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GEOCULTURE
IN THE ANGLOPHONE AREA

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FOREWORD

Studying a foreign language introduces students not only to the language they are studying, but also to the culture surrounding the language. It also aims at increasing students' ability to understand the world and the different kinds of people who live in it. Learning about cultures is important because it is always interactive. While students learn about other civilizations, they also learn to better understand their own language and culture. Students' interest in linguistic and cultural diversity should be supported. One of the goals of language teaching is also to motivate students to appreciate their own cultural background, and other cultures, so that they can learn to encounter people without prejudice.

Thus, the given textbook is intended for the students of Cycle II but might be used by all learners who are eager to deepen their knowledge exploring other worlds. In this regard, the main aim of the textbook is to make students learn about different countries where English is spoken, and appreciate, tolerate and compare different cultures. The textbook explores the main cultural manifestations, examining the principal geographical and social features, as well as the events and processes that have shaped the social and cultural development of the English-speaking countries. Throughout the course learners will be able:

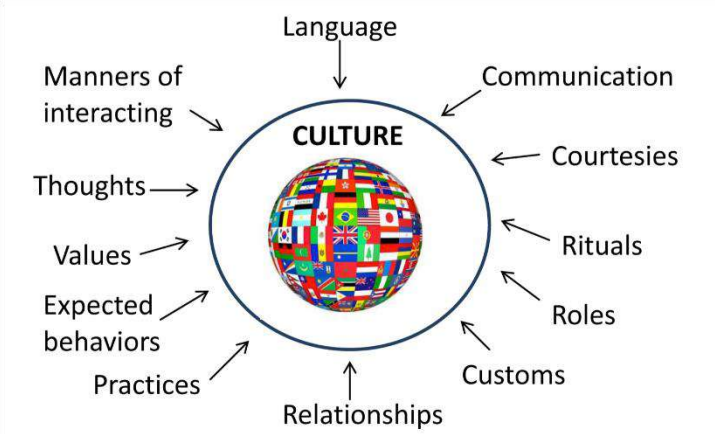
- to gain knowledge and apply basic methodologies in order to carry out a research project in English culture.
- to show in-depth understanding of history, culture and society of the English-speaking countries, showing an awareness of the diversity of cultural heritage.
- to acquire the ability to analyze cultural aspects and their relationship with the historical and social realities of the English-speaking countries.
- to analyze the interaction between history, society, and cultural production in English.

The textbook is built around two entities, the *peculiarities of culture in different English-speaking countries and teaching culture in the EFL classroom*. Together these two main themes form the basis on which it is possible to build the analysis of the source material. Under the first theme the students of Cycle II will learn different models for categorizing cultural content, everyday life and behavior, culturally meaningful objects, symbols and institutions, national geography, national heroes and identity, as well as social practices and national history, beliefs and rituals, holidays, values and social practices in the English-speaking countries. The focus of the second theme is still on English teaching, offering a wide range of interactive tasks for integrating language and culture in the English classroom. Therefore, the book is a compilation of theory and practical activities which will help our students transpose the theory into their professional field and promote intercultural awareness among learners.

I. DEFINING CULTURE

Characteristic Features of Culture

Culture is a term used by social scientists for a way of life. Every human society has a culture. Culture includes a society's arts, beliefs, customs, institutions, inventions, language, technology, and values. A culture produces similar behavior and thought among most people in a particular society. To learn about a culture, one may ask such questions as these: *What language do the people speak? What do the people of the society wear? How do they prepare their food? What kind of dwellings do they live in? What kind of work do they do? How do they govern themselves? How do they judge right from wrong*?



People are not born with any knowledge of a culture. They generally learn a culture by growing up in a particular society. They learn mainly through the use of language, especially by talking and listening to other members of the society. They also learn by watching and imitating various behaviors in the society. The process by which people-especially children- learn their society's culture is called *enculturation.* Through *enculturation*, a culture is shared with members of a society and passed from one generation to the next. Enculturation unifies people of a society by providing them with common experiences.

Tylor (1871) once created a definition of culture that has been the most influential for the development of the concept. He describes culture as a complex entity that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a member of society. He refers to culture as a synonym of civilization. His definition is very broad and descriptive, trying to offer an exhaustive list of the aspects of culture.

Geertz (1973), points out that culture is not something that individuals know in their minds, but it is rather expressed in their interactions with other individuals. Culture is always someone’s perceptions of the world. According to Kramsch (2003), culture is a product of one's own and others' perceptions and can be thought of as a social symbolic construct.

The *term* ***civilization*** is similar to culture, but it refers mostly to cultures that have complex economic, governmental, and social systems. A civilization is technologically more advanced than other cultures of its time. A culture is any way of life, be it simple or complex, advanced or not advanced.

For hundreds of thousands of years, human beings have had at least some of the biological abilities on which culture depends. These abilities are to learn, to use language and other symbols, and to employ tools to organize their lives and adapt to their environments. Besides human beings, other animals also have such elements of culture as the ability to make and use tools and the ability to communicate. For example, elephants break off tree branches and wave them with their trunks to brush off flies. Dolphins communicate with one another by means of barks, whistles, and other sounds. But no other animals have developed language and other symbols as complex as those of human beings. Thus, no other animal possesses to the same extent the abilities to learn, to communicate, and to store, process, and use information.There are several important *characteristics of culture*. The main ones are these:

- A culture satisfies human needs in particular ways.
- A culture is acquired through learning.
- A culture is based on the use of symbols.
- A culture consists of individual traits and groups of traits called patterns.

Satisfying basic needs. All cultures serve to meet the basic needs shared by human beings. For example, every culture has methods of obtaining food and shelter. Every culture also has family relationships, economic and governmental systems, religious practices, and forms of artistic expression. Each culture shapes the way its members satisfy human needs. Human beings have to eat, but their culture teaches them what, when, and how to eat. For example, many British people eat smoked fish for breakfast, but many Americans prefer cold cereals. In the Midwestern United States, people generally eat dinner at 5 or 6 p.m. However, most Spaniards dine at 10 p.m. Many Turks prefer strong coffee with the grounds left in the cup, but most Australians filter out the grounds for a weaker brew. Many Japanese eat their meals from low tables while sitting on mats on the floor. Canadians usually sit on chairs at higher tables.

Learning**.** Culture is acquired through learning, not through biological inheritance. That is, no person is born with a culture. Children take on the culture in which they are raised through *enculturation*. Children learn much of their culture through imitation and experience. They also acquire culture through

observation, paying attention to what goes on around them and seeing examples of what their society considers right and wrong.

Using symbols. Cultural learning is based on the ability to use symbols. A symbol is something that stands for something else. The most important types of symbols are the words of a language. There is no obvious or necessary connection between a symbol and what it stands for. The English word *dog* is a symbol for a specific animal that barks. But other cultures have a different word that stands for the same animal-the French word *chien*, for example, or the Swahili word *mbwa.*

There are many other kinds of symbols besides the words in a language. A flag, for example, stands for a country. Colors have symbolic meaning, and the meanings vary from culture to culture. For Chinese people, white is a color of mourning. In Western societies, black is the color of mourning. White is a symbol of purity, and brides wear white. All human societies use symbols to create and maintain culture.

Forming patterns. Cultures are made up of individual elements called *cultural traits*. A group of related traits is a *cultural pattern*.

Cultural traits may be divided into material culture and nonmaterial culture. Material culture consists of all the things that are made by the members of a society. It includes such objects as buildings, jewelry, machines, and paintings. Nonmaterial culture refers to a society's behaviors and beliefs. A handshake, a marriage ceremony, and a system of justice are examples of nonmaterial culture. Cultural patterns may include numerous traits, both material and nonmaterial. The pattern for agriculture, for example, includes the time when crops are harvested (nonmaterial), the methods (nonmaterial) and machinery (material) used in harvesting, and the structures for storing the crops (material).

The Boundaries of Cultures

Every human society has a culture. People who grow up in the same nation can be said to share a national culture. But they may be part of other societies within the nation that have separate cultural traditions. Social scientists sometimes use the term *subculture* to describe variations within a culture. Social groups often develop some cultural patterns of their own that set them apart from the larger society they are part of. Subcultures may develop in businesses, ethnic groups, occupational groups, regional groups, religious groups, and other groups within a larger culture. For example, Amish people in Pennsylvania and several Midwestern States make up a subculture, as do members of a *teen-age street gang*.

Many cultural traits and patterns are limited to a particular culture, but many others are common to more than one culture. For example, cultures in the same part of the world often have similar patterns. A geographical region in which two or more cultures share cultural traits and patterns is called a culture area. Northern Europe is an example of a *culture area.*

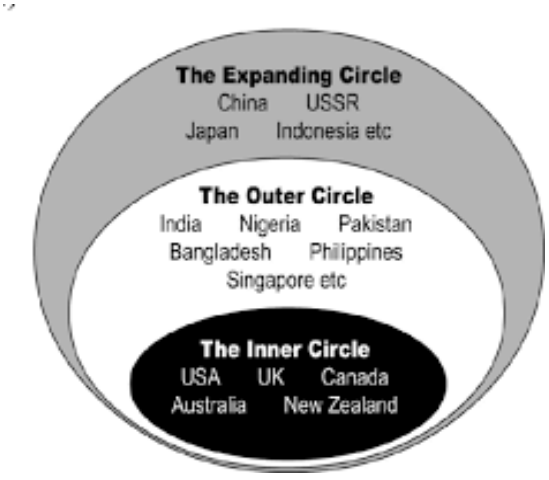
Some cultural traits have spread throughout the world. For example, some clothing, music, sports, and industrial processes are the same in many areas of the world. Cultural traditions that extend beyond national boundaries form what is called international culture. For example, countries that share an international culture include Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Their common cultural traditions include the English language and a heritage of British founders.

Culture and Society

Multiculturalism. Some societies-such as those of Tibetans in Tibet and various peoples of the Pacific Islands-have traditionally been associated with a single culture. Other societies-such as those of the United States and Canada-are multicultural societies. They include many distinct cultures. A shared cultural background makes people feel more comfortable with other people from their own culture. A multicultural society supports the view that many distinct cultures are good and desirable. The multicultural view encourages such diversity. Thus, in the United States, millions of people speak both English and the language of their own culture. They eat both American food (*apple pie and hamburgers*) and ethnic food. They celebrate both national holidays (Fourth of July and Thanksgiving) and their ethnic holidays. For example, many Mexican Americans celebrate *Mexican Independence Day on September 16*. In Chinese communities across the country, parades and other festivities mark the Chinese New Year.

The Culture Circles.

English has for many years been taught as a foreign language in many non-English speaking countries. According to Davies (2005), EFL in particular suggests that English used in the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand is taught around the world as a foreign language. The definition of "English-speaking" varies from country



to country. This is why Linguist Braj Kachru developed the three circles model in the mid-1980s. This allows us to measure the level of English speaking in each place, and how it has impacted the culture (and vice versa). The three categories are as follows:

The Inner Circle

Also the smallest (like a bullseye), an "Inner Circle" is a country where English is the native language of nearly the entire population. This includes: *The United States, the United Kingdom and Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, and Canada*. The important thing to note about the inner circle, is that these countries are proficient in English. They dictate the way the language is used and contribute changes over time.

The Outer Circle

This is actually the middle circle. This includes countries that widely use English as their second language. It is widely used in these places for school, trade, and business. These countries include India, Nigeria, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Kenya, Jamaica and Papua New Guinea, and Singapore. The outer circle challenges the norms adapted from inner-circle countries and builds upon the English language with its own flare.

The Expanding Circle

This is the largest circle of the bunch. It belongs to the countries where English has not culturally impacted the country, but its commonly spoken for business. Countries in this Circle include Russia, China, Japan, Brazil, and much of the rest of the world. The Expanding Circle depends on the other circles to set the standard for the language's use.

Models of Culture

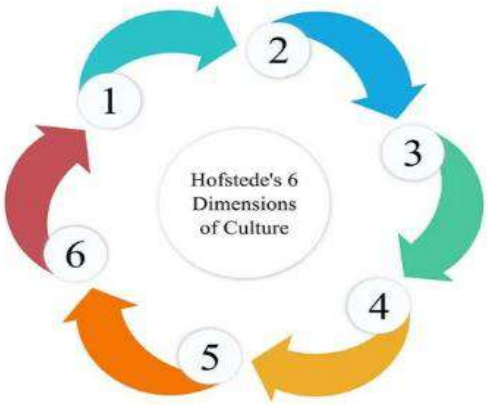
Geert Hofstede created a framework for intercultural communication called the cultural dimensions theory. It utilizes a structure drawn from component analysis to demonstrate how a society's culture affects its members' values and how these values connect to behavior.

By utilizing factor analysis to look at the outcomes of an international survey of employee values conducted by IBM between 1967 and 1973, Hofstede was able to create his original model. It has since been improved.

Individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance (strength of social hierarchy), and masculinity-femininity (task-orientation against person-orientation) were the original theory's four suggested categories along which cultural values may be analyzed.

Hofstede identified six categories that define culture:





- ***Power distance index***:

"The degree to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally" is how the power gap index is defined.

- ***Individualism vs. collectivism***:

The "degree to which people in a society are integrated into groups" is examined by this indicator. Individualistic societies tend to have weak relationships that frequently only connect a person to his or her immediate family.

- ***Uncertainty avoidance*:**

The uncertainty avoidance index is described as "a society's tolerance for ambiguity" and measures how willingly or unwillingly people accept or avoid an occurrence that is unexpected, uncharted, or inconsistent with the status quo. Societies with high scores on this index tend to have strict rules of conduct, regulations, and a general belief in absolute truth, or the idea that there is one single truth that governs everything and that everyone is aware of it.

- ***Masculinity vs. femininity*:**

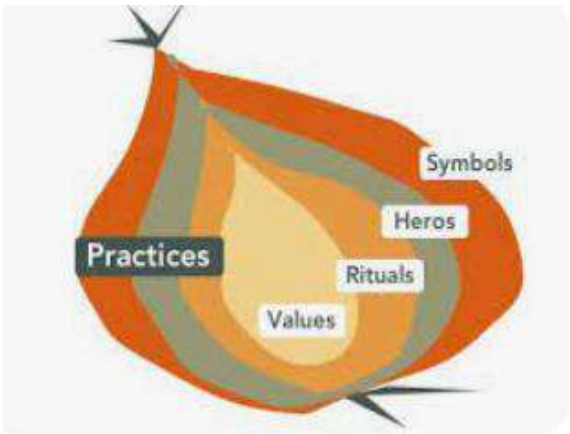
Masculinity is described in this category as "a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success." Its polar opposite stands for "a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak, and quality of life." Women tend to exhibit distinct ideals in their respective communities. They hold the same humble and compassionate ideals as men in feminine societies. Women are relatively forceful and competitive in society that values masculinity, but significantly less so than men. They still acknowledge the discrepancy between male and female values, in other words. In countries that lean heavily towards masculinity, this feature is typically seen as taboo.

- ***Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation*:**

This dimension associates the connection of the past with the current and future actions/challenges.

- ***Indulgence vs. restraint*:**

This dimension is the extent to which society standards permit citizens to pursue their human desires.



Hofstede's *cultural dimensions* are widely used to understand etiquette and facilitate communication across cultures in areas ranging from business to diplomacy.

There have been multiple models for the categorization of cultural content. Hofstede (2005) presents a model of four terms, called an onion model; *symbols, heroes, rituals and values*, that together cover the whole concept of culture. In this model, the terms are displayed in four layers, and where the outermost layer represents the most superficial appearances of culture and the innermost layer the deepest manifestations of culture. The outermost layer, symbols, are easily seen from the outside, easily developed and may, as well, easily disappear. *Words, gestures, objects that have a meaning in that society, ways to dress, flags and status symbols* all belong to this layer.

