalists?
4. According to Mark Curtis, what responsibility do British governments bear for global poverty?

5. How does the author describe the reality of wealth creation in Liverpool during its imperial power?

6. In what ways does the author suggest that poor and ordinary people are being sidelined in Liverpool's Regeneration project?

7. What larger themes or issues does the author believe can be found in the questions raised about wealth distribution and injustice in Britain?

Test

1. The article asserts that the driving force behind Britain's imperial actions was primarily a lack of moral responsibility and concern for those "trampled underfoot in the quest for bigger and bigger profits". Which of the following best captures this argument?

A. The article suggests that Britain's imperial past was motivated by a genuine desire to spread Western values and civilization.

B. The article argues that Britain's imperial actions were driven by a thirst for knowledge and cultural understanding.

C. The article contends that Britain's imperial past was characterized by greed, hypocrisy, and a disregard for the well-being of ordinary people.

D. The article maintains that Britain's imperial actions were a result of its commitment to fair play and justice on the global stage.

2. According to the article, how does the author characterize the British media's coverage of the injustices perpetrated by Britain throughout its history?

A. The author suggests that the British media has accurately and thoroughly reported on these injustices.

B. The author argues that the British media has been overly critical and biased in its coverage of Britain's historical actions.

C. The author contends that the British media has largely ignored or downplayed the injustices committed by Britain.

D. The author maintains that the British media has been instrumental in exposing the realities of Britain's imperial past.

3. The article draws a direct connection between Britain's colonial legacy and the vast wealth disparity observed in modern-day Britain. Which of the following best summarizes this argument?

A. The article suggests that the wealth disparity in Britain is a result of the country's current economic policies and not its colonial past.

B. The article argues that the wealth disparity in Britain is a consequence of the country's democratic political system.

C. The article contends that the wealth disparity in Britain is a direct outcome of the injustices and exploitation perpetuated during the colonial era.

D. The article maintains that the wealth disparity in Britain is a reflection of the country's education system and its failure to provide equal opportunities.

4. How does the article characterize the "regeneration" of Liverpool, one of Britain's major ports during its imperial heyday?

A. The article suggests that the "regeneration" of Liverpool is a positive step towards improving the city's economy and living standards.

B. The article argues that the "regeneration" of Liverpool is a necessary and justified response to the city's historical poverty and low-wage economy.

C. The article contends that the "regeneration" of Liverpool is a cynical exercise in generating profits for the wealthy at the expense of the city's working-class residents.

D. The article maintains that the “regeneration” of Liverpool is a reflection of the city’s cultural and artistic achievements, rather than a purely economic endeavor.

5. The article suggests that Britain’s support for right-wing dictatorships and monarchies in other countries is a continuation of its colonial legacy. Which of the following best captures this argument?

A. The article argues that Britain’s support for these regimes is a necessary strategy for maintaining its global influence and power.

B. The article contends that Britain’s support for these regimes is a result of its democratic political system and commitment to upholding the rights of its citizens.

C. The article suggests that Britain’s support for these regimes is a reflection of its religious beliefs and desire to spread Western values.

D. The article maintains that Britain’s support for these regimes is a direct extension of the injustices and exploitation that characterized its colonial past.

6. The article argues that the disparity between the wealth of the few and the poverty of the many in Britain is a reflection of the country’s lack of concern for those “trampled underfoot in the quest for bigger and bigger profits”. Which of the following best captures this argument?

A. The article suggests that the wealth disparity in Britain is a result of the country’s fair and just economic system.

B. The article contends that the wealth disparity in Britain is a consequence of the country’s ineffective welfare policies.

C. The article argues that the wealth disparity in Britain is a symptom of the country’s declining industrial base and the loss of manufacturing jobs.

D. The article maintains that the wealth disparity in Britain is a direct result of the country's prioritization of profit-making over the well-being of its citizens.

•~• Ancient Britain •~•

“Deep are the roots”. Indeed, Great Britain's history dates back to 250,000 BC when first evidence of human life might occur. Britain has history like the Sahara has sand, and its history may be divided to some periods: Ancient Britain; Middle Ages Britain; the 18th century – the century of wealth, technological revolution and power; the 19th century – the Victorian age of the British Empire; the 20th century – the contemporary world; the 21st century – the century of globalization.

Ancient Britain deals with preceltic and celtic people (old stone men, new stone men, bronze men, iron men, the Picts, the Scots, the Britons); the Romans and the Roman occupation (55 BC - AD 410); the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings (410-1066); the Normans and the Battle of Hastings (1066-1154).

The greatest material monument of the ancient population of the British Isles is Stonehenge. Their priests the Druids, were skillful in teaching and administration. The material monument of the Roman times is Hadrian's Wall, which was built in the 2nd century to protect the Romans from attacks by the Scots and Picts. The Anglo-Saxon period is connected with the beginning of the United Kingdom of England. The Norman Conquest of England (1066) was the fifth and the last invasion of England. The Norman duke became king of England – William I or William the Conqueror. It was he who built the Tower of London, introduced Great Council and the Domesday Book (a complete inventory of Britain).

The Normans mixed with the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes and from this mixture the English nation emerged.

Questions

1. What is the greatest material monument?
2. When was the Hadrian`s Wall built?
3. Who became king of England?
4. How did the English nation emerge?
5. Who built the Tower of London?

•~• Middle Ages Britain •~•

Middle Ages Britain tells us about feudalism as a politico-economic system of that period; chevaliers (knights), king Arthur and their round table; the growth of towns (Oxford, Cambridge, Bedford etc); medieval guilds and occupations; commodity production and a system of payment by money; markets and fairs; wool trade as a very profitable business; main sea routes which established commercial contacts with trading towns of the world. This period named legal documents of constructional importance, which affected modern legal systems. These are the Magna Carta or the Great Charter (1215) which limited the power of the monarch; Habeas Corpus Act (1621), which guaranteed and guarantees that nobody can be held in prison without trial; the Bill of Rights (1689), one of the basic instruments of the British constitution, which limited some of the powers of the monarch.

In terms of culture in feudal England we say that: 1) the standard written language was formed; 2) William Caxton, the first printer, set up printing and printed the first book in England "The History of Troye"; 3) Latin was still the language of learning; 4) a development of folklore was connected with the Robin Hood

Cycle; 5) it was the period of English Gothic architecture (King's College Chapel in Cambridge, Westminster Abbey, etc). That period and namely the 15th century was an age of violent contrasts, the anarchy and the lack of powerful central government. The war of Roses was a vivid example of that time (1455–1485).

The Tudor age started with Henry VII, the established centralized national state and absolute monarchy. Then came Henry VIII, one of the most well-known monarchs in English history. It was during his reign that the reformation took place. Then Edward VI sat upon the throne and he became the founding father of the English-Russian relations. Henry VIII's daughter Mary was known to be Bloody Mary. In 1553 Elisabeth, daughter of Henry VIII, became Queen. She was the first of three long-reigning queens in the British history (the other two are Queen Victoria and Elizabeth II). During her reign England became very important in European politics, commerce and the arts (English Renaissance).

The 17th century was the century of the Stuart dynasty and it was in that period Parliament established its supremacy over the monarchy in Britain (Oliver Cromwell). Two political parties were formed in the 17th century: Tory and Whig. In 1688 there was the «glorious (bloodless) revolution» and the Bill of Rights was signed.

Questions

1. What did affect modern legal systems?
2. What was the one of the basic instruments of the British constitution?
3. Why was this period an age of violent contrasts, the anarchy and the lack of powerful central government?
4. When did Elisabeth, daughter of Henry VIII, become Queen?
5. Were two or three political parties formed in the 17th century?

•~• The XVIII-XX centuries •~•

The 18th century was politically stable. Economically it was marked by the development of capitalism. The 18th century was the century of wealth, technological revolution and power. England, Scotland (1707) and Wales (1536) were united and became Great Britain.

In 1714 a new dynasty of Hanoverians was established. It was the time of the cabinet system of government. The first prime minister was Robert Walpole. In the 18th century colonial expansion and the formation of the colonial empire occurred. The American colonies waged the war of Independence (1775-1783) and on the 4th of July 1776 the Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence.

In the 19th century Britannia Ruled the Waves. In 1805 Nelson defeated the French and Spanish Fleet at Cape Trafalgar. In 1813 the Duke of Wellington defeated the French army in Spain and 1815 at Waterloo. Britain became the "Workshop of the World". The 19th century was the period of Napoleonic Wars.

Queen Victoria reigned from 1837 to 1901 and was regarded as the personification of contemporary morals.

The 20th century is associated with the British Empire, the British Commonwealth and the Commonwealth of Nations. It was the time of the new dynasty Windsor. Elisabeth II became queen in 1952. In 1973 the Conservatives came to power led by Margaret Thatcher, Britain's first woman prime minister. In 1990 John Major was elected. In 1997 the Labour Party won by a landslide. Tony Blair became Prime Minister.

Here are the main milestones.

1971 – decimal currency is introduced;

1973 – Britain joins the European Economic Community;

1981 – marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer;

1994 – Channel tunnel opens.

Questions

1. When is decimal currency introduced?
2. Where did the Duke of Wellington defeat the French army?
3. Were England, Scotland and Wales united?
4. What occurred in the 18th century colonial?
5. What did the American colonies wage on the 4th of July 1776?

•~• Britain in the 21st century ~••

As a relatively small trading nation without much in the way of natural resources Great Britain must compete and innovate to make a living. It retains a post-imperial habit of thinking and investing globally, and it is home to the world's most important international financial center. All this makes it a testing ground for globalization.

Britain's economy is one of the most open among the big rich countries. Britons have long been avid investors overseas, and now foreign investors are returning the favour. Britain is a little ahead on restructuring its economy: it freed the labour market and strengthened competition, its workforce is much more flexible than France's and Germany's. High-tech or research-based fields (aero-space engines pharmaceuticals) are dominated in the industry. Most importantly, Britain's financial market and business services are doing a roaring trade as other countries become more internationally minded.

Globalisation is undermining the old certainties in lots of ways: 1) employment is less secure; 2) communities are less rooted; 3) the gaps between rich and poor, skilled and unskilled, young and old, are wider, and immigration has risen sharply in recent years.

All these has created vibrancy and buzz, but also dislocation and often sense of grievance.

Britain is in some ways a halfway house between America and the rest of Europe. It resembles America in its open and flexible markets. It resembles Europe in social safety.

At every turn the choice lies between openness and protectionism; between multiculturalism and nativism; between engagement and isolationism.

Which way will it go in the 21st century?

Questions

1. Must Great Britain compete and innovate to make a living?
2. What is one of the most open among the big rich countries?
3. Where Great Britain resemble Europe?
4. What has created vibrancy and buzz, dislocation and sense of grievance?
5. Are high-tech or research-based fields dominated in the industry?

•~• History of Great Britain •~•

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a country of great history rich in important events and entertaining legends connected with them. It's not enough to write several volumes to tell the full history of the country. That's why we'll try to answer the question where the British come from and who they are.

They say, that in prehistoric times Britain was joined to Europe. So the first people came there over dry land. The present English Channel which separates Britain from Europe appeared at the end of the Ice Age. In the New Stone Age the hunters crossed the sea to the west of the Channel and settled along the Western shores in search of

food. The first inhabitants of the island came from the Iberian peninsula, where Spain is located, somewhere after 3000 BC. After 2000 BC the people from the east of Europe entered the country. The two peoples intermixed. They left us Stonehenge and Avebury as impressive monuments of their time.

After 800 BC the Celts arrived from Central Europe and opened up a new important page of the British history. The name "Britain" comes from the name of a Celtic tribe known as the Britons. Their influence was greatest in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, as they were driven to these parts by the invaders who followed them. That's why these parts of Britain are very different from England in language, customs and traditions.

In 55 BC Julius Caesar, the Roman ruler, invaded Britain. However, his first expedition was not successful, because his force was small, and the Celts fought well. In the following year 54 BC he invaded the country with a larger army and this time the expedition was successful: the Celts were defeated. But Caesar didn't stay in Britain. He left the country with slaves and riches and made the Celts pay a regular tribute to Rome.

Some 90 years later, in 43 AD, the country was conquered by the Romans and the occupation continued to the beginning of the 5th century (410 AD). Roman influence was greatest in the south and south-east, while in the north and west the country remained untouched. The Romans built many towns, connected them by good roads. The largest of the towns was called Londinium. Roman culture and civilization had a positive influence on the development of the country. When the Romans left, Britain remained independent for some time.

However quite soon it was attacked by Germanic tribes: the Jutes, the Saxons and the Angles. And by the end of the 5th century

the greater part of the country was occupied. People began to call the new land of the Angles and Saxons England. Wales, Cornwall, the northern part of Britain and Ireland remained unconquered and preserved Celtic culture.

The Saxon kingdoms fought one against the other. In 829 the greater part of the country was united under the name England.

The northern part was the home of the Picts and Scots. After the conquest of the Picts by the Scots in the 9th century this territory was called Scotland. And in the 11th century a united Scottish kingdom was formed.

An important event which contributed to the unification of the country was the adoption of Christianity in England in 664.

In the 9th century the Danes attacked England. It was Alfred who defeated the Danes making them sign a peace agreement.

The last of the invaders to come to Britain were the Normans from France. In 1066 Duke William of Normandy defeated the English at the battle of Hastings and established his rule as king of England known as William the Conqueror. The French language became the official language of the ruling class for the next three centuries. This explains the great number of French words in English. The power of the state grew and little by little England began to spread its power. First on Wales, then on Scotland and later on Ireland. Wales was brought under the English parliament in 1536 and 1542 by Henry VIII.

In 1603 the son of Mary Queen of Scots James Stuart became James I of England. The union of England, Wales and Scotland became known as Great Britain. However the final unification of Scotland and England took place in 1707 when both sides agreed to form a single parliament in London for Great Britain, although

Scotland continued to keep its own system of law, education and have an independent church.

Ireland was England's first colony, but even now there are problems there connected with religion. The Irish people can be divided into two religious groups: Catholics and Protestants. The fighting between these groups is connected with the colonial past. In the 16th century Henry VIII of England quarreled with Rome and declared himself head of the Anglican Church, which was a Protestant church. He tried to force Irish Catholics to become Anglican. This policy was continued by his daughter Elizabeth I. The "Irish question" remained in the centre of British politics till 1921. After a long and bitter struggle the southern part of Ireland became a Free State. The northern part of Ireland where the Protestants were in majority remained part of the UK. After all the years of confrontation the people of Northern Ireland understand that only through peace talks and respect for the rights of both Catholics and Protestants can peace be achieved.

Recently, there have been many waves of immigration into Britain. Now Britain is a multinational society, which benefits from the influence of different people and cultures.

Questions

1. When did the present English Channel appear?
2. Who arrived from Central Europe and opened up a new important page of the British history?
3. Why was Julius Caesar's first expedition not successful?
4. How did the Romans connect many towns?
5. Was the greater part of the country occupied by the end of the 5th century?
6. Who defeated the Danes making them sign a peace agreement?

•~• Why Are There Two Irelands? •~•

Geographically speaking, Ireland is an island and the second largest in the British Isles. It's the third-largest island in Europe and welcomes millions of tourists every year, but we can also talk about Ireland politically as the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The island of Ireland is split in two. There are two nations sharing the island. In the northeast of the island, there's Northern Ireland, a constituent country of the United Kingdom. The rest of the island is occupied by the Republic of Ireland, a sovereign state.

Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland which also includes England, Scotland, and Wales. The Republic of Ireland is independent of this union.

After many conflicts, the Republic of Ireland gained its independence from the United Kingdom in the first half of the 20th century. These conflicts led to the Republic of Ireland becoming an independent state in 1937 with the creation of its constitution. It wouldn't be until 1949 that it was a fully independent state, though.

Let's just say that confusing the two doesn't normally sit well with the inhabitants of either and that there are still tensions between the two nations.

Why Is Ireland Split in Two?

In 1801, the whole of Ireland was joined to the United Kingdom by the Acts of the Union. Ireland joined England and Scotland to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

The majority of the United Kingdom are protestants while the majority of the Irish are Catholics. The hostilities between different religions and cultures and religions never stopped. The Irish repeatedly rejected British rule, which came to a head during the Easter Rising, an armed conflict in 1916 and the subsequent war that started in 1919.

This war of independence finished in 1921. British authorities chose to split Ireland into two parts. The north, where the majority were protestants, became Northern Ireland, with its capital in Belfast. The south, where the majority were Catholics, became the Republic of Ireland with its own parliament in the capital city of Dublin. Officially, the Republic of Ireland was born in 1949.

However, the Catholics in Ireland often don't see this as a real solution and seek to reunify the whole island, ridding it of British rule. However, many protestants rejected the Catholics' calls for unification. This division would continue for many years.

The situation became particularly grim in the 1960s. The population remained split in two with protestants who were usually loyal to the crown and the UK, facing off against Catholics who preferred the idea of a unified Ireland.

The fighting was regularly brutal and bloody with peaceful protests organised by NICRA (Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association) being ended by a massacre by British soldiers in which over a dozen people died.

In January 1972, British soldiers shot at 26 peaceful protesters in Derry. 13 died on that day, 1 months later, and 12 were injured. The group was protesting against a law that allowed the British to make arrests without trial. The events would drastically mark the history of Ireland.

During the 30 years of conflict, over 3.5 thousand people would die. During this time, violent acts became commonplace. It wouldn't be until the late 80s that any semblance of calm would return. After an attempt on the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's life in 1984, negotiations were made and the Hillsborough Castle Agreement was made in 1985.

A ceasefire wouldn't be agreed until 1997. The Good Friday Agreement of 18 April 1998 helped reduce the violence. This agreement included:

- The disarmament of the IRA.
- The end of a territorial claim to Northern Ireland by the Republic of Ireland.
- The right of every Northern Irish to hold a British passport, an Irish passport, or both. While this effectively put an end to the conflict, the desire for a unified Ireland still remains.

Questions

1. What is the geographical status of Ireland in relation to the British Isles and Europe?

2. How is Ireland split politically, and what are the differences between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland?

3. What were some of the historical events that led to the split of Ireland into two parts?

4. What were some of the key points of the Good Friday Agreement of 1998?

5. What were some of the consequences of the conflict in Ireland, including the number of casualties and major events that marked the history of the country?

6. Why do Catholics in Ireland seek to reunify the island, and why do many Protestants reject this idea?

7. What was the significance of the Hillsborough Castle Agreement in 1985 in the context of the conflict in Ireland?

8. How did the events of January 1972 in Derry impact the history of Ireland and the conflict between different groups?

9. How did the British authorities choose to split Ireland into two parts in 1921, and what were the characteristics of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland as a result?

10. How did the conflict in Ireland eventually lead to the Good Friday Agreement and what were some of its key provisions?

•~• English Revolution •~•

English Revolution is the name given to a series of conflicts that took place in England between the years 1640 and 1688 that led to the transition from absolutist monarchy to parliamentary monarchy – model adopted until today in the country.

This revolution marks the end of absolutism and takes place in the context of the rise of the bourgeoisie, which grew stronger between the 15th and 16th centuries and began to demand political changes.

The English Revolution was the first bourgeois revolution in the world, she paves the way for England to be the main stage of the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century.

The 48-year period of the English Revolution can be divided into 4 phases: Civil War and Puritan Revolution, Oliver Cromwell's Republic, Restoration of the Stuart Dynasty and Glorious Revolution. But before entering the phases of the revolution, it is important to understand the context of 16th and 17th century England.

Throughout the 15th century, England was ruled by the Tudor dynasty, whose main monarchs were King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I. During this period, there was the strengthening of the bourgeois class, especially after the Anglican Revolution, when feudal lands that were in the domain of the Catholic Church became private property.

These lands began to be used by the bourgeoisie for mineral exploration or agriculture, causing a great rural exodus. It was the beginning of land use from a capitalist logic.

In 1603, Elizabeth I dies and begins the Stuart dynasty, with King James I. In order to maintain the monarchic and absolutist power, James I began to adopt measures to contain the advance of the bourgeoisie, such as raising taxes and dissolving the parliament.

In recent years the bourgeois had gained strength in the House of Commons, which was opposed to the House of Lords in parliament. The House of Lords supported the Crown.

In 1625 James I dies and Charles I assumes power. Charles I continues to adopt absolutist measures and prevent the population from participating in politics.

The conflict between different strata of society also had a religious character. King Charles I was more related to the Catholic Church, while the bourgeoisie was more adept at Puritanism, a Protestant religion.

Charles I ruled without consulting parliament, which was dissolved when he assumed power. In 1640, however, due to financial difficulties faced by England, King Charles I decides to consult parliament to raise taxes.

The parliament did not accept the tax increase and tried to demand more political participation from the king. Dissatisfied, the king dissolved the parliament again and thus began the first phase of the English Revolution, called the Civil War or Puritan Revolution.

Questions

1. What was the period of time that the English Revolution took place?
2. What was the transition that occurred during the English Revolution?
3. What economic group grew stronger between the 15th and 16th centuries and began to demand political changes?
4. What was the first action that King James I took to maintain monarchic and absolutist power?

5. What religious group did King Charles I favor, and what religious group did the bourgeoisie favor?

6. Why did King Charles I decide to consult parliament in 1640?

7. What was the name of the first phase of the English Revolution?

•~• History of Stonehenge •~•

Stonehenge is one of the most recognizable monuments in the UK. It is a ring of standing stones set into the ground and surrounded by a circular mound of earth. Located in Wiltshire, England, these ruins were built sometime between 3000 and 2000 BC. The stones were transported from over 200 miles away in present-day Wales. Nobody knows for certain why Stonehenge was built nor how the stones were transported from so far away. This article takes a look at some of the theories about the history and mystery of the origin of Stonehenge.

The stones that make up the Stonehenge monument are commonly referred to as bluestones. It is believed that these stones were erected around 2300 BC, although archaeological evidence suggests that this site has been in use for much longer. Research has determined that most of these stones originated in the Preseli Hills in Wales, 150 miles away. Other stones have come from the North Pembrokeshire coastal area. Also, each stone is massive, weighing between 2 and 4 tons.

The mystery surrounding the bluestones is: how could a prehistoric culture transport such large stones over such long distances? Several theories have been presented in order to explain this anomaly. According to one theory, the stones were transported to the Stonehenge site via slow-moving glaciers during the

Pleistocene era. The glaciers left these stones closer to the present-day Stonehenge site. Other researchers believe the stones were used previously in a different, nearby site before being reused at Stonehenge because evidence indicates the stones were cut 500 years prior to being set.

Many of the earliest theories about the purpose and origin of Stonehenge are based on local folklore. These stories credit the devil and Merlin with placing the stones here. By the mid-17th century, another theory emerged that Stonehenge was built as a Roman Temple in honor of the sky god Caelus. Until the end of the 19th century, common theories associated Stonehenge with the Saxons and the Danes cultures.

One of the most popular theories is that the Druids were responsible for erecting the stones at Stonehenge. In fact, this theory was commonly accepted throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. However, at the beginning of the 19th century, a researcher discovered bronze tools at the site, determining it had existed since at least the Bronze age. Radiocarbon dating later confirmed this find, indicating that the site had been built 3100 BC and 1600 BC. This evidence disproved the theory that the Druids were responsible for its construction as this culture did not exist until around 300 BC.

In line with the Druid theory, many people continued to believe that the Druids had used Stonehenge for sacrificial rituals. However, experts in the field have debunked this theory, claiming that Druids performed rituals in wooded and mountainous areas. Other theories suggest that Stonehenge was an important pilgrimage site, used for healing the sick. Many of the burial sites surrounding the area have been excavated, showing evidence of significant instances of trauma and deformities. People following this theory believe that the ancient cultures attributed magical healing properties to the stones.

Still, other theories suggest that Stonehenge was a stone replica of timber structures of the time. These researchers believe that timber was associated with living humans, while stone was associated with the dead. They believe that Stonehenge was the destination point of a long, symbolic funerary procession, beginning at civilizations in the east and moving along the river and over land to the west. Other researchers believe Stonehenge was built along astronomical alignments.

Only one thing is certain. The mystery surrounding Stonehenge makes it a popular tourist site today.

Questions

1. When was Stonehenge built, and where is it located?
2. How far were the stones transported to build Stonehenge, and where did they come from?
3. What are some theories about how the stones were transported to the Stonehenge site?
4. What were some of the earliest theories about the purpose and origin of Stonehenge?
5. What is the connection between Stonehenge and the Druids, and how was this theory disproved?
6. What were some of the uses of Stonehenge according to different theories?
7. Why do some researchers believe that Stonehenge was a stone replica of timber structures of the time?
8. What evidence led experts to debunk the theory that the Druids used Stonehenge for sacrificial rituals?
9. How do some theories suggest Stonehenge was used as a pilgrimage site for healing?
10. What is one thing that is certain about Stonehenge according to the text?

•~• PART III •~•

BRITISH TRADITIONS AND CULTURE

•~• Cultural traditions in the UK •~•

What comes to mind when you think of British culture? Probably quite differing traditional stereotypes. On the one hand, you might think of James Bond ordering a sophisticated Martini or of stylish celebs attending Wimbledon. While on the other, you might think of the eccentric capers of Mr. Bean. The UK is a multi-nation, multi-ethnic land of diversity and contrast. And yet you'll find it hard to meet a Brit who doesn't love a good cup of tea with a nice chocolate biscuit.

This blog post looks at some of the most characteristic customs shared by the British. I feel it necessary to point out that I myself am from southern Ireland and am therefore not a Brit, even though we share many quirks. I have, however, lived in the UK and now spend my days surrounded by many wonderful Brits at British Council Barcelona. In the interests of objectivity (and of course, to avoid controversy), I have consulted British friends and colleagues to ask them what customs they would define as specifically British, for better or worse. Read on for their eye-opening responses.

Awkward greetings. Our first respondent, Tamsin from Leicester, suggests that there are no strict rules for greeting somebody in the UK, the only essential element is that it's awkward. In a country like Spain, the social rules for handshakes or giving two kisses are quite clear. In the UK, greetings can range from a formal handshake to a hug to a nod of the head or perhaps just a simple "Hello". Such lack of guidance spells social disaster, as one person goes in for a hug while the other is offering a reserved head nod. The result is

embarrassment for everybody, and thus a typical British interaction has begun! Try to minimise the awkwardness by at least having some greeting expressions up your sleeve. Click here for some typical expressions in English.

Tea (and biscuits, obviously). It's not just a stereotype. When asked about quintessentially British customs, almost all respondents to my question immediately mentioned drinking a nice cuppa. The word "cuppa" (/ˈkʌpə/) is a common way to refer to a cup of tea, as when you pronounce the expression "cup of tea", it sounds more like "cuppa tea". And it's true that the humble cup of tea forms the basis of many British social interactions. Most Brits drink tea for breakfast, more tea during work breaks, tea before bed, tea when the neighbours visit, tea during a meeting, tea to help decide how to solve a crisis ... you get the idea. And let's not forget the great British art of "dunking": this means dipping sugary biscuits into tea before eating them. In fact, one source of national debate is which brand of biscuit is best for dunking purposes.

Going to the pub. Like many other respondents, Simon from Essex says that the main British tradition for him is going to the pub. Many people have their "local", meaning the pub that they go to most regularly and where they know the staff and the other customers. I remember working in an office in London and how our entire team of about 50 people had the fun habit of going to the pub together every Friday after work (sometimes on Thursdays too!). It's not all about drinking though. A trip to the pub can involve playing darts, watching sports on TV, eating some "pub grub" (that's the name for food served in a pub), or maybe even taking part in a challenging pub quiz. If you're in the mood for a fun night out, keep an eye out (or Google) for a typical British pub quiz right here in Portugal.

Paying for drinks in rounds. Several respondents pointed out that if you decide to try out British pub culture, you need to be aware of the other British tradition of buying drinks in rounds. This means that rather than ordering your drink individually, it's much more common to order (and pay) for the entire group. Your fellow drinkers will return the favour when they buy your next drink, and the next after that, depending on how many people are in the group.

Just be careful: if you're not as used to alcohol as your colleagues, going out with a big group could lead to a pretty bad hangover the following day! Or if you've had enough, you can feel free to go home. The people who owe you drinks will (usually) remember to buy you one the next time you're in the pub together. [Click here for more about British pub etiquette.](#)

Saying sorry. Another custom which many respondents thought was particularly British was excessive apologizing. Jane from London suggests that in any situation that goes wrong, it is the automatic reaction of most Brits to say sorry, regardless of whether they are at fault. Jane says that if she's getting off the tube and a man bumps into her while he rushes into the carriage, her instinctive reaction is to exclaim "Oooh, sorry!", even though she clearly hasn't done anything wrong. Things get even more bizarre than that. People in office corridors walk past each other and whisper "sorry!" even when there is plenty of room for them both to pass; my ex-flatmate in London once unthinkingly apologised to a dog which had run into her leg.

Identifying accent. A suggestion from various colleagues was the British custom of trying to place a person based on their accent. Of course, this tendency exists in every country but it's true that the UK seems to have a particular wealth of distinguishable regional accents. So when one Londoner meets another, it's quite possible that they

will automatically know which general part of the city the other is from, just from accent. This phenomenon is not limited to big cities, with many rural areas having their own distinct accents. This means that Brits often talk about accents to break the ice in social gatherings, for example:

Jeff: So, would I be right in guessing that you're from Cornwall, Harold? Harold: Oh, close enough. I'm actually from Devon.

Identifying class. In several responses to my question about British quirks, people mentioned the UK's obsession with class. One important factor in this sphere is, again, accent. For example, if somebody has attended a public school (this is – confusingly – the name for an expensive private school in the UK), they have a very recognisable accent. I have had many conversations with British friends, along the lines of “Well, my grandparents were working class but they saved money to send one of their kids to public school so that he'd get a posh accent and become a lawyer”. Often, a person's class is assumed by their accent or family connections rather than their actual bank balance. The British tend to speak about class quite openly and even consider certain supermarkets, newspapers, or social activities to be dictated by a person's class. All of this means that silently guessing a person's class is one of Brits' favourite hobbies.

Sunbathing, wherever, whenever. A final custom, suggested by Sandra from London, is the British tendency to sunbathe at any sight of sun. Perhaps this is a biological necessity, a behaviour common to all people from sun-deprived nations. Any sunny day in the UK with a temperature of over 18 degrees leads to mass delirium. That means people unbuttoning their shirts, rolling up their trousers and stopping everything to sit in the sun, whether they're in a park, in a city square, at a bus stop, literally anywhere outdoors. And who

could blame them for making the most of the British sunshine? Perhaps less healthy is when Brits do the same while on holiday in a hot country like Spain and instead of a sun-kissed glow, end up with an unfortunate “gamba” red!

Thanks to all my British friends and colleagues for explaining just a few of their most representative customs. Of course, there are many more that we could add to the list. Any suggestions? Why not add them to the Facebook comments for this post? Don’t forget to click here for more blog posts about life in the UK.

Questions

1. What are some traditional stereotypes associated with British culture?
2. How does the text describe the diversity and contrast in the UK?
3. What is a common beverage enjoyed by many Brits according to the text?
4. How is the term “cuppa” used in British culture?
5. Why is drinking tea considered a quintessentially British custom?
6. What is the significance of “dunking” in British tea culture?
7. How do Brits typically socialize at pubs?
8. What activities are commonly associated with going to the pub in the UK?
9. What is the concept of having a “local” in British pub culture?
10. How does the text describe the tradition of buying drinks in rounds in British pubs?
11. Who is Tamsin from Leicester, and what custom does she mention regarding greetings in the UK?
12. How does the text highlight the awkwardness of greetings in British social interactions?