The next layer when moving inside is *heroes.* These are *persons who have attributes that are highly valued* in society. They may be alive or already passed, real or imaginary, but they nevertheless serve as models for behavior.

The next layer, rituals, includes the activities that are practically unnecessary but considered socially fundamental within a culture. This includes for example *ways of greeting and paying respect to others and other daily interaction*. Also, social and religious ceremonies are part of this category.

The innermost layer presents the deepest *beliefs of a society*. Values are universal habits to appreciate certain matters over others. For example, which one wins: *evil versus good, forbidden*
versus permitted and unnatural versus natural?

Byram (1993) presents a list that has traditionally been used as evaluation criteria for the cultural content in language textbooks. He does not put the

categories in any order to determine which ones are the most important. The categories are as follows:

- belief and behavior, including daily routines, morals, religious beliefs
- socialization and the life-cycle, including institutions like families and schools, and rites of passage.
- social identity and social groups, including social classes, regional identities and ethnic minorities.
- social interaction, including behavior in social interaction, differing levels of formality.
- stereotypes and national identity, including assumptions of what is typical in that culture and symbols of national identity (for example famous people and important monuments)
- national history, including historical and contemporary events and periods
- national geography, including geographic factors seen significant by members
- social and political institutions, including state institutions like health care, law and order, social security, that characterize the state.

In 1976, Edward T. Hall suggested that culture was similar to an iceberg. He proposed that culture has two components and that only about 10% of culture (external or surface culture) is easily visible; the majority, or 90%, of culture (internal or deep culture) is hidden below the surface.

When we see an iceberg, the portion which is visible above water is, in reality, only a small piece of a much larger whole. Similarly, people often think of culture as the numerous observable characteristics of a group that we can *see* with our eyes, be it their food, dances, music, arts, or greeting rituals. The reality, however, is that these are merely an external manifestation of the deeper and broader components of culture -- the complex ideas and deeply-held preferences and priorities known as attitudes and values.



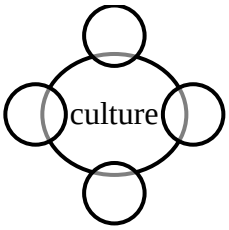
Examples of observable behaviors and practices (above the water): *Food, dress, music, visual art, drama, crafts, dance, literature, language, celebrations.*

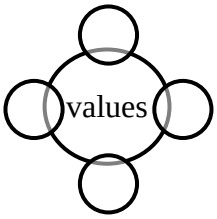
Examples of the 90% of culture which is out of conscious awareness (under the water): *Notions of modesty, concept of beauty, ideals governing child raising, relationship with animals, definition of sin, courtship practices, notions of leadership, concept of past and future, arrangement of physical space, concept of cleanliness, humor, attitudes toward elders, tempo of work, definition of obscenity, nature of friendship*.

Deep below the *"water line"* are a culture's core values. These are primarily learned ideas of what *is good, right, desirable, and acceptable,* as well as what is bad, wrong, undesirable, and unacceptable. In many cases, different cultural groups share the similar core values (such as "honesty", or "respect", or "family"), but these are often interpreted differently in different situations and incorporated in unique ways into specific attitudes we apply in daily situations. Ultimately, these internal forces become visible to the casual observer in the form of observable behaviors, such as the words we use, the way we act, the laws we enact, and the ways we communicate with each other. It is also important to note that the core values of a culture do not change quickly or easily. They are passed on from generation to generation by numerous institutions which surround us. These institutions of influence are powerful forces which guide us and teach us. Although an economic system may change, or a new methodology in school may be adopted, or new definitions of "common and normal" may be perceived on the television, there are innumerable forces that continue to mold a culture as they have in the past. So, like an iceberg, there are things that we can see and describe easily... but there are also many deeply rooted ideas that we can only understand by analyzing values, studying institutions, and in many cases, reflecting on our own core values.



I. a). Elaborate *a Mind Map* pointing out all the words that belong to: *culture and value*s.





b) Highlight the importance of culture in the formation of people's demeanour and attitudes.

II. Explain and examine the following terms:

pragmatic	sponsorship.	international culture	cultural pattern
difference	conservatism	inner-city.	diversity
consensus	kilts pluralism.	ethnic	.insular grassroots
nostalgia.	Modernization	cultural pattern	culture area
myth	dependency.	nonconformist	evolution
enterprise	community	cultural traits	subculture
hierarchies.	Homogeneous.	inclusive apathetic	shared
enculturation	cultural background	multilingualism	multiculturalism

III. Define the concept of *culture*

IV. Look at the sentences below and explain the meanings of the words in bold.

a) We need to recognize and welcome **cultural diversit**y.
b) **Cultural awareness** begins with self-awareness.
c) We shouldn't **make assumptions** about other people.
d) It's wrong to **make judgements** about people until we understand their culture.
e) We need **empathy** if we are going to understand the other person.
f) Never forget that people new to living in your culture **face challenges** we can only imagine.
g) You don't have **to agree with the views of others**, but always respect them.
h) When we learn **to embrace the differences** between us, we can work well together.
i) Keeping language simple helps prevent **the exclusion of others**.
j) It's a mistake to try **to impose one culture onto another**

V. Draw a Venn Diagram explaining the relationship between *civilization and culture*. Are they synonyms?

VI. Identify 5 cultural symbols and explain the connection they stand for.

VII. Describe the subculture of a teen-age street gang.

VIII. Explain the similarity between culture and an iceberg? Analyze the Models of Culture created by different researchers.

IX. Answer the following:

- How would you define culture?
- Overall, do you feel like people appreciate, dislike, or ignore your culture?
- What behaviors reflect our culture, and how are they learned and shared?
- What important factors (social, religious, and economic) influence our culture?
- What are some important traditions that are unique to our country?
- What ideals and values bind our culture together?
- How do children learn culture?
- What symbols are prevalent in our culture?
- Is there any part of your culture that embarrasses you?
- If a tourist came to visit you in your native country, what cultural landmarks would you show them?
- What role does food play in your culture?
- Have you ever experienced culture shock? How can a person get over culture shock?
- What role does music play in your culture?
- Can you think of any cultural traditions that young people no longer follow?
- How can people from different cultures communicate well with each other?
- If aliens from outer space came to visit, how would you describe your culture to them?
- Have any important cultural sites or relics from you culture been damaged or destroyed? If so, what happened?
- Would your parents or grandparents approve of you marrying someone from a different culture?
- Are older generations more connected to culture than younger generations?
- How can young people keep cultural traditions alive?
- What does multiculturalism mean?
- Does dancing play a significant role in your culture?
- What is cultural awareness and why is it important?

- Do you think that cultural awareness is an important part of personal growth?
- What are your own experiences of working or living alongside people from different cultures?
- Give examples of nonmaterial culture.
- What is the difference between a single culture society and a multicultural society?
- How does English culturally impact the country?
- What is the difference between multilingualism and multiculturalism?
- How can cultural awareness help us in business / foreign relations / diplomacy / etc.

IX. Explain the relation between language and culture.

X. Mention some of the researchers' definition of culture.

XI. Choose aspects of another culture and write down what they might be like. You should write down, the first thing that you think of in each case:

What do you think of first when you hear about…

►► *food in Japan*
►► *schools in Nepal*
►► *houses in New Zealand*
►► *music in Turkey*
►► *festivals in India*

XII. Think about which model of culture best reflects your own understanding of culture. In groups (according to the model chosen), draw your own version of your selected model, with examples for each section of the model

XIII.

a) Describe a few ways your culture has changed over time.
b) Describe a few behaviors that are considered rude in your culture.
c) Describe an important contribution your culture has made to the world.



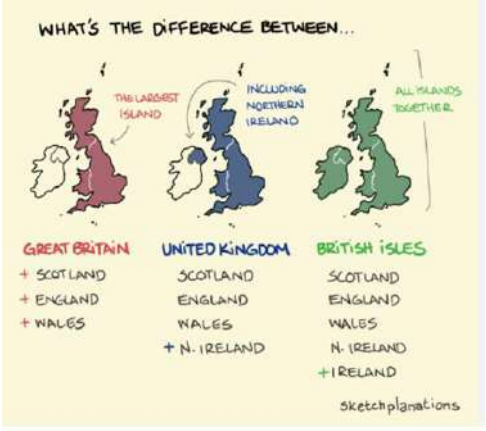
II. THE UNITED KINGDOM

Geography of Great Britain



It is necessary to clarify basic terms with regard to the geography of Great Britain in order to avoid referring to it incorrectly as the United Kingdom or the British Isles. The following introduction aims at explaining these expressions: Great Britain is a geographical expression. "The name *"Britain*" comes from the word 'Pretani', the Greco-Roman word for the inhabitants of Britain. The Romans mispronounced the word and called the island 'Britannia'"

The island is made up of *England, Scotland and Wales*. In everyday speech, Britain refers to the UK. Great Britain is the biggest of the group of islands, which lie between the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean; it is the largest island in Europe and the eighth largest in the world. Great Britain is surrounded by over one thousand smaller islands and islets within the Atlantic Ocean, North Sea, Irish Sea, Celtic Sea, and the English Channel. "It is separated from France and continental Europe by a 34 km gap. However, they are physically connected to each other by the Channel Tunnel, the longest undersea tunnel in the world." Also, The North Channel, Irish Sea, St George's Channel and Celtic Sea separate the island from the island of Ireland to its west.



What's the Difference Between Great Britain and the United Kingdom**?** *The names* Great Britain *and* United Kingdom *are often used interchangeably.* However, they are not actually synonymous. The reason for the two names, and the difference between them, has to do with the expansive history of the British Isles.

The British Isles are a group of islands off the northwestern coast of Europe. The largest of these islands are

Britain and Ireland. (Smaller ones include the Isle of Wight.) In the Middle Ages, the name *Britain* was also applied to a small part of France now known as Brittany. As a result, *Great Britain* came into use to refer specifically to the island. However, that name had no official significance until 1707, when the island's rival kingdoms of England and Scotland were united as the Kingdom of Great Britain.



Ireland, meanwhile, had effectively been an English colony since the 12th century, and after the emergence of Great Britain, it remained under the influence of the British crown. In 1801 it formally joined with Great Britain as a single political entity, which became known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland—or the United Kingdom for short. However, the union lasted only until 1922, when Ireland (with the exception of six counties in the north) seceded. Ireland soon became a sovereign republic, and its former partner took on the official name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

British Political System

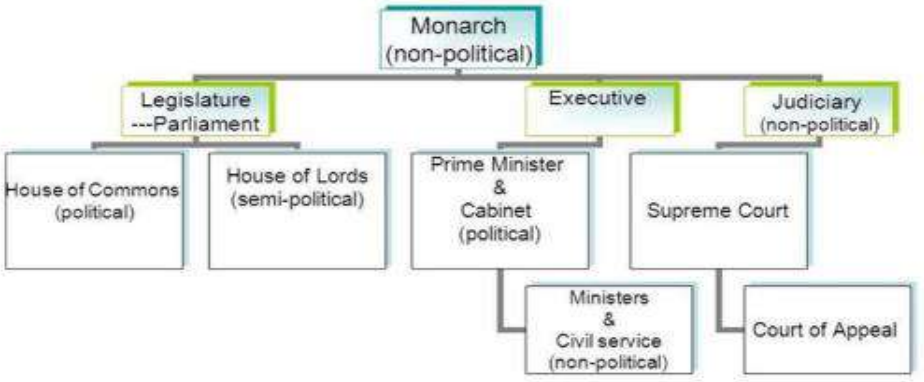
The British political system is headed by a monarchy but essentially the powers of the monarch as head of state - currently King Charles III - are ceremonial. The most important practical power is the choice of the Member of Parliament to form a government, but the monarch follows the convention that this opportunity is granted to the leader of the political party with the most seats in the House of Commons or who stands the best chance of commanding a majority in a vote of confidence in the Commons.

Traditionally the choice of monarch has been determined on the hereditary and primogeniture principles which means that the oldest male child of a monarch was the next in line to the throne.

Under the terms of the Act of Settlement of 1701, the monarch and the monarch's spouse could not be Catholics because the UK monarch is also the Head of the Church of England. In 2015, the primogeniture principle was abolished, so that the next in line can now be a female eldest child, and the monarch can marry a Catholic but not himself or herself be one.

In classical political theory, there are *three arms of the state*:

1. *The executive* - the Ministers who run the country and propose new laws
2. *The legislature* - the elected body that passes new laws
3. *The judiciary* - the judges and the courts who ensure that everyone obeys the laws.



In the political system of the United States, the constitution provides that there must be a strict division of powers of these three arms of the state, so that no individual can be a member of more than one. So, for example, the President is not and cannot be a member of the Congress. This concept is called *'separation of powers'*, a term coined by the French political, enlightenment thinker Montesquieu. This is not the case in the UK where all Ministers in the government are members of the legislature and one individual, the Lord Chancellor, is actually a member of all three arms.

The U.K. Parliament.

The British Parliament - like that of most larger countries - is bicameral, that is there are two houses or chambers. One tends to find unicameral legislatures in smaller nations such as Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Greece, Israel and New Zealand, although China and Iran are two larger nations with a single legislative chamber (but neither of these countries is a democracy).



The British Parliament is often called *Westminster* because it is housed in a distinguished building in central London called

the Palace of Westminster which stands out because of the clock tower at the south end (this is the *Elizabeth Towe*r and it houses *Big Ben*) and the tower with a flag at the other end (this is the *Victoria Tower*). Although this is a grand building, it is in an appalling state of repair and it is planned that in 2025 Parliament will move out of the building for a £3.5 billion refurbishment programme lasting an estinated six years. The House of Commons will move to *Richmond House* and the House of Lords will relocate to the *Queen Elizabeth II conference centre.*

The House of Commons

This is the lower chamber but the one with the most authority. The Commons are chaired by the Speaker. Unlike the Speaker in the US House of Representatives, the post is non-political and indeed, by convention, the political parties do not contest the Parliamentary constituency held by the Speaker.

The House of Commons currently comprises *650 Members of Parliament* or MPs (the number varies slightly from time to time to reflect population change). This is a large legislature by international standards. For instance, the House of Representatives in the USA has 435 seats but, of course, each of the 50 US states has its own legislature. Before the General Election of 2010, the Conservative Party said that it wished to reduce the number of Commons seats by around 10% (65 seats) and the Liberal Democrats said that the Commons should be reduced by 150 MPs.

Each member in the House of Commons represents a geographical ***constituency.*** Typically a constituency would have around 60,000-80,000 voters, depending mainly on whether it is an urban or rural constituency. The largest constituency in the country is the Isle of Wight with around 110,000 electors, while the smallest is Na h-Eileanan an Iar (formerly known as the Western Isles) with an electorate of only arouind 22,000. The Coalition Government of 2010-2015 intended to make the size of constituencies more equal in terms of electors, but so far the legislation has not been implemented.

Every citizen aged 18 or over can vote once in the constituency in which they live. Voting is not compulsory (as it is in Australia). In the last General Election of May 2015, 66.1% of the electorate actually voted. Most democratic countries use a method of election called ***proportional representation*** (PR) which means that there is a reasonable correlation between the percentage of votes cast for a particular political party and the

number of seats or representatives won by that party. However, much of the Anglo-Saxon world - the USA, Canada, and the UK but not Australia or New Zealand - uses a method of election called the simple majority system or '***first past the post***' (FPTP).