13. Why is it important to be prepared with greeting expressions in the UK?
14. What role do biscuits play in British tea culture?
15. How does the text describe the social importance of tea in British interactions?
16. What national debate does the text mention regarding tea and biscuits?
17. Who is Simon from Essex, and what tradition does he associate with British culture?
18. How does Simon describe the significance of going to the pub in British tradition?
19. What activities can one typically engage in at a British pub besides drinking?
20. How does the text describe the tradition of paying for drinks in rounds in British pubs?
21. Why is it common to buy drinks for the entire group in British pub culture?
22. How do fellow drinkers reciprocate when drinks are bought in rounds?
23. What role do pub quizzes play in British pub culture according to the text?
24. How does the text emphasize the communal aspect of buying drinks in rounds?
25. What customs did the author consult British friends and colleagues about?
26. What is the custom of excessive apologizing mentioned in the text?
27. How does Jane from London describe the British tendency to apologize?
28. Can you provide an example of a situation where Brits tend to apologize even when they are not at fault?

29. How does the text describe the British custom of identifying accents?
30. Why do Brits often talk about accents in social gatherings?
31. How do regional accents play a role in identifying people in the UK?
32. What is the significance of identifying class in British culture according to the text?
33. How is a person's class often assumed in the UK?
34. Can you explain the relationship between attending a public school and having a posh accent in the UK?
35. How do Brits openly discuss and consider class distinctions in their society?
36. What is the British tendency mentioned by Sandra from London regarding sunbathing?
37. Why do Brits tend to sunbathe at any sight of sun according to the text?
38. How does the text describe Brits' behavior on sunny days with a temperature over 18 degrees?
39. Where do Brits typically engage in sunbathing, as per the text?
40. What is the potential consequence of Brits sunbathing on holiday in hot countries like Spain, as mentioned in the text?
41. How do Brits make the most of the British sunshine, as described in the text?
42. What are some other representative customs of British culture that could be added to the list according to the text?
43. How can readers contribute additional British customs to the discussion, as suggested in the text?
44. What is encouraged at the end of the text regarding adding more customs to the list?
45. Where can readers find more blog posts about life in the UK, as mentioned in the text?

•~• English culture •~•

British Imperialism

English culture, like the individual cultures of the other nations that make up the United Kingdom, is heavily influenced by its imperial past. Admittedly, this is not a great part of British and European history but does form the basis for many cultural elements you'll come across in England today. At the height of its power in the early 19th century, the British Empire stretched across the globe. During its reign, it controlled large parts of Africa, India, Australia, New Zealand, Polynesia, Canada and the Caribbean.

The wealth but also the conflict that the British Empire wrought has shaped England as we know it today. This impact is seen across language, cuisine, architecture and the arts.

It's undeniable that the British Empire is one of the direct causes of the English language being one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. It should be noted that the English also borrowed words from the nations they colonised, such as words like 'bungalow' and 'pajama' from India, 'tea' from China and 'hammock' from the Caribbean. Modern English is of course shaped by various other groups and languages to arrive on this island, including Old Norse (thanks to the Vikings) and old French (thanks to the Normans). The rise of the British Empire also meant eliminating the middleman in regard to trade, allowing more cash flow and imported goods to come into and through England, meaning that this small, isolated island was suddenly the centre of the world. Through new shipping routes and colonies, power had now shifted from the east to the west.

Imperialism in general also meant that Britain and mainland Europe had access to fruits, vegetables and spices they otherwise

would've had a harder time obtaining. Over time, dishes from colonised countries have been appropriated into western cuisine, often altered to suit European palates.

Tea Drinking

One of the most evident remnants of the British Empire on English culture? Tea. Being English has almost become synonymous with tea drinking, and it's an understatement to say that the English feel rather strongly about how it's done. Aside from the obvious differentiators of type and blend, some prefer it strong, others weak. Some like it with sugar and milk, or just sugar or just milk. Lemon and honey are also popular but contentious additions.

Although tea first came to England in the 17th century, it wasn't popularised till the late 18th century. It was first marketed as a medicinal drink and sold for its restorative qualities. It soon became the most fashionable beverage of choice amongst the aristocracy and the upper class (likely due to its cost). Especially as sugar was also a luxury commodity at the time, drinking tea with sugar was the ultimate show of wealth. Over time, drinking tea became a status symbol, increasing its demand amongst the middle classes. As the British Empire controlled everything from tea production to importation, the government heavily encouraged tea-drinking over the consumption of chocolate and coffee, products from neighbouring empires. This meant that drinking tea was branded as a patriotic and a very 'English' thing to do. By then, both tea and sugar were cheap, and it became the ultimate working-class beverage. It both energised labourers as well as brought warmth in less-than-ideal work conditions.

The popularity of tea today still continues for a multitude of reasons. The pleasant taste and caffeine content are obvious reasons, but some argue there is more to it than that. It's habitual in its

routine, an English tradition of sorts. There is a very British mantra that there is no problem a good cup of tea can't fix. You're cold? It warms you. You're hot? It cools you. Not feeling well? Tea will make you feel better. Stressed? Tea will calm you. Can't sleep? Have tea. Need a caffeine boost? Tea. It's also a social experience – the British equivalent of “chatting around the water cooler”. Some also argue that preparing tea is an easy way for an uncomfortable Brit to distract themselves from an awkward situation!

Be sure to try the ultimate English tea drinking experience with an ‘Afternoon Tea,’ popularised initially as a light meal to have between lunch and later dinner at 8 pm. Afternoon tea consists of, you guessed it, tea! It's served with small bites like finger sandwiches, cakes, pastries and scones.

Dialects & Accents

Although English may be the dominant language in England, that doesn't guarantee that you'll understand who you're talking to! England is famous for its vast array of characteristic regional accents and dialects. Their existence is owed to the country's rich past of invasion and colonisation. Cockney, Scouse and Yorkshire accents may be the strongest and most recognisable – but there are over 30 different recognised dialects across the country.

English Food

When one thinks of English cuisine, fish & chips will probably be in front of mind. Although this national staple is undeniably delicious, there is a lot more you should try when visiting. England's climate and location mean that it has a rich and varied natural larder. Expect fresh seasonal produce, seafood, meats and a variety of dairy products. The cuisine is also heavily influenced by England's colonial past, and arguably you couldn't get a more English dish than a Tikka

Masala. If you're after a more 'traditional' English food experience, be sure to try scones with clotted cream or perhaps a savoury pastry or pie (such as a Cornish pasty).

Below we've got some of our favourite English dishes you should try at least once when you're in England.

Fish & Chips

The English have been eating fish and chips since the mid 19th century, and it's not surprising why. Hearty, cheap and delicious – this meal was readily available to the masses and one of the few foods not subjected to British rationing at wartime. If you're unclear on the specifics, fish & chips consist of breaded or battered white fish (haddock/cod), served with thick fries and almost always mushy green peas. Grab yourself some at the nearest 'chippy,' best eaten with a view of the sea and a dash of lemon for the fish and vinegar for the chips (fries).

Sunday Roast

There is nothing more quintessentially English than a Sunday family roast. The dish consists of roast vegetables and roast meat like chicken, lamb or beef, served with copious amounts of gravy and Yorkshire pudding. The name and tradition of eating it originated from Sunday church attendance, and not being allowed to eat meat on Fridays. The Sunday roast marked the end of the fast and was also convenient as dinner was cooked whilst the family attended the service. Sunday roast is still popular now and is a great way to get the family together for a meal.

A Full English

The English are staunch believers that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Nothing says this more than the full English breakfast. Expect eggs (fried, poached, or scrambled), bacon,

sausages, black pudding, baked beans, tomatoes and mushrooms, and served with toast or fried bread as well as tea or coffee. It's also known as a fry-up as most of the ingredients are, well, fried. It definitely sets you up for the day! Different regions in England and the rest of the United Kingdom include variations of the above. Most places also include a less traditional but filling veggie English breakfast option.

Bangers & Mash

No surprises here – bangers are sausages, and mash is mashed potato. This is a very traditional English dish and is still widely eaten today across the UK as it is both easy to make and very filling. Calling sausages 'bangers' is actually a WWI relic. Due to meat shortages, sausage casings were filled up with other ingredients like water that made them explode when fried. The best way to eat bangers & mash is with a generous pouring of onion gravy. You can also get vegetarian variations, although these are not usually served in restaurants.

English Curry

Indian curry is so popular in England and the rest of the United Kingdom that almost every town has a curry house, and curry is said to contribute over 4 billion to the UK economy. This love for spice originates from English soldiers and workers returning from India who missed the flavours, as well as the immigration of Indian, Bangladeshi and Nepalese into the UK. In fact, there was sufficient demand for a curry house to open its doors in London as early as 1810. The curries served in the UK are amalgamations of curries from across south-east Asia and much adjusted to suit European palates.

Cream Tea

On the face of it, you might think 'Cream Tea' is tea with cream. But alas! It's actually a light afternoon meal that consists of generous quantities of tea, scones, jam and rich clotted cream from either Devon or Cornwall. It's usually served across the United Kingdom as part of an afternoon tea along with other accompaniments like sandwiches, cakes and pastries. If you're unfamiliar with British scones, they're similar to American biscuits and are dry and crumbly. Scones are often plain, but there are also savoury versions laden with tangy cheddar cheese.

Crumpets

The humble crumpet may change your life when you first taste it. The spongy warm texture with oozy butter is divine. It's claimed to originally be a Welsh invention but is now very popular for breakfast and brunch in England. Crumpets should not be confused with what is called an English muffin in the USA, which are made from dough and not a batter. Crumpets are best eaten slathered in butter with either sweet or savoury toppings like jam, honey, eggs or just more butter.

Kendal Mint Cake

Mint cake originated in the Cumbrian town of Kendal in the late 19th century and is argued to be one of the world's first manufactured energy bars. It consists primarily of sugar and peppermint oil. As it provides a quick hit of energy, it's a popular snack amongst hill walkers and mountaineers. It has famously been eaten on the first summit of Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and was packed on the Sir Ernest Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic Expedition. Have a nibble for yourself when out hiking the English countryside.

Trifle

Definitely, a dessert puzzled over by our foreign guests. Trifles evolved from another popular British dessert called a fruit fool. Traditionally they consist of layers of sponge soaked in alcohol or fruit juice, jelly or jam, custard, whipped cream and fruit garnishes. If you're a 'Friends' fan, rest assured that trifles do not include minced beef, peas and onions. There are many variations depending on the main fruit used. It may be a bit weird to look at but we promise you it's tasty!

Savoury Pies & Pasties

The English love a good savoury pie. Whether that be inside a pastry casing, a stew topped with a puff pastry lid or a metaphorical pie, you'll find English dinner menus awash with pies.

On the one hand, you've got the classic pie pies like steak & ale pie and pork pies that are fully encased in a shortcrust pastry, on the other hand, you've got casseroles masquerading as pies like Shepherd and Cottage pies which contain stewed beef mince and vegetables topped with mashed potato and then baked. Then there are Cornish pasties, which are sort of enclosed pockets filled with rich, savoury toppings and served piping hot.

They are all richly delicious and sure to warm you up after a day in the hills.

Puddings

Puddings, like pies, are a hot commodity in England and break the rules of what's generally accepted to be pudding. You might be thinking of a jiggly type of dessert – but in England, this can be anything from a blood-based sausage (black pudding) to sponge cake covered in toffee sauce (sticky toffee pudding). There is no rhyme or reason as to what is a pudding in English cuisine, it could be savoury or sweet and the texture differs wildly! Be sure to try

Christmas pudding, bread and butter pudding and Yorkshire pudding – we'll let you discover independently what variety each one is.

It's also worth noting that Brits will refer to dessert as 'pudding', it's just a phrase that's used interchangeably for the word dessert. Sometimes post-dinner 'pudding' is genuinely a pudding, but more often than not dessert is ice cream, cakes, tarts, jellies etc.

Distilling & Brewing

Beer

We can't deny our reputation for being beer lovers. The English have been brewing beer for centuries and it continues to be the most popular alcoholic beverage in the United Kingdom. Traditionally English beer styles include bitter, mild, brown, and old ale. English ale is famously served "warm" which is a misconception – really, these ales are served at "cellar" temperature. In recent years there has been a considerable increase in demand for craft beer. Now there are over 700 craft breweries in England alone.

Cider

Cider is a very popular alcoholic beverage in England, sold ubiquitously alongside beer and wine in pubs and restaurants. It's made from fermented apple juice and is thought to have come to the United Kingdom along with the Romans. There are dry and sweet variations, and ciders brewed in the South West of England are generally stronger. Be sure to try local farmhouse brews if you get the chance.

Pimms

Pimms is a gin-based liqueur and the favourite summer drink of the English. Although it was originally intended to aid digestion, it gained mass popularity as a tippie at the start of the 20th century.

It's usually served as a long cocktail garnished with fruit and is known to be very refreshing on a hot day. Alongside champagne, Pimms is actually one of the two official drinks of Wimbledon!

“Down at the Pub”

Despite hearing it countless times separately, it may never have clicked that ‘pub’ is actually short for ‘public house’. The concept of taverns and alehouses arrived with the Romans and evolved from there. Going to the pub is a very British pastime – the pub is a place where people gather to socialise, have a drink and enjoy a pub meal. English pubs are different from bars you’ll find elsewhere. Don’t expect fancy cocktails and you’ll likely be expected to order at the bar, even meals. Don’t be surprised if a grizzly stranger strikes up a conversation with you about the weather, football or the latest in politics. That’s normal! It’s customary to order rounds when you’re in a group of people, taking turns to purchase drinks for the whole group. The aforementioned grizzly stranger may join in – don’t be too alarmed. When staff start ringing a bell and shouting ‘last orders,’ you know it’s time to finish up – usually around midnight. Even though they say last orders, staff really want you to pack up and leave at this point! Interesting British tradition? In England, they traditionally go to the pub on Christmas day.

The Royal Family

Somehow the British Royal Family have become a main tourist attraction for people visiting England. Visitor attractions tied to the Royal family see more visitors, and royalty-related merchandise outperforms other types of memorabilia. People are fascinated by the British Royal Family – their lifestyles spark a lot of intrigues which has been much assisted by the media because, ultimately, we all love a good fairytale. The British Royal family have cultivated and

glamorised their image carefully to inspire fantasy and escapism to the masses.

If you, like many others, enjoy a bit of ogling at the Royal way of life, there are many places in England worth a visit. Other than the London attractions of Buckingham Palace, Kensington Palace and the Tower of London, the English countryside is peppered with places to visit which are tied to the Royal family.

“Royal” Attractions in England Outside London

Windsor Castle

Aside from Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle is one of the most recognised royal residences. It’s both the largest and longest-occupied castle in the Royal collection, having been owned by the English monarchy for nearly a thousand years! HRM Queen Elizabeth II was known to spend most of her time between Buckingham Palace in London, Balmoral Castle in Scotland and at Windsor Castle in Berkshire. She was known to prefer spending her weekends away from London at Windsor, and often summers at Balmoral. The castle famously gets used for big events like Royal weddings.

Sandringham House

Originally purchased by Edward VII for his wife Alexandra of Denmark in 1862, Sandringham House is a private royal residence where the Royal family traditionally celebrates Christmas most years. It was at Sandringham in 1957 that HRM Queen Elizabeth II delivered the first televised Christmas message.

Except for when the family is in residence, the house is open for tours, as well as the stunning gardens, surrounding estate and woodlands.

Highgrove House & Gardens

Highgrove House is the private residence of the King and the Queen Consort (King Charles III and Camilla). The King invested considerable time, energy and fortune into transforming the house and especially the gardens. Receiving over 30,000 visitors a year, the gardens are known to be innovative in their design. The gardens follow the environmental philosophies of the Royal couple, containing orchards, an organic farm and a wildflower meadow.

English Castles & Country Houses

If there's one thing the English have a lot of, it is castles, sprawling country estates with splendid manor houses. Although there is no conclusive number that indicates just how many castles and country houses there are in England, as what defines each is heavily debated, we can say with certainty that there are over 800 medieval castles and over 1,500 country houses. Many are open to the public so check out visiting hours and tours. You can let your imagination run wild whilst strolling through the grounds, picturing yourself as British Royalty and or as a famous fictional character.

Below we've gathered some of our favourite castles and stately homes from across the country.

Bodiam Castle, Sussex

If you imagine your typical turreted and moated castle, Bodiam Castle is what you get. Constructed in the 14th century, Bodiam Castle was eventually donated to the National Trust in 1926 upon the death of owner Lord Culzon, who did notable restoration work to the ruins whilst he owned it. Well worth a visit, the castle is a beautiful medieval relic set splendidly in pastoral countryside.

Bamburgh, Northumberland

Bamburgh Castle is truly one of the most spectacular castles in the whole of the United Kingdom. Its bulk presides over the Northumberland coastline and has done so for over a 1,000 years. It's one of the largest still inhabited castles in the country and is open to visitors throughout the year.

Lowther Castle, Cumbria

These striking ruins are well worth a visit. Built at the turn of the 19th century the castle was designed to be lavish and luxurious, with no expense spared. However, it fell into disrepair and ruin in the mid 20th century when the owners lost their fortune. It's a popular visitor attraction today with splendid gardens and trails to explore.

Highclere Castle, Hampshire

Highclere Castle is surely one of the most recognised English landmarks after it featured as the main house on the popular drama series *Downton Abbey*. The impressive house was completed in the 17th century and is owned – and at times inhabited – by the Earl of Carnarvon. You can visit this splendid estate on pre-booked guided tours that usually include a specially presented afternoon tea.

Lindisfarne, Northumberland

Constructed in the 16th century, you can only access Lindisfarne Castle on Holy Island via a causeway. It's well worth the well-timed effort! The castle (arguably less castle and more fort), was built using stones from the old priory and is perched on a rocky outcrop. It makes for a dramatic entrance with a steep cobbled ramp with incredible views. The nearby ancient priory, the first place in England raided by Vikings, is also a fascinating visit.

Skipton Castle, Yorkshire

Skipton Castle is a remarkably well-preserved and impressive medieval fortress. The castle was famously under siege for three years during the English civil war before yielding to Cromwell in 1645. It's open year-round to visitors with access to large parts of the interiors and gardens. Be sure to check out the Yew tree in the courtyard, planted by Lady Anne Clifford, who did much to restore the castle after the civil war.

Corfe Castle, Dorset

You'll find the beautiful ruins of Corfe Castle on top of a steep hill overlooking a quaint village of the same name. It sits perched between two chalk hills and is constructed out of limestone quarried nearby. The castle changed hands numerous times since its construction in the early 12th century and has served as both a residence and military garrison. The castle was famously defended by Lady Banks during the English Civil War. The location near the Jurassic Coast is jaw-droppingly beautiful, and there are some great coastal hikes in the area.

Alnwick Castle, Northumberland

After Windsor, Alnwick Castle is the second-largest inhabited castle in England. It's been in the hands of the Percy family, now the Dukes of Northumberland, for over 900 years! The current Duke and Duchess still reside in a part of the castle. The castle's use in both film and TV has meant a surge in visitors over the last few years. The oldest parts of the castle date back to the 11th century and the most significant work was done in the 19th century. The present-day castle makes for a great family day out

Tintagel Castle, Cornwall

Clinging to the cliffs on a small peninsula along the Cornish coastline, the ruins of Tintagel are steeped in myths and legends, most famously as the site of King Arthur's conception. Merlin disguised Arthur's father Uther Pendragon as Gorlois, the Duke of Cornwall, who had hidden his wife Igraine in a fort at Tintagel. The myth predates the most recent structures which are the ruins of the castle built by Richard I, the 1st Duke of Cornwall at Tintagel due to its legendary and mythical status. His castle has long fallen into decay but visitors can explore the beautiful ruins and enjoy the spectacular views.

English Landscaping & Gardens

English gardens and landscaping became popular in the 18th century. Resisting the formality of the previously popular European renaissance landscaping, English gardens were designed to enhance and idolise nature with stylised groves, artificial lakes and ponds and sweeping lawns. English gardens still feature structures in the form of walls and hedges but are likely to be interspersed with winding paths and some informal dense planting. Also find architectural centrepieces in an English garden, such as bridges, rotundas, follies and temples. English "cottage" gardens are especially popular right now, which are deliberately wild with dense and flowery vegetation sprawling up and out of flower beds.

Of course, not all gardens converted to this new style in England in the 18th and 19th centuries. You can still find formal French and Italian style gardens dotted about in their 100s (although now often as part of a wider informal garden). The 19th century saw the rise of public parks and public gardens. Visiting a public green space is still a very English pastime, especially for those who live in cities and have limited or no outdoor space of their own. There are

thousands of gardens open to the public, designed to be enjoyed year-round. Gardening in England is one of the nation's favourite pastimes, and most English landowners are proud of their gardens no matter how large or small. Below are just a few of our favourites not mentioned in our Castles & Country Houses section, but check out Visit England's piece on English gardens for more information.

Stowe, Buckinghamshire

The gardens at Stowe House exist on a massive scale. Redesigned in the 18th-century they've become the best example of 'English Garden' landscaping. For visitors today, the gardens are managed by the National Trust and offer 250 acres of rolling lawns, woodlands and various stunning architectural features (including but not limited to 28 temples and the famous Palladian bridge).

Studley Royal Water Garden

Studley Royal Park and the ruins of Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire make up a UNESCO world heritage site. It's a beautiful 18th-century water garden with a focus on water features like ponds, lakes, statues and follies. The carefully laid out aquatic features are designed to complement the natural landscape. Make sure to also appreciate the informal features like a wildflower lawn and laurel bushes. You'll also find the ruins of Fountain Abbey, a 12th century Cistercian monastery, which is a must-see. The wider area gained heritage status through its shared 800-year history.

Levens Hall, Cumbria

The gardens at Levens Hall are a good example of the types of garden that pre-date what is now known as an 'English garden'. They contain a much-celebrated topiary garden, said to be the world's oldest. The topiary garden is mostly intact from the way it was laid out at the end of the 17th century. It's said there are over

100 different specimens within the topiary, with some shrubs being over 300 years old! The garden is perfectly manicured and features interesting geometrical and abstract shapes.

English Writers

Over the centuries, England's countryside and history have inspired countless renowned writers, poets, playwrights and storytellers. Of course, there are many, many more authors than listed here, but we've highlighted a few of the most influential. Read on to learn a little about some of our beloved and timeless authors.

Geoffrey Chaucer, 1343-1400

This 14th century writer undeniably shaped modern literature. Chaucer is often described to be the best poet of the Middle Ages and as the father of both English literature and poetry. His writings are still read and enjoyed today, with relatable characters. He is best known for *The Canterbury Tales* — which consists of 24 stories.

William Shakespeare, 1564-1616

This 16th century play-wright is undoubtedly the most famous in history. Known for his 38 plays which include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*. Shakespeare has shaped the modern English language, with many of his phrases still used commonly today.

William Wordsworth, 1770-1850

William Wordsworth is a much-beloved English poet; alongside fellow poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, he kick-started the Romantic Age of literature. Aside from poetry, Wordsworth also published plays, autobiographies and travel guides. His love for the English countryside is evident in his writings.

Jane Austen, 1775–1817

Jane Austen is well known for penning to life Britain's greatest heartthrob Mr. Darcy, as well as her portrayal of the landed gentry in England. Her six novels predominantly revolve around the life of 18th century women, detailing their social and economic insecurity and dependency on marrying well.

The Brontë Sisters, 1800s

The Brontë sisters are Charlotte, Emily and Anne. These 19th century sisters were each heavily influenced by their surrounding landscapes and isolated upbringing. They created individualistic sweeping narratives that covered everything from life in Northern England, the role of women, human nature and the poor living conditions at the time. Their most famous works are *Jane Eyre* (Charlotte), *Wuthering Heights* (Emily), and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (Anne).

Charles Dickens, 1812–1870

Known to be the greatest writer of the Victorian era, Charles Dickens wrote 15 novels and various essays, short stories and novellas commenting on and critiquing 19th century life. His most famous works include *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*.

Lewis Carroll, 1832–1898

A notable 19th century author of children's fiction and poetry. Lewis Carroll (real name Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) is best known for *Alice in Wonderland*, *Jabberwocky* and *Through the Looking Glass*. He was also an accomplished mathematician, photographer and inventor.

Arthur Conan Doyle, 1859–1930

Doyle himself was Scottish, but his creations are iconically English. Sherlock Holmes is hands-down the most famous detective, ever. The perceptive, stoic, know-it-all detective known for his observational skills, logical reasoning and advanced knowledge of forensic science and his smart, loyal partner Dr Watson in Doyle's original Victorian-era stories have influenced countless books, stories, TV series, films and fandom as well as the genre in general.

Agatha Christie, 1890–1976

Dame Agatha Christie wrote a mind-boggling 66 detective novels over the course of her life. The “Queen of Crime,” she is considered to be one of the best-selling and most-translated authors of all time. Although she wrote both crime and romantic novels, most people will know her for the creation of Miss Marple and Hercule Poirot characters.

J.R.R. Tolkien, 1892–1973

Often named the father of fantasy literature, J.R.R. Tolkien repopularised the fantasy genre and inspired countless authors with his high fantasy works *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of Rings*. Tolkien's writings are notoriously intricate and detailed. He spent considerable time building the fantasy world in which his stories take place as well as developing various invented languages.

George Orwell, 1903–1950

A twentieth-century writer primarily known for his social commentary and views on totalitarianism. George Orwell was Eric Arthur Blair's pen name. It's through his most popular novels *Animal Farm* and *1984* that the adjective “Orwellian” came to be, used to describe totalitarian and authoritarian social practises.

Roald Dahl, 1916–1990

Roald Dahl is an extremely popular children's author. His works are famed for their surprise endings, whimsical nature and strong 'good' and 'bad' archetypes. He also wrote short stories for adults which tended to be on the dark side and co-wrote screenplays, most notably two James Bond films. Some of his most famous works include *Mathilda*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *James and the Giant Peach* and *The Witches*.

Salman Rushdie, 1947

Sir Salmon Rushdie was knighted in 2007 for his services to literature, having published 12 novels, two children's books and various essays. His work largely comments on the east and west divide, religion and politics. His novel *Midnight's Children* won the Booker Prize in 1981, whilst his 1988 *Satanic Verses* sparked considerable controversy.

Kazuo Ishiguro, 1958

A much-awarded and celebrated author of various novels, short stories and screenplays. Kazuo Ishiguro won the Nobel Prize in literature in 2017 and was also knighted for his services to literature in 2019. His most successful work includes *The Remains of the Day* and *Never Let Me Go*. Ishiguro spent much of his life in England and many of his novels take place there.

Malorie Blackman, 1962

Malorie Blackman is a much-celebrated science fiction and children's author who is best known for the thought-provoking *Noughts and Crosses* series, which explore structural racism in Britain via an alternate universe where the white race is suppressed by a black authoritarian race.

J.K. Rowling, 1965

J.K. Rowling and Harry Potter are almost synonymous with English culture. The series will have impacted many a modern childhood and she is currently credited as Britain's best-selling living author, with the Harry Potter franchise ubiquitously recognised. The series itself, as well as spin-offs, have been translated to both film and theatre.

Kamila Shamsie, 1973

Shamsie is a Pakistani-British author and winner or nominee of several prizes. Author of seven novels and contributor to several anthologies, she is one of Britain's most interesting new authors, often exploring themes of multiculturalism, nationality and Pakistani/British culture.

Zadie Smith, 1975

One of the most influential modern British writers is Zadie Smith, author of five novels, over a dozen short stories and winner of several prizes. She has also taught creative writing at several top universities including Columbia and New York University.

Reni Eddo-Lodge, 1989

In June 2020, Eddo-Lodge became the first black British woman to be No. 1 overall in the British book charts. A journalist and author, her nonfiction work focuses on issues of race and sexism. Her very topical work, *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race*, has topped nonfiction charts.

Questions

1. How did the British Empire influence English culture and society?
2. What impact did the British Empire have on the English language?

3. Why is tea drinking considered a significant part of English culture?
4. How did the British Empire influence the consumption of tea in England?
5. In what ways has imperialism influenced the culinary traditions in England?
6. How did England's history of invasion and colonization contribute to the variety of regional accents and dialects in the country?
7. What are some examples of traditional English dishes beyond fish and chips that visitors should try?
8. How did the availability of fish and chips make it a popular meal for the masses in England, especially during wartime?
9. What is the significance of the Sunday roast in English culture, and how did its tradition originate?
10. What ingredients typically make up a full English breakfast, and why is it considered an important meal in English cuisine?
11. Why are sausages referred to as "bangers" in the dish bangers & mash, and what is the history behind this term?
12. How has England's colonial past influenced the diversity of its culinary traditions, as seen in dishes like Tikka Masala?
13. How did the popularity of Indian curry in England originate and what factors contributed to its widespread acceptance?
14. What distinguishes a traditional Cream Tea in the United Kingdom and what are the key components of this afternoon meal?
15. What is the difference between British scones and American biscuits, and how are scones typically enjoyed in England?
16. What is the history behind Kendal Mint Cake and why is it considered a popular snack for outdoor enthusiasts in England?

17. How did the dessert known as Trifle evolve from a traditional British dessert called a fruit fool, and what are the typical layers found in a Trifle?

18. What are some examples of traditional English savoury pies and pasties, and how do they differ in terms of their fillings and pastry casings?

19. How do English puddings challenge traditional notions of what constitutes a pudding, and what are some examples of both savoury and sweet puddings in English cuisine?

20. What are some traditional English beer styles and what is a common misconception about how English ale is served?

21. How did cider come to the United Kingdom and what are some variations of cider that can be found in England?

22. What is Pimms and why is it considered a favourite summer drink of the English?

23. What is the significance of the pub culture in England and how does it differ from bars in other countries?

24. How has the British Royal Family become a main tourist attraction in England and what are some popular visitor attractions tied to the Royal family?

25. What interesting tradition do the English have regarding going to the pub on Christmas day?

26. Besides London, what are some “royal” attractions in England that are worth visiting and what is the significance of Windsor Castle in the English monarchy?

27. What is the significance of Highgrove House and what are some unique features of its gardens?

28. How many medieval castles and country houses are estimated to be in England and what is a common characteristic of these properties?

29. What restoration work was done to Bodiam Castle and why is it considered a beautiful medieval relic?
30. What makes Bamburgh Castle one of the most spectacular castles in the United Kingdom and what is its historical significance?
31. Why did Lowther Castle fall into disrepair and what makes it a popular visitor attraction today?
32. What is the significance of Highclere Castle and how can visitors experience this landmark related to Downton Abbey?
33. What unique feature does Lindisfarne Castle have and how does its construction differ from traditional castles?
34. What is the historical significance of Alnwick Castle and how long has it been in the Percy family's possession?
35. What legendary connection does Tintagel Castle have, and who is said to have built the ruins that visitors can explore today?
36. How did English gardens and landscaping differ from European renaissance landscaping in the 18th century?
37. What are some common features found in English gardens, and why are "cottage" gardens particularly popular?
38. How did the 19th century contribute to the development of public parks and gardens in England?
39. What makes the gardens at Stowe House in Buckinghamshire a prime example of English Garden landscaping?
40. What unique features can visitors expect to find at Studley Royal Water Garden in Yorkshire, and why is it a UNESCO World Heritage site?
41. What distinguishes the gardens at Levens Hall in Cumbria, and what makes its topiary garden significant?
42. Who is often described as the best poet of the Middle Ages and the father of both English literature and poetry?

43. How many plays did William Shakespeare write, and what are some of his most famous works?

44. What literary movement did William Wordsworth help kick-start, and what is evident in his writings?

45. What themes did Jane Austen predominantly focus on in her novels, and what is one of her most famous characters?

46. Who are the Brontë sisters, and what influenced their individualistic sweeping narratives?

47. How many novels did Charles Dickens write, and what was he known for commenting on and critiquing?

48. What is Lewis Carroll best known for, and what were some of his other accomplishments?

49. Where was Arthur Conan Doyle from, and who is his most famous detective character?

50. What are some common characteristics of Geoffrey Chaucer's writing, and what is his most famous work?

51. How has Sherlock Holmes influenced literature, TV series, films, and the detective genre in general?

52. Who is considered the "Queen of Crime" and wrote 66 detective novels during her lifetime?

53. What are the two famous characters created by Agatha Christie that most people know her for?

54. What genre did J.R.R. Tolkien popularize, and what are some of his famous works?

55. What pen name did George Orwell use, and what are his most popular novels known for?

56. What are some characteristics of Roald Dahl's works, and what are some of his famous books?

57. What themes does Salman Rushdie's work largely focus on, and what controversy did one of his novels spark?

58. What notable awards has Kazuo Ishiguro won, and what are some of his successful works?

59. What is Malorie Blackman best known for, and what is the focus of her Noughts and Crosses series?

60. How is J.K. Rowling's impact on English culture often described, and what is she currently credited as?

61. What themes does Kamila Shamsie often explore in her novels, and what is she known for?

62. What are some notable accomplishments of Zadie Smith, and where has she taught creative writing?

63. Who became the first black British woman to top the British book charts in June 2020, and what are the themes of her work?

64. What is Reni Eddo-Lodge's focus in her nonfiction work, and what book of hers has topped nonfiction charts?

65. What are some common characteristics of the works of these British authors mentioned in the text?

66. How have these authors contributed to English literature and culture?

•~• British Culture •~•

The culture of England is sometimes difficult to separate clearly from the culture of the United Kingdom, so influential has English culture been on the cultures of the British Isles and, on the other hand, given the extent to which other cultures have influenced life in England.

From the relatively tiny island in the North Atlantic, England was influenced virtually every other nation in the world. The country has played a central and significant role in history as one of the world's most influential centers of cultural development. It is known throughout the world for its distinctive culture, habits,

values, and traditions, and for its rich and colorful history. Places, people, buildings, monuments, myths, and legends hold intrigue for many.

Many of the most important figures in the history of modern western scientific and philosophical thought were either born in, or at one time or other resided in, England. Major English thinkers of international significance include scientists such as Sir Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon, Charles Darwin and New Zealand-born Ernest Rutherford, philosophers such as John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Bertrand Russell, and Thomas Hobbes, and economists such as David Ricardo, and John Maynard Keynes.

Questions

1. How has English culture influenced the cultures of the British Isles and other nations around the world?

2. What role has England played in the history of cultural development on a global scale?

3. Who are some of the major figures in the history of modern western scientific and philosophical thought that have ties to England?

4. Why are places, people, buildings, monuments, myths, and legends in England of interest to many people around the world?

•~• Art •~•

The oldest art in the United Kingdom can be dated to the Neolithic period, and is found in a funerary context. But it is in the Bronze age that the first innovative artworks are found. The Beaker people, who arrived in Britain around 2500 B.C.E., were skilled in metal refining, working at first in copper, but later bronze and gold.

The Wessex culture excelled in making gold ornaments. Works of art placed in graves or sacrificial pits have survived.

In the Iron Age, the Celts made gold ornaments, but stone and most likely wood was also used. This style continued into the Roman period, and would find a renaissance in the Medieval period. It also survived in the Celtic areas not occupied by the Romans, largely corresponding to the present-day Wales and Scotland.

The Romans brought with them the classical style, glasswork and mosaics. Christian art from the fourth century, has been preserved in mosaics with Christian symbols and pictures. Celtic and Scandinavian art have in common the use of intricate, intertwined patterns of decoration.

Anglo-Saxon sculpting was outstanding for its time in the eleventh century, as proved by pre-Norman ivory carvings. Celtic high crosses show the use of Celtic patterns in Christian art. Scenes from the Bible were depicted, framed with the ancient patterns. Some ancient symbols were redefined. Murals were painted on the white-chalked walls of stone churches, and stained glass was used in church and other windows.

Questions

1. What is the significance of the Beaker people in the development of art in the United Kingdom during the Bronze Age?
2. How did the Wessex culture contribute to the art scene during the Bronze Age in the United Kingdom?
3. What materials were commonly used in art creation during the Iron Age in the United Kingdom?
4. How did Anglo-Saxon sculpting in the eleventh century stand out compared to other art forms of the time in the United Kingdom?

•~• Cinema •~•

England has been influential in the technological, commercial, and artistic development of cinema and probably second only to the United States in producing the greatest quantity of world-wide film stars. Despite a history of successful productions, the industry is characterized by an ongoing debate about its identity (including economic and cultural issues) and the influences of American and European cinema.

Modern cinema is generally regarded as descending from the work of the French Lumière brothers in 1892, and their show first came to London in 1896. However, the first moving pictures developed on celluloid film were made in Hyde Park, London in 1889 by William Friese Greene, a British inventor, who patented the process in 1890. The film is the first known instance of a projected moving image. The first people to build and run a working 35 mm camera in Britain were Robert W. Paul and Birt Acres. They made the first British film *Incident at Clovelly Cottage* in February 1895, shortly before falling out over the camera's patent.

Questions

1. Who were the French pioneers of modern cinema, and when did their work first come to London?
2. Who was the British inventor credited with developing the first moving pictures on celluloid film in London in 1889?
3. What was the first known instance of a projected moving image, and who is responsible for it?
4. What was the title of the first British film made by Robert W. Paul and Birt Acres in February 1895?

•~• Clothing •~•

There is no specifically British national costume. In England, certain military uniforms such as the Beefeater or the Queen's Guard are considered to be symbolic of Englishness, though they are not official national costumes. Morris dancers or the costumes for the traditional English May dance are cited by some as examples of traditional English costume.

This is in large part due to the critical role that British sensibilities have played in world clothing since the eighteenth century. Particularly during the Victorian era, British fashions defined acceptable dress for men of business. Key figures such as Beau Brummell, the future Edward VII and Edward VIII created the modern suit and cemented its dominance. As such, it could be argued that the national costume of the British male is a three-piece suit, necktie and bowler hat – an image regularly used by cartoonists as a caricature of Britishness.

Questions

1. What are some examples of clothing items that are considered symbolic of Englishness?
2. How did British fashions influence acceptable dress for men of business during the Victorian era?
3. Who are some key figures mentioned in the text that played a role in defining modern British fashion?
4. Why is it argued that the national costume of the British male could be considered a three-piece suit, necktie, and bowler hat?

•~• Cuisine •~•

Although highly-regarded in the Middle Ages, English cuisine later became a source of fun among Britain's French and European

neighbors, being viewed until the late twentieth century as crude and unsophisticated by comparison with continental tastes. However, with the influx of non-European immigrants (particularly those of south and east Asian origins) from the 1950s onwards, the English diet was transformed. Indian and Chinese cuisine in particular were absorbed into English culinary life. Restaurants and takeaways appeared in almost every town in England, and “going for an Indian” became a regular part of English social life. A distinct hybrid food style composed of dishes of Asian origin, but adapted to British tastes, emerged and was subsequently exported to other parts of the world. Many of the well-known Indian dishes, such as Tikka Masala and Balti, are in fact Anglo-Indian dishes of this sort. Chicken Tikka Masala is often jokingly referred to as England’s national dish, in a reference both to its English origins and to its enormous popularity.

Dishes forming part of the old tradition of English food include: Apple pie, bangers and mash, bubble and squeak, cornish pasty, cottage pie, egg salad, fish and chips, full English breakfast, gravy, jellied eels, Lancashire hotpot and so on.

Questions

1. How did English cuisine evolve over time, and what were some of the factors that influenced this change?
2. What role did non-European immigrants, particularly those of south and east Asian origins, play in transforming the English diet?
3. How did the introduction of Indian and Chinese cuisine into English culinary life impact the traditional English food scene?
4. What are some examples of dishes that are considered part of the old tradition of English food?

•~• Engineering and innovation •~•

As birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, England was home to many significant inventors during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Famous English engineers include Isambard Kingdom Brunel, best known for the creation of the Great Western Railway, a series of famous steamships, and numerous important bridges.

Other notable English figures in the fields of engineering and innovation include: Richard Arkwright, industrial spinning machine inventor; Charles Babbage, computer inventor (nineteenth century); Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the *World Wide Web*, *http*, *html*, and many of the other technologies on which the Web is based; James Blundell, a physician who performed the first blood transfusion and so on.

Questions

1. Who is considered the father of the Industrial Revolution in England and what are some of his notable creations?
2. What significant contributions did Isambard Kingdom Brunel make to the field of engineering?
3. What inventions is Richard Arkwright known for in the industrial sector?
4. Who is Charles Babbage and what is he famous for inventing in the nineteenth century?

•~• Heritage •~•

Stonehenge is believed by many English people and foreigners alike to hold an iconic place in the culture of England. Other built structures such as cathedrals and parish churches are associated with

a sense of traditional Englishness, as is often the palatial ‘stately home’; a notion established in part by English author Jane Austen’s work *Pride and Prejudice*. The English country house and the rural lifestyle forms an interest among many people as typified by visits to properties managed by English Heritage or the National Trust.

Landscape gardening as developed by Capability Brown set an international trend for the English garden. Gardening, and visiting gardens, are regarded as typically English pursuits, fueled somewhat by the perception of England as a nation of eccentric amateurs and autodidacts. In many, usually rural places, people gather for May Day festivals on the first of May to celebrate “the awakening of the flowers” – the beginning of summer. This traditionally involves the local schoolchildren skipping around a maypole – a large pole erected on the village green (historically a tree would have been specially cut down) – each carrying a colored ribbon, resulting in a multi-colored plaited pattern.

Questions

1. What are some other built structures besides Stonehenge that are associated with a sense of traditional Englishness?
2. Who is Capability Brown and what international trend did he set for English gardens?
3. How are gardening and visiting gardens viewed as typically English pursuits?
4. What is the significance of May Day festivals in rural English communities?

•~• Language •~•

English people traditionally speak the English language, a member of the West Germanic language family. The modern English language evolved from Old English, with lexical influence from

Norman-French, Latin, and Old Norse. Cornish, a Celtic language originating in Cornwall, is currently spoken by about 3.5 thousand people. Historically, another Brythonic Celtic language, Cumbric, was spoken in Cumbria in North West England, but it died out in the eleventh century although traces of it can still be found in the Cumbrian dialect. Because of the nineteenth-century geopolitical dominance of the British Empire and the post-World War II hegemony of the United States, English has become the international language of business, science, communications, aviation, and diplomacy. English is the native language of roughly 350 million people worldwide, with another 1.5 billion people who speak it as a second language.

Questions

1. What are some of the languages that influenced the evolution of the modern English language?
2. How did English become the international language of business, science, communications, aviation, and diplomacy?
3. Approximately how many people worldwide speak English as their native language?
4. How many people globally speak English as a second language?

•~• Media •~•

England has an unrivaled number of media outlets, and the prominence of the English language gives it a widespread international dimension. The BBC is England's publicly-funded radio and television broadcasting corporation, and is the oldest broadcaster in the world. Funded by a compulsory television license, the BBC operates several television networks and BBC Radio stations both in

England and abroad. The BBC's international television news service, BBC World, is broadcast throughout the world and the BBC World Service radio network is broadcast in 33 languages globally. Most digital cable television services are provided by NTL:Telewest, and free-to-air digital terrestrial television by Freeview.

British newspapers are either quality, serious-minded newspaper (usually referred to as "broadsheets" due to their large size) and the more populist, tabloid varieties. For convenience of reading, many traditional broadsheets have switched to a more compact format, traditionally used by tabloids. The Sun has the highest circulation of any daily newspaper in the UK, with approximately a quarter of the market; its sister paper, The News of The World similarly leads the Sunday newspaper market, and traditionally focuses on celebrity-led stories. The Daily Telegraph, a right-of-center broadsheet paper, has overtaken The Times (tabloid size format) as the highest-selling of the "quality" newspapers. The Guardian is a more liberal (left-wing) "quality" broadsheet. The Financial Times is the main business paper, printed on distinctive salmon-pink broadsheet paper. A number of British magazines and journals have achieved world-wide circulation including The Economist and Nature.

Questions

1. What is the funding source for the BBC, England's publicly-funded radio and television broadcasting corporation?
2. How many languages is the BBC World Service radio network broadcast in globally?
3. What are the two main types of British newspapers mentioned in the text?
4. Which British newspaper has the highest circulation of any daily newspaper in the UK?

•~• Music •~•

Composers from England have not achieved recognition as broad as that earned by their literary counterparts, and particularly during the nineteenth century, were overshadowed in international reputation by other European composers; however, many works of earlier composers such as Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, and Henry Purcell are still frequently performed throughout the world today. A revival of England's musical status began during the twentieth century with the prominence of composers such as Edward Elgar, Gustav Holst, William Walton, Eric Coates.

In popular music, however, English bands and solo artists have been cited as the most influential and best-selling musicians of all time. Acts such as The Beatles, The Who, The Rolling Stones, and Radiohead are among the biggest selling in the world. England is also credited with being the birthplace of many pop-culture movements such as hard rock, British invasion, heavy metal, britpop, glam rock, drum and bass.

Questions

1. Why were composers from England overshadowed by other European composers during the nineteenth century?
2. Which earlier English composers are still frequently performed worldwide today?
3. Which popular English bands and solo artists are cited as the most influential and best-selling musicians of all time?
4. What pop-culture movements are credited as being born in England?

•~• Religion •~•

Ever since the break with the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century, the English have predominantly been members of the Church of England, a branch of the Anglican Communion, a form of Christianity with elements of Protestantism and Catholicism. The Book of Common Prayer is the foundational prayer book of the Church of England and replaced the various Latin rites of the Roman Catholic Church.

Today, most English people practicing organized religion are affiliated to the Church of England or other Christian denominations such as Roman Catholicism and Methodism (itself originally a movement within the Anglican Church).

Immigration to Britain from India and Pakistan since the 1950s has resulted in a large number of England's populations practices Islam (818,000), Hinduism (467,000), or Sikhism (301,000). Both the Church of England and the Catholic Church in England and Wales trace their formal history from the 597 Augustinian mission to the English. Other churches which had their start in England include the Methodist church, the Quakers and the Salvation Army.

Questions

1. What is the Church of England and how does it differ from the Roman Catholic Church?
2. What is the Book of Common Prayer and why is it significant to the Church of England?
3. How has immigration from India and Pakistan since the 1950s impacted the religious landscape of England?
4. How did the Methodist church, the Quakers, and the Salvation Army have their start in England?

•~• Sport •~•

A number of modern sports were codified in England during the nineteenth century, among them cricket, rugby union and rugby league, football, tennis, and badminton. Of these, association football, rugby and cricket remain the country's most popular spectator sports. England contains more UEFA five-star and four-star rated stadia than any other country, and is home to some of the sport's top football clubs. The England national football team are considered one of the game's superpowers, having won the World Cup in 1966 when it was hosted in England.

The England national rugby union team and England cricket team are often among the best performing in the world, with the rugby union team winning the 2003 Rugby World Cup, and the cricket team winning The Ashes in 2005, and being ranked the second best Test Cricket nation in the world. Rugby union clubs such as Leicester Tigers, London Wasps and the Northampton Saints have had success in the Europe-wide Heineken Cup. At rugby league, the England national rugby league team competed more regularly after 2006, when England became a full test nation in lieu of the Great Britain national rugby league team, when that team retired.

Thoroughbred racing originated under Charles II of England as the "Sport of Kings" and is a royal pastime to this day. World-famous horse races include the Grand National and the Epsom Derby.

Many teams and drivers in Formula One and the World Rally Championship are based in the England. The country also hosts legs of the Formula One and World Rallying Championship calendars and has its own Touring Car Racing championship, the BTCC.

Questions

1. Which sports were codified in England during the nineteenth century?
2. What are the most popular spectator sports in England?
3. What is the origin of thoroughbred racing in England?
4. What major racing events take place in England for horse racing and motorsports?

•~• Identification •~•

The name of the country and the term “English” derive from the Old English word for one of the three Germanic peoples that invaded the British Isles in the 5th century CE, the Angles. “Britain” and “British” derive from a Roman term for the inhabitants’ language of the British Isles, called “Brythonic” or p-Celtic.

Englishness is highly regionalized. The most important regional divide is between the south and the north. The south, chiefly represented by the regions of the southeast, southwest, East Anglia, and the Midlands, now contains the economically most dynamic sectors of the country, including the City (the chief financial center of the United Kingdom) and the seat of the national government, both in London. The north, the cradle of industrialization and the site of traditional smokestack industries, includes Yorkshire, Lancashire, Northumberland, Cumbria, Durham, Merseyside, and Cheshire. Especially in the last decades of the twentieth century, the north has experienced deindustrialization, severe economic hardship, and cultural balkanization. England is also a culture of many smaller regionalisms, still centered on the old governmental unit of the county and the local villages and towns. Local products, such as ale, and regional rituals and art forms, such as Morris dancing and folk music, many of which date back to the preindustrial era, allow

people to shape their attachments to their communities and the nation. Merged with the north-south divide and regionalism are notions of working class, middle class, and upper class as well as rich versus poor.

England's role as a destination for migration also has influenced conceptions of Englishness. Historically, the most prominent immigrant group has been the Irish, who came in two major waves in the modern era: 1847 and 1848 after the potato famine, and during and after World War II. Scots were present in England by the 1700s and settled in England in large numbers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, often for economic reasons. Welsh in-migration came to prominence when deindustrialization began in Wales in the 1920s. This immigration has brought the so-called Celtic fringe into English culture in a host of ways. There has also been the impact of Jewish, Flemish, Dutch, French Huguenot, German, Italian, Polish, Turkish, Cypriot, and Chinese cultures since the twelfth century. The loss of Britain's colonies has brought Afro-Caribbeans, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, Indians, and migrants from northwestern and eastern Africa in significant numbers. Judgments of whether England's newcomers feel themselves to be "Englis" vary by group and even by individual.

Questions

1. What are the historical origins of the terms "English" and "Britain"?
2. How is Englishness regionalized in terms of economic dynamics and traditional industries?
3. How has immigration influenced conceptions of Englishness throughout history?
4. What impact have different immigrant groups had on English culture and society?

•~• Demography •~•

The population was 49.5 million in 1998. The estimated nonwhite proportion of the population for that year was 7.3 percent, with the officially designated ethnic groups being black Caribbean, black African, black other, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Chinese.

Celtic in-migrations continues to be a major influence. These migrations are often urban in focus and tend to cluster in particular districts like London and Merseyside. The second important shift in demography from an ethnic standpoint is related to the end of the British Empire. Beginning in the 1950s, peoples from the Indian subcontinent and the Caribbean began to immigrate to England, taking advantage of the 1948 British Nationality Act, which established that all Commonwealth citizens enjoyed British citizenship. Most of these immigrants have settled in London, the West Midlands, Yorkshire and Merseyside. Between 1984 and 1996, the number of nonwhites in England, Scotland, and Wales rose from 2.3 million to 3.39 million (the majority of whom lived in England) for a total increase of 47 percent. In that same period Great Britain grew by just 5.8 percent and England by even less. European, Mediterranean, and East Asian immigrants have been part of the cultural landscape since the Middle Ages, when the Jewish community came to prominence and Flemish clothworkers began arriving. Immigrants to England in particular have been drawn there by the creation of a Common Market in Western Europe and the ending of restrictions on the movement of eastern Europeans.

Questions

1. What was the population of England, Scotland, and Wales in 1998?

2. What were the two major influences on demography from an ethnic standpoint mentioned in the text?
3. What was the significance of the 1948 British Nationality Act in relation to immigration to England?
4. How did the number of nonwhites in England, Scotland, and Wales change between 1984 and 1996, and where did the majority of them live?

•~• Linguistic Affiliation •~•

The primary language since the sixteenth century has been some version of English. English, however, is an amalgam of languages brought to the British Isles by invasions that began before written history. The Celts made Gaelic the dominant language until the Romans invaded in 55 and 54 BCE. , and introduced Latin and Greek, but it was the invasion of England by Germanic tribes in the fifth century (Angles, Saxons, and Jutes) that laid the basis for English. The arrival of Christianity in 597 allowed English to interact with Latin as well as with Greek, Hebrew, and languages as distant as Chinese. Viking invasions a few centuries later brought Scandinavian languages to the British Isles, while the Norman invasion in 1066 introduced French. Gradually, all levels of society adopted English, which had largely supplanted Latin and French in the second half of the fifteenth century.

Modern English comes from the East Midland dialect of Middle English. This divide between the East Midland dialect and all others emerged between the fourteenth and nineteenth centuries when those speaking with a “proper” or “posh” accent separated themselves from those speaking “Cockney” or working-class English. This division is signified by the distinction between “received pronunciation” (r.p.), Standard English, or BBC English and regional or local

dialects of English. This linguistic divide has always corresponded with social rank. The elite generally spoke with an r.p. accent (also known as the Queen's or King's English), and other residents spoke a non-standard, locally mediated English. In recent decades the connection between class and accent has begun to loosen.

Except in certain urban communities, bilingualism and multilingualism continue to play a minimal role in England. As of 1980 at least twelve languages other than English had more than 100 thousand speakers in Britain, including Punjabi, Urdu, Caribbean patois, Hindi, and Cantonese, which are among England's more influential second languages. In the last decade, the many varieties of spoken English have been thriving. Popular culture, especially music, radio, and television, has brought English creoles and patois; Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi English; and Celtic versions of English into the lives of the country's inhabitants. Thus, while Standard English still holds sway, it is no longer an unquestioned standard.

Questions

1. How did the invasion of England by Germanic tribes in the fifth century contribute to the development of the English language?
2. What role did the arrival of Christianity in 597 play in the evolution of the English language?
3. How has the connection between social class and accent in England evolved in recent decades?
4. What is the role of bilingualism and multilingualism in England, and how has it changed over time?

•~• Symbolism •~•

From a political standpoint, the monarchy, Parliament, and the English (or British) constitution are central symbols with both physical and ritual manifestations. Equally powerful are the rituals surrounding Parliament's routine. The monarchy expresses itself physically through the palaces and other residences of the royal family. Ritually, the monarchy permeates national life. From the social functions of the elite, which many people follow in the popular press, to the promotion of public causes, to royal weddings, the monarchy's representatives lend an almost sacral quality to public life.

Images that capture England's past have become a very important element in how people root themselves in a society that is increasingly mobile and in which the past has become a commodity. Idealizations of village and town life from bygone days are common in the speeches of politicians. Other idealizations of the past are equally popular, from the preserved industrial landscapes of the Midlands and the north, to nature walks that refer to the ancient peoples who inhabited the area long before the English arrived, to the appearance of the "English" countryside.

In recent years, popular culture has provided ways for England's immigrants to claim Englishness publicly. Before World War II the majority population insisted that newcomers assimilate and migrants were unable to lay claims to Englishness. More integrated national sports, especially soccer, and sports heroes represent the new ethnic landscape and provide symbols the young and the poor can claim. Similarly, movies, pop music, and plays have given less powerful groups ways of claiming Englishness. Popular festivals such as the Notting Hill Carnival, which is Europe's largest celebration of black identity, are also part of the mix. The New

Commonwealth population also has produced widely read literary works.

Questions

1. How do images of England's past contribute to how individuals root themselves in a society that is increasingly mobile?
2. How have national sports, such as soccer, and sports heroes contributed to representing the new ethnic landscape in England?
3. In what ways have movies, pop music, and plays provided less powerful groups with ways of claiming Englishness?
4. How do popular festivals like the Notting Hill Carnival contribute to celebrating and showcasing different identities within English society?

•~• Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space •~•

England's urbanism and notions of landscape and countryside are closely tied to the movement of people and economic sectors from major metropolitan areas into new towns, extensions of older towns, smaller towns, villages, and remote rural areas. Cities are thought of as places of decay and degeneration by many people. The central principle in definitions of urban communities is their management and containment; this has been done by designating rings of nondevelopment (green belts) around major cities and urban areas. The emphasis on areas of nondevelopment also has influenced planning within cities and towns, with space being created for private and public gardens, parks, athletic fields, and other so-called greenfield sites. There has also been an emphasis on arranging cities and towns in more livable units, with more thought to the placement of work sites, public amenities, shopping areas, and dwellings and more of a focus on how streets cater to public and private uses.

Villages and small towns that were fairly local or regional have become bedroom communities for large cities such as London or parts of larger regional urban networks. Sometimes they retain their original character, but more often affluent newcomers have changed these localities. Thus, while those in suburban, village, and small-town areas trumpet the rural nature of their lives, they have altered the rural landscape. Outside the towns and villages, two forces dominate the countryside: highly commercialized agriculture and preservation. Agribusiness has played a role in defining the countryside by destroying 95 percent of the nation's wetlands. Countering the trend toward developing the countryside to accommodate more housing are the preservationists, who want to expand parks, preserve a traditional country way of life, and keep urban dwellers out of these areas. Left out of towns, cities, villages, and rolling hills are those with no money and no political voice. Those most excluded from current visions and proposals are the poor and the urban-dwelling ethnic minority groups.

Many different types of Englishness compete in towns, cities, villages, and the countryside. Architecturally, little is left from the Celtic, Anglo-Saxon and Roman periods, although Roman town planning, roads, and walls are still evident and Anglo-Saxon churches and Celtic monuments are still standing. The Middle Ages have left Gothic and Romanesque architecture while the Tudor and Stuart periods of England's history have also left their contributions, notably not just in buildings for the elite and the state but also for the middling sort. The eighteenth century saw Georgian and neo-Gothic architecture, which continued into the nineteenth century when neo-Classical styles arose. The twentieth century has seen the rise of suburban building styles and Modernism and reactions against both

in the form of conservation, community architecture, and a tendency to revive old styles such as neo-Classicism.

Government buildings serve a range of symbolic purposes. Monuments more often symbolize particular historical figures or events. The purposes of public spaces also vary. The pews in a typical church promote an orderly separation between congregants while emphasizing togetherness as a congregation. Piccadilly Circus and many museums encourage people to mingle. Tea rooms, coffee shops, public houses, and nightclubs provide separate seating but promote a social atmosphere. People in England prefer to live in detached, suburban dwellings, ideally with a garden. First built in large numbers in the 1920s, many suburban houses were built in twos with a garden in front and rear. Another detached style was the single-story bungalow, which also became popular in the 1920s. Although in the post-war era it became common to build large, boxy modernist apartment blocks, especially for public housing, suburban building continued in additional new towns, some of which used the uniform, modernist styles. Since the 1980s more traditional designs for housing have been popular and both detached and non-detached housing have been constructed to evoke one of England's past eras. In private dwelling spaces, the English tend to fill much of the available space.

Questions

1. What role have green belts played in managing and containing urban communities in England?
2. How have villages and small towns in England transformed into bedroom communities for large cities like London?
3. How has English architecture evolved over different historical periods, and what influences can still be seen today?

4. How have housing preferences and styles in England changed over time, from the 1920s to the post-war era and up to the present day?

•~• Etiquette •~•

Etiquette is changing, but norms for appropriate behavior articulated by the elite and the middle class are still an important normative force. Greetings vary by the class or social position of the person with whom one is dealing. Those with titles of nobility, honorific titles, academic titles, and other professional titles prefer to be addressed by those titles, but like people to avoid calling too much attention to a person's position. Unless invited to do so, one does not call people by their nicknames. Postural norms are akin to those in other Western cultures; people lean forward to show interest and cross their legs when relaxed, and smiles and nods encourage conversation. The English expect less physical expression and physical contact than do many other societies: handshakes should not be too firm, social kissing is minimal, loud talking and backslapping are considered inappropriate, staring is impolite, and not waiting one's turn in line is a serious social blunder.

In conversation the English are known for understatement both in humor and in other forms of expression. On social occasions, small talk on neutral topics is appropriate and modest gifts are given. People reciprocate in paying for food and drink in social exchanges, by ordering drinks by rounds, for example. In public houses (bars), appropriate etiquette includes not gesturing for service. In restaurants it is important to keep one's palms toward the waiter, and tips are in the range of 10 to 15 percent. Standard table manners include holding the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right hand, tipping one's soup bowl away when finishing, and not leaning

one's elbows on the table. Deviations from these norms occur in ethnic subcultures and among the working class. These groups usually develop their own version of etiquette, appropriating some rules from the majority standard while rejecting others.

Questions

1. How do greetings in English society vary based on the social position of the individuals involved?
2. What are some postural norms in English culture that are similar to other Western cultures?
3. How do the English typically handle social exchanges involving food and drink?
4. What are some standard table manners in English culture, as outlined in the text?

•~• Christmas •~•

Although not a country of churchgoers, only 5% of people attend church regularly, Christmas is a religious festival that is celebrated with enthusiasm.

The festivities begin in the weeks running up to the big day with the exchange of Christmas cards. Even in the digital age, most people prefer the common touch of a traditional Christmas card sent by post.

About a week before Christmas, houses are decorated to herald the coming of the special day and a Christmas Tree is placed in a prominent position in the front room of the house, adorned with festive colours and baubles.

The day before December 25th is usually the day to put presents under the tree ready for collection the next day. Much

thought is put into the wrapping of the gifts so they blend with the overall feel of the front room.

Christmas Day usually begins with the children of the family getting up extra early so they can open up their presents. In the morning a huge feast is prepared with, roast potatoes, carrots, peas, Brussels sprouts and, the crowning glory, a huge turkey.

At around 3 pm it is usual to turn the television on to watch the Queen's speech which many people feel very moved by.

The rest of the day may continue with TV viewing of a Christmas classic like "It's A Wonderful Life" or "The Sound of Music". Some family members may escape to the local public house to meet friends.

Although not as important as Christmas Day, December 26th, Boxing Day, is a time for fitting in things that there was not time for the previous day. Relations who live out of town may call to exchange presents and share a festive drink. Traditionally, the leftover turkey is the source of sandwiches for lunch.

Questions

1. What percentage of people in the country attend church regularly?
2. What are some of the traditions leading up to Christmas Day in this country?
3. How do people in this country typically decorate their houses for Christmas?
4. What is the significance of December 26th, also known as Boxing Day, in this country's Christmas celebrations?

•~• Tea •~•

Since colonial times, tea has been a huge part of the British way of life. If there is an emergency or a difficult conversation to take place, a strong cup of tea will smooth the way.

But if there is time for a more measured approach, tea can be drunk with biscuits, (digestive are preferred) or small cakes, or a mixture of both. This is often turned into something ceremonial and called “High Tea”.

Connoisseurs of tea argue about whether the milk should be put in before the tea is poured, or after. As far back as 1946, Dr. Stapley of Loughborough University, UK, established, scientifically, that tea tastes better if the milk is put in first.