In this system, the country is divided into a number of constituencies each with a single member and the party that wins the largest number of votes in each constituency wins that constituency regardless of the proportion of the vote secured. The simple majority system of election tends to under-represent less successful political parties and to maximise the chance of the most popular political party winning a majority of seats nationwide even if it does not win a majority of the votes nationwide.

The House of Lords

This is the *upper chamber* but the one with less authority. Its main roles are to revise legislation and keep a check on government by scrutinising its activities. Since 1911, its power to block "money bills" is limited to one month and its power to block other bills is limited to one session, so ultimately it cannot block the will of the House of Commons. Furthermore, since 1945, there has been the Salisbury Convention that the House of Lords will not oppose a measure that was specifically mentioned in the last election manifesto of the political party forming the Government.

The House of Lords is an utterly bizarre institution that has no parallel anywhere in the democratic world. The explanation for the unusual nature of the Lords goes back to the beginning of this essay: the British political system has evolved very slowly and peacefully and it is not totally logical or democratic.

There is no fixed number of members in the House of Lords and the number fluctuates because of deaths, retirements and new appointments, but currently there are almost 800 members - many more than in the House of Commons, more than the combined houses of the American Congress or the Indian Parliament (although both of these nations have a federal system), and the second biggest legislative body in the world (after the Chinese National People's Congress which is effectively a rubber-stamping body).

Historically most members of the House of Lords have been what we called hereditary peers. This meant that years ago a king or queen nominated a member of the aristocracy to be a member of the House and, since then, the right to sit in the House has passed through the family from generation to generation. Clearly this is totally undemocratic and the last Labour

Government abolished the right of all but 92 of these hereditary peers to sit in the House.

Almost all the other members of today's House of Lords are what we call life peers. This means that they have been chosen by the King, on the advice of the Government, to sit in the House for as long as they live, but afterwards no member of their family has the right to sit in the House. Almost 200 are former Members of Parliament. Others are distinguished figures in fields such as education, health and social policy.

A small number of other members - 26 - are archbishops and bishops of the Church of England. The archbishops of Canterbury and York and the bishops of London, Durham and Winchester automatically take seats in the Lords, while the further 21 seats are allocated on the basis of length of service. Iran is the only other country in the world that provides automatic seats for senior religious figures in its legislature.

The Legislative Process

In the British political system, almost all legislation is proposed by the Government and much of it comes from promises made in the manifesto of the relevant political party at the last election. At the beginning of each annual session of the Parliament, the main Bills to be considered are announced by the King in a speech opening that year's session of Parliament. All legislation has to be approved by both Houses of Parliament.

In each House of Parliament, a proposed piece of legislation - called a Bill - goes through different stages.

• ***First Reading*** - the Bill is introduced with simply a reading by a Minister of the long title of the Bill • Second Reading - the general principles of the Bill are debated by all the members of the House and a formal vote is taken

• ***Committee Stage*** - each clause and schedule of the Bill, plus amendments to them and any new clauses or schedules, is examined in detail, in the Commons by a small, specially chosen group of members meeting as Public Bill Committee or in the Lords by the members as a whole on the floor of the House

• ***Report Stage*** - the changes made to the Bill in the Committee are reported to and debated by the whole House which is invited to consider the Bill as a whole, approve the changes by the Committee, and consider any further proposed changes that might be suggested

• ***Third Reading*** - the final version of the Bill is considered by the whole House in a short debate (in the Commons without the facility for further amendments)

• ***Royal Assent*** - the Crown gives assent to the Bill which then becomes an Act, the provisions becoming law either immediately or at a date specified in the Act or at a date specified by what is called a Commencement Order

Political Parties

Today there are four major political parties in the British parliamentary system:

• **The Conservative Party** (frequently called the Tories) - the centre-Right party, currently led by Boris Johnson, which since 2010 has been in Government either in coalition (2010-2015) or alone (since 2015). The Conservatives won 365 seats (with 43.6% of the vote) – a gain of 47 seats and the party's best result since 1987. This gives the party an overall majority of 80 in the Housae of Commons.

• **The Labour Party** - the centre-Left party, (temporarily) led by Jeremy Corbyn, which was last in Government from 1997 to 2010. Labour won 203 seats (with 32.2% of the votes) – a loss of 43 seats and the party's worst result since 1935.

• **The Scottish National Party** - the party supporting Scottish independence, which is led by Nicola Sturgeon. The SNP won 48 seats (with 3.9% of the vote) – a gain of 13 seats out of a total contested of 59.

• **The Liberal Democrat Party** (known as the Lib Dems) - the centrist, libertarian party, (temporarily) led by Jo Swinson, which was the junior member of the Coalition Government of 2010-2015. The Lib Dems won 11 seats (with 11.5% of the votes) – one seat down on 2017 and with the loss of the seat of its leader Jo Swinson.

In recent years, Britain has seen the rise and fall of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and the Brexit Party, both led by Nigel Farage. In the last General Election, it did not contest seats held by the Conservative Party and failed to win any of the seats which it did contest.

In addition to these parties, there are some much smaller UK parties (notably the Green Party) and some parties which operate specifically in Wales (Plaid Cymru) or Northern Ireland (such as the Democratic Unionist Party for the loyalistsand Sinn Fein for the nationalists).

Each political party chooses its leader in a different way, but all involve all the Members of Parliament of the party and all the individual members of that party. By convention, the leader of the political party with the largest number of members in the House of Commons becomes the Prime Minster (formally at the invitation of the Queen).

The U.K. Government

All Government Ministers have to be a member of either the House of Commons (most of them) or the House of Lords (the remainder of them) and every Government Department will have at least one Minister in the Lords, so that the Department can speak in either House as necessary. The number of Ministers varies from administration to administration, but typically there will be around 120, the 20 or so most senior being Cabinet Ministers. The Ministerial and Other Salaries Act, passed in 1975, limits prime ministers to 109 ministerial salaries being paid at any one time with a maximum of 95 ministers in the House of Commons. All Ministers are subject to the Ministerial Code which sets out they should behave in fulfilment of their duties.

The Prime Minister



The UK does not have a President. Constitutionally the head of state is the monarch who is a hereditary member of the Royal Family. However, the monarch has very few formal powers and stays above party politics. He or she receives a weekly oral report from the Prime Minister, a tradition which began with King George I in 1714 because this German had struggled to follow the English deliberations of his Cabinet.

Therefore, in practice, the most important person in the British political system is the Prime Minister. The first modern Prime Minister was Sir Robert Walpole who served from 1721-1742, so the current PM is **Rishi Sunak** the 56th.

In theory, the Prime Minister simply choses the ministers who run Government departments and chairs the ***Cabinet*** **-** *the collection of the most senior of those Ministers.* In practice, however, the Prime Minister is a very

powerful figure and increasingly has been behaving much like a president in other political systems, especially in the area of foreign policy.

The official residence of the Prime Minister is at 10 Downing Street in central London and the country residence of the Prime Minister is at Chequers in Buckinghamshire.

The U.K. Judiciary

The British judicial branch is extremely complex. Unlike most countries which operate a single system of law, the UK operates three separate legal systems: one for England and Wales, one for Scotland, and one for Northern Ireland. Currently Wales is slowly developing a fourth jurisdiction. Although bound by similar principles, these systems differ in form and the manner of operation.

The Supreme Court hears civil cases from all parts of the UK and criminal cases from England, Wales and Northern Ireland, so it is the ultimate court of appeal in all legal matters other than criminal cases in Scotland. The court also hears 'devolution' issues: matters which raise questions of constitutional importance about the exercise of devolved powers by the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

In most cases, there is no automatic right of appeal to the Supreme Court. Generally cases are appealed from a lower court where there is sufficient uncertainty about how the law should be applied and what precedent the lower courts should follow in future.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court shares its building and administrative functions with the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The Judicial Committee is the highest court of appeal for civil and criminal cases for about 30 Commonwealth countries (such as Jamaica) and British overseas territories, the crown dependencies, and military sovereign base areas.

The UK does not have its own Bill of Rights. However, since 1951 it has been a signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights (part of the Council of Europe) and since 1966 it has allowed its citizens the right of individual petition enabling them to take the government to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg. The last Labour Government incorporated the provisions of the European Convention into UK domestic

law in 2000, so that citizens can now seek to have the provisions enforced in domestic courts.

Finally, so long as the UK remains a member of the European Union, in respect of the application of European Union law in the UK, matters are subject to appeal to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) which is located in Luxembourg.

British Constitution and the Royal Family

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a constitutional monarchy. The monarch is the Head of the State and reigns with the support of Parliament. The sovereign is officially the head of all 3 branches of the constitution: Parliament that makes law, Government that executes law and puts them into effect, and Law Courts that interpret laws. However, it has little direct power. Parliament is divided into:

1. **The House of Commons**: members of parliament (MP) elected in 650 constituencies. The **Prime Minister**, the head of the government is also an MP. Functions of the Prime Minister: leading the majority party, running the government, appointing Cabinet ministers and other ministers, representing the nation in political matters. He is advised by **the Cabinet**. Since the 18th century the cabinet has been increasingly responsible for deciding policies and controlling, coordinating government administration. It meets in private and its discussions are secret. The Cabinet, with about 20 members, acts as 'one body' with collective responsibility.

2. The House of Lords: members are not elected and do not get salary; 70% of them are 'hereditary peers' that is their fathers were peers before them; 30% of them are 'life peers' whom the King appointed.

The sovereigns' duties include: opening and closing Parliament, approving the appointment of the Prime Minister, giving her Royal Assent to bills, giving hours such as peerages, knighthoods and medals, Head of the Commonwealth, Head of the Church of England, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. The official name of the current Sovereign is King Charles III, the son of Elizabeth II.

Elizabeth II, from the House of Windsor, came to the throne in 1952 after her father, George VI died. In 2015 she surpassed Victoria, her great-great grandmother, to become the longest-reigning monarch in British history. She died in 2022.

Etiquette (e.g., Beaumont Etiquette) is an essential part of the Royal family's everyday life. They represent themselves all the time thus the proper manner and speech is highly expected from them. Training begins when members of the royal family are very young. A few important rules:

- Children must play outside on a daily basis: children in the royal family follow a very strict schedule that includes at least one session of outdoor playtime a day.
- They must dress appropriately at all times: to dress modestly and smartly for all occasions. "Young male members of the royal family must only wear shorts until they reach the age of eight. Royal women, meanwhile, should not wear tights and always wear hats to formal events unless it's after 6pm, at which point, tiaras are required. Coats must stay on in public and bright nail polish should be avoided. Additionally, skirts should not be above the knee. Royal family members are also all reportedly always required to take a black outfit with them when travelling overseas in case of a death."
- They must not take selfies – Meghan Markle complained about it in 2017.
- They cannot give autographs.
- They avoid certain foods: members of the royal family should not eat shellfish when they go out in order to avoid food poisoning.
- They must sit in a certain way: "royal women must not sit with their legs crossed at the knee. Instead, they are advised to keep their knees together and cross their ankles, a pose known as "the duchess slant" given how the Duchess of Cambridge often sits like this in public with her legs slightly slanted to one side."
- No politics allowed: Members of the royal family are not allowed to vote or even publicly express their opinion on political matters.



- Two heirs cannot fly together: in case something tragic were to happen. Once Prince George (who is third in line to the throne after Prince Charles and Prince William) turns 12, he will have to fly separately from his father, Prince William.

- Royal wedding bouquets contain myrtle. This tradition started with Queen Victoria and continued with the Duchess of Cambridge's marriage in 2011. This flower symbolizes good luck in love and marriage.

A few current happenings in the British Royal family:

- 2019: Prince Andrew, Queen Elizabeth's second son and the ex-husband of Sarah Ferguson (the Duchess of York) served as the UK's trade envoy from 2001 through 2011, when he stepped down due to mounting criticism over some of his personal relationships. Namely, he was close friends with American financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Virginia Roberts, accused Epstein of forcing her to have sex with the prince when she was just 17 years old, back in 2001. Prince Andrew stepped back from his royal duties altogether in 2019.
- 2020: Harry and Markle announced they become '*senior' members of the Royal Family:* work and live in America to become financially independent, while continuing to fully support Her Majesty.
- 9 April 2021: Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh died.

The King marked his 75th birthday by launching the Coronation Food Project, which aims to tackle food poverty and waste.

As was the case for his mother, Elizabeth II, he also has an "official birthday", in June, celebrated with the Trooping the Colour ceremony.

- Prince Charles was crowned King Charles III at Westminster Abbey in May 2023 alongside his wife, Queen Camilla.

What does the King do?

- The King is the UK head of state, but his powers are largely symbolic and ceremonial, and he remains politically neutral.
- He receives daily dispatches from the government in a red leather box, including briefings ahead of important meetings, or documents needing his signature.
- ***Rishi Sunak*** is the second prime minister of King Charles's reign

The King also has a number of official *parliamentary roles*:



- *Appointing a government* - the leader of the party that wins a general election is usually called to ***Buckingham Palace***, where they are invited to form a government. The King also formally dissolves the government before a general election.
- *State Opening and the King's Speech* - the King begins the parliamentary year with the State Opening ceremony, where he sets out the government's plans in a speech delivered from the throne in the House of Lords.
- *Royal Assent* - when a piece of legislation is passed through Parliament, it must be formally approved by the King in order to become law. The last time Royal Assent was refused was in 1708.In addition, the monarch leads the annual Remembrance event in November at the Cenotaph in London.

Great Britain in the twentieth century

King George *V (1910–1936),* ***George VI*** *(1936–1952) and* ***Queen Elizabeth*** **II** (1952–2022) followed each other on the British throne in the twentieth century. Their rule had been challenged by the World Wars, Great Depression and the Cold War. Great Britain's participation in the world wars had had a great impact on its imperial power and the global map. After WWI, it became clear that Britain could no longer afford an empire; had no right to rule people who did not want to be ruled by Britain, and the Royal Navy was not strong enough to protect all the Empire all over the world:

- 1916–1998 In the years after the Easter Rising of 1916 nationalists in Ireland (people who wished to have independence) fought the Irish War of Independence against British forces and police in Ireland.

- 1919 The Treaty of Versailles promoted ‘self-determination’, or the right to rule yourself. It gave Germany’s colonies, which included land in Africa and China, as ‘mandates’ for Britain and France to administer.
- 1919–1935 There was going on a strong independence movement in India.
- 1924 The British Empire Exhibition at Wembley Stadium showcased the strength and power of the empire. However, in Britain at this time people became increasingly critical of imperialism.
- 1926 The British government agreed the Balfour Declaration – that Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa were completely independent countries, “freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.”
- 1947 Declaration of Indian Independence and the partitioning of India and Pakistan.
- 1948 British withdrawal from Palestine.
- 1952 Mau Mau Rebellion broke out in opposition to white British colonial rule in Kenya.
- 1956–1966 Sudan gained independence, closely followed the next year by Ghana and other British colonies throughout the African mainland.
- 1972 Asians expelled from Uganda. 1990 Namibia achieved independence.
- 1997 Hong Kong was handed back to China.

British Commonwealth of Nations (1931–49)/
Commonwealth of Nations (present)

King Charles III is the current monarch and + of the UK and of 14 other independent countries. These 15 countries are today referred to as "Commonwealth realms". *(As of 2024, there are 15 Commonwealth realms: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and the United Kingdom.).* It is a free association of sovereign states comprising the United Kingdom and a number of its former dependencies who have chosen to maintain ties of friendship and practical cooperation and who acknowledge the British monarch as symbolic head of their association. The modern Commonwealth of Nations was born in 1949. King George VI was the first Head of the Commonwealth, and Queen Elizabeth II became Head

when he died. But the British king or queen is not automatically Head of the Commonwealth. Commonwealth member countries choose who becomes Head of the Commonwealth. It comprises 53 countries (31 500 000 km2), across all continents with 2.3 billion people (almost a third of the world population).