The type of tea used is also something that gets brew-makers talking. These days teabags predominate. Not many supermarkets stock “loose” tea. But high-level-tea-lovers insist that teabags are just the remnants of the tea sorting process in a factory. It is only when you have full-leaf tea, that the full flavour comes out.

Recommendations for brewing, or letting the drink stand hover at between three and five minutes. If you are using loose tea, one level teaspoon of tea for each person to take refreshment.

Tea drinking on the less formal of occasions can be drunk from a mug. But when entertaining important visitors the china tea set comes out of storage.

For many years, there used to be the art of telling fortunes from the tea left in a cup. With teabags so much in evidence, the art of tasseography seems to have died off.

Questions

1. How has tea been a significant part of British culture since colonial times?

2. What is the significance of a strong cup of tea in handling emergencies or difficult conversations?

3. What did Dr. Stapley's research in 1946 reveal about the order of putting milk in tea?

4. What is the debate between tea connoisseurs regarding tea bags versus loose leaf tea?

•~• **British Food** •~•

One thing that would probably cause a strike in any country is British food, particularly in most company canteens and restaurants, where everything is served with chips or ice-cream. Of course, British food isn't always as bad as it's painted by foreigners. (What can people who eat anything that crawls, jumps, swims or flies, possibly know about real food?). While it's true that British food is often bland, may look terrible and can make you sick, for most people it's just a matter of getting used to it. After all, it's usually necessary to become acclimatised to the food in most foreign countries.

However, it's difficult not to have some sympathy with foreigners who think that many British 'restaurants' should post health warnings and be equipped with an emergency medical centre. It may come as a surprise to many foreigners to learn that British bookshops are bursting with cookery books and they aren't all written by foreigners. The UK also has many popular television cookery programmes that usually feature eccentric (and excellent) chefs and scrumptious looking food. The British can console themselves with the knowledge that they (or some of them) at least know how to behave at the table, even if they don't have much idea what to serve on it.

To compensate for their deficiencies in the kitchen, the British are famous for their love of wine (or anything alcoholic) and are among the world's foremost experts on the character and qualities of good wine, although they're often better talkers than drinkers. In the UK, a wine may be described as having intense aromas and flavours of berries, bramble-jelly, morello cherries, peppery spices, mint, toffee and a hint of honey. The secret of dining in the UK is to drink a lot as, when you're drunk, most food tastes okay. The British even make their own wine; not only home-brewed stuff made from elderberries and other strange fruit, but also real commercially-produced wine made from grapes.

Questions

1. What are some common criticisms of British food mentioned in the text?
2. How does the text suggest that foreigners perceive British food?
3. What are some ways in which British food culture is portrayed positively in the text?
4. How do the British compensate for their deficiencies in the kitchen, according to the text?

•~• English Etiquette •~•

Whilst the English penchant for manners and socially appropriate behavior is renowned across the world, the word etiquette to which we so often refer actually originates from the French *estiquette* – “to attach or stick”. Indeed the modern understanding of the word can be linked to the Court of the French King Louis XIV, who used small placards called *etiquettes*, as a reminder to courtiers of accepted ‘house rules’ such as not walking through certain areas of the palace gardens.

Every culture across the ages has been defined by the concept of etiquette and accepted social interaction. However, it is the British – and the English in particular – who have historically been known to place a great deal of importance in good manners. Whether it be in relation to speech, timeliness, body language or dining, politeness is key.

British etiquette dictates courteousness at all times, which means forming an orderly queue in a shop or for public transport, saying excuse me when someone is blocking your way and saying please and thank you for any service you have received is de rigueur.

The British reputation for being reserved is not without merit. Overfamiliarity of personal space or behavior is a big no-no! When meeting someone for the first time a handshake is always preferable to a hug and a kiss on the cheek is reserved for close friends only. Asking personal questions about salary, relationship status, weight or age (particularly in the case of more 'mature' ladies) is also frowned upon.

Traditionally, one of the best examples of the British etiquette is the importance placed on punctuality. It is considered rude to arrive late to a business meeting, medical appointment or formal social occasion such as a wedding. As such it is advisable to arrive 5-10 minutes early to appear professional, prepared and unflustered as a mark of respect to your host. Conversely, should you arrive too early to a dinner party this could also appear slightly rude and ruin the atmosphere for the evening if the host is still completing their preparations. For the same reason an unannounced house call is often frowned upon for risk of inconveniencing the home owner.

Should you be invited to a British dinner party it is customary for a dinner guest to bring a gift for the host or hostess, such as a bottle of wine, a bouquet of flowers or chocolates. Good table

manners are essential (particularly if you want to be invited back!) and unless you are attending a barbeque or an informal buffet it is frowned upon to use fingers rather than cutlery to eat. The cutlery should also be held correctly, i.e. the knife in the right hand and the fork in the left hand with the prongs pointing downwards and the food pushed onto the back of the fork with the knife rather than 'scooped'. At a formal dinner party when there are numerous utensils at your place setting it is customary to begin with the utensils on the outside and work your way inward with each course.

As the guest it is polite to wait until everyone at the table has been served and your host starts eating or indicates that you should do so. Once the meal has begun it is impolite to reach over someone else's plate for an item such as seasoning or a food platter; it is more considerate to ask for the item to be passed to you. Leaning your elbows on the table whilst you are eating is also considered rude.

Slurping or making other such loud noises whilst eating is completely frowned upon. As with yawning or coughing it is also considered very rude to chew open-mouthed or talk when there is still food in your mouth. These actions imply that a person was not brought up to adhere to good manners, a criticism against not only the offender but their family too!

Questions

1. What are some examples of British etiquette mentioned in the text?
2. Why is punctuality considered important in British etiquette?
3. What are some key points to remember about table manners at a British dinner party according to the text?
4. Why are actions like slurping, chewing open-mouthed, or talking with food in your mouth considered rude in British etiquette?

•~• British Culture •~•

Let's take a candid and totally prejudiced look at the British people, tongue firmly in cheek, and hope they forgive my flippancy or that they don't read this bit.

The typical Briton is introspective, patriotic, insular, xenophobic, brave, small-minded, polite, insecure, arrogant, a compulsive gambler, humorous, reserved, conservative, reticent, hypocritical, a racist, boring, a royalist, condescending, depressed, a keen gardener, semi-literate, hard-working, unambitious, ironic, passionless, cosmopolitan, a whinger, hard-headed, liberal, a traditionalist, a couch potato, obsequious, a masochist, complacent, homely, pragmatic, cynical, decent, melancholic, unhealthy, a poor cook, pompous, eccentric, inebriated, proud, self-deprecating, tolerant, inhibited, a shopaholic, conceited, courageous, idiosyncratic, mean (a bad tipper), courteous, jingoistic, stuffy, overweight, well-mannered, pessimistic, disciplined, a habitual queuer, stoic, modest, gloomy, shy, serious, apathetic, honest, wimpish, fair, snobbish, friendly, quaint, decadent, civilised, dogmatic, scruffy, prejudiced, class conscious and a soccer hooligan.

If the above list contains a few contradictions, it's because there's no such thing as a typical Briton and very few people conform to the standard British stereotype (whatever that is). Apart from the multifarious differences in character between the people from different parts of England (particularly between those from the north and south), the population of the UK encompasses a disparate mixture of Scots, Welsh, Irish and assorted ethnic groups originating from throughout the British Commonwealth, other EU countries (including hundreds of thousands from new member countries in recent years), plus miscellaneous foreigners from all corners of the

globe who have chosen to make the UK their home (London is the most ethnically diverse city in the world).

Questions

1. What is the average Briton prone to?
2. Is there a concept like a typical Brit?
3. Who is included in the UK population?

•~• **Class Systems** •~•

One of the things which initially confuses foreigners living in the UK is its class system, which is a curious British affectation. Entry to the upper class echelons is rooted in birthright and ill-bred upstarts with pots of 'new' money (particularly foreigners with unpronounceable names), find they're unable to buy entry to the most exclusive clubs and homes of England (even when they're seriously rich). Many Britons are obsessed with class and for some, maintaining or improving their position on the social ladder is a full-time occupation (the ultimate aim being to acquire a knighthood or peerage). The rest of us pretend we're a 'better' class than we actually are, with the exception of a few politicians who are busy trying to live down their privileged past in order to court popularity with the underprivileged masses.

At the top of the heap there's the upper class (the 'blue-bloods' or aristocracy), crowned by the British royal family, followed at a respectable distance by the middle class (which is subdivided into upper middle class, middle middle class, and lower middle class), the working class or lower class, and two relatively new categories that are the inevitable legacy of the unbridled market economy of the last two decades: the underclass and the beggar class. In the UK, people were traditionally officially classified according to their

occupations under classes A to E. However, owing to the burgeoning of the middle class in the last few decades (we are all middle class now), the government has introduced no fewer than 17 new classes (including a meritocratic super class of top professionals and managers earning zillions a year). Class is, of course, wholly unimportant in the UK, provided you attended public school, speak with the right accent and have pots of inherited money.

The UK has been uncharitably described (with a hint of truth) as a society based on privilege, inherited wealth and contacts. Class is also what divides the bosses from the workers in the UK and the class struggle is at the root of many industrial disputes. It has certainly re-ignited over the past couple of years. A blue-collar (manual) worker must never accept a position that elevates him to the ranks of the lower middle class (a white-collar job), otherwise his workmates will no longer speak to him and he will be banned from the local working men's club. (As a consolation he may be accepted as a member at the Conservative club). Similarly, middle-class management must never concede an inch to the workers and, most importantly, must never have direct discussions with them about anything, particularly pay rises or a reduction in working hours.

Questions

1. What confuses foreigners at first?
2. Who is at the top of the pyramid?
3. Who is in the middle class?

•~• Food in Britain •~•

One thing that would probably cause a strike in any country is British food, particularly in most company canteens and restaurants, where everything is served with chips or ice-cream. Of course,

British food isn't always as bad as it's painted by foreigners. (What can people who eat anything that crawls, jumps, swims or flies, possibly know about real food?). While it's true that British food is often bland, may look terrible and can make you sick, for most people it's just a matter of getting used to it. (What's wrong with a diet of brown sauce, chips, biscuits and tea, anyway?). After all, it's usually necessary to become acclimatised to the food in most foreign countries.

However, it's difficult not to have some sympathy with foreigners who think that many British 'restaurants' should post health warnings and be equipped with an emergency medical centre. (There's nothing wrong with British food that a good stomach pump cannot cure.) It may come as a surprise to many foreigners to learn that British bookshops are bursting with cookery books and they aren't all written by foreigners. The UK also has many popular television cookery programmes that usually feature eccentric (and excellent) chefs and scrumptious looking food. The British can console themselves with the knowledge that they (or some of them) at least know how to behave at the table, even if they don't have much idea what to serve on it.

To compensate for their deficiencies in the kitchen, the British are famous for their love of wine (or anything alcoholic) and are among the world's foremost (self-appointed) experts on the character and qualities of good wine, although they're often better talkers than drinkers. In the UK, a wine may be described as having intense aromas and flavours of berries, bramble-jelly, morello cherries, peppery spices, mint, toffee and a hint of honey. The secret of dining in the UK is to drink a lot as, when you're drunk, most food tastes okay. The British even make their own wine; not only home-brewed stuff made from elderberries and other strange fruit, but also real

commercially-produced wine made from grapes! Although it isn't exactly causing panic among continental wine producers, some of it's quite palatable.

Questions

1. What does British food look like to foreigners?
2. What do the signs in restaurants warn about?
3. How do the British compensate for the shortcomings of their cuisine?

•~• Drinking habits •~•

Contrary to popular belief, the British aren't all drunks and are languishing in a fairly lowly 12th position in the alcohol consumption league among the world's top 30 developed countries. The British do at least know how to make a good cuppa (tea) and don't believe in polluting it with lemon or herbs (just milk and/or sugar). The British recipe for any national disaster, whether it's a cricket thrashing at the hands of the Aussies or a power cut during Coronation Street, is to make a 'nice cup of tea'. Tea is drunk at almost any time (approaching 200 million cups a day), not just in the morning or 'afternoon tea'. Many Britons drink tea in the same quantities as other Europeans drink mineral water or wine.

Unfortunately, coffee is a different matter altogether and although the British have been drinking it since the 16th century (long before tea), they have yet to master the art of brewing a half-decent pot, which just goes to show that practice doesn't always make perfect. The British don't do anything by halves and their coffee, almost always instant, is easily the worst in the world (it would help if they actually used real coffee beans).

Questions

1. What is the place of the British in alcohol consumption?
2. When do the British drink tea?
3. How is British coffee treated in the world?

•~• Socializing •~•

You may sometimes get the impression that the British are an unfriendly lot, as your neighbours won't always say hello and probably won't drop by or invite you to their home for a cup of tea. (If they offer coffee, invent an urgent appointment!). As an outsider, it may be left to you to make the first move, although if you drop by uninvited, your neighbours may think that you're being pushy and just trying to sneak a look at their home. Northerners are generally friendly and warm-hearted, particularly when compared with the detached and aloof southerners who won't usually give you the time of day. If your southern neighbour does condescend to speak to you, he's likely to greet you with the ritual "How are you?". This doesn't, of course, mean "How are you feeling mentally, physically or spiritually?", but simply "Hello". The questioner usually couldn't care less whether you're fighting fit or on your death bed. The ritual answer is (even if you've just had a heart and lung transplant) "Fine, thank you – how are you?".

If you wish to start a conversation with your neighbour (or anyone), a remark such as "nice weather" usually elicits a response (particularly if it's raining cats and dogs). The weather is a hallowed topic and it's the duty of every upstanding citizen to make daily weather predictions because of the awful hash made of it by the meteorologists. The UK has rather a lot of weather and there's often rain, gales, fog, snow and a heat wave in the same day (although

the weather is always described as 'nice' or 'not very nice'). When it snows, everyone and everything is paralysed and people start predicting the end of civilisation as we know it.

The British stick steadfastly to their Fahrenheit temperature measures and many people haven't a clue whether 20 °C is boiling hot, lukewarm or freezing. The seasons are a mite erratic, but, as a rough guide, winter lasts for around 11 months, with a break of a couple of weeks for spring and autumn, and (in a good year) a couple of days for summer. There is, however, no truth in the rumour that all the world's bad weather originates in the British Isles (some of it must come from somewhere else!). The British will do anything to escape for a few weeks to sunnier climes (whatever do they find to talk about on holiday when the sky is boringly blue each day?), even going so far as to spend days in an airport lounge for the dubious pleasure of a few weeks in a half-built hotel, bathing in polluted seas and getting sick on foreign food. The fact that no people anywhere have shown such a consistent desire to emigrate as the British may have more than a little to do with the climate.

Questions

1. What impression do you sometimes have of the British?
2. What is the difference between northerners and southerners?
3. What is the weather like in the UK?

•~• Dialects •~•

It's a common misconception among many foreigners that the British all speak English. There are numerous accents and dialects, half of which are so thick that you could be forgiven for thinking that people are conversing in an ancient secret language. A Briton's accent and choice of words is usually a dead giveaway as to his

upbringing. For example, you can safely bet that someone who says, "One feels that one has a certain obligation to one's social peers to attend Royal Ascot, even though one doesn't really care for horse racing oneself", isn't from London's East End. One-third of the British use such long words that most of us cannot even pronounce them (let alone understand them) and some 25 % are immigrants who speak only Hindi, Bengali, Chinese, French, Gujarati, Arabic, Xhosa, Russian, Punjabi, Swahili, Urdu, Italian, Turkish, Spanish, Esperanto, Yiddish or Polish.

The rest are tourists, who usually speak the best English of all, but unfortunately don't remain in one place long enough to hold a conversation with anyone. Some foreigners actually pay real money to come to England to learn English, which is part of a grand plot to get them to teach us how to talk proper at their expense. If you're a foreigner and speak good English, you can always practise with other foreigners who you will understand perfectly. If you have a few problems writing English and tend to get all the words mixed up (to say nothing of the damned spelling), fear not; you will be in excellent company as many British are barely literate (the average Briton's vocabulary is around 1,000 words or 500 for tabloid newspaper readers). The best compliment a foreigner can receive from a native is that his English is rather unusual or unorthodox, as he will then blend in with the rest of us and won't be taken for an alien. (If you speak perfect English you will be instantly exposed as a foreigner).

Many Britons are prejudiced against all foreigners and the English are also prejudiced against English from other regions, Irish, Scots, Welsh, Yanks, Europeans, most other foreigners and anyone who speaks with a different (i.e. lower class) accent. However, don't be concerned, as British xenophobia always refers to 'the others' and

present company is usually excepted. The British, in common with most other races, don't have a lot of time for foreigners, particularly rich tourists and foreigners who buy up all the best property, and who should all stay at home. Most Britons' image of foreigners is gleaned from the stereotypes portrayed on television. For example, every Briton knows that all Americans are millionaires with flash cars, murderers or policemen (or all three), drive like maniacs and make love with their clothes on in full make-up. However, it's the Germans and Japanese who, despite providing us with reliable cars and other things that work, remain the baddest of baddies and are still portrayed as 'the enemy' in weekly television (TV) reruns of World War II.

Questions

1. What misconception is common among foreigners?
2. What do a third of Brits use?
3. How many percent are immigrants?

•~• Understatements •~•

The British are masters of the understatement and rarely rave about anything. If they're excited about something they sometimes enthuse "that's nice" and, on the rare occasion when they're deliriously happy, they've been known to exclaim "I say, that's rather good". On the other hand, if something disastrous happens (such as their house burns down) it might be termed "a spot of bother". The end of the world will probably be pronounced "unfortunate" or, if there was something particularly good on TV that evening, it may even be greeted as "a jolly bad show" (the ultimate tragedy). The true character of the British is, however, revealed when they're at play, particularly when they're engaged in sport.

Questions

1. What are masters of the British?
2. When is the true character of the British revealed?

•~• Sports •~•

The British are sports mad, although most people confine their interest to watching or gambling rather than taking part. The British, or at least the English, are famous for their sense of fair play and playing by the rules – cheating is considered very bad form. Football (soccer) is the UK's national sport and if we hadn't taught all the other nations to play we might even be world champions. However, the real character and true sporting traditions of the English (other Brits have better things to do) are embodied in the game of cricket, a study of which provides a valuable insight into these strange islanders (and their attitude towards tea parties, religion, sex and foreigners). Foreigners may, at first, have a bit of difficulty understanding what cricket is all about (although it's far easier to understand than British politics), but after a few decades, most get the hang of it (unlike British politics which remain a complete mystery). The first thing you must understand is that cricket is a game for gentlemen, embodying the great British traditions of fair play, honour and sportsmanship (except when played by Australians, who haven't the remotest concept of these things).

It's tempting (although fairly pointless) to make comparisons between cricket and a minority sport played in the US, called baseball. (The nearest equivalent in the UK is rounders, a sissy game played by girls). Imagine if you can, a baseball match that lasts five days with interminable breaks for breakfast, drinks, rain, streakers

(naked runners), lunch, injuries, stray dogs, more rain, rest days, more drinks, tea, bad light, dinner, supper, and even more rain, and always ends in a draw (if not abandoned due to rain) – and you will have a rough idea what it's all about. Despite the length of a cricket match, which varies from one to five days, it's an enthralling and thrilling sport. On the rare occasions when things get just a teensy bit boring, there's always something exciting to liven things up such as a newspaper blowing across the pitch, a stray dog or pigeon on the field or, on a good day, a stalker. The commentators do a sterling job and keep the audience spellbound with the most amazing and fascinating statistics and anecdotes about cricket's legendary heroes.

The rules of cricket are a little complicated (Einstein's theory of relativity is much easier to understand), so I won't bore you by trying to explain them in detail (fascinating though they are). A cricket team consists of 11 players and a 12th man who has the most important job of all – carrying the drinks tray. He's also sometimes called on to play when one of his team-mates collapses from frostbite or is overcome by excitement. Like baseball, one team bats and the other team attempts to get them out (or committed to hospital) by hurling a ball at the batsman's head. The team in the field (not batting) stands around in set positions with peculiar names such as gully, slips, short leg, square leg, long leg, peg leg, cover point, third man (they made a film about him), mid-off, mid-on and oddest of all – silly mid-off and silly mid-on. Only someone who's a few pence short of a pound stands directly in front of a batsman as he's about to hit a very hard ball in your direction at around 100 mph (160 kmph).

When the bowler strikes the wicket or the batsman with the ball everyone shouts in unison "Howzat" (very loudly, on the assumption that the umpire is asleep, hard of hearing, short-sighted or all three). Cricketers play in a white uniform and the only colourful

things about the game are the ball (red) and the language used by the batsman (blue) when he's hit by the ball or when the umpire gives him out leg before wicket (lbw) to a ball that didn't touch him, and in any case was a million miles away from the wicket. One of the unwritten rules of cricket is that the players (gentlemen) never argue with the umpire, no matter how shortsighted, biased and totally ignorant of the rules the idiot is.

The Aussies (Australians), whom everyone knows have no respect for tradition (and couldn't give a XXXX for anything that doesn't emanate from a tinny or a barrel), have attempted to brighten up the game's image by dressing like clowns for one-day matches (yet another sacrilege to the old school). One of the worst mistakes the English ever made was to teach foreigners how to play cricket (or any other sport), as the ungrateful blighters get a sadistic delight from rubbing their mentors' noses in the dirt. One of the problems with foreigners is that they have no concept of how gentlemen should behave and fail to realise that the real purpose of sport is taking part and nothing at all to do with winning. Gallant losers are feted as heroes in the UK and heroic defeats against overwhelming odds are infinitely preferable to easy (hollow) victories.

Questions

1. What are the British obsessed with?
2. What are the British famous for?
3. What is the national sport in Britain?
4. What should you understand about cricket?
5. What are the rules of the game of cricket?

•~• Queuing •~•

The British have a passion for queuing (lining up) and appear to outsiders to have endless patience – as you would expect from a nation that can endure a five-day cricket match. The British queue everywhere for everything, including football tickets, sales (when people queue for days or weeks), buses, trains, aircraft, fast food (or slow food if there's a long queue), post offices, government offices, hospital beds, concerts, cafeterias, doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms, groceries, supermarkets, theatre tickets, banks and payphones. The other form of queue popular in the UK is the traffic jam. Many motorists spend their weekdays bumper to bumper driving round and round the M25 motorway, which is circular to make it easier to get back to where you started. At weekends, motorists often get withdrawal symptoms and go for a drive with the family, friends, relatives and the dog, in search of a traffic jam, usually to be found anywhere near coastal areas from spring to autumn, particularly on public holiday weekends.

Queuing isn't always a necessity, but simply a herd instinct that compels people to huddle together (in winter it helps to keep warm), except of course when travelling by public transport, when the rules are somewhat different. On public transport you must never sit next to anyone when an empty seat is available and you must spread yourself and your belongings over two or three seats and never move for anyone. (The best way is to feign sleep with a belligerent expression on your face – most people wouldn't dare disturb you). You must avoid looking at your fellow passengers at all costs (in case a stranger smiles at you), usually achieved by staring fixedly at the back of a newspaper or out of the window. Whatever you do, don't open a window and let in any nasty fresh air, which will cause a riot.

Questions

1. Why do the British have a reputation for their love of queuing?
2. Can you give examples of places where the British queue for various things?
3. How do the British behave on public transport in terms of seating etiquette?

•~• Lousy Lovers •~•

There's not a word of truth in the rumour that British men are lousy lovers (or all gay), which is a cheap lie put about by sex-mad Latinos so that they can keep all the women for themselves. Slanderous foreign propagandists have calculated that the British make love an average of twice a month. To add insult to injury they also estimate this is more often than we bathe (which is a damn insult, as the average Briton washes at least once a week). If you find a foreigner under your bed or in your bath don't be alarmed, he'll only be conducting a sex survey for *Paris Match* or *Der Spiegel*.

Although perhaps not the most romantic of lovers (but much better than those unctuous Italians, who are all talk and no trousers and have the lowest birth-rate in Europe), the British know what it's for and don't need a ruler to measure their manhood (neither do we all get our kicks flashing, mooning or being whipped by women in leather underwear). Judging by the illegitimate birth rate (around 40 per cent of all births), many Britons don't wait until they're married to find out what sex is all about either. 'No Sex Please, We're British' is simply a challenge to women who have had their fill of Latinos with short fat hairy legs. (How does a woman make love to someone who only comes up to her knees anyway?) Sex is definitely not

simply a person's gender and most Britons take more than a hot-water bottle to bed with them.

British women are among the most emancipated in the world – not that the weaker sex (men) gave in graciously – and are allowed to vote and drive cars. Nevertheless, it's difficult, if not impossible, for women to claw their way to the top of most professions or into boardrooms, which remain bastions of male chauvinism. Of course, no self-respecting man would allow himself to be dominated by a mere woman, unless of course he's a wimp and she's a handbag-wielding, belligerent battler. If British (male) politicians learnt nothing else during the Thatcher years, it was the utter havoc a woman can wreak in the boardroom.

Questions

1. Why does the author mention the stereotype of British men being lousy lovers and all gay in this context?
2. According to the author, how frequently do foreign propagandists claim the British make love on average?
3. How does the author refute the claim that the average Briton washes less frequently than they make love?

•~• Money and Gambling •~•

The main problem with the British economy (apart from the ineptitude of British politicians) is that many Britons lack ambition. They certainly want 'loadsamoney', but would rather do almost anything than work for it (contrary to the popularly held misconception that 'hard work never did anyone any harm', the British know only too well that it can prove fatal). The British are reluctant entrepreneurs and many succeed in their own business only when forced into it.

Most people prefer to try their luck at gambling (rather than work) and will bet on almost anything, including the national lottery, football pools, horse and greyhound racing, bingo, casinos, names of royal babies or ships, public appointments, election results and who the Prime Minister will sack next (or who will resign) – you name it and someone will make a book on it. (One of the reasons that gambling is so popular in Britain is that gambling debts are unenforceable in law.) However, the attitude to gambling is changing. Nowadays, someone who wins a fortune on the lottery is unlikely to declare that it won't change his life and that he'll be keeping his job as a £50 a week farm labourer (instead he'll buy a villa in Spain, a yacht and a Ferrari). If the British injected as much energy into work and business as they do into gambling, they might even be able to compete with the Germans and Japanese.

Questions

1. How do you think the popularity of gambling in Britain impacts the work ethic of its people?
2. In what ways do you believe the attitude towards gambling in Britain reflects on the overall ambition of its citizens?
3. What changes do you think could be made to encourage more Britons to pursue entrepreneurship rather than relying on gambling for financial gain?

•~• The secret of life •~•

The secret of life in the UK is to maintain a sense of humour (and carry a big umbrella). Most Brits have a lively sense of humour and a keen sense of the ridiculous, which helps make life in the UK bearable. (The worst insult is to accuse someone of having no sense of humour). One of the things that endears the British most to

foreigners is their ability to poke fun at themselves (the British don't take themselves too seriously) and everyone else, as typified in TV programmes such as Monty Python and Dead Ringers. Nothing escapes the barbs of the satirists: from the Pope to the Prime Minister, the President of the US to the Royal Family, everyone is lampooned with equal affection.

It's often difficult for foreigners to understand British humour or to recognise when someone is being serious or joking, although the subject at hand usually offers a clue. Generally, the more earnest or solemn the topic, the more likely they are to be joking. Amazingly, some foreigners think that the British have no sense of humour, usually Americans who don't understand our subtle way with words and cannot understand real English anyway. Many foreigners believe the British are at least a little eccentric and, at their worst, stark staring bonkers.

Questions

1. How does a sense of humour play a significant role in British culture, as described in the text?
2. Why do some foreigners have difficulty understanding British humour, according to the text?
3. How do TV programmes like Monty Python and Dead Ringers reflect the British attitude towards humour and satire, as mentioned in the text?

•~• A serious bit! •~•

Enough of this flippancy – now for the serious bit! The UK has its fair share of problems and is still failing in many vital areas, including transport, health and manufacturing (apart from those industries we've sold to foreigners). However, we are still world

leaders in pageantry, binge drinking and football hooliganism. Major concerns include rising crime (particularly juvenile and violent crime), the uneven quality of state education, a flourishing drugs culture, the failing health service, inequality (the growing gulf between rich and poor), a looming pensions crisis, pollution, awful public transport, homelessness, overcrowded roads, urban blight, a spiralling cost of living and a burgeoning underclass. Apart from that everything is perfect.

The worst crisis is among the UK's young working class males, among whom a lack of a sense of purpose and unemployment commonplace in widespread. This is reflected in their suicide rate, which has risen sharply in the last decade. Perhaps the most serious decline in British life is shown in the combined effects of loss of social cohesion and sense of community, and the breakdown of the family unit. Almost half of marriages end in divorce and some 40 percent of all births are to unmarried mothers, which has resulted in a high proportion of one-parent families.

However, not everything is depressing in Britain and the quality of life is considered by many foreigners to be excellent and among the best in the world. In the last two decades, the UK has become a more entrepreneurial society, in which people are increasingly ready to take risks and are less dependent on the state. It has also become a more European nation, less afraid of European bogeymen and domination by foreigners (although the euro is still a hard sell).

Most Britons are better off today than they've ever been and optimism about the future has characterised the last decade. This has largely coincided with the election of a dynamic and up-beat Labour government to replace the discredited Conservatives in 1997, although ten years down the road the two are almost indistinguishable.

Labour have tried hard to improve things – although not as hard as they have worked to line their own pockets – but it seems that everything they touch turns to ashes. An obsession with political spin-doctoring and public relations has tended to obscure any positive improvements, which in any case have been over-shadowed by the disastrous Iraq war. The conscious branding of the country as ‘cool Britannia’ now looks a little dated, but nonetheless the underlying reality remains the same. Good restaurants flourish and fashion, music, nightlife and style are all fields in which the UK can now hold its own with the world’s best.

Questions

1. What are some of the major concerns facing the UK according to the text?
2. How has the quality of life in Britain been perceived by foreigners in recent years?
3. How has the UK changed in terms of entrepreneurship and independence from the state in the last two decades?

•~• Entertainment •~•

The British enjoy superb entertainment, leisure, sports and cultural facilities, which for their sheer variety and accessibility are among the best in the world (but increasingly expensive). The quality and huge choice of goods in the shops is excellent and explains why many people travel from far and wide simply to shop in Britain. British television has no equal, national and local radio is excellent, and the country has an unrivalled choice of quality newspapers, magazines and literature. The UK is a caring society, highlighted by the abundance of charitable and voluntary organisations, unparalleled in any other country, all of which do invaluable work

(nationally and internationally). The UK remains a centre of scientific excellence underlined by its number of Nobel prize-winners. It's also one of the least corrupt and most civilised countries in the world.

The British have more freedom from government interference than the people of most countries to do, say and act any way they like, something most of them take for granted. The UK is still a great enlightened power (if a little frayed at the edges) and a positive influence in the world and London remains the centre of the English-speaking world. Whatever else it may be, life in the UK is spiritually, mentally and intellectually stimulating and rarely dull. Although foreigners may occasionally complain about Britain and the British weather, most feel they're privileged to live there and wouldn't dream of leaving.

Last, but certainly not least, there are the British people, who, although they can be infuriating at times, will charm and delight you with their sense of humour and idiosyncrasies. When your patience with the UK and the British is stretched to breaking point, simply take yourself off to the nearest pub and order a pint of ale or a large gin and tonic: the UK looks an even nicer place through the bottom of a (rose-tinted) glass, and, with a bit of luck, you won't even notice that it's still raining.