Society and Culture in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s

For a period of 30 years after the WWII, unemployment was low, wages increased by 20 percent and living standards steadily improved. Although Britain prospered after 1945, compared with other countries of the European Economic Community, it merited the nickname "the sick man of Europe." The Sixties showed consumption and hedonism – through America, Elvis Presley's Rock and Roll reached England. The Beatles from Liverpool debuted in the same decade. Other leading British bands of the 1960s and 1970s included the Rolling Stones, the Who, the Kinks, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin and Roxy Music. Solo British artists included the guitarist Eric Clapton and Dusty Springfield. The most significant form of cultural protest in the second half of the 1970s was the load and aggressive punk music. Its representatives were The Sex Pistols and the Clash. "London was a particularly significant cultural center during the 1960s; the city of youth culture was referred to as "Swinging London."

In addition to music, British fashion attained international fame when the miniskirt was invented, and "British model, *Twiggy be*came the first supermodel with an impact on culture far beyond just wearing clothes. The television show, *The Avengers* and the James Bond films [based on the novels of the 20th-century English writer Ian Fleming] added to the image of a youthful, exciting culture. England even won the World Cup, soccer's greatest prize, in 1966." Britain indeed was becoming more permissive and less judgmental society. For instance, abortion and homosexuality were relaxed in 1967; theatre sponsorship ended in 1968. Buddhism and Maoism were introduced to Britain as well. Furthermore, Britain underwent the second wave of feminism. As a result, the 1970 bill forbade pay discrimination against women. The Australian-born Germaine Greer became one of Britain's as well as and the world's leading feminist intellectuals. Her *The Female Eunuch* (1970) became a best seller, in which she reflected on a broad range of social phenomena, from misogyny to the suppression of women's sexuality to constricting bras. The *Female Eunuch* was a powerful

consciousness-raising text, drawing many women to feminism. Finally, Britain also participated in the Green and Anti-Nuclear Movements of the 1980s.

Britain in the 1990s

The 1990s Britain also experienced interesting or shocking happenings both in history and in culture. A few examples:

- *1994 – First women priests* are ordained by the Church of England. It was regarded a controversial step: welcomed by most of the church but rejected by traditionalists.
- *1994 – English Channel* tunnel ("Chunnel"): in 1994, a nineteenth-century plan had been finally realized, and a tunnel under the English Channel, the world's longest undersea tunnel opened. It links France and Britain by high-speed rail. Opposed to the expectations, the tunnel has not enhanced great economic development in Kent, and despite a few illegal immigrants to Britain, it has not endangered British national security. "Each day, about 30,000 people, 6,000 cars and 3,500 trucks journey through the Chunnel on passenger, shuttle and freight trains."
- *1997 – Diana, Princess of Wales*, had tragically died in a car crash in France. The first Harry Potter book was published.
- *10 April 1998* – The Troubles, a long period of ethno-nationalist conflict in Northern Ireland ended, that lasted about 30 years from the late 1960s to the late 1990s, but whose history dated back to the Easter Uprising of 1916. The Good Friday Agreement, among others, signed by PM *Tony Blair* (1997-2007) was an agreement between Northern Ireland's nationalists and unionists – as a result of British government negotiations and US pressure on Sinn Féin, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army. It set out plans for devolved government and provided for the early release of terrorist prisoners and the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons.
- *1999 – Britain* decides not to join the European Single Currency.
- *The British popular culture* continued flourishing with Oasis, Blur, 'Parklife,' Billy Joel, The Spice Girls, Radiohead and Westlife.

Contemporary historical, cultural and other events in Great Britain

Multicultural and religious issues "By the start of the 21st century the greatest concern among Britons and British authorities was caused by Britain's growing Muslim communities, mostly immigrants from Pakistan and India. Radical Islamic organizers had become influential in some British Muslim communities. The strength of radical Islam in London led some to dub it 'Londonistan,' although others argued the phenomenon, though real was exaggerated. In addition to extra-European issues such as the Palestinian situation, radical Muslim organizations fed on resentment of British racism and some immigrants' fear of being assimilated. What brought the relationship of the Muslim community to the larger society to the top of the agenda was the Rushdie affair." British writer Salman Rushdie, an immigrant from India, wrote a novel called The Satanic Verses (1988), which many Muslims took to be "blasphemous and insulting throughout the Muslim world." Muslim outrage was expressed mainly through massive demonstrations and demands that Penguin Books withdraw the novel."

(Terrorist) Attacks in Great Britain

After the Irish Republican Army (IRA) carried out a campaign of bombing and sabotage against the civil, economic, and military infrastructure of Britain in the second half of the twentieth century, the country has been forced to face (terrorist) attacks in the twenty-first century as well. A few examples from the 2000s, 2010s and 2020s:

- *20 September 2000*: The IRA fired an RPG-22 rocket launcher at the MI6 headquarters in London.
- *July 2005:* 7/7 central London bombings conducted by four separate Islamist extremist suicide bombers, which targeted civilians using the public transport system during the morning rush hour. Three bombs were detonated on three separate trains on *the London Underground* and one on a double-decker bus. As well as the suicide bombers, 52 other people were killed and around 700 more were injured. It was the UK's worst terrorist incident since the 1988 Lockerbie bombing and the first Islamist suicide attack in the country.
- *14 May, 2010*: MP Stephen Timms was stabbed during his constituency surgery by a British Islamic extremist and first Al-Qaeda sympathiser.

- *2016, 16 June:* Murder of Jo Cox – Thomas Mair, a 52-year-old white nationalist, shot and stabbed the MP Jo Cox outside a surgery in West Yorkshire, and severely wounded a passer-by who came to her aid. The attack was treated as an act of terrorism. As the judge said, "There is no doubt that this murder was done for the purpose of advancing a political, racial and ideological cause namely that of violent white supremacism and exclusive nationalism most associated with Nazism and its modern forms."
- *22 March 2017: 2017 Westminster attack – Khalid Masood*, a 52-year-old Islamist, drove a car into pedestrians on Westminster Bridge, killing four and injuring almost fifty people. He ran into the grounds of the Palace of Westminster and fatally stabbed a police officer, before being shot dead by police.
- *22 May, 2017: Manchester Arena bombing* – An Islamist suicide bomber blew himself up at Manchester Arena as people were leaving a concert, killing 22 and injuring 139. It became the deadliest terrorist attack in Britain since the 7/7 London bombings in 2005.300
- *3 June 2017: 2017 London Bridge attack* – Three Islamists drove a van into pedestrians on London bridge before stabbing people in and around pubs in nearby Borough Market. Eight people were killed and at least 48 wounded. The attackers were shot dead by police eight minutes after the incident was reported.
- *29 November 2019: 2019 London Bridge stabbing* - Two people were killed in the attack and three were left injured. The attacker, 28-year-old Usman Khan, was shot dead by police.
- *2 February 2020: 2020 Streatham stabbing* - Sudesh Amman, wearing a fake suicide vest similar to the one used in the 2019 London Bridge stabbing, was shot dead by armed police after stabbing and injuring two people in Lambeth Borough of Streatham.
- *20 June 2020: 2020 Reading stabbings* - Khairi Saadallah, shouting "Allahu Akbar", attacked two groups of people socialising in a public park in the centre of Reading, killing 3 and injuring 3 others.

Scottish Independence Referendum (18 September 2014)

On 18 September 2014, Scotland hold ***a referendum*** to make decision about its future within the UK. The question was: Should Scotland be an independent country? Reasons for Scottish independence are: a nation ought

to govern itself regardless of other considerations (nationalist argument), the country could do better on its own as a small European country (economic argument), to make its own decisions about social policy like migration. Finally, Scotland voted "No." When the results were announced, Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond (2007–2014) called for unity and urged the unionist parties to deliver on more powers, and David Cameron (British PM 2010-2016) said he was delighted the UK would remain together." On 13 October 2014, the parties published proposals on further devolution for Scotland. In 2016, Nicola Sturgeon, the new First Minister of Scotland, hinted the possibility of holding a second referendum, but in 2019, Boris Johnson, British Prime Minister refused on the grounds that the 2014 referendum was a "once in a generation opportunity." However, in March 2021, Sturgeon told Johnson that a second independence referendum was "a matter of when – not if" and it is about to happen by autumn 2023."

Brexit (2016–2020) The term 'Brexit' (British + exit) refers to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland leaving the European Union on 31 January 2020. The EU is an economic and political union involving 28 European countries. It allows free trade and free movement of people, to live and work in whichever country they choose. The UK joined it in 1973 (when it was known as the European Economic Community). UK is the first member state who withdrew from the EU.

Reasons for Brexit

- *sovereignty* – to be able to make its own decision related to the country
- *immigration* – in 2019 there were approximately 6.2 million people with non-British nationality living in the UK, and 9.5 million people who were born abroad. It led to the loss of employment and employment opportunity
- *economic crisis of Syria and Iran*
- *increased terrorism and low economic growth*. As a consequence, a public vote/referendum was held on 23 June 2016, to decide whether the UK should leave or remain. Leave won by 52% to 48%. The referendum turnout was very high at 72%, with more than 30 million people voting.

After the referendum David Cameron, resigned from his PM position. The new Prime Minister, Theresa May (2016–2019) also resigned after her Brexit deal was rejected three times, and she was replaced by the new Prime

Minister, Boris Johnson (2019–2022). The Parliament rejected Theresa May's Brexit deal due to the 'backstop.' This was designed to ensure there would be no border posts or barriers between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland after Brexit. If it had been needed, the backstop would have kept the UK in a close trading relationship with the EU and avoided checks altogether. But many MPs were critical. They said if the backstop was used, the UK could be trapped in it for years. This would prevent the country from striking trade deals with other countries. The backstop has been replaced with new customs arrangements so that the UK would be able to sign and implement its own trade agreements with countries around the world. It effectively creates a customs and regulatory border between Northern Ireland and Great Britain. This means some goods entering Northern Ireland from Great Britain would have to pay EU import taxes (known as tariffs).



I. Explain and examine the following terms.

constituency
swinging Londo
magna carta
proportional representation.
simple majority system
federal system.
imperialism monarchy
Cabinet Ministers.
punk music
misogyny
federal system
convention
duchess slant
secret ballot
separation of powers
Hedonism

II. Identify the correct sentences

Westward Ho! is the name of the English village. ***True or false?***
Great Dozing is a village in England. ***True or false?***
There is a village in Scotland called Lost. ***True or false?***
Scratchy Bottom is a place name in England. ***True or false?***

III. Using the technique of Star Explosion, ask questions related to the text content focusing on the main aspects of the British political *system (Who? What? When? Where? How?).*

IV. UK Geography Questions

- Which countries make up the United Kingdom of Great Britain?
- Which river runs along the border of England and Scotland?
- Which canal runs from Birmingham to London?
- Which river is also known as the River Isis in Oxford?
- Which is the largest lake in the British Isles?
- What is the name of the largest artificial lake in the UK?
- Name the sea off the east coast of Britain.
- Where is the tallest mountain in the UK?
- What is the name of the Loch that supposedly has a monster in it?
- What is the capital city of Wales?
- What is the tallest mountain in Wales?
- What is the largest gorge in the UK?
- Which range of hills is commonly referred to as the 'backbone of England'?
- What is the longest river in Scotland?
- What is the capital of Scotland?
- What is the second-largest city in England?
- What was the first capital of England?
- Douglas is the capital of which island?
- What is the smallest city by area in the UK?
- Name a UK city that is four letters long.
- What is the capital of Wales?
- Which countries make up Great Britain?
- In which seaside town would you find Pleasure Beach?
- What is the oldest national park in the UK?
- What is the most populous city in Scotland?
- Which is the largest public park in the UK?
- Who designed the Clifton suspension bridge in Bristol?
- Where would you find Britain's only hot springs?
- What Roman wall was built near the border of England and Scotland?
- Mention the functions/roles of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.
- Why is the House of Lords considered bizarre and undemocratic?

V. Choose the best variant

The Monarch of the UK _____

(A) rules and governs.

(B) reigns but does not rule.

(C) reigns and rules.

(D) rules but does not reign.

The British monarchs are crowned in _____

(A) Westminster Abbey.

(B) St. Paul's Cathedral.

(C) the Tower.

(D) Buckingham Palace.

The motto of the UK is _____

(A) "God and My Right".

(B) "God Save the Queen".

(C) "Land and My Fathers".

(D) "In God We Trust".

Which of the following is the royal residence?

(A) Westminster Palace

(B) Buckingham Palace

(C) The Tower

D) Whitehall

What is the noble title of the British monarch's eldest son?

(A) The Prince Royal

(B) The Duke of York

(C) The Duke of Edinburgh

(D) The Prince of Wales

Who elects the members of the House of Commons?

(A) The Monarch

(B) The Prime Minister

(C) Electors

(D) The House of Lords

In the UK, parliamentary elections are held _____

(A) once in three years.

(B) once in four years.

(C) once in five years.

(D) once in six years.

St. Patrick is the patron of _____

(A) England.

(B) Scotland.

(C) Ireland.

(D) Wales.

Which part of the UK is not represented in the Union Jack?

(A) Scotland

(B) Wales

(C) England

(D) Northern Ireland

Who were the most ancient inhabitants on the British Isles?

(A) The Romans

(B) The Celts

(C) The Anglo-Saxons

(D) The Normans

Julius Caesar came from Rome to the British Isles in _____

(A) 55 B.C.

(B) 43 B.C.

(C) 43 A.D.

(D) 55 A.D.

The British Empire stopped existing in _____

(A) the 1920s.

(B) the 1930s.

(C) the 1940s.

(D) the 1950s.

On the Welsh flag, we can see _____

(A) three crosses.

(B) a lion.

(C) a dragon.

(D) a daffodil.

The Speakers' Corner is in _____

(A) Kensington Gardens.

(B) St. James's Park.

(C) Hyde Park.

(D) the House of Commons.

Who is the head of the state in the UK?

(A) The Prime Minister
(B) The Lord Chancellor
(C) The Monarch
(D) The Speaker

Who is the head of the government in the UK?

(A) The Monarch
(B) The Speaker
(C) The Lord Chancellor
(D) The Prime Minister

Which part of London is the heart of its business and commercial life?

(A) The City
(B) The East End
(C) The West End
(D) Westminster

What monument is in the centre of Trafalgar Square?

(A) The Statue of Eros
(B) Nelson's Column
(C) The Monument to Queen Victoria
(D) Peter Pan Statue

What London street is known as the centre of journalism?

(A) Leicester Square
(B) Piccadilly Circus
(C) Fleet Street
(D) Bond Street

What is the capital of Wales?

(A) London
(B) Edinburgh
(C) Cardiff
(D) Belfast

What is the historical name of Northern Ireland?

(A) Ulster
(B) The Irish Republic
(C) The Republic of Eire
(D) The Emerald Isle

What is the capital of Northern Ireland?

(A) Dublin
(B) Belfast
(C) Cardiff
(D) Edinburgh

How many lakes are there in the Lake District?

(A) 6
(B) 10
(C) 16
(D) 20

What is the highest mountain in the United Kingdom?

(A) Ben Nevis
(B) Snowdon
(C) The Mourne Mountain
(D) The Pennine Chain

Who came to the British Isles after the Romans had left Britain?

(A) The Normans
(B) The Anglo-Saxons
(C) The Britons
(D) The Danes

Who was the first king to be crowned in Westminster Abbey?

(A) King Arthur
(B) King Alfred
(C) Henry VIII
(D) William the Conqueror

What misfortune fell upon London in 1666?

(A) The Great Flood
(B) The Plague
(C) The Great Fire
(D) The Great Depression

What bird is the national bird of the UK?

(A) The blackbird
(B) The sparrow
(C) Robin Redbreast
(D) The starling

Who is the patron of England?

(A) St. Patrick

(B) St. George
(C) St. Andrew
(D) St. David

VI. Ask 5 questions on the British political system using the *Star Explosion Technique*



a) Describe in outline the history of settlement and immigration in Britain.

b) Examine the changing patterns of population distribution in Britain.

c) Is it correct to describe contemporary Britain as a 'multi-ethnic' and 'multinational' society? If so, why?

d) Describe what is meant by the 'two-party system', and comment upon its effectiveness.

e) Does Britain have an adequate parliamentary electoral system? If not, why not?

f) Critically examine the role of the Prime Minister.

g) Discuss the position and powers of the monarch in the British constitution.

k) Complete the *Graphic T* mentioning those behaviours which are acceptable and objectionable for the society of the 19 century as well as for the society of our times.

Manners and behaviours			
The society of 19 century		**The society of our times**	
acceptable	objectionable	acceptable	objectionable

l) Oral production activity. Role-Play:
Suggested situation: You are a reporter for a TV channel. Your mission is to present the values that shaped lives and identities in the British society of XXI century. Point out their role in an affluent society. Draw a comparison with the Rumanian society. Are the values different? Incorporate cultural connotational knowledge.

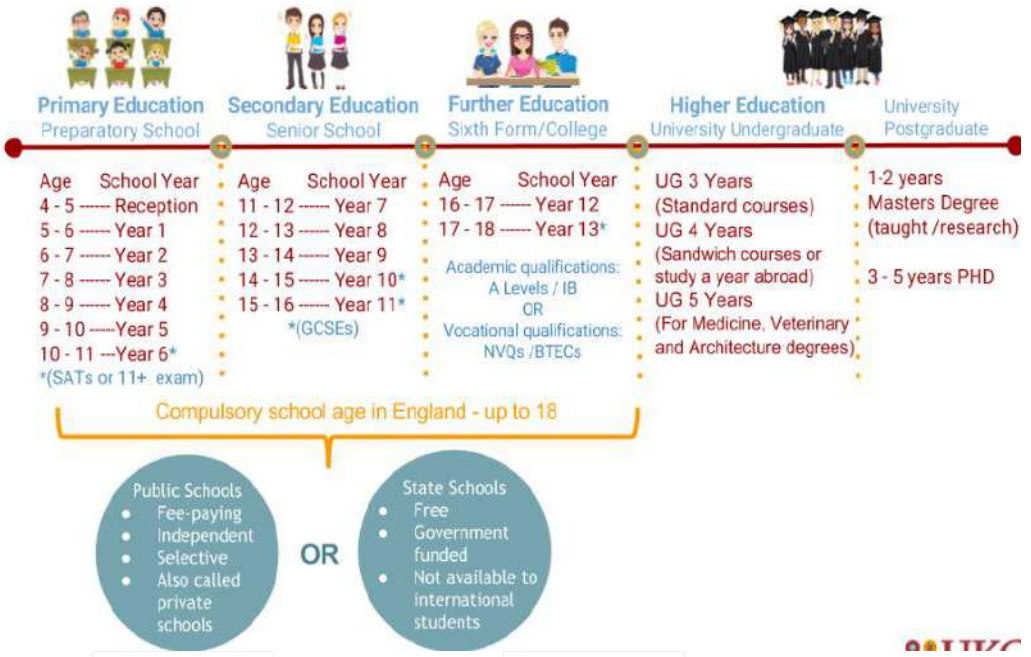
m) Build a Canva Poster and reveal 5 good manners of a young guy at a party from the contemporary times and 5 good manners related to the social context of the 19th century.

British Education System

The education system in the UK is divided into four main parts, primary education, secondary education, further education and higher education.

The education system in the UK is also split into "key stages" which breaks down as follows:

- **Key Stage 1:** 5 to 7 years old
- **Key Stage 2:** 7 to 11 years old



- **Key Stage 3:** 11 to 14 years old**Key Stage 4:** 14 to 16 years old

UK Primary Education



Primary school education begins in the UK at age 5 and continues until age 11, comprising key stages one and two under the UK educational system.

Some primary schools are split up into Infant and Junior levels. These are usually separate schools on the same site. The infant age range (Key Stage 1)

is from age 5 to 7. The Junior age range (Key Stage 2) is from age 7 to 11. The year groups at primary School level are:
Year R (Reception) (age 4 – 5)
Year 1 (age 5 - 6)
Year 2 (age 6 - 7) The year when SATs testing takes place for Key Stage 1
Year 3 (age 7 - 8)
Year 4 (age 8 - 9)
Year 5 (age 9 - 10)
Year 6 (age 10 - 11) The year when SATs testing takes place for Key Stage 2

Secondary School - years 7 and 8

Years 7 and 8 are the first two years of secondary school education in the UK. In some independent schools they are included in the Junior School, in others, they are part of the Senior School.

Under the UK school system, all students study English, Maths, Sciences, a Humanity and a Modern Language. Besides these subjects, each school has a list with optional subjects (Art, Music, Drama, Latin, Sport Science, Design Technology, Computer Science), and students may choose a few subjects that interest them.

In some schools, students sit the Common Entrance Exam in year 7. There are 3 examination sessions, in November, January and May/June. The transition from Junior to Senior School (from year 8 to year 9) may be conditioned upon the Common Entrance Exam results in those schools.

Secondary school - year 9



Year 9 is a very important year in the British school system, as most of the students make the transition from Junior School to Senior School. It is also a very good foundation for the GCSE programme and it is an entry point to all schools.

Students study English, Maths, Sciences, Humanity and Languages. In addition, students choose a few subjects from the optional subject list offered by each school.

Secondary education - years 10 and 11

GCSE programme

In the last two years of secondary education, which are called Year 10 and Year 11, starting at age 14, students prepare for GCSE exams that are taken after two years (General Certificate of Secondary Education).

In the UK school system, during the GCSE programme, students study between 9 and 12 subjects. Some of them are compulsory (English, Math, 2/3 Sciences, History/Geography, a Modern Language etc.), some are chosen by each student according to their abilities and preferences. At the end of the 2 year GCSE programme, following the examinations on each studied subject, students receive their GCSE Certificates.

The chosen subjects and the GCSE results are very important for their Further Studies (A-Level or IB) and for their University admission.

Intensive 1 year GCSE

Some schools offer a 1 Year GCSE programme in Year 11 for international students seeking a school education in the UK. These intensive, one year courses, are available for students aged 15 plus, with the appropriate academic level from their own country. Fewer subjects are studied (maximum 6).

IGCSE

The IGCSE programme (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) prepare international students for A-Level and/or IB.

Students study between 5 and 7 subjects, English, Maths and Science being included. Each school has a list of available subjects for IGCSE students. At the end of Year 11, students take exams in each studied subject and receive IGCSE Certificates.

University preparation - years 12 and 13

A level study

In the UK school system, once a student reaches the age of 16, they can start a 2 year programme which leads to A (Advanced) level examinations. Students specialise in 3 or 4 subjects, that are usually relevant to the degree subject they wish to follow at university. A levels are state examinations and are recognised by all UK universities and by institutions worldwide.

At the end of Year 13, following the examinations in each subject, the students receive A level Certificates.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

Those who would like to study more than 3-4 subjects, may continue their studies in a broader number of subjects with the International Baccaularete Diploma Programme, offered by some independent schools.

During the IB, students study 6 subjects, 3 at higher level (HL) and 3 at standard level (SL). Each school offers different subjects at different study levels (HL/SL). The IB programme also includes a compulsory Core programme consisting of Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Extended Essay (EE) and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS).

Students take written examinations on each subject at the end of their courses.

Further education - vocational courses

International students can either choose a state sixth form college or a college of further education as an alternative to private education. Both offer GCSE and A level courses for students from the age of 16. Colleges of further education also offer foundation and diploma courses. All colleges can prepare students for entry to a UK university or any university in the world. Bright World works with a number of state colleges in the UK which provide a multitude of vocational and academic courses. These courses can enable students to pursue their chosen career or to gain a place at a university of their choice.



The British school system also extends to BTEC courses which are designed for students who would like to develop practical knowledge and skills in a specific subject (Business, Psychology, Engineering, Sport, Art & Design) and find traditional exams challenging. Focussing on practical, skills-based learning, the BTEC students are assessed during the course. After each unit students are assessed through assignments, tasks or tests, and not at the end of the programme as it happens with GCSE or A-Level students.



University - undergraduate study

In the UK, a British bachelors degree normally takes three years to complete and most are awarded at honours level. Examples of first degrees are: BA (Bachelor of Arts), BEng (Bachelor of Engineering), and BSc (Bachelor of Science).



State colleges offer some 2 year vocational diplomas that grant exemption from the first and sometimes second year of a degree programme. Some private tutorial colleges offer a one year diploma programme which is equivalent to year 1 of university. Students taking 1year diplomas are awarded second year entry at some universities.

University - postgraduate study



Postgraduate courses in the UK education system are very intensive. This means that the courses are usually much shorter than in other countries. A master's degree typically takes 12 months to complete, for example an MA - Master of Arts and an MEng - Master of Engineering. An MBA (Master of Business Administration) is a high profile Masters course which can take 2 years. Applicants will usually be high achieving with at least 2 years managerial experience. A PhD research degree in the UK can take between 2 and 7 years.

Boarding schools

A boarding school is a residential school where pupils live and study during the school year. There are approximately 500 boarding schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. UK boarding schools offer pupils an outstanding education, helping them to develop their skills and progress to university. All UK boarding schools have to meet strict government standards on the quality of their teaching, facilities and student care. Many UK boarding schools combine beautiful, centuries-old buildings

with a mix of modern classrooms and traditional architecture. The excellent facilities help make living and learning a great experience and pupils will improve their English skills while they study.

FE Colleges

An FE college is an institution that provides education for those above school age (age 16). There are many types of FE colleges including, sixth form colleges, specialist colleges and adult education institutes. FE Colleges are state run and as such those members of the EU joining can benefit from free education. There is also a competitive fee structure available for non-EU international students.

Universities

The UK is one of the world's most popular destination for students from overseas. In fact, more than 400,000 international students enrol each year. International students considering an education in the UK have a choice of over 140 universities and higher education institutions, each offering a great range of tertiary qualifications that will be recognised the world over. Students join a 3 year undergraduate programme or a 1 year postgraduate course.

British Life and Traditions

In the United Kingdom, *public holidays* are days on which most businesses and non-essential services are closed. Many retail businesses (especially the larger ones) do open on some of the public holidays. There are restrictions on trading on Sundays, Easter Day and Christmas Day in England and Wales and on New Year's Day and Christmas Day in Scotland. Public holidays defined by statute are called "*bank holidays*", but this term can also be used to include common law holidays, which are held by convention. The term "public holidays" can refer exclusively to common law holidays.

There is no automatic right to time off on these days, but banks close and the majority of the working population is granted time off work or extra pay for working on these days, depending on their contracts.

There are eight bank holidays a year in England and Wales, nine in Scotland and ten in Northern Ireland. Additional days have been allocated for special events, such as royal weddings and jubilees. There are seven bank holidays common to all jurisdictions: New Year's Day, Good Friday, the early May bank holiday, the Spring bank holiday, the Summer bank

holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. Easter Monday is a bank holiday in England, Wales and Northern Ireland but not in Scotland. In Northern Ireland, St Patrick's Day and Orangemen's Day are also bank holidays. In Scotland, 2 January and St Andrew's Day are bank holidays. The Summer bank holiday varies according to jurisdiction: in Scotland, it is on the first Monday in August, and in the rest of the United Kingdom, it is on the last Monday in August. *Here are some holidays and traditions in UK.*

Hogmanay. It is the Scottish New Year's Eve. The word is believed to come either from the French 'hoginane' meaning 'gala day' or from the Anglo-Saxon 'haleg monath' meaning 'holy month.' It is thought to have been first used widely following Mary's, Queen of Scots, return to Scotland from France in 1561. The celebration takes place all over Scotland and lasts for three days, from 31 December to 2 January. Scottish people have two days of holiday following the celebrations, unlike the rest of the United Kingdom, which just has one on New Year's Day. One of the traditions of Hogmanay is called first footing, when they visit friends or family immediately after midnight in order to become the first guests in the new year. The very first foot – the first visitor – should traditionally be a tall, dark-haired man. "That is said to date back to the Viking invasions, as Vikings were typically fairer haired, so the arrival of a blonde man could have meant imminent danger. It could also have roots in pagan traditions of marking the arrival of the dark half of the year and interacting with the mysterious realm of darkness and spirits, and appeasing them with food and hospitality." The foot should bring black bun, which is a dark rye bread, in order to ensure that the host does not go hungry in the year ahead, and also to bring "a lump of coal to ensure the house remains warm in the coming months."





Plough Monday

"The midwinter festival period was followed by Plough Monday on 10 January, a celebration more overtly linked with fertility, when a plough, sometimes decked out with greenery, was paraded through the village or taken into the church for a ceremonial benediction." It was a day when "ploughmen traditionally black
ened their faces and marked the end of the Christmas period for the agricultural communities… Molly dancing is most commonly performed on or around Plough Monday. In the past, *Molly dancers* sometimes accompanied the farm labourers to dance and entertain for money. They blackened their faces with soot to disguise themselves so they could not be recognised by their future employers." Since the nineteenth century, Straw Bears – men clothed in a layer of straw – have been a familiar feature of Plough Monday. This tradition is maintained in Whittlesey, near Peterborough.

Burns's Night

The life and legacy of Robert Burns, Scotland's own 'National Bard', is celebrated on 25 January. Burns's Night includes: • Big Burns Supper: eating traditional foods, like cock-a-leekie soup; Haggis, neeps and tatties, Clootie Dumpling (a pudding prepared in a linen cloth or cloot) or Typsy Laird (a Scottish sherry trifle); cheeseboard with bannocks (oatcakes) and tea/coffee. Some Burns Night suppers include a lost manuscript reading, where a participant with literary aspirations recites from a fictitious long-lost musing of the great man on a new subject.

• Toast to the Lassies: a toast, which is designed to praise the role of women in the world today. This should be done by selective quotation from Burns's works and should build towards a positive note.



• Burns and Beyond (cultural events), Night at the Museum, singing Auld Lang Syne, Burns' poem.

Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday

It is the traditional feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday. As

Pancake Day always falls 47 days before Easter Sunday, the date varies from year to year and falls between February 3 and March 9. Shrove Tuesday was the last opportunity to use up eggs and fats before starting the Lenten fast and pancakes were the perfect way of using up these ingredients. "A traditional English pancake is very thin… Golden syrup or lemon juice and caster sugar are the usual toppings for pancakes… In the UK, pancake races form an important part of the Shrove Tuesday celebrations – an opportunity for large numbers of people, often in fancy dress, to race down streets tossing pancakes. The winner is who gets to the finishing line first, carrying a frying pan with a cooked pancake in it and flipping the pancake as he/she runs."