Questions

1. How does the text describe the entertainment, leisure, and cultural facilities in Britain?

2. What are some of the characteristics of British society highlighted in the text, such as charitable organizations and scientific excellence?

3. How does the text portray the British people in terms of their sense of humor and idiosyncrasies?

•~• William Hogarth •~•

William Hogarth (born November 10, 1697, London, England — died October 26, 1764, London) was the first great English-born artist to attract admiration abroad, best known for his moral and satirical engravings and paintings — e.g., “A Rake’s Progress” (eight scenes, 1733). His attempts to build a reputation as a history painter and portraitist, however, met with financial disappointment, and his aesthetic theories had more influence in Romantic literature than in painting.

Hogarth — the only son of Richard Hogarth, a minor classical scholar and schoolmaster — grew up with two sisters, Mary and Ann, in the heart of the teeming city. Richard’s evident abilities as a classicist brought him scant reward but provided an educated and industrious, if not prosperous, home. Later, looking back on this period, Hogarth dwelt almost exclusively on his father’s shabby treatment at the hands of printers, booksellers, and wealthy patrons. Apart from confirming his distrust of learning, his resentment at his father’s disappointing experiences fostered the boy’s self-assertiveness and independence of character.

As a boy with little inclination to scholarship but gifted with a lively perception of the world around him, he enjoyed mimicking and drawing characters, interests that were encouraged by visits to a local painter’s workshop. While not discouraging his artistic inclinations, his father, Hogarth later complained, could do little more “than put me in a way of shifting for myself”. He consequently sought the security of a solid craftsman’s training and became apprenticed, at about the age of 15, to a silversmith. Hogarth presumably moved to his master’s house, where he learned to engrave gold and silver work with armorial designs — in his own phrase, the “monsters of heraldry”. Valuable years lost on what the

engraver George Vertue aptly termed “low-shrub instructions” had crucial bearing on Hogarth’s subsequent development. Apart from the insecurity they bred, Hogarth’s frustration with his training led him to exploit unorthodox methods of self-instruction in order to make up for lost time. His originality and flexibility as an artist owed much to this pragmatic and unconventional approach to his career.

Hogarth’s years of apprenticeship were by no means devoted exclusively to hard work, however. Sociable and fond of fun, a keen and humorous observer of human behaviour, with a special love of the theatre and shows of all kinds, he was evidently a convivial companion. Never prudish, he knew the exuberant life of the London streets, bawdy houses, fairs, and theatres firsthand and derived from them a fertile appreciation of the vitality of popular tradition. At the same time, he felt drawn to the coffeehouses and taverns frequented by writers, musicians, actors, and liberal professionals, forming lasting friendships in such lively intellectual circles. His sympathies rested with the middle classes and, specifically, with the critical, enlightened element – rational, tolerant, and humanitarian – that played such a prominent role in the cultural life of Hanoverian England.

George I had been king for six years when Hogarth set up shop on his own at the age of 23, resolving to escape the rigid limitations of his trade. He began by attending a private drawing school in St Martin’s Lane, where he joined other students drawing from casts and live models. He had a natural distaste for copying, however, likening it to emptying water from one vessel into another, and this instinctive rejection of formal training, combined with a natural waywardness, convinced him that the best method of learning to draw lay in direct attention to actual life. An intuitive realist, primarily concerned with expressive rather than formal values, he

developed a kind of visual mnemonics: “the retaining in my minds eye without drawing on the spot whatever I wanted to imitate”. From close observation of the everyday scene, Hogarth trained his unusual visual memory until he could dispense with preliminary studies, committing his ideas directly to paper or canvas. This inspired improvisation was supplemented by a formidable knowledge of the European tradition in art, acquired through familiarity with a vast range of reproductive engravings. Meanwhile, he earned his living as a copper engraver, executing trade cards, tickets, and book illustrations. His growing success as an illustrator brought Hogarth little satisfaction, for it entailed unwelcome dependence on the booksellers who had exploited his father; he later insisted that engraving “did little more than maintain myself in the usual gaities of life but (was) in all a punctual paymaster”. He had long been an admirer of Sir James Thornhill’s fluent adaptation of the late Baroque style, and in 1724 he joined a drawing school, newly opened in Thornhill’s house. It was the start of a critical association. Holding the official post of sergeant painter to the king and being the first knighted English-born artist, Thornhill in his career affirmed the vitality of native art and the social respectability of the artist. Hogarth cared passionately about both, primarily for personal reasons but also because he believed in art as a vital creative force in society. He despised the connoisseurs’ exclusive admiration for the Old Masters and their prejudice in favour of foreign artists. In his first major work, *Masquerades and Operas*, published independently of the booksellers in 1724, Hogarth attacked contemporary taste and expressed attitudes that were vigorously sustained throughout his life. Boldly questioning the standards of a powerful clique that was supported by the 3rd earl of Burlington, an influential art patron and architect, Hogarth’s first blow with the connoisseurs was shrewdly

designed to appeal to his hero, Thornhill, who was himself suffering from Burlington's Neoclassical revival. Thus, Hogarth made powerful enemies at the start of his career, and, when they retaliated about 1730 by nullifying royal interest in his work, he was cruelly disappointed. Indeed, despite his own intransigent frankness, Hogarth was always discouraged and offended when his opponents hit back.

A lawsuit he brought in 1728 against Joshua Morris, a tapestry weaver, throws eloquent light on his susceptibilities. The details of the case reveal that, by the age of 30, Hogarth felt sufficiently confident of his abilities to embark on a painting career. Morris failed to share this confidence and rejected a painting he had ordered on grounds that it was not finished. Hogarth indignantly sought and obtained public vindication with the help of professional witnesses, including Thornhill. Their testimony was amply justified by his first dated painting, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), a scene from John Gay's popular farce, which emphasized Hogarth's prevailing interests: his involvement with the theatre and with down-to-earth, comic subjects. Closely attentive to realistic detail, he recorded the scene exactly as it appeared to the audience and included portraits of the principal actors and spectators. He thus anticipated both his later narrative paintings and the small, informal group portraits, or "conversation pieces", that occupied him in the years immediately after this auspicious debut.

Questions

1. What is William Hogarth best known for in his artistic career?
2. How did Hogarth's upbringing influence his character and approach to art?
3. Why did Hogarth feel frustrated with his apprenticeship as a silversmith?

4. How did Hogarth view formal training in drawing, and what method did he believe was the best way to learn to draw?

5. What were some of the influences on Hogarth's art style and techniques?

6. Who were some of the key figures in London that Hogarth associated with during his early years as an artist?

7. How did Hogarth express his views on contemporary taste and standards through his work "Masquerades and Operas"?

•~• The Tradition of Teatime in England •~•

As you well know, tea came to England thanks to the export of this product from the colonies that the country had in India, where this product was and is an essential part of its gastronomic culture.

It was in the 17th century when this fruit of the *Camellia Sinensis* plant arrived in England and, as always, the first people to consume it was the upper classes, mainly the nobility and the aristocracy.

But when did this famous tradition of five o'clock tea begin in England? Curiously enough, it took a few years. In fact, it is considered that two centuries passed, when in the 19th century, the then Duchess of Bedford, Lady Anna Maria Stanhope, invented it due to the hunger she used to have in the afternoons.

How? Yes, yes. As you read it. At that time, the custom was to have a very powerful breakfast and a dinner of the same style, but nothing else was eaten for the rest of the day, at most, a small mid-morning snack. How not to go hungry!

So one afternoon when the aforementioned duchess was very hungry, she asked her servant to serve her tea with some pastries. She enjoyed it so much that she began to drink it every afternoon

and, little by little, she invited her friends to join her during that moment of tea and pastries.

A moment that had a ritual, since the excuse was to meet to talk about topics of interest of the moment, share opinions and, of course, show hospitality.

Gradually, this custom went from being something only of the aristocracy and the upper classes, to the middle classes and workers, especially the latter, who stopped at 5 pm to have a small snack and thus be able to continue with the workday, which was getting longer and longer.

And so it was that an attack of hunger became one of the most typical customs in England. Of course, nowadays that time oscillates between 3 and 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Something that is not surprising considering that the schedules have nothing to do with those we have in Spain and that the time to have lunch is usually around noon.

As I have already mentioned above, the English like to drink tea with a little milk and always when it is cold, but where does this tradition come from?

Historians believe that the English are the only Europeans who began to consume it this way because they were the ones who drank Assam variety tea (a black tea) and when making the infusion the color was dark and the flavor was stronger, they considered it normal to add that little bit of milk to make it softer.

In addition, they also have the custom of adding a slice of lemon, at least, that is how it is in the famous 5 o'clock tea tradition. By the way, do you know how tea is served in this famous ceremony?

To begin with, small salty sandwiches are served (usually split in half) with flavors such as cucumber, salmon, egg, or ham, among other typical afternoon tea ingredients.

Next comes the sweet snack and the famous scones, which are small rolls that are spread with butter and jam. Of course, a large teapot is prepared, so that one or two cups can be served while tasting the tea.

This type of mini snack always comes served on a trolley with different heights and it is usually the hostess who serves the cups of tea. Once the water in the first teapot is finished, the tea leaves are kept and hot water is added again.

This will mean that the second infusion will be softer and, therefore, there will be less theine in each of the cups.

In England, there are places where the five o'clock tea ceremonies are very famous and everything is taken care of in detail and with great elegance.

They are called Tea Rooms and are usually frequented by celebrities or wealthy people, since these types of "snacks" cost between 30 and 40 pounds (yes, they are open to everyone). If background music is played, it has to be very soft and is usually classical music.

Questions

1. How did tea come to England?
2. Who were the first people in England to consume tea?
3. When and why was the tradition of five o'clock tea invented in England?
4. What is the significance of adding milk to tea for the English?
5. What are some typical snacks served during the five o'clock tea ceremony?

6. How is tea traditionally served during the five o'clock tea ceremony?

7. Why do historians believe that the English started consuming tea with milk?

•~• BBC Proms •~•

BBC Proms, large-scale British music festival, sponsored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The festival focuses on Western classical tradition and is held over an eight-week period each summer.

In 1894 Robert Newman, the manager of London's newly constructed Queen's Hall, conceived of a series of concerts that would be available to the public at an affordable price and that would cultivate a broader audience for classical and contemporary art music. To realize his vision, he enlisted the participation of conductor and accompanist Henry Wood, both to conduct the hall's permanent orchestra and to direct the concert series. The first season of the so-called promenade concerts opened at Queen's Hall in August 1895.

The concert series soon became known as the Proms and was staged annually by Newman and Wood until Newman's death in 1926. By that time the orchestra and the Proms were in the thick of financial difficulty, largely attributable to changes in the public's musical tastes in the wake of World War I (1914–1918). In 1927 the BBC assumed sponsorship of the Proms and of Henry Wood's orchestra. Three years later the orchestra was replaced by the newly established BBC Symphony Orchestra (still under Wood's direction). During World War II (1939–1945), Queen's Hall was heavily bombed by the German air force, and the Proms consequently moved to London's Royal Albert Hall.

Wood died in 1944, but the Proms carried on, with the number of concerts and venues expanding significantly over the following decades. Other orchestras were invited to perform, and an array of ancillary events—including a literary festival, assorted workshops and preconcert talks, and various family activities—were organized around the concerts. The audience for the Proms also expanded as the BBC began to broadcast the concerts – first over the radio, then on television, and later on big screens in major parks across Britain and over the World Wide Web. In 2009 the celebratory Last Night of the Proms, traditionally marked by patriotic music and flag waving, was broadcast live via satellite to movie houses around the globe.

Questions

1. Who conceived the idea of the Proms music festival and why?
2. How did the Proms music festival evolve after Robert Newman's death in 1926?
3. What led to financial difficulties for the orchestra and the Proms in the early 20th century?
4. How did the BBC become involved with the Proms music festival?
5. What changes occurred during World War II that affected the location of the Proms concerts?
6. How did the audience for the Proms expand over the years?
7. Why is the Last Night of the Proms considered a celebratory event?

•~• History of British Food •~•

Great Britain – three very different countries, England, Scotland and Wales, each with a rich and varied history and culture. Perhaps this explains the diversity of its culinary traditions.

The history of Britain has played a large part in its traditions, its culture – and its food. The Romans for instance brought us cherries, stinging nettles (to be used as a salad vegetable), cabbages and peas, as well as improving the cultivation of crops such as corn. And they brought us wine! The Romans were prolific road builders, these roads allowing for the first time the easy transportation of produce throughout the country.

The Saxons were excellent farmers and cultivated a wide variety of herbs. These were not used just for flavour as they are today but were used as bulk to pad out stews.

The Vikings and Danes brought us the techniques for smoking and drying fish – even today the North East coasts of England and Scotland are the places to find the best kippers – Arbroath Smokies, for example. “Collops” is an old Scandinavian word for pieces or slices of meat, and a dish of Collops is traditionally served on Burns Night (25th January) in Scotland. York Ham is a great favourite with the British housewife. The first York Ham is said to have been smoked with the sawdust of oak trees used in the building of York Minster.

The Normans invaded not only our country but also our eating habits! They encouraged the drinking of wine and even gave us words for common foods – mutton (mouton) and beef (boeuf) for example. In the 12th century the Crusaders were the first Britons to taste oranges and lemons whilst in Jaffa in 1191-1192.

Britain has always been a great trading nation. Saffron was first introduced into Cornwall by the Phoenicians at a very early date when they first came to Britain to trade for tin. Derived from the dried and powdered stigmas of the saffron crocus, saffron is still used today in British cooking. The importation of foods and spices from abroad has greatly influenced the British diet. In the Middle

Ages, wealthy people were able to cook with spices and dried fruits from as far away as Asia. It has been said however that the poor people were lucky to eat at all!

In Tudor times, new kinds of food started to arrive due to the increase in trade and the discovery of new lands. Spices from the Far East, sugar from the Caribbean, coffee and cocoa from South America and tea from India. Potatoes from America began to be widely grown. Eccles Cakes evolved from Puritan days when rich cakes and biscuits were banned.

Turkeys were bred almost exclusively in Norfolk up until the 20th century. In the 17th century, turkeys were driven from Norfolk to the London markets in great flocks of 500 birds or more. Their feet were sometimes bandaged to protect them. Upon arrival in London, they had to be fattened up for several days before market.

The growth of the Empire brought new tastes and flavours – Kedgeree, for example, is a version of the Indian dish Khichri and was first brought back to Britain by members of the East India Company. It has been a traditional dish at the British breakfast table since the 18th and 19th centuries.

Nowadays you can sample cuisines from all around the world – chinese, indian, italian, french, american, spanish, thai, etc., reflecting the ethnic diversity of Britain today as well as the modern ease of travel. Some would even claim ‘Curry’ to be a traditional British dish – although it bears little resemblance to the curries to be found in India!

So what is British cuisine? Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding, Steak and Kidney Pie, Trifle – these are the dishes that everyone associates with Britain. But like the country of Britain which is constantly changing and evolving, so is British food, and whilst

today these dishes are 'traditionally British', in the future perhaps dishes such as the British Curry will join them!

Mark statements as True/False/Not stated

1. Great Britain consists of four countries, not three.
2. The Romans did not introduce any new crops to Britain.
3. The Vikings introduced smoking and drying fish techniques to Britain.
4. The Normans had no impact on British eating habits.
5. Britain will stop being a trading nation in the future.
6. Tudor times saw the introduction of new foods due to increased trade and exploration.
7. Turkeys were bred in every county except Norfolk.
8. The British Empire introduced new flavors to Britain, such as Kedgeree.
9. British cuisine has not been influenced by international cuisines.
10. British cuisine is not associated with any specific dishes.

•~• Dumb Cakes: A Tradition of Baking on Halloween to Reveal Your Future Spouse •~•

While most traditions are interlinked and often branch out from common practice, some traditions are very specific with certain rituals. One such tradition is that of making "dumb cakes" during Halloween.

When you hear about a cake that reveals your future spouse's name, you might think that you are about to hear some fictitious story. But there is a tradition prevalent from the 18th century where maidens baked dumb cakes on certain days to discover their fate. Sound witchy? Not exactly.

The history of dumb cakes

During Halloween, many traditionalists will be turning to the tradition of baking dumb cakes after dragging the old recipe out of its safe place. While the association with Halloween might make it sound like the cake has some spooky history, the story associated with this cake is anything but spooky.

The name “dumb” cake can be traced back to the time of Regency – around the 18th century – and the language at that time might mean “doom” cake. But the translation might have changed the meaning. This divination cake baking started in Lewis, a region located in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. The custom then traveled to the southern part of the British Isles. The cake was baked with the hope that when a maiden baked this cake, she would be able to know the name of her spouse.

Dumb cakes recipes

With a tradition that has so many variations, the recipe is bound to have the same. In some regions, dumb cakes are more like a loaf of bread while in others, they are baked like a cake. The region that follows this tradition and the availability of ingredients also played a major role in determining the recipe. The core ingredients though remain the same – barley, salt, wheat meal, and water.

The rituals involved

Like all traditions that were orally passed down the generation, the actual ritual did change over time. Many variations can be found when an Internet search is done, but there are a few aspects of this cake-baking ritual that remain the same.

The main aspect of this ritual is that, when dumb cakes are being made, the girls baking them have to keep in mind the hope of knowing the name of their future spouse and they must do so in complete silence. If any word or sound was made, then it was

believed that the spell was rendered ineffective and the magic of the moment was broken. Some variations also state that besides these, certain calamities would befall those baking the cake. This need for complete silence also gave rise to the name “dumb cake”.

With the variations speaking of calamities that would befall the girls, certain folklore experts believe that this might have been a way to make excited and talkative young girls observe complete silence at least once a year by the elders of the family. Many older variations also mentioned that girls should prepare the cake in solitude. While this might have been mentioned to help the girl or maiden maintain the need for silence with ease, some versions require a group of girls to bake a single cake or several cakes, but in absolute silence.

Another requirement was the need to follow the lucky odd number rule. Britain has been a huge believer that odd numbers are lucky and hence, girls would gather in groups of threes and fives to follow the ritual. The upside of girls gathering together to bake a cake meant that the task would be done faster, while the downside was that each girl was required to put in an equal amount of effort.

If any girl was not doing her bit, she would not receive any tiniest amount of hint about her future husband. This was another incentive to ensure that all the girls worked in silence and worked in harmony. While the tradition might have been of a romantic origin and had many side effects attached to it, the core principle of teamwork could be found in it.

Questions

1. What is the tradition of making “dumb cakes” during Halloween?
2. How did the tradition of baking dumb cakes originate and where did it spread to?
3. What are the core ingredients used in making dumb cakes?

4. Why was complete silence important while baking dumb cakes?

5. How did the requirement of following the lucky odd number rule impact the baking process?

6. What were some potential consequences if a girl failed to maintain silence while baking the cake?

7. What underlying principle of teamwork can be found in the tradition of baking dumb cakes?

•~• French Hood •~•

The Dictionary of Fashion History (2010) defines the French hood as:

“A small bonnet made on a stiff frame, worn far back on the head, the front border curving forward on each side to cover the ears. This border was usually trimmed with an inched edging, behind which was the nether billiment of goldsmith’s work; further back, arched over the crown, was the upper billiment. Behind this, falling down the back of the neck, was fabric in formal pleats or, more often, a stiffened flap which could be turned up and worn flat on the crown, the straight edge projecting over the forehead and known as a cornet or bongrace.

The English variation of the French hood (1525–1558), associated with Queen Mary I, was flattened across the head, projecting wide of the temples, then turned in at an angle to cover the ears, otherwise the same”.

To further describe the French hood, Phyllis G. Tortora in The Fairchild Books Dictionary of Fashion (2013) writes:

“Woman’s headdress, consisting of a small bonnet over a stiffened frame, worn at the back of the head and trimmed with Ruching. [The] Front border was curved forward cover to the ears

and had two ornamental gold bands or Billiments. A black flap either enclosed the hair or was folded forward over head, projecting above forehead. Fashionable from 1521 to 1590 and worn by some until 1630”.

Daniel Delis Hill in *History of World Costume and Fashion* (2011) explains the reason behind the design and history. He writes:

“The French hood was redesigned into a crescent-shaped cap that sat back on the head exposing the hair. A chin strap was required to hold heavy ornaments cap in place. The lappets has disappeared, and the hood was shortened to about shoulder length. Catherine Howard, Henry VIII’s fifth wife, introduced the French version to England’s court”.

The FIDM Museum houses a recreation of a French Hood worn by Queen Elizabeth I for the film *the Young Bess* released in 1953, created by Walter Plunkett . The FIDM writes:

“The head-wear seen in these images is based on the French hood, a type of head-covering which gained wide-spread popularity among aristocratic English women by the late 1540s. As the name suggests, this style of hood migrated from France to England, probably in the 1520s. Comprised of a stiffened foundation shaped into a curved, close-fitting cap and a veil-like fall of fabric at the back, the French hood was placed back on the head, covering the ears and exposing the center parted hair of the wearer. It was worn over a coif, a small cap of linen or silk which covered and restrained the hair. A French hood was almost always black, though sometimes white or red. This c. 1546 portrait of ‘Young Bess’ shows her wearing a red French hood. On occasion, the length of fabric at the back was folded forward to protect the face from sun. When worn in this fashion, it was called a bongrace”.

Questions

1. How is the French hood described in *The Dictionary of Fashion History* (2010)?
2. What was the English variation of the French hood associated with?
3. According to Phyllis G. Tortora, what were the key features of the French hood?
4. Why was a chin strap required for the redesigned French hood mentioned by Daniel Delis Hill?
5. Who introduced the French version of the hood to England's court, as explained by Daniel Delis Hill?
6. What type of head-covering gained popularity among aristocratic English women by the late 1540s?
7. How did the FIDM Museum recreate the French Hood worn by Queen Elizabeth I for the film "Young Bess"?

•~• Symbols of Scotland •~•

The distinctive Royal Stewart Tartan is the personal tartan of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Flag of Scotland, the Saltire or St Andrew's Cross, dates (at least in legend) from the 9th century, and is thus the oldest national flag still in use. The Saltire now also forms part of the design of the Union Flag.

The unicorn is also used as a heraldic symbol of Scotland. The Royal Coat of Arms of Scotland, used prior to 1603 by the Kings of Scotland, incorporated a lion rampant shield supported by two unicorns. On the Union of the Crowns, the Arms were quartered with those of England and Ireland, and one unicorn was replaced by a lion (the supporters of England).

William Wallace, a national hero and a leader in the Scottish Wars of Independence.

The thistle, the floral emblem of Scotland, features in many Scottish symbols and logos, and on UK currency. Heather is also considered to be a symbol of Scotland.

St Andrew's Day, the 30 November, is the national day, although Burns' Night tends to be more widely observed. Tartan Day is a recent innovation from Canada. In 2006, the Scottish Parliament passed the St Andrew's Day Bank Holiday (Scotland) Act 2007, designating the day to be an official bank holiday.

Festivals

First footing – 1st January – after the bells have rung in the New Year is still common – the “first foot” in the house after midnight should be male, dark, and handsome and should carry symbolic coal, shortbread, salt, black bun (a spiced cake) and, of course, whisky.

Burns Night – 25 January – the anniversary of the birth of the poet Robert Burns, in 1759 at which many a “Burns Supper” is consumed and the “Immortal Memory”, a speech in praise of the Bard, will be given.

Candlemas Day – 2 February – began as a Roman festival to celebrate the return of spring. It is now a Scottish legal “quarter day” when rents and other payments fall due.

Original New Year – 25th March – the Celtic New Year was celebrated on Samhain (November 1st). Then, until 1600, the Gregorian calendar which was used in Scotland placed New Year on 25th March.

Beltane's Day – 1st May – a pagan fire festival which goes back to pre-Christian times. It was supposed to encourage the crops to grow. Young girls would also rise early to wash their faces in the

May dew. The custom of lighting fires at this time has come through in place names such as Tarbolton in Ayrshire (“tor” meaning hill and “bolton” from “Beltane”). The ancient Druidic Fire Festival has been revived by “New Age” followers who gather on the historic Calton Hill in Edinburgh.

Lammas – 1st August – there was a Celtic feast of “Lugnasaid” and this may have been the origins of this festival. It is now a Scottish legal “Quarter Day” when rents and contracts fall due.

Halloween – 31 October – was celebrated by the Druids as “Samhain” from the words meaning summer and ending. It was associated with witches and celebrated with bonfires and “guising” as children dressed up and went round neighbouring houses with “neep lanterns” (candles inside turnips). The pumpkin serves the same purpose in the USA.

All Souls Day – 2nd November – prayers were said for the souls of the dead and alms given to the poor.

St Andrew’s Day – 30 November. Although St Andrew has been the patron saint of Scotland since a Pictish victory in a battle in 747AD, 30 November is not a public holiday in Scotland. Indeed, St Andrew’s night is celebrated more by expatriate Scots around the world.

Hogmanay – New Year’s Eve, 31 December. To this day, Hogmanay is still a more important festival in Scotland than Christmas. Historians believe that we inherited the celebration from the Vikings who, coming from even further north than ourselves, paid even more attention to the passing of the shortest day. While clearly celebrated around the world, the Scots have a long rich heritage associated with this event, when the whole country celebrates in the build up to “the bells” chiming midnight – and Burns’ song “Auld Lang Syne” is murdered once again! There are

traditions such as cleaning the house on 31st December (including taking out the ashes from the fire in the days when coal fires were common).

Questions

1. What is the significance of the Royal Stewart Tartan?
2. How old is the Flag of Scotland, and what is its design?
3. Why was the unicorn used as a heraldic symbol of Scotland?
4. Who is William Wallace, and why is he considered a national hero?
5. What are some symbols of Scotland besides the thistle?
6. What are some traditional Scottish festivals and their origins?
7. Why is Hogmanay more important than Christmas in Scotland?

Test

1. Which tartan is specifically associated with Queen Elizabeth II according to the passage?
 - A. The national tartan of Scotland.
 - B. The personal tartan of King Charles III.
 - C. The Royal Stewart Tartan.
 - D. The Saltire Tartan.
2. What is the significance of the date of the Saltire or St Andrew's Cross flag, as mentioned in the text?
 - A. It dates from the 10th century.
 - B. It dates from the 11th century.
 - C. It dates (at least in legend) from the 9th century.
 - D. It dates from the 12th century.
3. How is the unicorn used as a heraldic symbol in Scotland, according to the passage?
 - A. It is used in the Royal Coat of Arms of Scotland.

- B. It is used as the national emblem of Scotland.
 - C. It is used as a supporter on the Royal Coat of Arms.
 - D. It replaced the lion on the Union of the Crowns.
4. What is stated about William Wallace in the text?
- A. He was a fictional character.
 - B. He was a leader in the Scottish Wars of Independence.
 - C. He was a national hero of Scotland.
 - D. He was both a national hero and a leader in the Scottish Wars of Independence.
5. Which symbol is described as the “floral emblem of Scotland” in the passage?
- A. The rose.
 - B. The shamrock.
 - C. The thistle.
 - D. The heather.
6. What is the current status of St Andrew’s Day in Scotland according to the text?
- A. It is the national day and an official bank holiday.
 - B. It is the national day but not an official bank holiday.
 - C. It is an official bank holiday but not the national day.
 - D. It is neither the national day nor an official bank holiday.
7. How is Hogmanay described in relation to Christmas in Scotland, based on the information in the passage?
- A. Hogmanay is a more important festival than Christmas.
 - B. Hogmanay is less important than Christmas.
 - C. Hogmanay and Christmas are equally important festivals.
 - D. The passage does not provide a comparison between Hogmanay and Christmas.

•~• Why do they have two countries in Ireland? •~•

An island in the northern Atlantic Ocean west of Great Britain, divided between the independent Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, which is a part of the United Kingdom. The island was invaded by Celts c. 500 B.C. and converted to Christianity by Saint Patrick in the fifth century. Ireland came under English control in the 17th century and was joined with Great Britain by the Act of Union in 1801. After the Easter Rebellion (1916) and a war of independence (1919-1921) the island was split into the independent Irish Free State (now Ireland) and Northern Ireland, which is still part of the United Kingdom.

The tricolor flag of Ireland was introduced by Thomas Francis Meagher in 1848. The color of the green represents the Irish people, the orange represents the English supporters of "William of Orange" and the white color represents peace.

The harp has long been a symbol of Ireland. Perhaps the legends of its magical powers come from the time when the bards would sing and tell stories of famous events to the Irish kings. During the rule of Henry VIII, the harp was first depicted on Irish coins. That tradition is carried on today and the harp is also used for other official duties such as the Irish state seal, official documents and uniforms. In ancient Ireland the Shamrock was thought to have magical powers and the number 3 was considered a powerful number. Legends say the leaves will stand upright when a storm approaches and that no snake will be found among them. When St Patrick came to Ireland he used the Shamrock to symbolize the meaning of the church's teaching on the Trinity.

The meaning of the Celtic cross is told in legend of Ireland's St Patrick. He was shown a sacred standing stone that was marked with a circle. St Patrick took this opportunity to show the union of

old and new ways. He marked a cross through the circle and blessed the stone.

Questions

1. How did Ireland come under English control in the 17th century?
2. What events led to the split of Ireland into the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland?
3. Who introduced the tricolor flag of Ireland and what do its colors represent?
4. Why has the harp been a symbol of Ireland for so long?
5. What significance does the Shamrock hold in Irish culture and history?
6. How did St Patrick use the Shamrock to symbolize the church's teaching on the Trinity?
7. What is the legend behind the Celtic cross and how does it relate to St Patrick?

Test

1. Prior to the arrival of Christianity, what was the predominant religious tradition on the island of Ireland?
 - A. Catholicism.
 - B. Protestantism.
 - C. Paganism.
 - D. Buddhism.
2. What event(s) ultimately led to the division of Ireland into the independent Irish Free State and the remaining Northern Ireland under British rule?
 - A. The Act of Union in 1801.
 - B. The Easter Uprising and the subsequent War of Independence.

- C. The invasion of Ireland by the Celts.
 - D. The conversion of Ireland to Christianity by Saint Patrick.
3. The tricolor flag of Ireland is said to symbolize the reconciliation between which two opposing factions on the island?
- A. The Irish people and the Catholic church.
 - B. The Irish people and the English supporters of William of Orange.
 - C. The English and the Northern Irish.
 - D. The Republicans and the Loyalists.
4. In what capacity has the traditional Irish harp symbol been utilized throughout the country's history?
- A. Exclusively as a decorative element.
 - B. Primarily by bards to accompany their storytelling.
 - C. Solely on Irish currency during the reign of Henry VIII.
 - D. For a variety of official purposes, including the state seal and uniforms.
5. According to Irish legend, what unique properties were believed to be possessed by the shamrock plant?
- A. It was thought to have magical powers and the number three held special significance.
 - B. It was claimed to be capable of detecting the presence of snakes.
 - C. It was used by Saint Patrick to illustrate the concept of the Holy Trinity.
 - D. All of the above.
6. The origin of the Celtic cross symbol in Ireland is traced back to a specific historical event involving Saint Patrick. What was the nature of this event?
- A. Saint Patrick carved the cross into a sacred standing stone marked with a circle.

B. The cross was first depicted on Irish coins during Saint Patrick's time.

C. Saint Patrick blessed an existing Celtic cross to signify the union of old and new traditions.

D. The cross was adopted as a symbol of the Irish people's pagan beliefs.

7. What was the ultimate political outcome for Ireland after it came under English control in the 17th century?

A. Ireland remained a separate and autonomous kingdom.

B. Ireland became an independent republic.

C. Ireland was joined with Great Britain through the Act of Union.

D. Ireland was divided into the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

•~• Traditional clothes of Scotland •~•

Scottish traditional clothing plays a significant role in the history and identity of this nation, which has a rich cultural heritage. Scotland's traditional clothing, recognizable worldwide from the iconic kilt to the distinctive tartan pattern, is frequently worn on special occasions to honour the nation's cultural traditions. In this article, you will see some of Scotland's most recognizable and well-liked traditional outfits, discussing their significance in the past and present.

Many Scots take great pride in wearing these traditional outfits, which are frequently worn on special occasions to honour the nation's rich cultural heritage. These clothes are proof of Scotland's enduring traditions, whether it's a stylish tartan blanket or a formal kilt ensemble.

The Kilt

The Kilt may be the most famous national dress of Scotland. The kilt is a pleated, knee-length woollen garment that is worn with a belt, sporran (pouch), and knee-high socks in Scotland. It is the most well-known item of Scottish traditional clothing and is frequently associated with the country.

People wear it for formal or semi-formal occasions, on special occasions, or to represent Scotland. In Scotland, the kilt has a long history dating to the 16th century, when Highland clans wore it as a useful, practical garment. The great kilt was first created from a single piece of cloth that was draped over the shoulder and fastened at the waist. The kilt is now more frequently made with sewn pleats and worn as a standalone piece of clothing.

The kilt is not only a useful piece of clothing but also a representation of Scottish culture and history. It is frequently worn on special occasions like weddings, Burns Night (a celebration of poet Robert Burns' life and work), and Scottish dance performances. Members of the Black Watch and the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, two military and law enforcement organizations in Scotland, also don the kilt.

The Tartan

The tartan pattern is another defining feature of Scottish traditional clothing. A fabric with a distinctive pattern known as tartan is frequently used to create kilts and other clothing, and it is strongly associated with Scotland. Each tartan is linked to a particular clan or family, and some people wear tartans to symbolize their Scottish ancestry. There are countless tartans, each with a distinctive pattern and palette. Numerous garments, such as kilts, scarves, and sashes, as well as home furnishings like pillows and blankets, feature tartan.

Glengarry

Another common outfit worn by men in Scotland is the Glengarry. It is a particular style of hat with a flat top, a curved peak, and ribbons hanging down the back. It is made of woollen fabric. Especially at occasions like the Edinburgh Military Tattoo or the Highland Games, the Glengarry is frequently paired with a kilt and another traditional Scottish garb.

The Arisaid

The Arisaid is one of the Scotland traditional dress for women. The arisaid is a long, loose garment that is worn by women in Scotland and is similar to a cape. It is often made from tartan fabric and can be worn over a dress or other clothing. The arisaid is traditionally worn by women in the Highlands and is a popular choice for special occasions such as weddings and traditional Scottish dance performances.

The arisaid is a type of outerwear garment that is worn over a woman's dress or other clothing. It is typically made from woollen fabric and can be found in a variety of tartans and colours. The arisaid is worn with a belt and is fastened at the shoulder with a brooch. It is a traditional garment that is often associated with Scotland and is worn on special occasions to celebrate the country's rich cultural heritage. The arisaid is also sometimes worn by members of reenactment groups and historical societies.

The Balmoral Bonnet

A particular style of hat known as the Balmoral bonnet is frequently worn with traditional Scottish clothing. The hat has a flat top, a round shape, a ribbed band, and a pom-pom on top. It is frequently worn with a kilt and other formal attire and is typically made of woollen fabric. The Balmoral bonnet, also known as a "Balmoral" or a "tam o'shanter," is named after Balmoral Castle, the

Scottish home of the British royal family. Members of historical societies and reenactment groups frequently wear it when attending formal events like weddings and Burns Night festivities. The Black Watch and the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards are two Scottish military and law enforcement organizations that occasionally don the Balmoral bonnet.

The Sporran

Traditional Scottish attire includes a particular type of pouch called a sporran, which is worn with a kilt. It hangs from a belt around the waist and is typically made of leather or fur. Small personal items like keys, coins, and a wallet are frequently carried in the sporran, which doubles as a pocket.

When dressing traditionally for special occasions like weddings, Burns Night celebrations, and traditional Scottish dance performances, the sporran is an essential component of Scottish attire. In Scotland, military and law enforcement organizations like the Black Watch and the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards also don it.

A kilt and other traditional Scottish clothing are worn with the formal Prince Charlie jacket. Usually made of woolen fabric, it is a double-breasted jacket with a high collar and lapels. It is a common choice for formal events like weddings and Burns Night celebrations and is frequently worn with a waistcoat and sash.

The Prince Charlie Jacket

The Prince Charlie Jacket is inspired by King Charles Edward Stuart, who sought the thrones of England, Scotland, and Ireland in the 18th century. It is a formal piece of clothing that is frequently worn with a kilt and other items of traditional Scottish clothing for formal events like weddings, balls, and Burns Night celebrations. The Black Watch and the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards are Scottish

military and law enforcement organizations that occasionally don Prince Charlie jackets.

Sgian dubh

Usually in Scotland national costume, a man wears a small decorative knife called a sgian dubh tucked into the top of his sock. It is customarily worn with a kilt and other formal attire and is regarded as a representation of Scottish heritage.

Many Scots take great pride in wearing these traditional outfits, which are frequently worn on special occasions to honour the nation's rich cultural heritage. These clothes are proof of Scotland's enduring traditions, whether it's a stylish tartan blanket or a formal kilt ensemble.

Questions

1. What is the significance of Scottish traditional clothing in the history and identity of Scotland?
2. How has the kilt evolved over time from its original form to what it is today?
3. Why is the tartan pattern so strongly associated with Scottish traditional clothing?
4. What occasions are kilts typically worn for in Scotland?
5. Can you explain the significance of the Glengarry hat in traditional Scottish attire?
6. What is the arisaid and how is it traditionally worn by women in Scotland?
7. Why is the Balmoral bonnet considered an essential part of traditional Scottish clothing?

Test

1. Which item of traditional Scottish attire is a pleated, knee-length woollen garment often associated with Scottish culture and history?

- A. The Glengarry.
- B. The arisaid.
- C. The Balmoral bonnet.
- D. The kilt.

2. The tartan pattern, which is strongly linked to specific Scottish clans and families, is a defining feature used in the creation of what types of Scottish garments and accessories?

- A. Kilts, scarves, and sashes.
- B. Glengarries and arisaids.
- C. Sporrans and Prince Charlie jackets.
- D. All of the above.

3. According to the passage, the Glengarry is a particular style of hat that is frequently paired with a kilt and other traditional Scottish attire, especially during which types of events or occasions?

- A. Weddings and Burns Night celebrations.
- B. Highland Games and Scottish dance performances.
- C. Both A and B.
- D. None of the above.

4. The arisaid, a long, loose garment similar to a cape, is traditionally worn by which specific group of people in Scotland?

- A. Men in the Lowlands.
- B. Women in the Highlands.
- C. Members of historical reenactment groups.
- D. The British royal family.

5. The Balmoral bonnet, named after Balmoral Castle, the Scottish home of the British royal family, is a type of headwear that is frequently worn with formal Scottish attire, including by members of which two Scottish military and law enforcement organizations?

A. The Black Watch and the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards.

B. The Scottish Highland Regiment and the Lowland Scots Regiment.

C. The Scots Guards and the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

D. The Edinburgh Castle Guard and the Scottish Police Force.

6. The sporran, a type of pouch worn with a kilt, serves what primary function for the wearer?

A. To display their clan's tartan pattern.

B. To carry small personal items like keys and coins.

C. To provide additional warmth and insulation

D. To act as a decorative accessory to the kilt.

7. The Prince Charlie jacket, a formal double-breasted jacket with a high collar and lapels, is inspired by which historical figure who sought the thrones of England, Scotland, and Ireland in the 18th century?

A. King James VI of Scotland.

B. Robert the Bruce

C. William Wallace.

D. King Charles Edward Stuart.

•~• Small Talk in Britain •~•

Many languages don't even have a word or expression for the concept of "small talk" but in Britain we love it, and we do a lot of it. Making small talk is as British as Buckingham Palace or a cup of tea!

If you are learning English, you've probably wondered how you can make small talk. This blog and the ones to follow will show you how to do it.

What is small talk?

Small talk is a kind of polite conversation meant to avoid "awkward silence" and allow people to be friendly at social gatherings. It involves sticking to general and unimportant topics – nothing offensive or sensitive. It's often the kind of conversation you make when you first meet a person or a group of people. We use small talk at work, at parties, in supermarket queues, in parks and cafes and while we're waiting for the bus.

In fact, small talk is an essential part of communication in Britain, and it's important to try it if you want to practice your English.

Why do we love small talk in Britain?

British people are quite reserved and don't like to get straight into deep conversations with strangers. They like to get to know them a bit first, and small talk is a perfect way to do this.

Small talk can often lead to "bigger" talk, and to a deeper relationship with people. It's a bit like the first course of a meal. Don't forget to use a smile and a friendly tone of voice!

Small talk varies from country to country. As I mentioned earlier, in some countries, like Sweden, they don't seem to do it at all. Instead, they go directly to the point or don't talk at all. In China, small talk can include money or business matters, which isn't polite in many European cultures. In the USA, people use a lot of compliments in small talk, such as: 'I love your earrings, T shirt, trainers'.

Lovely weather, isn't it?

All over the world, the British are famous for talking about the weather. And it's absolutely true: we do use the weather a lot for small talk. Why?

Firstly, it's a subject which everyone can contribute to, as we all experience the weather. Secondly, it's a safe topic; it will not embarrass or upset people.

Thirdly, as anyone who has been to Britain will know, there's a lot to talk about! In countries where the weather stays hot and sunny most of the summer, or cold all winter, there's not much to say about the weather. However, here in Britain, there's plenty to discuss because our weather is very changeable and unpredictable. We can have four or five different types of weather in one day – one moment it is warm and sunny, the next it is pouring down with rain!

And when there's nothing more to say about today's weather, we talk about yesterday's weather or tomorrow's!

Keep it safe

The important thing about small talk is to stick to general, shared subjects like the weather. However, there are other common topics you can try, such as traffic, dogs, babies, children and your surroundings.

Queen Elizabeth II is apparently also the queen of small talk as she meets a lot of different people all the time. The question she most often asks is, "Have you come far?". This shows interest in the other person without being too personal and is a beautiful example of talking about journeys or travel.

How to start a small talk conversation

Do you want to make small talk to practice your English skills? Don't just wait for someone to speak to you – start a conversation

yourself! You can make a statement or ask a question when you want to start a conversation with someone.

Questions

1. What is small talk and why is it important in British culture?
2. Why do British people prefer to engage in small talk before diving into deep conversations with strangers?
3. How does small talk vary from country to country, according to the text?
4. Why is talking about the weather a common topic for small talk in Britain?
5. What are some other safe topics besides the weather that can be used for small talk?
6. How does Queen Elizabeth II use small talk effectively when meeting different people?
7. What advice does the author give on how to start a small talk conversation to practice English skills?

Test

1. What is the primary purpose of the author's discussion of small talk in Britain?
 - A. To explain the cultural significance of small talk in British society.
 - B. To provide practical tips for engaging in small talk as a language learner.
 - C. To contrast the use of small talk in Britain with other countries.
 - D. To argue that small talk should be avoided in professional settings.

2. Which of the following best describes the author's view on why British people engage in small talk?

A. British people use small talk as a means to avoid uncomfortable silences.

B. Small talk allows British people to quickly establish deep connections with strangers.

C. Small talk is a necessary prerequisite for more substantive conversations in Britain.

D. British people engage in small talk as a way to subtly assess the social status of others.

3. According to the passage, what is one key difference between small talk in Britain and small talk in other cultures?

A. Small talk in Britain focuses more on personal compliments, unlike in other countries.

B. Small talk in Britain often includes discussions of money and business, which is considered impolite elsewhere.

C. Small talk in Britain typically avoids sensitive or controversial topics, while other cultures embrace such discussions.

D. Small talk in Britain commonly involves discussions of the weather, which is not as prevalent in other cultural contexts.

4. Which of the following is NOT identified by the author as a reason why the British love to engage in small talk?

A. Small talk is a safe way to initiate friendly interactions with strangers.

B. Small talk can naturally lead to more substantive conversations and relationships.

C. Small talk allows British people to display their extensive knowledge of meteorology.

D. Small talk is an essential part of British communication and social etiquette.

5. What does the author suggest about the Queen's use of the question "Have you come far?" when engaging in small talk?

A. The question is intended to be rude and off-putting.

B. The question is a way for the Queen to demonstrate her disinterest in the other person.

C. The question is a polite and unobtrusive way for the Queen to show interest in the other person.

D. The question is a conversational tactic the Queen uses to initiate deeper personal discussions.

6. Based on the information provided, which of the following can be inferred about small talk in Sweden?

A. Small talk is a common and essential part of Swedish social interactions.

B. Small talk in Sweden is typically focused on business and financial matters.

C. Swedes prefer to engage in small talk rather than getting straight to the point.

D. Swedes tend to avoid small talk and instead communicate in a more direct manner.

7. Which of the following best summarizes the author's overall perspective on the role of small talk in British culture?

A. Small talk is a harmless but unnecessary social convention in Britain.

B. Small talk is a valuable tool for language learners to practice their English skills.

C. Small talk is a fundamental aspect of social and professional interactions in Britain.

D. Small talk is an outdated practice that should be discouraged in modern British society.

•~• The Union Jack •~•

The national flag of the UK is famously called the Union Jack or the Union Flag. The flag has degree of status in some of the Commonwealth Countries like Canada where it is considered an official flag there by the parliamentary resolution. The flag is also used in some of the smaller UK overseas territories as the official flag. The Union Jack also appears in flags of some of the nations and territories that were under the dominion of the British. The current design of the flag dates back to 1801 during the Royal Decree after the union of the England and Ireland. The flag is created with the aspects of three older national flags; St George's Red Cross of the kingdom of England, St Andrew's white saltire of Scotland, and St Patrick's red saltire of the Irelands. The origin of the flag of the Great Britain dates back to 1606 when James VI united England and Scotland.

Union Jack and Union Flag are used interchangeably to refer to the flag of the UK. Both terms are historically correct in the description of the national flag of the UK. England and Scotland remained independent kingdoms in the 17th century up to the passing on of Queen Elizabeth I of England in 1603. Since she died childless and was unmarried, the crown was given to James VI who was her cousin and also the king of Scotland. In 1606, King James VI ordered for the creation of a flag which bore the crosses of both St George and St Andrew. The resultant flag was the Union Flag or Union Jack with Jack as the short form of Jacobus which is a Latin word for James. When the first flag was established, it was just referred to as the British Flag.

The flag is mounted on warships and submarines commissioned by the Royal Navy and also on air force vessels. The flag is worn at the masthead of a ship as an indication of the presence of an

Admiral of the Fleet. No law recognized law make the Union Jack as the kingdom's national flag, but it was upgraded to one through precedents. The use of the Union Flag on land by the civilians has been permitted, but the use at sea has been restricted to only the military. According to Lord Lyon, the Union Jack is the right flag for the people and the corporate bodies of the UK. In Australia, the Union flag was systematically replaced by the current national flag through the Flag Act of 1953. Union Jack is incorporated by four former British colonies as a part of their national flags. These colonies include New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, and Tuvalu. The flag was also used by the US in its first flag. There are designated days when the Union flag needs to be flown on buildings throughout the UK. Also, there are days when the flag is flown on specific places only.

Questions

1. What is the national flag of the United Kingdom commonly known as?
2. In which Commonwealth country is the Union Jack considered an official flag?
3. When was the current design of the Union Jack established?
4. What are the three older national flags incorporated into the Union Jack's design?
5. When did James VI unite England and Scotland?
6. What is the origin of the term "Union Jack"?
7. Where is the Union Jack mounted on commissioned warships and submarines?
8. Is the Union Jack recognized as the official national flag of the UK by law?
9. Which countries have incorporated the Union Jack into their national flags?

10. Are there specific designated days for flying the Union Jack in the UK?

•~• Stonehenge Free Festival •~•

The Stonehenge Free Festival was a British free festival from 1974 to 1984 held at the prehistoric monument Stonehenge in England during the month of June, and culminating with the summer solstice on or near 21 June. It emerged as the major free festival in the calendar after the violent suppression of the Windsor Free Festival in August 1974, with Wally Hope providing the impetus for its founding, and was itself violently suppressed in 1985 in the Battle of the Beanfield, with no free festival held at Stonehenge since although people have been allowed to gather at the stones again for the solstice since 1999.

By the 1980s, the festival had grown to be a major event, attracting up to 30 thousand people in 1984. The festival attendees were branded as hippies by the British press. This, along with the open drug use and sale, contributed to the increase in restrictions on access to Stonehenge, and fences were erected around the stones in 1977. The same year, police resurrected a moribund law against driving over grassland in order to levy fines against festival goers in motorised transport. By 1984 police - festival relations were relaxed with only a nominal police presence required.

The festival was a celebration of various alternative cultures. The Tibetan Ukrainian Mountain Troupe, The Tepee People, Circus Normal, the Peace Convoy, New Age Travellers and the Wallys were notable counterculture attendees.

The stage hosted many bands including Hawkwind, Zorch, Poison Girls, Doctor and the Medics, Flux of Pink Indians, Buster Blood Vessel, Omega Tribe, Killing Joke, The Selecter, Dexys

Midnight Runners, Thompson Twins, Bronz, The Raincoats, The 101ers, Jeremy Spencer & the Children of God, Brent Black Music Co-op, Killerhertz, Mournblade, Amazulu, Wishbone Ash, Man, Benjamin Zephaniah, Inner City Unit, Here and Now, Cardiacs, The Enid, Roy Harper, Jimmy Page, Ted Chippington, Ozric Tentacles Solstice and Vince Pie and the Crumbs, who all played for free.

Questions

1. When and where was the Stonehenge Free Festival held?
2. Who is credited with providing the impetus for the festival's founding?
3. What event led to the emergence of the Stonehenge Free Festival as the major free festival in the calendar?
4. What was a major factor in the increase in restrictions on access to Stonehenge?
5. What type of cultural groups attended the festival?

•~• Five o'clock •~•

One of the most famous traditions associated with England is the five o'clock tea drinking. Tea in this country is a traditionally popular and refined drink, and the culture of tea drinking is very distinctive and unique. And it is not inferior in complexity to oriental ceremonies. So what are the characteristics of the tea traditions of the British?

The love of the British for tea drinking is reflected in the works of English writers, and in films, which thereby contribute to the popularization of this tradition. Lewis Carroll made the mad tea party one of the main scenes of his famous "Alice in Wonderland". Using the example of the inhabitants of the Looking Glass, he showed how unshakable the tradition of "five o'clock tea" in Britain

is. His heroes, having started the tea-drinking, as it should be, at five o'clock, cannot end it in any way, because the time offended by them stopped the hands of the clock. And since the clock shows "five", you need to drink tea. It is possible that this crazy tea party is not over yet, who knows...

Over a cup of fragrant tea, the famous detectives Sherlock Holmes and Miss Marple unravel the most complex tangle of crimes.

For the first time this popular drink came to England in the middle of the 17th century, more precisely in 1664. According to one of the versions, several pounds of its dried leaves were presented as a gift to King Charles II, at that time it was a very expensive gift, since huge duties were paid for the import of tea.

The taste and aroma of the drink was the first to be appreciated by the wife of the king, Katerina of Braganza, who, having made tea an official drink in the palace, started the custom of drinking it every day from porcelain cups. Her servants, fearing that these cups, very thin and fragile, might burst, began to pour milk into the bottom, and only then hot tea. Since then, this English tradition has appeared – to drink tea with milk.

The most significant event in the history of English tea drinking was the well-known tradition of "five o'clock", which originated in the 1840s. And she appeared thanks to Anna Russell, Duchess of Bedford.

At that time it was customary to serve lunch in the evening, between 8 and 9 o'clock. Once, walking in the garden and getting very hungry, Anna asked to prepare tea, bread and butter, cookies and muffins for her, and thus had a light snack. Next time Anna invited her friends to a similar tea party, and they had a very good time. So this ritual arose – the five o'clock tea party, which quickly took root among the aristocrats and the middle class.

In order to be able to drink tea outside the home, there were “tea rooms”. Similar ceremonies were also popular in special “tea gardens”, with music and dancing.

Beginning in 1880, this new emerging tradition of “five o’clock” grew into a real secular ceremony with its perfected etiquette and very beautifully decorated – tea tables with white starched tablecloths, expensive and exquisite china sets, silverware, vases with flowers.

Ladies in elegant outfits, gentlemen in suits with bow ties... Tea for such ceremonies was used of the best quality and of several varieties. Ready-made brewed tea was poured into cups for guests right at the table.

Tea was usually served with a variety of sandwiches – with chicken, cucumber, cheese, ham, smoked salmon, lettuce. As well as sweet pastries, whipped cream, jams on multi-tiered shelves.

Such a ceremony was necessarily accompanied by a long and pleasant casual conversation, perhaps, and gossip, where can we go without them...

You could also go to a tea ceremony at one of London’s trendy grand hotels, for example, the Ritz or Brown’s. In the 1910s, when the fashion for Argentine tango came to Europe, in hotels they also began to dance during tea drinking (‘tango teas’), and also to teach those who wish.

After the war, tea dancing disappeared and the five o’clock tea tradition declined. But the British are still very fond of tea, they drink a lot, only at other times and without much ceremony.

Today, only in the most expensive restaurants in Great Britain you can feel like an English aristocrat and enjoy the atmosphere of classic English tea drinking, but you need to book a place for such events several months in advance. One of the most elite places where such tea ceremonies are held is the Ritz Hotel Restaurant.

Questions

1. What is the origin of the tea tradition in England?
2. How did the tradition of “five o’clock tea” come about in England?
3. Why did the English start drinking tea with milk?
4. What are some characteristics of traditional English tea ceremonies?
5. How did Lewis Carroll depict the British tea tradition in “Alice in Wonderland”?
6. What types of food are typically served during English tea ceremonies?
7. How did the popularity of tea rooms and tea gardens contribute to the English tea culture?
8. How did the popularity of tea rooms and tea gardens contribute to the English tea culture?
9. What is the significance of the Ritz Hotel in the history of English tea drinking?
10. How has the British love for tea drinking been depicted in literature and films?

•~• Incredible Scottish Loch Monsters •~•

How many Scottish loch monsters can you name?

Just about everyone has heard of Nessie, but did you know that there are many other Scottish lochs that have strange creatures, or monsters, of their own?

There are approximately 30 thousand lochs in Scotland, the majority are freshwater lochs, but there are several sea lochs, most of them on the western coast of the Highlands.

Many of these lochs are interconnected by a network of rivers, or by access to the open ocean, or both. Theories exist that one, or several, creatures could move from loch to loch, or from loch to open ocean and back again. It's also been suggested that there are underwater caverns and tunnels that may connect some of the closest lochs. As far as I know, no one has actually proven these exist But the water in Scotland's lochs is so cold, dark, and deep, that it has defied many expeditions and jealously guards its secrets.

Of course Loch Ness' Nessie is by far the most famous of Scotland's monsters, with Morag (from Loch Morar) coming in a distant second, but the others may come as a complete surprise to you.

Scotland and its culture is wreathed in mystery, magic and the supernatural.

In fact, the world of the wee folk (fairies, brownies and their relatives), mystical creatures, witchcraft, and a belief in the supernatural is woven throughout Scottish history, with accounts and sightings of loch monsters appearing regularly over the centuries.

But when it comes to the creatures in Scotland's lochs, the point at which folklore and imagination separates from physical reality is blurry.

Historically, the earliest accounts of fantastic creatures in Scotland's lochs endowed them with mystical or magical powers, including shape-shifting, but over time the monsters have taken on a more tangible, flesh-and-blood persona.

Although loch creatures are generally seen IN the water, there have been many documented sightings of them on land, and even in the waterways surrounding, and connecting, the lochs.

This could indicate that if the creatures do exist, they can travel between lochs, even entering rivers or swimming out into the surrounding seas. Fascinating stuff!

I can't claim that this is a list of ALL the monsters or creatures that have been reported to live in the deep, cold, dark waters of Scotland's lochs.

There are way too many lochs, and far too many stories, for me to fit on one, or even several, webpages. For that I'd need to write a book, and that's something I don't intend doing :)

Regardless, I hope you enjoy the results of my research. It was fascinating and enormously time-consuming to do, but I learned so much and am now convinced that there was (and maybe still is) something strange, or maybe several somethings, rearing it's head in Scottish waters.

- Loch Ness.
- Loch Morar.
- Loch Hourn.
- Loch Oich.
- Loch Quoich.
- Loch Shiel.
- Loch Lomond.
- Loch Lochy.
- Loch Arkaig.
- Loch Awe.
- Loch Linnhe, etc.

Questions

1. Approximately how many lochs are there in Scotland?
2. Where are most of the sea lochs in Scotland located?
3. What is Nessie's home loch?

4. Which loch monster is considered a distant second in popularity to Nessie?

5. Name two types of mystical creatures commonly associated with Scottish folklore.

6. According to the text, at what point does folklore and imagination blur with physical reality when it comes to loch monsters?

7. Where have loch creatures been sighted outside of the water?

8. List four Scottish lochs mentioned in the text that are said to have monsters.

•~• Guy Fawkes Night •~•

British people celebrate Guy Fawkes Night (or Bonfire Night) every year on 5 November in memory of a famous event in British history, the Gunpowder Plot. On 5 November, 1605 a group of Roman Catholics planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament while King James I was inside. On the evening before, one of them, Guy Fawkes, was caught in the cellars with gunpowder, and the plot was discovered. He and all the other conspirators were put to death.

Originally Bonfire Night was celebrated as a victory for Protestants over Catholics, but the festival is now enjoyed by everyone. Some children make a guy, a figure of a man made of old clothes stuffed with newspaper or straw to represent Guy Fawkes. The guy is then burned on top of a bonfire on Guy Fawkes Night. A few weeks before, children take their guy into the street and ask for a 'penny for the guy'. They use the money to buy fireworks. Only adults are legally allowed to buy fireworks in Great Britain.

Some people hold private bonfire parties in their gardens, while others attend larger public events organized by local councils or charities. Chestnuts or potatoes are often put in the bonfire so that

they will cook as it burns. Fireworks such as Roman Candles, Catherine Wheels, bangers and rockets are put in the ground and are let off one by one. Children hold lighted sparkles in their hands and wave them around to make patterns. Unfortunately, there are sometimes accidents involving fireworks and there are now restrictions on the type of fireworks that can be used by the general public.

Questions

1. When do British people celebrate Guy Fawkes Night?
2. When was King James I inside?
3. What do children do on this day?
4. Where do children take their guy?
5. What is often put in the bonfire?

•~• The British remain superstitious •~•

With the increase in science and technology over the last few decades, it is easy to imagine that there is a decrease in people's belief in superstitions. However, this is not the case. A new study shows that British people are as superstitious as they were a generation ago.

One of the most popular British superstitions is 'touching wood'. For example, when someone remarks that life is good or that things are going well, then that person touches the nearest wooden object and says 'touch wood' out loud. This action ensures that no bad luck will come to damage or destroy the way things are. If there is no wood to hand, the person touches their head – as though they are saying that their head is made from a block of wood! The next most popular superstition in Britain is to cross your fingers. Usually, you cross your fingers when you want something to work out well or

succeed. For example, it is quite usual to cross your fingers for someone when you wish them well in an exam or an important test.

Some superstitions are based on common sense and others appear quite odd. It seems sensible to avoid walking under ladders (Britain's third most noted superstition) in case someone drops something onto you from above. However, turning money over in your pocket when you see a new moon through a window, or carrying a lucky charm such as a rabbit's foot, or trying to avoid passing someone on the stairs, seem quite odd today!

Sometimes there are historical reasons for a superstition. In some areas of Britain it is considered most unlucky to put new shoes on the table. Or that breaking a mirror brings seven years of bad luck. Many people still adhere to these sorts of superstition. Others believe they are a throwback to the nineteenth century when servants working in large houses were taught about polite behaviour and how to care about expensive and delicate objects.

The survey on attitudes to superstitions has produced some controversial results. It seems that women in the UK are more superstitious than men. People in Scotland are more superstitious than their neighbours in England. Whatever your own views are, when in Britain it is a good idea to cross your fingers before you walk under a ladder and to keep loose change in your pocket in case you see a new moon.

Questions

1. Where is a decrease?
2. What should you do to see a new moon through a window?
3. What is the most popular British superstitions?
4. Has the survey on attitudes to superstitions produced some controversial results?
5. Who is more superstitious in UK?

•~• Halloween •~•

On October 31st, dozens of children dressed in costumes knock on their neighbors' doors and yell, "Trick or Treat" when the door opens. Pirates and princesses, ghosts and popular heroes of the day all hold bags open to catch the candy or other goodies that the neighbors drop in. As they give each child a treat, the neighbors exclaim over the costumes and try to guess who is under the masks.

November 1st is a religious holiday known as All Saints' Day (or formerly, All Hallows' Day). The day before the holy day is known as All Hallows' Eve. The word "Halloween" comes from that form. Its origins lie in both pre-Christian and Christian customs.

October 31st was the eve of the Celtic new year. The Celts were the ancestors or the present-day Irish, Welsh, and Scottish people. On this day, ghosts walked and mingled with the living, or so the Celts thought. The townspeople baked food all that day, and when night fell, they dressed up and tried to resemble the souls of the dead. Hoping that the ghosts would leave peacefully before midnight of the new year, the people carried the food to the edge of town and left it for them.

Much later, when Christianity spread throughout Ireland, and October 31st was no longer the last day of the year, Halloween became a celebration mostly for children. "Ghosts" went from door to door asking for treats, or else a trick would be played on the owners of the house. When millions of Irish people immigrated to the United States in the 1840s, the tradition came with them.

Today, school dances and neighborhood parties called block parties are popular among young and old alike. More and more adults — celebrate Halloween. They dress up like historical or political figures and go to masquerade parties. In larger cities,

costumed children and their parents gather at shopping malls early in the evening.

Stores and businesses give parties, with games and treats for the children. Teenagers enjoy costume dances at their schools, and the more outrageous the costume the better!

Certain pranks such as soaping car windows and tipping over garbage cans are expected. But partying and pranks are not the only things that, Halloweeners enjoy doing. Some collect money to buy food and medicine for needy children around the world.

At Halloween parties children play traditional games. One of the most popular is called pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey. One child is blindfolded and spun slowly so that he or she will become dizzy. Then the child must find a paper donkey hanging on the wall and try to pin a tail onto the back. Another game is bobbing for apples. One child at a time has to get apples from a tub of water without using hands! How? By sinking his or her face into the water and biting the apple!

Questions

1. When do dozens of children dressed in costumes knock on their neighbors' doors and yell, "Trick or Treat" when the door opens?
2. Whose origins do lie in both pre-Christian and Christian customs?
3. When did people carry the food to the edge of town and leave it for ghosts?
4. Are school dances and neighborhood parties called block parties popular among young and old alike?
5. What pranks are expected?
6. What are the main rules of the game pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey?