Chinese New Year



Since the seventeenth century, thousands of Chinese have arrived in Britain, but it was only in 1963 that the Lunar New Year was first celebrated in London's Gerrard Street, the centre of what was becoming the city's Chinatown. Since then, on 8 February, outside Asia, the world's biggest celebration of Chinese New Year has taken place in London. Each year there is a parade through Chinatown in the West.
End, with free performances of music, dance and acrobatics, a feast of food and fireworks; and it also features a one-day festival in Trafalgar Square. Manchester, Nottingham, Liverpool and Birmingham likewise host colourful street parties.323

British Valentine's Day

The romantic observance is celebrated on 14 February in Britain as well as in many other countries in the world. According to a 2017 study more than half (52%) of the UK population does not plan to buy a gift for their loved ones for Valentine's Day. 48% does not even plan on buying a card. However, the study conducted for PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) calculated that the people in the UK would spend almost half a billion pounds on Valentine's Day gifts, men spending about 40 pounds each, which is nearly twice as much as women. "Early versions of Valentine cards fashioned of satin and lace and ornamented with flowers, ribbons, and images of cupids or birds appeared in England in the 1880s."

- In *the county of Norfolk***,** the lovers' day is celebrated on a special scale. This is due to the legend of *Jack Valentine* (Old Father Valentine/Old Mother Valentine), who on the night of February 14 left gifts on the porches ofhouses for all residents. In the 1800s, Norfolk children would set out before dawn to sing rhymes in exchange for sweets, cakes and pennies. One favourite local verse was: Good morrow, Valentine//God bless the baker,//You'll be the giver,//And I'll be the taker. Once it was light, their requests could be turned down because they were said to be sunburnt.
- In England, flowers have presented on the day of lovers since the seventeenth century. This tradition came from the French king Louis XVI, who gave Marie Antoinette red roses.

St David's Day



March 1 is a day of celebration of both St David's life and of the Welsh culture. Many people attend special church services, parades, choral recitals or Welsh literature readings. Normally, the National St David's Day parade is held in the centre of Cardiff every year, with lots of exciting performances by dragons and theatre groups. Usually, many children take part, wearing traditional Welsh clothing and performing traditional dances. Other people may pin a daffodil or a leek to their clothes as these are symbols of Wales. Traditionally, there is also a famous concert held on the day at St David's Hall in Cardiff, with the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales performing Welsh songs.

May Day

Many folklore customs, like May Day, have their roots planted firmly back in the ancient Celtic festivals. For example, Beltane ('the fire of Bel'), represented the first day of summer and was celebrated with bonfires to welcome the new season. Still celebrated today, it is now called May Day. In this sense, 1 May "was essentially a ceremony to welcome the coming of spring with song and dance, and such it has remained. The maypole, decked with greenery, is known to have been in use in the fourteenth century and was probably a great deal older. In some degree the Mayday rituals were conflated with those of *Whitsun.* They were also associated with boisterous

activities which included the lighting of bonfires, the playing of rudimentary football games and, locally at least, the rough game of the hobby-horse" from which the concept of 'horse-play' is derived."

The May Day festivities vanished following the Civil War when Oliver Cromwell and his Puritans took control of the country. Describing maypole dancing as "a heathenish vanity generally abused to superstition and wickedness", legislation was passed which saw the end of village maypoles throughout the country till the Restoration. May Day is still celebrated in many villages with the crowning of the May Queen. The men also celebrate with *Jack-in-the-Green/the Green Man (*a wooden framework decorated with foliage and being worn by a person as part of a procession). May Day celebration includes *Maypole dancing and Morris Dancing* – the "name may refer to the possibility of the form of dancing coming to England from the Moors of North Africa; or it may have been called 'Moor-ish' simply because the dancers sometimes painted their faces black, and people compared this to the dark-skinned Moors."



Edinburgh Fringe Festival

The annual festival takes place in the city of Edinburgh in August and lasts for three weeks. It is the single biggest celebration of arts and culture on the planet. The Fringe story dates back to 1947, when eight theatre groups turned up uninvited to perform at the Edinburgh International Festival, which was an initiative created to celebrate and enrich European cultural life in the wake of the Second World War. The festival includes theatre, dance, circus, cabaret, children's shows, musicals, opera, music, spoken word, exhibitions and events.

The Notting Hill Carnival

The Carnival takes place over two days in August and dedicated to the cultures of London's Caribbean immigrants. It has become Britain's largest carnival and one of the largest in the world, attracting more than a million visitors in some years.

The National Eisteddfod of Wales

The Eisteddfod is Wales' biggest artistic event and one of Europe's oldest cultural festivals, which takes place between 30 July and 6 August. It

is a celebration of the culture and language in Wales. “The history of the Eisteddfod in Wales can be traced back to 1176, with the modern history of the organisation dating back to 1861 … The Eisteddfod is the natural showcase for music, dance, visual arts, literature, [and] original performances.”

Calan Gaeaf and Halloween

Calan Gaeaf, the precursor to Halloween, is the name of the first day of winter in Wales, which is observed on 1 November. Halloween dates back to Celtic and pagan festival of Samhain, which commemorated the end of the autumn and harvest season and the beginning of winter. Also, the “last day of October marked the end of the Celtic year, and was thus associated with mortality. It consequently became a festival of the dead, a time when their spirits returned to visit or to disturb their descendants.” “From around the 9th century onwards, the Christian church adopted and adapted some of *Samhain’s* traditions into its religious holidays of All Saints’ Day (1 November) and *All Souls’ Day* (2 November).” A further division of the ritual significance of Hallowe’en, as far as Great Britain is concerned, has been the removal of its bonfire aspect to 5 November in the seventeenth century. In parts of Britain, as well as in the United States, Hallowe’en is now associated with decorating one’s house or going trick-or-treating.



Remembrance Day

It is held on the second Sunday of November and commemorates British service members who have died in wars and other military conflicts since the onset of World War I. There are ceremonies at war memorials attended by members and ex-members of armed forces and military and representatives of the Judiciary. The most recognizable symbol of Remembrance Sunday is the red poppy, which became associated with World War I memorials after scores of the flowers bloomed in the former battlefields of Belgium and northern France. Therefore, poppies are laid on the memorials and two minutes’ silence is held at 11am.

St. George’s Day

St George’s Day in England remembers the anniversary of England’s patron saint. 23 April is regarded as England’s national day. The legend says that he

was a soldier in the Roman army who killed a dragon and saved a princess. The observance is celebrated with parades, dancing and other activities. Flags with the image of St George's cross are also flown on some buildings, especially pubs, and a few people wear a red rose on their lapel. Church services on the Sunday closest to April 23 often include the hymn 'Jerusalem', written by the poet William Blake. The words describe a supposed visit to Glastonbury by Jesus Christ during his youth.

British Christmas

The short history of Christmas cards, tree, mistletoe and carols

• In 1846, the first *Christmas cards* were designed and sold in Britain.

• Queen Victoria's German husband, Prince Albert, brought Christmas tree to Britain. He and the Queen had a Christmas tree at Windsor Castle in 1841. A few years later, nearly every house in Britain had one.

• **Mistletoe**: taken from two Anglo Saxon words, 'mistel' and 'tan', the word mistletoe can be translated to mean 'dung on a stick'. "The tradition of hanging mistletoe dates back to the ancient Druids who believed the plant brought good luck and helped protect against evil spirits. In Norse mythology, mistletoe symbolised love, which is where the custom of kissing under the mistletoe originates from. In the UK, the tradition of kissing underneath the mistletoe dates back to the 1700s."

• **Carols:** the songs with a religious impulse are the creation of the fiftieth century."The carol disappeared swiftly and almost completely with the Reformation… A carol revival began in the second half of the 18th century." Before Christmas, groups of singers go from house to house. They collect money and sing traditional Christmas songs or carols. There are a lot of very popular British Christmas carols. Three famous ones are: "Good King Wenceslas", "The Holly and The Ivy" and "We Three Kings."

"In the UK, the main **Christmas Meal** is usually eaten at lunchtime or early afternoon on Christmas Day." It is normally roast turkey, roast vegetables and vegetables like carrots, peas, stuffing and sometimes bacon and sausages. It is often served with cranberry sauce and bread sauce. Before the 1800s when turkey was not available, traditionally, roast beef or goose was the main Christmas meal. One vegetable that is often at Christmas in the UK are brussel sprouts. Dessert is often Christmas Pudding. The dinner table is decorated with a Christmas Cracker for each person. The UK is also famous for Christmas Cake. "Interestingly, in his weekly journal, The Original (1835–6), the gastronome Thomas Walker described some

memorable dinners which he regarded as models of good taste … [For example] On Christmas Day a simple meal for two guests consisted of crimped cod, woodcocks and plum pudding."360 As for the Cracker, "two people pull a cracker. Usually there is a small toy in the middle. Often there is a joke on a piece of paper, too.""**Christmas pudding** originated as a 14th century porridge called 'frumenty' that was made of beef and mutton withraisins, currants, prunes, wines and spices. This would often be more like soup and was eaten as a fasting meal in preparation for the Christmas festivities. By 1595, frumenty was slowly changing into a plum pudding, having been thickened with eggs, breadcrumbs, dried fruit and given more flavor with the addition of beer and spirits. It became the customary Christmas dessert around 1650, but in 1664 the Puritans banned it as a bad custom. In 1714, King George I re-established it as part of the Christmas meal, having tasted and enjoyed Plum Pudding. By Victorian times, Christmas Puddings had changed into something similar to the ones that are eaten today.362 Over the years, many superstitions have surrounded Christmas Puddings. One superstition says that the pudding should be made with 13 ingredients to represent Jesus and His Disciples and that every member of the family should take turns to stir the pudding with a wooden spoon from east to west, in honour of the Wise Men."

Christmas Eve

On 24 December, children hang a stocking at the end of their bed. It is believed that Father Christmas/Santa Claus (St Nicolas) brings their presents at night, which they open in the morning of the 25th. In the traditional story Santa Claus lives at the North Pole, and on Christmas Eve he visits every house with his reindeer. He climbs down the chimney and leaves lots of presents. Some people leave something for him too; for example, a glass of milk and some biscuits.369

Christmas Day



The birth of Jesus Christ is celebrated on 25 December, when children open the gifts, and families eat Christmas meal. The origins of the present traditional Christmas Celebration date back to sixth-century England. However, it was pushed back for a while in the course of history. In 1647,

the English parliament passed a law that made Christmas illegal, all festivities were banned by the Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell, who considered feasting and revelry on what was supposed to be a holy day to be immoral. The ban was lifted only when Cromwell lost power in 1660. Later, during Queen Victoria's reign, Christmas became a time for gift giving, and a special season for children. Nowadays, according to research, despite being a religious holiday, only 13 percent of families attend church on Christmas Day, and only 38 percent of families think that spending time with the family is the best thing about Christmas Day.370 For British children Christmas means pantomimes, too. The pantomime is a traditional Christmas show at the theatre. The stories follow the line of traditional tales such as Jack and the Beanstalk.371

Boxing Day



26 December is Boxing Day. "It originated in medieval times, when every priest was supposed to empty the alms box of his church and distribute gifts to the poor. Wealthy people indulged in huge Christmas feasts, and when they were finished, packed up the remains of feasts in boxes and gave them out to their servants. It did not become widely celebrated though until Victorian England. Boxing Day is still a public holiday, some shops and supermarkets open nowadays, but banks and most offices remain closed. It is also the real day for Christmas parties and visiting friends.

Bonfire Nights

On 5 November, the British celebrate Bonfire Night with fireworks, bonfires, sparklers and toffee apples because it is the anniversary of a failed attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament. Just one year after the failed Gunpowder Plot, Parliament passed the Observance of the 5th November Act to commemorate the king and Parliament in the wake of a deadly assassination attempt. In 1067, the first big Bonfire Night celebration occurred. Canterbury celebrated with over 100 pounds of gunpowder and 14 pounds of matches – adding food and drink to the party in later years. The most famous celebration of Bonfire



Night in the world happened in the English town of Lewes in 1850; it resembled a riot, resulting in a ban which then resumed peacefully later. The easiest way to recall the date is with the famous nursery rhyme: Remember, remember the fifth of November, Gunpowder treason and plot. We see no reason Why gunpowder treason Should ever be forgot.

Every year fireworks take place and burning effigies of Guy Fawkes are set up on a bonfire. They are made of old clothes stuffed with newspaper, and equipped with a grotesque mask. "The word 'guy' came thus in the 19th century to mean a weirdly dressed person, and hence in the 20th century in the USA to mean, in slang usage, any male person."

British Culture and Social Norms



British culture is a beautiful and unique mix of four countries: England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The mix of all these countries' traditions is what makes the British culture very rich and diverse and what they like to call "cultural capital."

British people like to think of themselves as people with class and great taste, whether about food, clothing, music, or movies.

Things to Know About the British Social Etiquette

You may already know that British people share their love for tea and the British Royal family.

Here are some of the basic social norms you should know about British people:

Greetings

Although British people have a reputation for acting cold towards others, surprisingly, they like kisses on the cheek as a form of greeting. When greeting a good friend or family member in the UK, you do not simply shake their hand. If you are not a close friend or family member, the physical touch is perceived as odd, and a handshake or a smile can go a long way.

Social Distance

The distant personality of the British stands out when they are conversing with someone —regardless of the relationship—as they like to keep a socially acceptable distance between them and those they are

speaking to. While in the UK, you can be rude if you do not respect a person's personal space when talking to them in any social situation.

Punctuality

Brits are very strict when it comes to being punctual. If you are late once in the UK, you will likely not be late again. The British consider being late disrespectful and rude, especially at private dinner parties or someone's home. If you cannot arrive on time at some place or event, make sure you let the host know beforehand.

Respect the Queue

British people love to follow the rules, especially when it comes to waiting in a queue, whether at the supermarket or the cinema. Those who dare and jump the queue will most likely be called out. If you do jump the queue for whatever reason, be prepared to get yelled at or even kick you out of the queue altogether.

In the UK, wherever there is a mass of people you will find an orderly queue. British etiquette dictates that when you arrive, you join the back of the queue so that each person receives the service in the order that they arrived. We 'wait our turn' in queues. The notion of an orderly queue relies on everyone in the queue agreeing that this is fair. It is seen as unfair if someone doesn't join the queue and pushes in.

Queuing can seem very strange if you are not used to it however if you are seen to 'push in' it is considered very rude and unfair to other people who have been waiting. If in doubt ask "is this the back of the queue?" to avoid offending anyone.

A common British trait is that despite everybody in the queue being annoyed with someone who has pushed in, very few people will ask that person to go to the back of the queue. British people do not like to cause a scene by arguing, but likewise, we like people to know we are annoyed in subtle ways. Instead people will shake their head, roll their eyes, tut, and/or have an angry facial expression. They may also complain to the person next to them in the queue.

Apologising

In the UK, people have a tendency to *over-apologise*. For example, if you tell someone about something unfortunate which has happened to you, it's quite likely that they *will apologise*. E.g. "I'm so sorry to hear that you have been unwell".

British people cannot resist the urge to apologise, for example, if someone accidentally bumps into you, it would be common for you to apologise and say "I'm sorry" as though you are sorry for being in their way. If you have reserved a seat on a train but somebody is sat in it, it would be common to say "I'm so sorry but you appear to be sat in my seat". If somebody spills your coffee, again it's quite normal for the victim to apologise. Of course, the person to blame would apologise as well, but apologising as the victim is a very English thing to do.

In the UK, we like receiving warm heartfelt apologies as well as giving them. If you have done something to upset or offend someone, it is important to offer them a genuine apology. A half-hearted apology will not go down well.