•~• Symbols of Halloween •~•

Halloween originated as a celebration connected with evil spirits. Witches flying on broomsticks with black cats, ghosts, goblins and skeletons have all evolved as symbols of Halloween. They are popular trick-or-treat costumes, and decorations for greeting cards and windows. Black is one of the traditional Halloween colors, probably because Halloween festivals and traditions took place at night. In the weeks before October 31, Americans decorate windows of houses and schools with silhouettes of witches and black cats.

Pumpkins are also a symbol of Halloween. The pumpkin is orange-colored and orange has become the other traditional Halloween color. Carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns is a Halloween custom also dating back to Ireland. A legend grew up about a man named Jack who was so stingy that he was not allowed into heaven when he died. His spirit was doomed to wander around the countryside, holding a lantern to light his way.

The Irish people carved scary faces out of turnips representing "Jack of the Lantern", or Jack-o'-lantern. When the Irish brought their customs to the United States, they carved faces on pumpkins because in the autumn, they were more plentiful than turnips. Today jack-o'-lanterns in the windows of a house on Halloween night let costumed children know that there are goodies waiting if they knock and say? "Trick or Treat!"

Questions

1. What symbols are associated with Halloween?
2. Why did black become one of the traditional colors of Halloween?
3. What other color has become traditional for Halloween?

4. Where does the custom of carving pumpkins for Halloween come from?
5. What legend is associated with the custom of carving faces on pumpkins?

•~• Scary Stories •~•

No Halloween party is complete without at least one scary story. Usually one person talks in a low voice while everyone else crowds together on the floor or around a fire. The following is a retelling of a tale told in Britain and in North Carolina and Virginia.

There was an old woman who lived all by herself, and she was very lonely. Sitting in the kitchen one night, she said, "Oh, I wish I had some company". No sooner had she spoken than down the chimney rumbled two feet from which the flesh had rotted. The old woman's eyes bulged with terror. Then two legs dropped to the hearth and attached themselves to the feet. Then a body tumbled down, then two arms, and a man's head. As the old woman watched, the parts came together into a great, tall man. The man danced around and around the room. Faster and faster he went. Then he stopped, and he looked into her eyes. "What do you come for?" she asked in a small voice that shivered and shook. "What do I come for?" he said. "I come for YOU!" The narrator shouts and jumps at the person near him!

Questions

1. Is a Halloween party complete without at least one scary story?
2. How does one person talk while everyone else crowds together on the floor or around a fire?
3. Did the old woman's eyes bulge with terror or happiness?

4. When did the man dance?
5. For what purpose did the ghost come to the woman?

•~• New Year Traditions •~•

New year in Great Britain is often launched with a party – either at home with family and friends or a gathering in the local pubs and clubs. Merrymaking begins on New Year’s Eve and builds up to midnight. The stroke of midnight is the cue for much cheering, hooting, whistling, kissing and the drinking of toasts.

Tradition has it that the first person over the threshold on New Year’s Day will dictate the luck brought to the household in the coming year. This is known as First Footing. At midnight on 31st December, particularly in Scotland and northern England, ‘first footers’ (traditionally a tall, dark, good-looking man) step over the threshold bringing the New Year’s Luck. The first footer usually brings a piece of coal, a loaf and a bottle of whisky. On entering he must place the fuel on the fire, put the loaf on the table and pour a glass for the head of the house, all normally without speaking or being spoken to until he wishes everyone ‘A Happy New Year’. He must, of course, enter by the front door and leave by the back.

In Wales the back door is opened to release the Old Year at the first stroke of midnight. It is then locked up to ‘keep the luck in’ and at the last stroke the New Year is let in at the front door.

In Scotland the New Year remains the greatest of all annual festivals. Called ‘Hogmanay’ (a word whose meaning has never been satisfactorily established), it’s marked by an evening of drinking and merrymaking, culminating at the stroke of midnight when huge gatherings of people at Edinburgh’s Tron Kirk and Glasgow’s George Square greet the New Year by linking arms and singing ‘Auld Lang Syne’.

The New Year is celebrated all over the world and different countries have different traditions.

In Cuba they store water beforehand and pour it into the street at midnight on New Year's Eve. This symbolizes their wish for the New Year to be as clear, fresh and sparkling as the water they pour.

In India they put on their national costumes and go into the streets carrying flowers, toys and jars full of water – they pour water over each other. On a hot night it can even be a pleasure to walk about in soaking clothes. And they traditionally fly bright kites on New Year's Eve.

So do the Japanese. Young and old enjoy it alike. In Japan 108 strokes of the bell announce the beginning of the New Year over the radio. Then everyone goes to bed to get up again at dawn so as not to miss the sunrise. They believe that if you miss the sunrise you'll have bad luck in the new year.

In Italy they follow a very old tradition – in the last minutes of the old year they throw all the old things they don't need – old furniture, pots and pans, old shoes, etc. – out of the window. So many countries, so many customs.

Questions

1. When does Merrymaking begin?
2. What is the cue for much cheering, hooting, whistling, kissing and the drinking of toasts?
3. When do 'first footers' step over the threshold bringing the New Year's Luck?
4. What remains the greatest of all annual festivals in Scotland?
5. Is New Year celebrated all over the world?
6. Can it be a pleasure to walk about in soaking clothes on a hot night?

•~• Boxing day •~•

In Britain the traditional day for giving presents until recently was December 26th, not as it is today – Christmas Day. December 26th, feast of St Stephen, is now known as Boxing Day, for it was then that the priests of the Middle Ages opened their armed boxes to give to the poor. Later it was the day when people gave Christmas boxes (small gifts of money) to their employees or servants. Now it's a bank holiday. This is the day when one visits friends, goes for a drive or a long walk or just sits round recovering from too much food. In the country there are usually Boxing Day meets, hunts, fox hunting. In Britain on that day, many sports events take place and in the US large shops begin their sales.

Questions

1. When did the traditional day for giving presents until recently take place in Britain?
2. Who opened armed boxes to give to the poor?
3. What do people do on this day?
4. Where do many sports events take place on that day?

•~• The Christmas pantomime •~•

Pantomimes, also called pantos, are traditionally put on in theatres throughout Britain for several weeks before and after Christmas. Most are intended for children. They are a British tradition which has developed over several centuries. A pantomime combines a fairy tale with comedy, music and singing, acrobatics and verse. Among the most popular stories are Aladdin, Babes in the Wood, Cinderella, Dick Whittington and, Jack and the Beanstalk.

The audience usually takes an active part in a performance: characters on stage speak to the audience directly and they shout back their answer. Sometimes they have noisy arguments, exchanging shouts of 'Oh yes, it is' and 'Oh no, it isn't'. Audiences are often encouraged to join in the singing, and to boo loudly whenever a bad character appears. Other pantomime traditions include that of a hero, called the principal boy, being played by a young woman, and a comic old woman, called a dame, being played by a male comedian. Pantomimes often also include several animal characters played by actors in animal costumes.

Many of the most successful pantomimes performed in professional theatres have well-known television or sports personalities playing leading roles. Hundreds of amateur pantomimes are also put on each year.

Pantomimes of this kind do not exist in the United States where the word pantomime means a play or entertainment performed without words.

Questions

1. What is traditionally put on in theatres throughout Britain for several weeks before and after Christmas?
2. What are the most popular stories?
3. Where does the audience usually take an active part?
4. Where do many of the most successful pantomimes perform?
5. When are hundreds of amateur pantomimes put?

•~• A giant Christmas tree •~•

In Trafalgar Square in front of the National Gallery stands an enormous Christmas tree. It's a gift from the people of Oslo. Every winter they cut down a tree for London. Then horses pull it through

the snowy forests to the docks. When the tree arrives, the police on motorcycles escort it to Trafalgar Square. It's over 50 feet high. There it stands as straight as the pillars behind it and looks taller than the dome of the National Gallery.

It is brightly coloured. Right at the top there is a large shining star. The branches are draped with tinsel and hung with big brilliant stars that sparkle in the night. Bright shining balls of different colours and different sizes cover the tree from top to bottom. Imitation snow lies soft and silver white on the dark green branches. No wonder whole families, boys and girls and grown-ups too, stand and stare. Here's a Christmas tree bigger than any they ever have seen in their lives. Under a darkening sky in the heart of London.

Questions

1. When do people of Oslo cut down a tree for London?
2. Is there a large shining star right at the top?
3. What lies soft and silver white on the dark green branches?
4. Where does this sparkling tree seem to catch the spirit of Christmas?

•~• Places of Interest in Great Britain •~•

Britain is rich in its historic places which link the present with the past.

The oldest part of London is Lud Hill, where the city is originated. About a mile west of it there is Westminster Palace, where the king lived and the Parliament met, and there is also Westminster Abbey, the coronation church.

Liverpool, the "city of ships", is England's second greatest port, ranking after London. The most interesting sight in the Liverpool is the docks. They occupy a river frontage of seven miles. The

University of Liverpool, established in 1903, is noted for its School of Tropical Medicine. And in the music world Liverpool is a well-known name, for it's the home town of "The Beatles".

Stratford-on-Avon lies 93 miles north-west of London. Shakespeare was born here in 1564 and here he died in 1616. Cambridge and Oxford Universities are famous centres of learning.

Stonehenge is a prehistoric monument, presumably built by Druids, members of an order of priests in ancient Britain. Tintagel Castle is King Arthur's reputed birthplace. Canterbury Cathedral is the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Church of England.

The British Museum is the largest and richest museum in the world. It was founded in 1753 and contains one of the world's richest collections of antiquities. The Egyptian Galleries contain human and animal mummies. Some parts of Athens' Parthenon are in the Greek section.

Madam Tussaud's Museum is an exhibition of hundreds of life-size wax models of famous people of yesterday and today. The collection was started by Madam Tussaud, a French modeller in wax, in the 18th century. Here you can meet Marilyn Monroe, Elton John, Picasso, the Royal Family, the Beatles and many others: writers, movie stars, singers, politicians, sportsmen, etc.

Questions

1. What is the oldest part of London?
2. When was Shakespeare born?
3. Who built Stonehenge?
4. What mummies do the Egyptian Galleries contain?
5. Who can you meet in Madam Tussaud's Museum?

•~• Scottish Universities •~•

More than 50,000 international students from over 180 different countries study at Scottish universities every year. Scotland's education system is recognised for its high quality and has a reputation for producing creative thinkers. Scotland has more world-class higher education institutions per head of population than anywhere else in the world and graduates from Scottish universities are fully prepared for the working world.

Reasons to study in Scotland:

1. The quality of education in Scotland is underpinned by world-class research.

2. Scottish Higher Education institutions are subject to rigorous quality assurance processes, and the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework requires universities to demonstrate improvements in the quality of teaching and education on a yearly basis.

3. The Scottish model of quality enhancement, which includes student input and feedback on student satisfaction, is being mirrored by universities across Europe.

4. Scottish universities offer learning focused on employability, and students have plenty of part-time and graduate job opportunities in major cities such as Edinburgh and Glasgow.

5. Scottish cities are student friendly and a center for cultural activities. Edinburgh plays host to some of the world's biggest parties and was ranked the 2nd best in the world for quality of life.

St Andrews University

St Andrews is famous for its rich history and tradition. The university was founded in the early 14th century and is one of the most prestigious universities in the UK and the oldest in Scotland. The campus of the university is part of the ancient city of

St Andrews, with a population of just over 17,000 people, of which 7,500 are students, faculty and staff of the University of St Andrews. Not far from the campus – breathtaking scenery of the North Sea coast and rolling forest. At the University of St Andrews 4 faculties: sciences, arts, theology and medicine – which, in turn, are divided into schools. According to The Guardian, the School of Antiquity, the School of Economics and Finance, the School of Geography and Sustainable Development, the School of History and International Relations, the School of Art History and the School of Physics and Astronomy are the best in the UK. The university itself has won the Sunday Times “University of the Year” title twice, in 2002 and 2020, and in 2022 the Good University Guide ranked it first among British universities – it is the first university to beat Oxford and Cambridge in the annual rankings. The University of St Andrews boasts numerous distinguished alumni, from the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Prince William and Kate Middleton, to writer Rudyard Kipling and mathematician John Napier, the inventor of logarithms.

The University of Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh is a public research university located in the capital of Scotland. It was founded in 1583 at the initiative of King James VI, which is remarkable, since in those days universities were established only at the initiative of the Pope. Several buildings of the University of Edinburgh are part of the Old City, therefore they are of great historical value, which is why they were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The University of Edinburgh is part of the elite group of interaction between research universities in the UK – “Russell”. The University of Edinburgh is well known in the academic community as the strongest center for teaching the humanities. Programs related to language and literature take the unconditional first place: the Faculty

of Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh is one of the world's top three leaders, and its indicators are extremely high not only in terms of the curriculum, but also in terms of reputation with employers. In addition, there are excellent programs for the study of English literature, philology and philosophy. It is also worth paying attention to the University of Edinburgh for applicants who see themselves in the field of healthcare: the general medicine and nursing programs, as well as the faculty of veterinary medicine, have excellent academic performance. In addition to the above, it is worth mentioning the direction of sociology of development, where the program of geography, sociology and sustainable development are especially strong. The University of Edinburgh is an important engine of modern science and is often noted by analysts as one of the strongest research centers in Europe. According to citation indexes, the most productive areas of research are the study of information systems, linguistics and biological sciences. The latter, by the way, are also among the most expensive (on average, one research project costs about 120 thousand pounds).

The University of Glasgow

The University of Glasgow is one of the four oldest universities in the UK. It is located in the largest city in Scotland – Glasgow. The university was founded in 1451 by Bishop William Turnbull. The University of Glasgow is one of the most active research centers in the world. He is a member of international associations: *Universitas 21* and *the Russell group*, along with Cambridge and Oxford universities. The University of Glasgow trains specialists in technical, humanitarian and natural sciences. Included in the top 100 universities in the world according to the QS ranking (in 2016 it took 62nd place). The strongest direction of study at the University of Glasgow is life sciences and medicine (included in the world

top 50 in the QS ranking). The strongest faculties are considered to be medical, veterinary and the faculty of geosciences. The University of Glasgow is famous for its research programs. The university conducts some of the most significant research in the world in the fields of veterinary medicine, pharmacology, medicine, nursing, geography and linguistics. Promising research is also underway in the fields of biology, computer science, pedagogy, and communications. Today, the University of Glasgow employs about two hundred of the best researchers from around the world. 7 Nobel Prize winners are associated with the activities of the university.

Test

1. What is the Scottish education system recognized for?
 - A. Availability.
 - B. High quality and reputation.
 - C. Because of famous personalities who graduated from Scottish universities.
2. Does the education system allow students to work?
 - A. Yes, but only part-time.
 - B. Only in Edinburgh.
 - C. Only in Glasgow.
3. Can students attend parties while studying?
 - A. No, and attempts to visit are threatened with expulsion.
 - B. Yes, as Edinburgh hosts some of the biggest parties in the world.
 - C. Students can attend but not organize.
4. When was St Andrews university founded?
 - A. 12th century.
 - B. 15th century.
 - C. 14th century.

5. What is the oldest university in Scotland?
- A. The University of Edinburgh.
 - B. St Andrews university.
 - C. The University of Glasgow.
6. What faculties in St Andrews university are divided into schools?
- A. Sciences, arts, theology and medicine.
 - B. The general medicine and nursing programs.
 - C. Geography, sociology and sustainable development.
7. When did St Andrews university win the title "University of the Year"?
- A. 2000.
 - B. 2002 and 2010.
 - C. 2002 and 2020.
8. Who was John Napier?
- A. Mathematician.
 - B. Musician.
 - C. Artist.
9. When was founded the University of Edinburgh?
- A. 1580.
 - B. 1683.
 - C. 1583.
10. Through teaching what sciences is the University of Edinburgh well known in the academic community?
- A. Physics and chemistry.
 - B. Humanities.
 - C. Art.
11. Where is the University of Glasgow located?
- A. The Scottish capital.
 - B. Wales.
 - C. Glasgow.
12. Who founded the University of Glasgow?
- A. William Turnbull.
 - B. Winston Churchill.
 - C. Queen Elizabeth.

13. What is the university of Glasgow famous for ?
A. Grants.
B. Research programs.
C. Vacation programs.
14. Where does the University of Glasgow rank in the list of the best universities in the world?
A. 62. B. 50. C. 31.
15. Who is connected with the activities of the University of Glasgow?
A. UK writers.
B. Nobel Prize winners.
C. Famous actors and musicians.

•~• **Grammar schools in Great Britain** •~•

A grammar school is one of several different types of schools in the history of education in Great Britain. Originally, it was a school teaching Latin, but more recently an academically oriented secondary school, differentiated in recent years from less academic secondary modern schools. The main difference is that a grammar school may select pupils based on academic achievements whereas a secondary modern may not.

The original purpose of medieval grammar schools was the teaching of Latin. Over time, the curriculum was broadened, first to include Ancient Greek, and later English and other European languages, natural sciences, mathematics, history, geography, art and other subjects. In the late Victorian era grammar schools were reorganised to provide secondary education throughout England and Wales; Scotland had developed a different system. Grammar schools of these types were also established in British territories overseas, where they have evolved in different ways.

Grammar schools became one of the three tiers of the Tripartite System of state-funded secondary education operating in England and Wales from the mid-1945s to the late 1970s. After most Local Education Authorities moved to non-selective comprehensive schools in the 1970s, some grammar schools became fully independent schools and charged fees, while most others were abolished or became comprehensive. In both cases, some of these schools kept “grammar school” in their names. More recently, a number of state grammar schools still retaining their selective intake gained academy status, meaning that they are independent of the Local Education Authority.

There remain 163 grammar schools in England. Only a few areas have kept a formal grammar school system along the lines of the Tripartite System. In these areas, the eleven plus exam is used solely to identify a subset of children considered suitable for grammar education. Results of the test determined a student’s placement in a three-track secondary system. The highest scoring students were admitted to grammar schools and were likely to go on to university studies. The other students attended either modern schools, where they completed a course of higher level elementary studies and did not go on to university, or technical schools. When a grammar school has too many qualified applicants, other criteria are used to allocate places, such as siblings, distance or faith. Such systems still exist in Buckinghamshire, Rugby and Stratford districts of Warwickshire.

In other areas, grammar schools survive mainly as very highly selective schools, for example in several of the outer boroughs of London. These very highly selective schools also tend to dominate the top positions in performance tables.

Test

1. What is a grammar school?
 - A. It is one of several different types of schools in Great Britain.
 - B. It is an additional grammar courses.
 - C. It is a girls-only gymnasium.
2. What is the main difference between grammar schools and secondary schools?
 - A. Grammar schools are funded by the government.
 - B. Grammar schools may select pupils based on academic achievements.
 - C. Secondary schools charge fees.
3. What was the first language included in the curriculum of grammar schools after the broadening?
 - A. English.
 - B. French.
 - C. Ancient Greek.
4. What was the original purpose of grammar schools?
 - A. Teach English.
 - B. Teach Latin.
 - C. Teach grammar.
5. How was grammar schools reorganized during the Victorian Era?
 - A. All grammar schools were closed.
 - B. Only royal children could study there.
 - C. They started to provide secondary education.
6. What countries had the same secondary education system in grammar schools?
 - A. Scotland and England.
 - B. England and Wales.
 - C. Wales and Scotland.

7. What state-funded secondary education system did grammar schools become part of?
- A. The Tripartite System.
 - B. Vocational Education system.
 - C. Formal education system.
8. When did most Local Education Authorities move to non-selective comprehensive schools?
- A. 1945.
 - B. 1970.
 - C. 1960.
9. How long did the “three types of schools” system work?
- A. 25 years.
 - B. 10 years.
 - C. 20 years.
10. When did grammar schools become fully independent?
- A. 1945.
 - B. 1960.
 - C. 1970.
11. When grammar schools became comprehensive, what did they keep?
- A. Pupils selection system.
 - B. “Grammar school” in their names.
 - C. Fees from parents.
12. What made grammar schools independent of the Local Education Authority?
- A. “Grammar school” in their names.
 - B. Private system of education.
 - C. Selective intake gaining academy status.
13. How many grammar schools are left in England?
- A. 163.
 - B. None.
 - C. 50.
14. What exam is used to identify a subset of children considered suitable for grammar schools?
- A. Eleven Plus exam.
 - B. Exam GCSE.
 - C. Exam HSCE.

15. In what system did the results of the exam determine a student's placement?
- A. A two-track secondary system.
 - B. A three-track secondary system.
 - C. A four-track secondary system.
16. Where were the highest scoring students admitted?
- A. Modern secondary schools.
 - B. Technical schools.
 - C. Grammar schools.
17. Which school graduates were likely to go on to university studies?
- A. Grammar schools.
 - B. Modern secondary schools.
 - C. Technical schools.
18. What criteria can be used to allocate places in grammar schools?
- A. Gender.
 - B. Siblings.
 - C. Parents work.
19. What schools tend to dominate the top positions in performance tables?
- A. Very highly selective grammar schools in several of the outer boroughs of London.
 - B. Secondary modern schools.
 - C. Schools with modern technologies.

•~• **Primary education in the UK** •~•

Primary school learning

Pupils coming to the UK from ethnic minority origins is on the rise with 33 % of primary school students belonging to these ethnicities. Only 5 % of primary school pupils experience classes

of over 30. Typically, classes in state-funded schools range from 25–30 pupils.

Parents looking for local schools for their children can find them at the following governmental websites, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Children entering the UK's education system for the first time are welcomed at any stage although they will usually be expected to start school at the beginning of a school year or term for a smoother transition stage. Parents should be aware that in areas with fewer schools, waiting lists may be more extensive. It is possible to inquire at the local council for recommendations on what to do.

Primary school is the first stage of education where children in the UK are required to attend. During primary school, children will begin to learn basic skills such as learning to read and write and simple numeracy. In the first few years, children are still allowed a fair part of the day to play, draw and do arts and crafts. Classes can typically be between 25 to 30 students per class and each class will be assigned one teacher who they will spend all their schooling time with. Some classes, namely the larger sized ones, may have teaching assistants who assist children with learning difficulties or who may learn at a slower pace.

Primary school

A school year group is calculated on the age of the child depending on what part of the year their birthday falls on.

England. It is compulsory to begin school at the age of 4 in England. Those who have turned 4 before the 1st September of any given year will be eligible to start school during the first September after their 4th birthday.

Scotland. Children in Scotland begin schooling in mid-August Children born between March of one year and by the end of

February the following year will comprise of one school year. This means children who begin school will be between the ages of 4 and 5 years old.

Wales. The Welsh system in place for starting school is identical to that actioned in England.

Northern Ireland. Children are also to start education from the age of 4 in Northern Ireland however the age cohort is based around the dates of the 2nd July round to the 1st July of the next year for one year group.

Typically, parents of children who were born close to or on the deadline of the academic year can choose whether their child joins the elder or younger school year. For example, if born on 31st August, you may be offered to defer your child's entry to school so that they will be the eldest in the year group as opposed to the youngest.

Primary and secondary schools categorise age groups by key stages. The purpose of key stages is to separate educational stages of the curriculum and also to adapt learning materials such as books or activities to the appropriate age. These are as follows:

- Key stage 1 – children aged 4 to 7.
- Key stage 2 – children aged 7 to 11.
- Key stage 3 – children aged 11 to 14.
- Key stage 4 – children aged 14 to 16.

In some cases, primary schools may be divided by key stage where key stage 1 and 2 will be taught in separate buildings or even separate schools (named infant and junior). This is so that there is not such a drastic age difference between the older and younger children. School years across all four countries can be located here.

Once children have become accustomed to being in an educational environment and have acquired the skills to read and

write, they will be following a more advanced curriculum. Although this differs between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the curriculum will all be of a similar variation. The subjects introduced will include; language, literacy, numeracy, physical education, religious education, arts such as music, painting and drawing and history. Please note that although religious education forms part of the national curriculum, parents can withdraw their child's participation from such classes if deemed appropriate to do so.

In key stage 2, children will be subjected to learning a greater range of subjects in addition to the above including; foreign language (typically French), IT (Information Technology) and sciences.

Tests and exams

England. Tests are not commonplace in primary schools due to the young age of children. SATs however (Standard Assessment Tests) are carried out at the end of each key stage to gauge the progress of a child's learning. SATs at the end of key stage 2 (sometimes referred to as the 11 Plus) have in the past been known to determine a child's placement at secondary school. Children with good 11 Plus results have also been accepted into "grammar schools". Such schools do still exist, although they are becoming less and less common and are mostly only found in English home counties and in Northern Ireland. Such schools are believed to teach the more academic part of a years cohort whilst the rest go to the nearest state-funded secondary school. This system is not very popular amongst many parents and is consequently a system that is slowly disappearing from British culture.

Scotland. Though not named SATs, children in Scottish primary schools also take tests gaging their ability. These are carried out in primary 1, 4 and 7 as well as in secondary 3. Such tests are still standardised nationally. In the earlier years, tests are more oriented

towards literacy and numeracy yet older children in primary schools will be tested on problem solving. Such tests will typically be multiple choice and carried out on computer software downloaded. The tests can be marked immediately depending on the answer chosen by the student. These are also known as InCAS tests (Interactive Computerised Assessment System). This system is also in place in Northern Ireland.

Wales. Welsh schools have similar tests set up to Scotland where they are also based on numeracy and literacy, though they too are only to track pupils learning outcomes. Tests have, as of the year 2019, been sat online. For primary school children, these tests are usually taken in Year 2 where children will be around 7 years old.

Northern Ireland. InCAS tests are also the standard procedure for children studying in Northern Ireland, see Scotland above.

Test

1. What percentage of primary school students in the UK belong to ethnic minority origins?

- A. 34 %. B. 5 %. C. 25–30 %. D. 50 %.

2. What is the typical range of pupils per class in state-funded schools?

- A. 34 %. B. 5 %. C. 25–30 %. D. 50 %.

3. Where can parents find local schools for their children in the UK?

A. At the local council.

B. At private schools.

C. At the following governmental websites: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

D. At the local library.

4. When are children expected to start school in the UK?
- A. Anytime during the year.
 - B. At the beginning of a school year or term.
 - C. At the end of a school year or term.
 - D. At the age of 5.
5. What should parents be aware of in areas with fewer schools?
- A. Waiting lists may be more extensive.
 - B. There are no schools available.
 - C. Schools are overcrowded.
 - D. Schools are too far away.
6. What is the first stage of education where children in the UK are required to attend?
- A. Secondary school.
 - B. College.
 - C. University.
 - D. Primary school.
7. What basic skills do children learn during primary school in the UK?
- A. Learning to read and write and simple numeracy.
 - B. Advanced mathematics and science.
 - C. Foreign languages.
 - D. Social studies.
8. How many students are typically in a primary school class in the UK?
- A. 10–15.
 - B. 20–25.
 - C. 25–30.
 - D. 30–35.
9. What is a teaching assistant?
- A. A teacher who assists other teachers.
 - B. A student who assists the teacher.
 - C. A person who assists children with learning difficulties or who may learn at a slower pace.
 - D. A parent who assists with school activities.

10. What is the age cohort for one school year in Northern Ireland?

A. Children born between March of one year and by the end of February the following year.

B. Children born between September of one year and by the end of August the following year.

C. Children born between January of one year and by the end of December the same year.

D. Children born between July of one year and by the end of June the following year.

11. What is the purpose of key stages in primary and secondary schools?

A. To separate educational stages of the curriculum.

B. To group children by age only.

C. To teach different subjects in different stages.

D. To divide schools into infant and junior buildings.

12. At what age do children typically start school in England?

A. 4.

B. 5.

C. 6.

D. 7.

13. What is the purpose of SATs in England?

A. To determine a child's placement at secondary school.

B. To track pupils' learning outcomes.

C. To teach foreign languages.

D. To separate educational stages of the curriculum.

14. What are grammar schools in England?

A. Schools that teach the more academic part of a year's cohort.

B. Schools that teach only foreign languages.

C. Schools that teach only sciences.

D. Schools that teach only physical education.

15. What is the age range for children in key stage 3?
A. 4 to 7. B. 7 to 11.
C. 11 to 14. D. 14 to 16.
16. What subjects are introduced in primary school?
A. Language, literacy, numeracy, physical education, religious education, arts such as music, painting and drawing, and history.
B. Foreign language, IT, and sciences.
C. Physical education, religious education, and arts such as music, painting and drawing.
D. Language, literacy, and numeracy only.
17. What is the purpose of InCAS tests?
A. To determine a child's placement at secondary school.
B. To track pupils' learning outcomes.
C. To teach foreign languages.
D. To separate educational stages of the curriculum.
18. What is the age range for children in key stage 2?
A. 4 to 7. B. 7 to 11.
C. 11 to 14. D. 14 to 16.
19. What is the purpose of Welsh tests?
A. To determine a child's placement at secondary school.
B. To track pupils' learning outcomes.
C. To teach foreign languages.
D. To separate educational stages of the curriculum.
20. What is the age range for children in key stage 4?
A. 4 to 7. B. 7 to 11.
C. 11 to 14. D. 14 to 16.

•~• **Higher education in the UK** •~•

Higher education in the UK is of the highest quality and prestige: among the top 100 best universities in the world according to QS Ranking, 17 are British universities. British universities have

high graduate employment rates and good funding. Due to the high salaries and living standards, the best teachers from all over the world are employed at universities. Thanks to this, the country has the second highest number of international students after the USA.

University studies

In the UK, as in most other countries, higher education is divided into three levels. However, the length of study is different:

Bachelor's degree – 3 years (instead of 4 years).

Master's degree – 1 year (instead of 2 years).

Doctorate degree – 4 years.

Due to the fact that secondary education in Britain lasts 13 years, and during the last two years students are engaged in a university program, the time of study at a university is reduced. At the same time, there will be no problems with the recognition of an English diploma abroad. It is equivalent to a bachelor's degree in any other country.

Types of programs

The Sandwich Course is a bachelor's degree combined with work experience. Between the second and third years of studies, students go on a one-year internship in their specialty, in the end receiving both a diploma and experience.

Undergraduate Master's degrees are programs that combine bachelor's and master's programs. The program lasts four years, and in the end graduates are awarded a master's degree. Such programs are particularly common in STEM fields. The training is focused more on practice rather than the continuation of an academic career.

PhD 1 + 3 programs combine two stages of education: master's and doctorate studies, the duration of which is four years. Moreover, graduates receive two degrees at once: a master's and PhD.

At universities, students make their own timetable. Usually, there are several compulsory disciplines in bachelor's programs, without which it will not be possible to complete the degree. That being said, students are free to choose their own additional subjects. The main thing is to obtain the required number of study hours, which are measured in credits.

Knowledge, especially in the humanities, is assessed mainly through essays, research papers, and projects. There are also exams, but they are less common than at universities in other countries. British education in any specialty is aimed at developing practical skills, one of them being critical thinking. Professors encourage students to ask questions, express their opinions, and lead the discussion. Disagreeing with a teacher is completely normal.

Admission to bachelor's programs occurs through a special platform called UCAS, while the admission process for master's and doctorate programs takes place directly through the university's website. The admissions committee evaluates the candidate based on his GPA, motivation letter, references, and resume. You will also need an English proficiency certificate (for example, IELTS). Some programs require you to pass an interview.

Education in the UK is quite expensive: from 18,651 USD to 49,736 USD per year. An additional 14,921 USD can be expected for accommodation. In America or Australia, prices are comparable, but prices in Europe are several times lower. In order for talented, but not very rich students to come to the country, British universities and the government offer large scholarships. Some of them fully cover the cost of education, but they are often available only to undergraduate students. For bachelor's programs, the usual size of a scholarship is 10-30 % of the tuition cost.