If you are offered an apology, it is considered good grace to acknowledge and accept it. In some cases you may still be a little upset over the incident, but by not accepting the apology the situation will escalate. A typical way of accepting an apology is by saying "it's okay", "don't worry about it", or for more serious incidents, "I forgive you".

Please and thank you! Minding your Ps and Qs. Many people from outside the UK find it strange that we say ***please*** *and* ***thank you*** as much as we do. It is considered polite, well-mannered and is a regularity of British speech. What may surprise you is when we are in a shop, restaurant or anywhere we are receiving customer service, we say thank you to the person serving us e.g. when they give you change, the bill, or come to give you your food and drinks. In Britain, every social transaction is eased by reiteration of these phrases from both parties.

Remembering to say please and thank you is very important, if you are not doing it you may be told to '*mind your p's and q's'* or, more specifically, to say both 'please' ('p's) and 'thank you' ('thank q's).

Being tactile

Britain isn't a particularly *tactile c*ountry. Because of this, some cultures perceive British people as being completely unemotional whilst others perceive us as having a '*stiff upper lip'*. This refers to the fact that British people do have emotions, they're just very good at hiding them. When a person's upper lip begins to tremble, it is one of the first signs that the person has experienced deep emotion. The 'stiff upper lip' is an idiom to our ability to conceal our emotions and keep a straight face.

Whilst you may be hugged and kissed 2 or 3 times by a total stranger in some European countries, it's unlikely that you would receive the same reception in the UK. **Social kissing** is becoming popular in Britain, but it is by no means an accepted norm. For example it is rare for men to kiss in the UK- this is usually a gesture reserved for women. Kissing is not appropriate in many professional situations.

Holding hands as friends in the UK is quite unusual. Instead, more common for female friends is to link arms. For male friends, there is usually no contact. Holding hands is usually reserved only for parent-children relationships, or between partners (e.g. girlfriend & boyfriend, husband & wife). A **good firm handshake** is a common way to greet someone in a business or social situation. People might make assumptions about you based on your handshake so it's important to get it right. For example, if you offer a limp handshake, it can give people the impression that you are disinterested and/or not confident.

Names

It is becoming increasingly common to *call people by their first name* in Britain, even in certain professional situations, for example most people are now on first name terms with their doctor where as in the past they had always been known by their surname e.g. "Dr. Smith."

There remains certain situations where you would never address a person by their first name unless you were invited to do so. This includes your teachers and people of an older generation. For many older people the easy use of their first name is seen as over-familiar. If you're not sure, opt for formality (e.g. Mr and Mrs Smith).

100 Million Cups of Tea Daily



It is no secret that British people love to drink tea, and they usually admit that it is their favorite part of the day. You can find Brits drinking tea at any social gathering, whether at a birthday or coffee shop. What makes English Tea special is the milk. According to research done on this matter, English people drink around 36 billion cups of tea per year.

In modern day Britain we love nothing better than 'putting our feet up' and enjoying a '**cuppa**' or a '**brew**'. You will be offered a cup of tea

anywhere you go in the UK and as you travel around, you will spot many tea shops and cafes.

Why do Brits call strangers "love," "dear," or "duck?"

How often have you heard Brits call strangers or a complete stranger call you "love," "dear" or "duck?" Probably too many times to count, right? Have you found it odd? Maybe even uncomfortable? Well, I agree that it's strange.

On one side, we Brits have a reputation of being ultra-reserved. On the other hand, we're often overly-friendly, calling virtual strangers love, sweetheart and such like. There is also a common belief the further north you go the friendlier the people are and quite frankly, the weirder the terms of affection become.

If you are new to the UK I can assure you that when someone in Newcastle calls you "my pet" or someone in the Midlands says to you "ay up me duck" you shouldn't worry too much. They are perfectly sane people using socially-acceptable terms of endearment.

Beyond "mate," "sir" or "madam" there are many words Brits call strangers with whom they are interacting.

You would probably expect a shop assistant to call you "sir" or "miss" when serving you, but it is also socially acceptable for the assistant to call you "darling," "dear" or "love." Don't be offended; it is normal here.

Other terms of endearment include "petal," "flower," "chick," "chuck," "me duck," "me duckie," "guy," "son" or even "treacle." It all depends on your age in comparison to the person talking to you as well as the geographical location. For example, if you give your seat to an elderly lady on the bus she is more likely to say, "Thank you, petal." If you were in a pub in the West Midlands trying to order a drink from the bar, the barmen would most likely say, "What'll it be, duck?"

So next time when you get called a peculiar name in public just remember it is a cultural term of endearment and not in any way personal. Simply smile, remember to say "please" and "thank you," and everything will go swimmingly as the Brits say.

British Superstitions

- **Putting New Shoes on the Table**

  "Believed to originate from the North of England, this superstition is related to the coal mining industry. When a miner died, their family

would place their shoes on the table as a tribute. Therefore, placing shoes on the table was seen to be tempting fate."

- **Opening an umbrella inside**

  Opening an umbrella inside is said that bad luck with 'rain down' on you. In the Victorian era, umbrellas were constructed with steel spokes and opening one indoors could cause injury or eye loss.

- **Riding on a bear's back**

  One ancient British superstition holds that if a child rides on a bear's back it will be protected from whooping-cough.

- **Rabbits**

  White Rabbits are said to be witches in reality and some believe that saying 'White Rabbit' on the first day of each month brings luck. However, according to the Celtic tradition, it brings good luck. Boudicca, a Celtic warrior, released a hare before battle as a good luck charm. Brown hares are quite common across much of East Anglia in fields of spring wheat and barley or on coastal marshes and heathland. The Norfolk Wildlife Trust reserves at Thompson Common, Upton Broad and Weeting Heath are good sites to see hares.

- **Food and drink**

  • Many housewives believed that food would be spoilt if it was stirred in the opposite direction to that of the sun.

  • In Dorset it is common knowledge that a slow-boiling kettle is bewitched and may contain a toad. • In Yorkshire, housewives used to believe that bread would not rise if there was a corpse in the vicinity, and to cut off both ends of the loaf would make the Devil fly over the house.

  • Two women must not pour from the same tea-pot, if they do, a quarrel will ensue.

  • In Somerset a double-yolked egg was viewed with concern as it foretold of a hurried wedding due to a pregnancy.

Pieces of advice for people visiting Britain

For those who want to work and live in Britain for shorter or longer period:

- You will need a helping hand to adopt to the new environment, so before coming to Britain, (and if it is possible) contact your family members or friends, who are already living there.

- If you want to settle in Britain, you have to be very hardworking, persistent and humble. It is a long process to walk up the ladder, and you

have to start from the very beginning even if you have the proper qualifications. However, employers are generally willing to help to succeed – they can even support your studies financially.

- You need to have the following things if you want to work in Britain: national insurance number (pattern: XY123456D) – which is similar to the health insurance number in Slovakia – and a bank account. You are entitled to get things only if you are employed, so the best if first of all you are hired at some place, and then you can go to a job centre (the nearest to your home) and to the bank. (UK residents receive a National Insurance Number automatically when they turn 16).
- If you are not a citizen, you will have to apply for a pre-settlement status and after a 5-year period, you can apply for a settlement status, which allows you to live and work there for an indefinite time.
- It is recommended to bring a bigger amount of money with you, so that you can pay the deposit for the flat you want to rent (cc. 1000 pounds).
- Register at the GP (general practitioner) when coming to live in Britain. You need a national insurance number and an official address for registering. You are treated much earlier in the hospital if you have a GP. You do not have to worry if your GP is not the one whom you first met; you do not have a permanent doctor here.
- If you are sick, you can buy the basic medicines almost in every kind of shop.
- British people do not have an ID and traditional health insurance card (only the NI number); their proof of identity is their birth certificate and/or driving licence.
- As for language learning, spend as much time with native speakers as youcan. In London you can easily get acquainted with other non-native speakers (immigrants), which will not motivate you to improve your English. You learn particular idioms related to your work environment, but self-education (watching TV, reading local newspapers), going out, and visiting small villages to meet native speakers are equally important to expand your vocabulary.

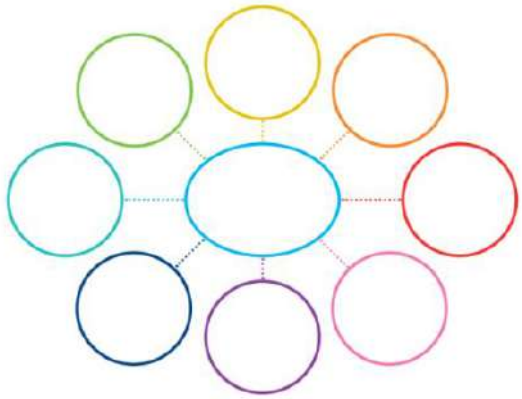
Also, for tourists:

- Do not waste your time in traffic jams with travelling by car. Choose public transport in bigger cities.
- Cash is no longer accepted on London's buses and trams. If you visit the capital, travel with the more financially friendly Oyster card. It is an

electronic stored-value contactless smart card and can be used across London on the underground, overground, buses, the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), trams and some river boat service within the London fare zones. Charges differs according to zones and times (peak or off-peak times)

- If you travel by more buses within a single hour, you do not have to buy a new ticket for each distance.
- As a pedestrian, if you cross the zebra when the lights are red, the policeman will not punish you – but it is dangerous!
- From London you get to the seaside by train within an hour. E.g. Brighton is popular but does not have many tourist attractions; Cornwall is nice too. The most beaches are stone beaches, so bring some comfy slippers with you. By the English Channel, you can see the beautiful chalk cliffs, the Seven Sisters.
- Be prepared that British tea is stronger than the tea you used to drink.
- Entertainment: if you want to drink the creamy and 'warmer' English and Irish beer (Guinness, Foster's, John Smith's, Budwiser are popular types of beer in England), save your money in advance as it is not cheap (cc. 6 pounds/pint). The good news is that there are some pubs which serve discount drinks, such as the pub company Wetherspoon.
- Before you leave the bar for a while (e.g., to smoke a cigar), make sure you are allowed to go back there as some places do not allow you to re-enter only if you pay the entrance ticket again (e.g., Ministry of Sound).
- Pubs in Britain are not similar to the pubs in Slovakia or Hungary. They are family-friendly places, where you can eat and drink in a cosy environment. Traditional menu in pubs involve for example Shepard's pie (meat pie), Sunday roast (as the name suggests only served on Sunday), sticky toffee pudding, apple crumble and cheese cake.





I. a) **Think about the information that you already know about The United Kingdom**. Mention general facts, beliefs, traditions, or any other idea that you have heard

about these countries. *For ex. They love tea etc*.

b) Work with a partner and discuss together in English general ideas that you both know about The United Kingdom.

c) Individually, fill in the spaces in the brain storming with the information that you and your partner discussed.

II. Complete the table with the correct information

Landmarks	Location	Description
1. Stonehenge	Wiltshire, England	
2. Buckingham palace		
3. Westminster Bridge		
4. London tower		
5. Hadrians Wall		
6. River Thames		
7. Big Ben		
8. London Eye		
9. Tower Bridge		
10. Westminster Abbey		

III. Match the names with what they are and write a–j next to the numbers 1-10.

1……..	English Channel	a.	clock
2……..	Big Ben	b.	city
3……..	Bristol	c.	sport
4……..	The New Forest	d.	rugby competition
5……..	Glastonbury	e.	traditional food
6……..	Ed Sheeran	f.	sea
7……..	Harry Kane	g.	singer
8……..	Six Nations	h.	rural area
9……..	snooker	i.	footballer
10……	sausage and mash	j.	music festival

IV. Choose the right variant

The Speakers' Corner is in _____

(A) Kensington Gardens.
(B) St. James's Park.
(C) Hyde Park.
(D) the House of Commons.

The Tate Gallery is named after _____

(A) the city it is in.
(B) the street it is in.
(C) its founder.
(D) its sponsor.

What is the emblem of the world famous Edinburgh Festival of Music and Drama?

(A) The poppy
(B) The daffodil
(C) The thistle
(D) The leek

Eisteddfod is the festival of _____ culture.

(A) Welsh
(B) Scottish
(C) Irish
(D) English

Which sport is not originated in the UK?

(A) Football
(B) Tennis
(C) Golf
(D) Horse racing

Wimbledon is associated with _____

(A) horse racing.
(B) soccer.
(C) tennis.
(D) cricket.

The kilt is _____

(A) an English hat.
(B) a Scottish skirt.
(C) an Irish coat.
(D) a kind of Welsh trousers.

The limerick is named after _____

A) the person who invented it.

(B) the pub where it was first introduced.

(C) the town in which it was created.

(D) the genre it belongs to.

Guy Fawkes is _____

(A) a famous historian.

(B) a national hero of Britain.

(C) an English poet.

(D) the man who wanted to set fire to the British Parliament.

Englishmen eat their dinner at _____

(A) 12 a.m.

(B) 2 p.m.

(C) 6 p.m.

(D) 8 p.m.

Which of the following holidays is not a bank holiday in the UK?

(A) Christmas Day

(B) St. Patrick's Day

(C) Easter Monday

(D) Boxing Day

_____ *is considered "the father of the English poetry".*

(A) Robert Burns

(B) George Gordon Byron

(C) Percy Bysshe Shelley

(D) Geoffrey Chaucer

_____ *is not a Lake Poet.*

(A) Samuel Coleridge

(B) William Wordsworth

(C) Thomas Moore

(D) Robert Southey

Which of the following writers did not belong to the Angry Young Men?

(A) John Braine

(B) Kinsley Amis

(C) John Wain

(D) John Osborne

_____ *is a Scottish writer.*

(A) Archibald Cronin

(B) Jonathan Swift
(C) Bram Stoker
(D) Joseph Conrad

Which of the following authors is an Irish writer?

(A) Oscar Wilde
(B) Arthur Conan Doyle
(C) William Golding
(D) Walter Scott

Joan Rowling wrote _____ books about Harry Potter.

(A) 5
(B) 6
(C) 7
(D) 8

Which of the following differs from the rest?

(A) "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"
(B) "Don Juan"
(C) "The Age of Bronze"
(D) "Song to the Men of England"

V. Answer the following questions

- What is a public school?
- What is the student quarter in London?
- How many universities and colleges are there in Great Britain?
- Who were King Arthur's companions?
- Which part of London is the heart of its business and commercial life?
- What monument is in the centre of Trafalgar Square?
- What London street is known as the centre of journalism?

VI. Complete the table with the right information

Typical Food	Ingredients/recipe	Description
1. Fish and potato fries		
2. Roast beef		
3. Tea lavanda/roses/black		
4. Cheese cake		
5. Apple pie		
6. Bedfordshire clanger		

7. Bangers and mash		
8. Chicken tikka masala		
9. Cobbler		
10. Beef Wellington		

VII.



a) Examine the view that Britain is a quaint, old-fashioned museum piece, backward-looking and conventional.

b) What are some of the characteristics that you would associate with the British people and their society?

c) Critically examine state secondary education in Britain, analysing its structures, aims and achievements.

d) Describe the structure of British higher education and its roles.

e) Comment upon the desirability, or otherwise, of British education's division into state and independent sectors.

VIII. Project.

Create a skit incorporating the costumes, music, and food of the culture of GB. Use PowerPoint or other formats that contain pictures or video clips (from YouTube or another source) to demonstrate aspects of the British culture.

British Food

British cuisine is the specific set of cooking traditions and practices associated with the United Kingdom, including the cuisines of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. According to food writer Colin Spencer, historically, British cuisine meant "unfussy dishes made with quality local ingredients, matched with simple sauces to accentuate flavour, rather than disguise it".