Tasks

Task 1. Give Russian equivalents.

1. Bachelor's degree –
2. Master's degree –
3. Doctorate degree –
4. PhD –
5. GPA –

Task 2. Complete the phrases.

1. A one-year –
2. Recognition of –
3. Is focused more on –
4. Measured in –

Task 3. Answer the questions.

1. What are the levels of higher education in the UK?
2. What are special types of programs at British universities?
3. How do students make their own timetable at universities in the UK?
4. Is it expensive to study in the UK?
5. How is knowledge assessed in humanities subjects in the UK?
6. What practical skill is emphasized in British education?

Task 4. Discuss.

1. Would you like to study in the UK?
2. What do you think are the benefits of pursuing higher education in the UK?
3. Can you name some of the top universities in the UK and what they are known for?
4. Do professors in your university encourage you to ask questions, express their opinions, and lead the discussion?
5. Are there any challenges international students may face when studying in the UK?

•~• APPENDIX •~•

•~• The most important dates in British history •~•

4000 BC: The Neolithic Age (also called the New Stone Age). People started farming.

2500 BC: Stonehenge was built. It is a circle of large stones in Wiltshire that you can still visit today.

800 BC: The Iron Age. Celtic warrior groups (called 'Britons') from Europe came to live here.

43: The Romans invaded. The Roman invasion was led by Emperor Claudius. The Romans built roads and towns across England (every town with a name ending in 'cester', 'caster' or 'chester' is from Roman times, including Manchester, Winchester and Doncaster).

60: Boudicca, queen of a tribe in east England, fought the Romans. Over 2 years they destroyed 3 cities, until she was captured.

410: Romans troops left. Celtic kingdoms reappear alongside Roman culture.

449: The Anglo-Saxons came. Tribes from areas in Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark gradually moved into Britain. They were known as the Anglo-Saxons. The Celtic people were pushed to Wales, Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Cumbria and Scotland. But by about 800, Cornwall, Devon and Somerset were part of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex.

597: Christianity became popular in Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Celtic areas had their own version.

793: Vikings from Scandinavia arrived. Within 100 years the Vikings controlled much of central and north-eastern England, an area called the Danelaw.

925: King Athelstan crowned. He was the first to be king of the area we now call England.

1005: Scotland united. Rival northern Celtic groups formed one nation, Scotland.

1066: The Norman Conquest. William, Duke of Normandy, beat King Harold II at the Battle of Hastings. His Norman armies invaded England and most of Wales. William was known as 'William the Conqueror', or King William I.

1086: The Domesday Book. King William I created the Domesday Book, a very detailed record of everyone who owned land or animals. This was so he could tax them. The book still exists.

1135: The Anarchy. After King Henry I died, there was a brutal civil war for 19 years. This was because two people wanted the English crown: Henry's daughter Matilda, and his nephew Stephen of Blois. Eventually Stephen won.

1171: England invaded Ireland. After the invasion, England ruled the island of Ireland for over 700 years. Although there was some mixing of the English and Irish populations, mostly they lived side by side.

1215: King John forced to sign the Magna Carta. King John was a bad king. His lords became angry and made him sign a document (the Magna Carta) that said he must follow the rules of England. It also limited how much the lords could be taxed and gave 'free men' the right to a fair trial. This idea of human rights was copied across the world.

1284: England took control of Wales. King Edward I fought Welsh prince Llywelyn ap Gruffudd and he was killed in 1282. In 1284, the Statute of Rhuddlan made Wales part of England. England and Wales made a formal union in 1536.

1296: Edward I invaded Scotland. A year later, a man called William Wallace tried to fight the English. Scottish king Robert the Bruce defeated the English at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. Scotland became independent in 1328.

1315: The Great Famine. Over 7 years, at least 10 % of people across Britain died from starvation caused by 2 years of very bad weather.

1337: The Hundred Years' War begins. It started when King Edward III of England tried to invade France. 116 years later, France won.

1348: The Black Death. Bubonic plague killed 40 % of people in one year. Many villages disappeared. But because of a labour shortage, the remaining peasants could suddenly choose who to work for and what to do. There was big social change.

1381: The Peasants' Revolt. Thousands of peasants protested in London because they wanted equal rights and did not want to pay a new tax. Eventually wool exports were taxed instead.

1400: The Welsh Revolt: a member of the Welsh royalty, Owain Glyndwr, led the Welsh to revolt against the new English king, Henry IV. At first it seemed like he was successful, but eventually the English took back control.

1450s: The Wars of the Roses. When King Henry VI became too ill to rule, Richard, Duke of York was asked to take over temporarily. However, he didn't want to stop being ruler even when the king was better. This started a 30-year war between two sides of the English royal Plantagenet family: the House of York (which had a white rose logo) and the House of Lancaster (red rose logo).

1485: The start of the Tudor dynasty. Henry Tudor of the House of Lancaster won the Battle of Bosworth Field and became King Henry VII. To stop the fighting of the previous 30 years, he married his

rival's niece, Elizabeth of York. Henry then created the House of Tudor (with a red and white rose logo). England and Wales entered a time of relative peace and growing wealth.

1534: The Reformation. Catholic King Henry VIII wanted to divorce his wife because she had not had a son. But divorce was forbidden by the Pope. So Henry made himself the head of a new church, the Church of England (Protestant). This led to many years of Catholic-Protestant fighting. Henry VIII is famous now for having six wives. He also executed over 50,000 people.

1536: Dissolution of the monasteries. King Henry VIII took the wealth and power from English Catholic monasteries.

1559: Queen Elizabeth I crowned. She was a Protestant queen who ruled for 44 years. It was a time of great wealth for the country, although many thousands are made homeless because of changes in land use.

1588: The Armada. A group of ships from Spain tried to invade England. They were defeated.

1592: Scottish parliament becomes Presbyterian. This is a type of Protestant Christianity, influenced by the teachings of John Calvin.

1603: The start of the Stuart dynasty. King James VI of Scotland was a close relation of the English Queen Elizabeth I. He was crowned as James I of England after her death because she has no children. It brought the two nations together (uneasily).

1642: The Civil War started. King Charles I was not a good leader and wanted money for a war with Scotland. Parliament did not want to help him. People who supported the king (Cavaliers) fought people who supported Parliament (Roundheads). About 10 % of the population died in the fighting.

1649: Britain became a republic (called 'the Commonwealth'). King Charles I had his head cut off. A military leader called Oliver Cromwell took control. He became a dictator.

1660: The Restoration of the Monarchy. Cromwell died in 1658 and his son Richard took over. He was not a good leader. Charles I's son was invited back to the country to be King Charles II.

1665: The Great Plague of London. About 20 % of London's population died of bubonic plague.

1666: The Great Fire of London. A fire that started in a bakery destroyed 80 % of the city.

1689: The Glorious Revolution. King James II (King Charles II's brother) was unpopular – and Catholic. He fled abroad after William of Orange (the husband of his Protestant daughter Mary) came with an army. Mary and William became joint monarchs, known as William II and Mary.

1692: The Glencoe Massacre. Catholics in Scotland were told to swear their support of the new king William III (a Protestant) by January 1, 1692. The chief of the MacDonald clan did it too late. In return, 34 men, 2 women and 2 children were killed by soldiers of the Earl of Argyll on the orders of the king.

1707: Great Britain is created. The Treaty of Union between Scotland and England United Kingdom of Great Britain was made, with a British parliament in Westminster.

1714: The start of the Georgian era. Queen Anne died and her nearest Protestant relative became the new king, George I. He was from Germany. This was the start of a time of great wealth and colonial expansion.

1715: First Jacobite Rebellion. Catholics who wanted James II of England back on the throne (called Jacobites) fought Protestants who

supported the new king George I. The fighting ended when the grandson of James II (known as 'Bonnie Prince Charlie') lost the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

1720: South Sea Bubble. Thousands of people went bankrupt and many took their own life when the price of shares in the South Sea Company collapsed.

1780s: The Highland Clearances. Over 100 years, people in Highland Scotland were forced from their villages and farms so the land could be used for sheep. Thousands of people emigrated, many to Ireland or North America.

1798: The Irish Rebellion. Irish people fought against British rule, with support from the French. Nearly 30,000 people died. Eventually, the British won.

1801: The UK is created. Because of the Irish rebellion, Britain dissolved the Irish parliament and moved its responsibilities to the British parliament. This created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

1825: The first passenger railway is built. It goes between Stockton and Darlington. Soon there were railways nearly everywhere. Many were shut in the 1960s.

1834: Abolishment of slavery. Slavery becomes illegal across most of the British Empire after a new law is passed. There was a transitional period that lasted until 1838. Some areas had to wait until 1843: St Helena, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and places in India controlled by the East India Company. A new system of 'indentured labourers' was introduced to replace slavery; for many people it was not much better.

1837: The start of the Victorian era. During the reign of Queen Victoria, the British Empire grew until it had a population of over

400 million people. It included countries like India, Australia and much of Africa. Most of these countries are now independent.

1845-1850: Irish Potato Famine. Over 1 million people died and about 1 million emigrated when a disease destroyed potatoes, the only food of the poor. During this time, many other foods were grown and sent to Britain. This made Ireland even more determined to become independent.

1851: The Great Exhibition. This trade fair in London showed 100,000 of the most amazing objects from the British Empire. It was held in a very big glass building called the 'Crystal Palace' and was visited by 6 million people, including Queen Victoria.

1901: The start of the Edwardian era. After Queen Victoria's death, her son became King Edward VII. He died in 1910, but the 'Edwardian era' is often considered to last until 1914. Britain changed a lot after World War I, so the Edwardian era marks the last days of the British Empire and the social system of large country houses and servants.

1903: The Suffragettes. For 11 years, women from the Women's Political and Social Union (called 'Suffragettes') fought for women to get the vote. After World War I, women over 30 who own property are allowed to vote. In 1928, everyone over 21 was allowed to vote.

1914-1918: World War I. The war brought social change because women had to do the jobs of the men while they were fighting. Men from many other countries also helped Britain as part of the Allied Powers.

1921: The Catholic southern part of Ireland declared independence from Britain. It became a republic in 1949. Six mainly Protestant counties in the north stayed with Britain and became Northern Ireland (sometimes called 'Ulster'). Protestants were usually of

English or Scottish descent, while Catholics were usually of Irish descent. The impact is still felt today.

1939–1945: World War II. Famous moments included evacuating British soldiers from Dunkirk in France (1940), the Battle of Britain (German air attacks stopped by British pilots, 1940), the Blitz (bombing raids on British cities, 1940–1941), and D-Day/Normandy Landings (when the US, Canada and UK invaded German-occupied France, 1944).

1948: The Windrush generation. People from the West Indies were invited to help Britain rebuild after the war or work in the NHS. Over the next decades, workers were invited from many other countries (including India, Pakistan and Bangladesh).

1951: Festival of Britain. An exhibition in London that celebrated British industry, art and science.

1966: Conflict in Northern Ireland. Over 30 years of violence and bombing (known as ‘the Troubles’) start because of tension between Unionists (mostly Protestant, who want Northern Ireland to stay with Britain) and Nationalists/Republicans (mostly Catholic, who want Northern Ireland as part of the Republic of Ireland). A peace deal was signed in 1998, which gave Northern Ireland its own locally-elected government.

1966: England wins the football World Cup. They won 4–2 against Germany.

1972: Bloody Sunday. British troops kill 14 civil rights protestors in Derry, Northern Ireland.

1973: The Three-Day Week. Strikes by coal miners meant there was not enough fuel for power stations. For two months, companies could only use electricity three days a week.

1973: Britain joined the EEC. It was an early version of the European Union.

1978/79: Winter of Discontent. Over 4 million people went on strike, including gravediggers, hospital staff, lorry drivers and rubbish collectors.

1981: Brixton Riots. There were riots in London and some other cities in response to racism by police.

1992: The Channel Tunnel opens. It links UK to France by road and rail.

1997: Death of Princess Diana. The Princess was much loved by the public, so her death at such a young age upset many people.

2005: Civil partnerships became legal. Same-sex couples gained the same rights as married couples.

2012: Queen's Diamond Jubilee. There were celebrations because Queen Elizabeth had been queen for 60 years. London also hosted the Olympic Games.

2016: Brexit vote. 52 % of the UK voted to leave the European Union (though in London, Scotland and Northern Ireland most people wanted to stay).

2020: Britain left the European Union.

2022: Queen's Platinum Jubilee and Death of Queen Elizabeth II. National celebrations took place in June to recognise Queen Elizabeth II's 70 years on the throne. Sadly, she died a few months later, in September. Her son became King Charles III.

•~• **British Prime Ministers** •~•

<i>Name</i>	<i>College</i>	<i>Terms as prime minister</i>	<i>Political party</i>
Rishi Sunak (1980-)	Lincoln	Oct. 2022 -	Conservative
Liz Truss (1975-)	Merton	Sep. 2022 - Oct. 2022	Conservative
Boris Johnson (1964-)	Balliol	Jul. 2019 - Sept. 2022	Conservative
Theresa May (1956-)	St Hugh's	Jul. 2016 - Jul. 2019	Conservative
David Cameron (1966-)	Brasenose	May 2010 - Jul. 2016	Conservative
Tony Blair (1953-)	St John's	May 1997 - Jun 2007	Labour
Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013)	Somerville	May 1979 - Nov. 1990	Conservative
Harold Wilson (1916-1995)	Jesus	Oct. 1964 - Jun. 1970	Labour
		Mar. 1974 - Apr. 1976	
Edward Heath (1916-2005)	Balliol	Jun. 1970 - Mar. 1974	Conservative
Sir Alec Douglas-Home (1903-1995)	Christ Church	Oct. 1963 - Oct. 1964	Unionist/Conservative
Harold Macmillan (1894-1986)	Balliol	Jan. 1957 - Oct. 1963	Conservative
Anthony Eden (1897-1977)	Christ Church	Apr. 1955 - Jan. 1957	Conservative
Clement Attlee (1883-1967)	University College	Jul. 1945 - Oct. 1951	Labour

<i>Name</i>	<i>College</i>	<i>Terms as prime minister</i>	<i>Political party</i>
H H Asquith (1852-1928)	Balliol	Apr. 1908 - May 1915	Liberal Coalition
		May 1915 - Dec. 1916	
Marquess of Salisbury (1839-1903)	Christ Church	Jun. 1885 - Jan. 1886	Conservative
		Jul. 1886 - Aug. 1892	
		Jun. 1895 - Jul. 1902	
Earl of Rosebery (1847-1929)	Christ Church	Mar. 1894 - Jun. 1895	Liberal
William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898)	Christ Church	Dec. 1868 - Feb. 1874	Liberal
		Apr. 1880 - Jun. 1885	
		Feb. 1886 - Jul. 1886	
		Aug. 1892 - Mar. 1894	
Earl of Derby (1799-1869)	Christ Church	Feb. 1852 - Dec. 1852	Conservative
		Feb. 1858 - Jun. 1859	
		Jun. 1866 - Feb. 1868	
Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850)	Christ Church	Dec. 1834 - Apr. 1835	Tory
		Aug. 1841 - Jun. 1846	
George Canning (1770-1827)	Christ Church	Apr. 1827 - Aug. 1827	Tory/Whig coalition
Earl of Liverpool (1770-1828)	Christ Church	Jun. 1812 - Apr. 1827	Tory
Lord Grenville (1759-1834)	Christ Church	Feb. 1806 - Mar. 1807	Whig
Henry Addington (1757-1844)	Brasenose	Mar. 1801 - May 1804	Tory
Earl of Shelburne (1737-1805)	Christ Church	Jul. 1782 - Mar. 1783	Whig

<i>Name</i>	<i>College</i>	<i>Terms as prime minister</i>	<i>Political party</i>
Duke of Portland (1738-1809)	Christ Church	Apr. 1783 - Dec. 1783	Whig/Tory coalition
		Mar. 1807 - Oct. 1809	Tory
Lord North (1732-1792)	Trinity	Jan. 1770 - Mar. 1782	Tory
Earl of Chatham (1708-1778)	Trinity	Aug. 1766 - Oct. 1768	Whig
George Grenville (1712-1770)	Christ Church	Apr. 1763 - Jul. 1765	Whig
Henry Pelham (1694-1754)	Hart Hall (later Hertford)	Aug. 1743 - Mar. 1754	Whig
Earl of Wilmington (1673-1743)	Trinity College	Feb. 1742 - Jul. 1743	Whig

•~• **Holidays and Notable Special Days in Great Britain** •~•

<p><i>January</i></p> <p>1st – New Year’s Day 5th – Twelfth Night</p>	<p><i>February</i></p> <p>1st – Candlemas Day 14th – Valentine’s Day</p>
<p><i>March</i></p> <p>1st St – David’s Day (Wales National Day) 17th – St Patrick’s Day (Ireland’s Special Day)</p>	<p><i>March/April</i></p> <p>Shrove Tuesday Lent Mothering Sunday Maundy Thursday Easter</p>
<p><i>April</i></p> <p>1st – April Fool’s Day 23rd – St George’s Day (England’s National Day)</p>	<p><i>May</i></p> <p>1st – May Day</p>
<p><i>June</i></p> <p>Trooping the Colours Wimbledon Tennis Tournament</p>	<p><i>July</i></p> <p>Swan Upping</p>
<p><i>August</i></p> <p>Notting Hill Carnival</p>	<p><i>September</i></p> <p>Harvest Festival</p>
<p><i>October</i></p> <p>31st – Halloween</p>	<p><i>November</i></p> <p>5th – Bonfire Night 11th – Remembrance Day 30th – St Andrew’s Day)</p>
<p><i>December</i></p> <p>Advent 25th – Christmas 26th – Boxing Day</p>	

•~• **The Greatest Britons of all Time** •~•

Famous writers

William Shakespeare, Brontë sisters (Charlotte, Emily, and Anne), Jane Austen, Agatha Christie, J.R.R. Tolkien and Charles Dickens.

Famous Poets

Lord Byron, Robert Burns, and Thomas Hardy.

Famous Composers

William Byrd, Thomas Tallis, John Taverner, Henry Purcell, Edward Elgar, Arthur Sullivan, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Benjamin Britten.

Top 100

Sir Winston Churchill

Isambard Kingdom Brunel

Diana, Princess of Wales

Charles Darwin

William Shakespeare

Sir Isaac Newton

Queen Elizabeth I

John Lennon

Horatio Nelson

Oliver Cromwell

Ernest Shackleton

Captain James Cook

Robert Baden-Powell

King Alfred the Great

Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington

Margaret Thatcher
Michael Crawford
Queen Victoria
Sir Paul McCartney
Sir Alexander Fleming
Alan Turing
Michael Faraday
Owain Glyndwr
Queen Elizabeth II
Professor Stephen Hawking
William Tyndale
Emmeline Pankhurst
William Wilberforce
David Bowie
Guy Fawkes
Leonard Cheshire
Eric Morecambe
David Beckham
Thomas Paine
Boudicca
Sir Steve Redgrave
Sir Thomas More
William Blake
John Harrison
King Henry VIII
Charles Dickens
Sir Frank Whittle
John Peel
John Logie Baird

Aneurin Bevan
Boy George
Sir Douglas Bader
Sir William Wallace
Sir Francis Drake
John Wesley
King Arthur
Florence Nightingale
T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia)
Sir Robert Falcon Scott
Enoch Powell
Sir Cliff Richard
Sir Alexander Graham Bell
Freddie Mercury
Dame Julie Andrews
Sir Edward Elgar
Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother
George Harrison
Sir David Attenborough
James Connolly
George Stephenson
Sir Charlie Chaplin
Tony Blair
William Caxton
Bobby Moore
Jane Austen
William Booth
King Henry V
Aleister Crowley

King Robert the Bruce
Bob Geldof
The Unknown Warrior
Robbie Williams
Edward Jenner
David Lloyd George, 1st Earl Lloyd George
Charles Babbage
Geoffrey Chaucer
King Richard III
J.K. Rowling
James Watt
Sir Richard Branson
Bono (Born in Ireland)
John Lydon (Johnny Rotten)
Bernard Law Montgomery
Donald Campbell
King Henry II
James Clerk Maxwell
J.R.R. Tolkien
Sir Walter Raleigh
King Edward I
Sir Barnes Wallis
Richard Burton
Tony Benn
David Livingstone
Sir Tim Berners-Lee
Marie Stopes

•~• Imperial Measures & Old Money •~•

Here in the UK we have a curious mix of units of measurement, some metric, some imperial, which is unique to Britain and reflects the older imperial measurements slowly giving way to considerable use of metric (SI) units of measure, with some notable exceptions stuck in the past.

Length (long distances, journeys) – miles. We describe the distance of a journey from one town to another, or from the UK to another country in terms of miles. Miles are displayed on road signs.

Length (short distances) – metres (m) and centimetres (cm). When talking about short distances such as the distance between buildings, or the dimensions of a room, we use metres, or centimetres/millimetres for much smaller lengths. The one exception is that the height of a person is often still measured in feet (ft) and inches (in), although official measurement (e.g. medical, law enforcement) is in metres or cm.

Length (nautical) – nautical miles (nm). The yachting and maritime community measures distances at sea in nautical miles (1 nm = 1.15 miles).

Length (horses) – hand. The height of a horse is measured in hands, a hand being exactly 4 inches. The world of horse racing is weird and archaic, with several unique units of measurement, including the “length” being 8 feet (or the approximate length of a race horse) and the “furlong” being one eighth of a mile, and used to describe the length of a race course.

Time – hours, minutes, seconds. No surprises here, time is measured in hours, minutes and seconds. The 24 hour clock, e.g. 14:00 = 2 pm (in US English called military time) is used in travel

timetables, TV guides and other publications. In speech, the am/pm system is used.

Speed (automotive) – miles per hour (mph). The speed of vehicles is measured in miles per hour although car speedometers also show km/h. Traffic signs display speed limits in mph.

Speed (nautical) – knot (kt or kn). At sea, wind speed and boat speed are both measured in knots (nautical miles per hour). 1 kt = 1.15 mph.

Area (large areas) – square miles (sqm, m²) or square kilometres (sqkm, km²). Large areas, such as the area of a country will normally be measured in square miles, or square kilometres in official publications. There is a comedy unit of measure the “Wales” being the land area of the principality of Wales, and can be used to describe large areas (such as annual deforestation in the Amazon: 0.7 Wales).

Area (small areas) – acres or hectares (ha). Areas such as building plots or agricultural land is measured in the metric measure of hectares (1 Ha = 2.47 acre = 10,000 km²) in official communication such as real estate, but informally in conversation acres are often still used.

Volume (objects) – cubic centimetres (cc) or cubic metres (m³). The volume of objects is measured in metric measurements, such as cubic centimetres or cubic metres.

Volume (most liquids) – millilitres (ml), litres (l) or cubic metres (m³). Volume of liquid is measured in metric measurements based on the litre. In cookery, for example, liquid ingredients are measured in millilitres or litres. The US concepts of “cup” and “quart” are not used. Large bodies of water, such as a swimming pool or a lake, are measured in cubic metres. The displacement

volume of a car engine is measured in litres or cubic centimetres, for example a car engine might be described as 1.6 l or 1600 cc. Automotive fuel is dispensed and purchased in litres. Alcoholic spirits are dispensed in ml.

Volume (beer and cider) – pints. Draught beer and cider is dispensed in imperial pints (0.57 litres). Beer glasses in pubs measure pint or half pint. The British pint is 20 % larger than the US pint (0.47 litres).

Alcoholic content – Alcohol by volume (ABV). The measure of alcohol content of a drink is Alcohol By Volume (ABV), expressed as a percentage of the drink that is ethanol. This is true of low alcohol drinks such as beer, as well as wine and spirits. The US measurement of the “proof” of a liquor (being twice the ABV figure, e.g. 40 % ABV = 80 % proof) is not used in the UK. In the past proof in the UK was defined such that it equalled approximately 1.75x the ABV figure.

Alcohol consumption – Units. In health and medical situations examining consumption of alcohol, this is measured in something called “a unit” being equivalent to 10 ml of pure alcohol (ethanol). It is calculated by multiplying the volume of drink (in ml) by its ABV percentage and dividing by 1,000. For example, a pint (568 ml) of strong beer (5.2 % ABV) equals 2.95 units (i.e. $5.2 \times 568 / 1000$). The National Health Service advises “men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis” (Source: NHS).

Fuel consumption – miles per gallon. Despite buying fuel in litres, the fuel consumption of a vehicle is still widely described in terms of miles per gallon (4.55 litres). The US Gallon (3.79 litres) is not used at all in the UK. Car manufacturers must also provide fuel efficiency figures in the metric litres per 100 km, which is a much

more sensible and useful measure for fuel consumption, not widely understood by the British public.

While mass and weight are not the same, outside of scientific sectors, in everyday life they are treated the same. The formal metric measure of weight, the Newton, is not used in everyday life outside of forming part of the definition of torque.

Mass & weight – kilograms (kg). Mass is measured in kilograms, or grams for smaller amounts such as in cooking. The exception is for the mass of a person, which is often also calculated as stone (st) and pounds (lbs), where one stone equals 14 pounds. For example, a 71 kg person would not be described as being 157 pounds in the UK, rather as 11 st 3 lbs. Both methods for weighing people are in use. Some older people might say pounds as a measure of weight when shopping for food and this will be understood, but in law, all prices must be displayed and calculated only in g or kg.

Power (electrical, human) – Watts (W). Power is measured in Watts (or kilowatts or megawatts for higher power figures). This includes all electrical devices and human power output in sport.

Power (automotive) – brake horsepower (bhp). In the UK automotive world, power is described in brake horsepower, although manufacturers will also provide a figure in kilowatts (kW). The older Pferdestärke (PS) was replaced by kW in 1992 but continues to be quoted by some manufacturers.

Energy (science, engineering, electrical) – Joules (J) or kilowatt hours (kWh). Energy in scientific and engineering scenarios is measured in the metric unit of Joules. In domestic and industrial settings, such as electricity consumption, or storage capacity of a battery, kilowatt hours are used.

Energy (food) – Calories (kCal). When describing the energy content of food, it is common in the UK to use Calories, with the meaning of calorie actually being a kilocalorie, i.e. 4184 Joules. kCal and Cal are used synonymously. Energy values of food are often quoted per 100 g or 100 ml. For example an apple might be said to contain 52 calories per 100 g, however the metric value, Joules, is also stated on food packaging.

Torque – Newton Metres (Nm). The torque of cars is measured in Newton Metres.

Temperature – Celsius (°C). Temperatures in the UK are measured in Celsius, for example to describe the weather, for storing and cooking food, for body temperature and health. Fahrenheit, once universally used in Britain, is now almost entirely restricted to a much older generation (born before the 1960s) referring to the temperature being “in the 80s” or similar. Very few people now use Fahrenheit and weather forecasts and kitchen appliances do not refer to it.

Temperature (gas ovens) – Gas Mark. On British gas ovens and in cooking instructions on food packaging, Gas Mark will be used as an alternative temperature scale in parallel with Celsius. Gas Mark 1 = 135 Celsius. It scales linearly with Celsius above 135 °C up to Gas Mark 10 being 270 Celsius.

Currency – Pound Sterling (GBP/£). The British currency is the Pound Sterling. Its ISO code is GBP. The pound is divided into pence. The singular penny has a plural of pence. One pound equals 100 pence.

•~• GLOSSARY OF TERMS, NAMES AND CONCEPTS •~•

Act of Parliament	Парламентские акты
Commonwealth of Nations	Содружество наций
constituency	Избирательный округ
Constitutional Monarchy	Конституционная монархия
Electoral districts	Избирательный округ
Executive	Исполнительный
Foreign affairs	Внешняя политика
General elections	Всеобщие выборы
Head of State	Глава государства
Judiciary	Судебное ведомство
Legislature, legislation	Законодательный, законодательство
Magna Carta	Магна Карта
Member of Parliament (MP)	Член парламента
Monarchy	Монархия
Parliament	Парламент
Prime Minister	Премьер-министр
Queen	Королева
Sovereign	Монарх, правитель
The Conservative Party	Консервативная партия
The Great Charter of Rights	Великая Хартия вольностей
The House of Commons	Палат представителей
The House of Lords	Палата лордов
The Labour Party	Лейбористская партия
Archbishop	Архиепископ
Cabinet	Кабинет министров
Government	Правительство
Lord Chancellor	Лорд-канцлер

Opposition	Оппозиция
Royal Assent	Королевская санкция
Secret ballot	Секретное голосование
Secretary of State	Госсекретарь
Speaker	Спикер
The Anglican Church	Англиканская церковь
Woolsack	Пост лорд-канцлера
To appoint	Назначать
To conclude treaties	Заключать мирные договоры
To declare war	Объявлять войну
To dissolve	Распускать (парламент)
To elect	Избирать
To give approval	Давать одобрение
To give audiences	Давать аудиенции
To introduce a Bill	Внести законопроект
To pass a Bill	Принять законопроект
To summon	Вызвать по повестке
To vote	Голосовать
Admiral Nelson	Адмирал Нельсон
Charles Darwin	Чарльз Дарвин
Charles Dickens	Чарльз Диккенс
Winston Churchill	Уинстон Черчилль

•~• TOPICS FOR ABSTRACTS AND REPORTS •~•

1. Importance of the Roman conquest for the further development of the country.
2. Renaissance in England.
3. Golden age of Elizabeth I.
4. Formation of the United Kingdom.
5. Industrial Revolution in the United Kingdom.
6. Albion and its inhabitants.
7. Celtic languages of the British Isles.
8. Sports in the United Kingdom.
9. The monarchy in the United Kingdom.
10. The electoral and party systems.
11. British political parties.
12. Higher education in the UK.
13. Great Britain in ancient times.
14. The Houses of Parliament and the procedure of passing a new law.
15. The Tudor Dynasty.
16. The educational system in the UK.
17. Private and state education.
18. National parks.
19. Royal residences and castles.
20. Great British personalities.
21. The British contribution to the development of world science.
22. Great geographical discoveries.
23. World famous festivals of art, music, poetry and drama.
24. English holidays, traditions and customs.
25. Historic places in the United Kingdom.

26. Edinburgh International Festival.
27. Ancient universities in England and Scotland.
28. The Highland Games.
29. Castles of Wales.
30. The Welsh language.
31. Scotland – a country of legends.
32. Religious problems in Northern Ireland.
33. Parliamentary traditions.
34. English Royal dynasties.
35. Victorian Era.

•~• CONCLUSION (ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ) •~•

Данное учебное пособие построено на материале аутентичных текстов, посвященных разнообразным аспектам культурно-исторического развития и современной жизни Великобритании, и нацелено на формирование у учащихся прочных знаний в области истории, географии и культуры этой страны.

Авторы надеются, что учебное пособие будет способствовать развитию познавательного интереса к представленной области знаний, формированию у студентов объективного взгляда на события прошлого и настоящего, мотивации к поиску дополнительного материала о наиболее специфических и интересных особенностях географии, истории и современной жизни страны, а также о фактах культурного развития народов, населяющих её.

Тесты для самоконтроля позволяют студентам выявить пробелы в изучении материала и оценить уровень своих знаний по предмету, а глоссарий помогает расширить словарный запас и понять аутентичный фактический материал.

В конце пособия помещены приложения, содержащие дополнительную информацию для студентов, изучающих страноведение и интересующихся историей, культурой и национальными традициями страны изучаемого языка.

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