Traditional British dishes include *full breakfast, roast dinner, fish and chips, toad in the hole and shepherd's pie.* Traditional desserts include trifle, scones, apple pie, sticky toffee pudding and Victoria sponge cake. Cheddar cheese originated in the village of Cheddar in Somerset.

Modern British cuisine is influenced by other cuisines and has in turn influenced the cuisines of cultures around the world.

Here are the popular dishes in English cuisine that you must try at least once:

- **Beef Wellington.** The beef wellington dish is considered to be one of the hardest dishes to cook in the UK. The beef wellington is basically a beef fillet, and the challenging part is to cook it just right since it is served medium rare, which is difficult to achieve.



- **Fish and Chips.** One of the most popular dishes among tourists in England, and it can be found almost everywhere in the UK. However, the Brits recommend trying fish and chips in restaurants near the sea for the most delicious version. As the name suggests, this dish is either served with a single fish or fish sticks with fries on the side.
- **Chicken Tikka Masala.** Initially cooked by a chef in Glasgow with Bangladeshi origins, this dish is one of the most popular home-cooked meals in the UK.
- **English Breakfast.** Brits take the expression "breakfast is the most important meal of the day" seriously. The full English breakfast is popular all over the UK, especially on weekends. This popular breakfast dish includes bacon, eggs, sausages, beans, toasted bread, and various vegetables, depending on your personal preference.





- **Yorkshire Pudding.** The Yorkshire pudding is usually served as a side dish and is served in different ways depending on the place and customer preferences. The name may fool you since it is not actual pudding, on the contrary, it is made of eggs, flour, milk, and fat.
- **Pie and Mash (Also known as Bangers and Mash).** If you are a carbs fan, this is the best dish to try in the UK. As with many traditional English dishes,

the pie and mash dish includes sausages and mashed potatoes. They often serve it with peas and gravy on top.



- **Black Pudding.** Once again, the UK dishes confuse the rest of the world with their food names. To everyone's surprise, the black pudding is a sausage out of beef or pork blood. Yes, you read it correctly. Even though it sounds bad, it is one of the most delicious dishes in the UK.



- **Toad in the Hole.** Another dish with sausages. It is very easy to make, and all you have to do is add sausages to the Yorkshire pudding and serve it with gravy and vegetables.



Shepherd's Pie or Cottage Pie. The recipe is the same for both these pies with only one difference: use lamb meat for shepherd's pie and beef for cottage pie.

Sausage Roll or Scotch Egg. More sausages —in this case— wrapped in an egg and other added ingredients that make it a savory pastry snack popular among all English people.

- **Jellied Eels.** Maybe one of the most unappetizing dishes you have ever seen or tasted. This traditional food is made of chopped boiled eels which they firstly allow to cool and serve cold.
- **Trifle.** This traditional English dessert is made by adding layers of pudding on top of one another —no beef included unless you are Joey from the "Friends" series. Brits like to top it with whipped cream and other toppings of their choice and serve it in a glass dish.
- **Jam Roly Poly.** Another traditional British dessert served as a cake, filled with any type of jam.
- **Steak and Kidney Pudding or Pie.** This pudding or pie, however you want to call it, is a must when you visit the UK. It is typically covered in pastry or potatoes.



- **Scones.** After Brexit, the UK's biggest debate is whether to put the cream or jam on the scone first.

You can try both and decide for yourself what you like more.

- **Roast Dinner or Sunday Roast.** It has been established that the British love to include Yorkshire pudding in almost every meal. The roast dinner is one of them. The roast dinner also includes roasted meat (of choice), roasted potatoes, stuffing, and vegetables.



- **Eton Mess.** A traditional English dessert made with strawberries or other berries of your liking, meringue, and whipped cream. A perfect refreshing dish for the lingering summer heat.

Why do Brits eat lunch at their desks?



Many Brits eat lunch at their desks because they feel that it is more efficient. The pressure to do as much work as possible while at the office is very high, and some people feel that eating at their desks – or simply skipping lunch altogether – means that they will be more productive.

Brits have been eating quick lunches at work since the Industrial Revolution, when the concept of 'lunch' – a small midday meal – was first introduced in the UK. Before the Industrial Revolution, people went home for a big meal in the middle of the day – a custom that dated back to Roman times. But factory workers were not allowed to go home for a long, leisurely meal, so working Brits changed their eating habits.

In the 1980s, 'power lunches' became popular in the UK. These were short lunches designed specifically so that workers could discuss business matters with each other while eating.

Nowadays, power lunches have largely fallen out of fashion in the UK. Many workers now rely on shop-bought meals or fast food delivered to their offices. *Salads and sandwiches* are easy to eat quickly in front of computers. Although UK workers are legally entitled to at least a twenty-minute midday break if they work for more than six hours, some Brits feel pressured to work through it.

What is the etiquette for eating lunch at your desk?

There are a few unofficial rules that you should follow when eating lunch at the office:

- **Do not bring hot or smelly foods to the office.** Curries and tuna fish sandwiches are delicious, but your teammates will not appreciate having to smell them. It is better to bring cold foods like sandwiches, salads and cold noodle dishes.
- **Eat lunch with your teammates.** Eating lunch with your co-workers is a good way to get to know them. It makes you feel like part of the team, and it shows them that you want to be a good team player. If your team invites you to go to lunch with them, you should accept.
- **Be sociable.** If there is a communal area where people like to eat lunch, you should eat there, too. Even if you eat at your desk, you should expect people to come over and talk to you. By eating lunch, you are signaling that you are free to talk.
- **Clean up after yourself.** If you get crumbs or flecks of sauce on your desk or lunch table, you should clean them up after you finish your meal. Leaving a mess behind is considered disrespectful.

Is the traditional breakfast the same everywhere in the UK?

Heavens, no. There are lots of regional variations on this classic dish. A full Scottish breakfast, for example, has a "tattie" (potato) scone and perhaps a slice of haggis. In Cornwall, you might see a type of sausage called "hog's pudding" and potato cakes. The Welsh variation probably looks the most different: it has cockles and a seaweed-based dish called laverbread. In Ulster, you might get your breakfast with a slice of Irish soda bread.

No matter where you're eating, though, one thing you're guaranteed is a delicious and very filling meal.



Did the Brits invent the sandwich?

It all started in the 1700s in a small town called…well, it was called Sandwich. This story goes something like this:

The fourth Earl of Sandwich, *John Montagu,* was playing a game of cards and became very hungry. But this was a

predicament because he did not want to stop playing his game to have a meal. So he ordered the staff to bring him beef between two slices of bread. His friends asked to have the same and there we go! The delightful lunch-time meal was born.

A reference to the sandwich did not pop up in historical documentation until the 1760s but we all know it was Montagu who started the trend.

The *town of Sandwich* still exists and is located in Kent, England. The medieval town now attracts tourists for its historic churches, the Richborough Roman Fort and the town's location on the River Stour. And, yes, sandwiches are a specialty there.

We like to think that everyone has their favourite kind of sandwich. Some classic British combinations are cheese and pickle, butter and cucumber, and roast beef and horseradish.

Pub Culture

What is British pub culture?

Pub culture is an integral part of British life, especially student life. Pubs are a place to go to socialise, relax and have a drink. It is something you should experience if you want to learn about Brits and our culture, even if you don't drink alcohol.

What do pubs serve?



If you're not a drinker or you're the designated driver, then you can easily order a soft drink! If you're a drinker, then the usual order at a pub consists of lager, ale, bitter and spirits. A request for lager, ale or bitter will usually get you a whole pint unless you specify you want half!

How do you order drinks?

In almost all pubs you need to order your drink at the bar, so don't wait around for someone to take your order from your table. The only exception to this is when you go to a "gastro pub", aka a posh pub, for a meal. Then you will get table service.

Pubs are busy at peak times such as after work and the weekends. It's advisable to edge your way to the front of the queue but strictly NO pushing in. You will not be popular. Once at the front, get the attention of the bar staff by having your money ready. They will most likely say "what will it be" or "what are you having" and you give them your order.

In some pubs they will ask if you want to start a tab, which means do you want to leave your debit or credit card behind the bar. In exchange they will give you a card with a number. Each time you place an order the staff will ask for that number and at the end they will present the bill to you.

Do you leave a tip?

You don't normally tip bar staff in the UK. If you want to say thanks, then offer to buy them a drink. They can then choose to accept the drink or take the value of the drink in the form of a tip.

Which pub is the right one for you?

You will find that many pubs are the hub for their local community, which means they are a great way to meet people. Some are also known for a certain thing, such as a venue for a certain genre of music or their quiz night. There are pubs that are known for being a place where people gather to watch a certain sport or support a certain football team. It's best to check out the vibe because it can be an uncomfortable experience if you support one team and everyone else is supporting the opposition.

You will also find certain pubs are known as a hangout for certain nationalities, such as "Aussies (Australians) and "Kiwis" (New Zealanders).

Why do Brits say "cheers" before they start their drink?

Holding up your drink and clinking your glass against everyone else's whilst making eye contact and saying "cheers" is a must before you start drinking. The custom is about acknowledging friendships and the fact that you are all gathered to have a nice time.

Popular snacks eaten in pubs

These days most pubs serve hot and cold food. Some pubs known as gastro pubs sell restaurant quality food. However, the traditional snacks eaten in pubs are crisps and nuts.

The social code is if you are feeling a bit peckish you'll ask people in your group what flavour of crisps they like. You then share the snacks by ripping the bag open so the crisps are piled on the torn foil.

How to order food in a traditional pub?

A pub is unlike a restaurant – you have to go up to the bar to place your order. The signal to show that you are ready to order is holding your money in your hand, so that it is visible to the person behind the bar. Once you have placed your order you will be given a table number that you place on your table. The food will then be bought to the table.

What does it mean when the bar staff ring the bell?

Last orders are usually around 10.30pm or 11pm on a Sunday. Bar staff will ring the bell to signal it's time to place your last orders. They will then ring it again to signal the bar is closing. No more orders can be placed after the second bell.

Music in the UK



There are many stereotypes surrounding the Brits, but they are very cheerful people and love to have fun. Not surprisingly, they gave the world a number of famous and unforgettable artists whose impact has greatly shaped this industry. Also, **music concerts are a common thing in the UK. Some of the biggest music events are organized in the UK.**

People often assume that the classical jazz genre of music dominates the music culture in the UK. However, this is no longer the case. You may recognize a lot of popular British musicians such as The Beatles, Elton John, Pink Floyd, The Spice Girls, and many more. However, nowadays, the music industry has changed a lot in the UK.

Here is what music genre is popular among the Brits today:

Punk
Pop
R&B
Rock
Garage
House
Hip Hop

And here are the most popular British music artists lately:

Harry Styles	Billie Eilish	Calvin Harris
Ed Sheeran	Coldplay	
Adele	Rita Ora	Lewis Capaldi
Dua Lipa	Sam Smith	



Architecture in the UK

British architecture is one of the most unique in the world. It is highly influenced by the 15th century and is home to some of the most historic building styles in the world. Below are some of these architectural styles that dominate British architecture and add to the British appeal.

- **Tudor**



The name Tudor is derived from the period in which these buildings were built. It started between the 15th and 17th centuries during the Medieval period of architecture. The features of this architectural style include a low arch, angled roof, grouped windows, and masonry chimneys.

- **Elizabethan Architecture**

The Elizabethan architectural style derives from the period of Elizabeth's reign when many houses were built in this style, and only the wealthier people lived in it. The glass design dominates the exterior as a way of filling the house with natural light.

- **Baroque**



Baroque architectural design is mostly influenced by Italian architecture, and Italian designers started to build them way back in the 17th century. Examples of such

architecture include St Paul's Cathedral and Greenwich Hospital. The Baroque architectural style was mostly adapted by English churches.

- **Georgian**

Roman architecture was the greatest influence during the Georgian era, around 1780 and 1820. The classical exterior architecture is what makes the Georgian period unique, along with a detailed interior design. What makes the Georgian design special are the high sectioned ceilings with characteristic colors such as lavender, pink, pea green, and light blue.

- **Post-WWII**

The post-war period in the architecture of British buildings set a new era of architecture by moving on from older building styles but incorporating some bits and pieces of vintage architecture. Some old buildings were renovated and embodied modernism along with international style.

*Old castles also share a proportion of architectural heritage in the UK***.** Among many of them, some of the most beautiful and most visited by tourists are Windsor Castle, Edinburgh Castle, Leeds Castle, Alnwick Castle, Cardiff Castle, Bodiam Castle, Stirling Castle, Caernarfon Castle, Warwick Castle, Bamburgh Castle, etc.

Art in the UK

*Art is an important part of British history and culture***.** Many British artists created irreplaceable artwork whose appeal influenced artists from around the globe.

The religious theme dominated British art during the middle ages, which was displayed and best illustrated through wall paintings in churches and religious books. Even in the modern days, the works by famous British artists are shown in famous galleries across the United Kingdom.

These famous galleries in the UK include some of the following:

- The National Gallery
- Tate Britain
- Tate Modern in London
- National Museum in Cardiff
- National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh

Most of these galleries display contemporary art.

Traces of British art development take us back to the pre-historical periods. **Stonehenge**, built around 2600 BC, is *among the oldest British artwork we know until now*. The influence of the Roman conquerors and

other preceding historical ages is still present in the UK. Old churches and cathedrals have the same illuminated manuscript and sculptures as when they were built centuries ago.

Famous Names in British Art

Throughout art history, the UK produced some of the greatest artists ever. Names like William Blake, J.M.W. Turner, John Constable, Samuel Palmer, and so forth made a strong basis for artists that would come later.

The 18th century also saw a number of brilliant British artists best represented by the names of Hans Holbein, Anthony van Dyck, Nicholas Hilliard, Robert Peake, William Larkin, William Dobson, and John Michael Wright.

During the second part of the 18th century, the art movements that took place in the UK resulted in the expansion of distinguished artists like Sir Joshua Reynold, George Stubbs, Thomas Gainsborough, and Joseph Wright of Derby.

Artists like Joseph Wright, James Wright, Samuel Palmer, Richard Parkes Bonnington, and so on, were some of the best during the *19th century***,** or the Romantic period as it is known.

*During the 20th century***,** artists like John Singer Sargent, Sir Jacob Epstein, David Bomberg, Lawrence Atkinson, Dora Carrington, and others climbed the elite of artists in the UK.

Sport in the UK

Playing and watching all kinds of sports is Brits' favorite thing to do, especially football. There is a range of popular sports in the UK, which foreigners also recognize as British sports.

Here are some of the most popular sports in the United Kingdom:

- **Football.** Football is among the most popular sports in the UK and the world. Some of the most popular football teams and players are from the UK, and there is the Premier League which includes the top 20 teams from across the UK. Some of the most popular teams in the UK are Arsenal, Liverpool, Manchester United, etc.
- **Cricket.** Cricket is one of the oldest and most popular sports in the UK, going back as early as the 17th century. There are 18 cricket clubs in total named after all historic counties of the UK. Every year there is a First Class County Championship held over a period of four days.

- **Rugby.** Another very popular British sport is divided into Rugby Union and Rugby League. These two different championships differ in the number of players and some game rules.
- **Badminton.** Badminton is continuously becoming one of the most popular sports in UK history. British people and other badminton fans call it Badminton England, and it is a member of the International Badminton Federation.
- **Tennis.** Sports tournaments are one of the most favorite entertainment ideas among the British people. The most popular tournament in the UK is called Wimbledon, which started way back in 1877.



I. Explain and examine the following terms:

Do-It-Yourself	Lottery	the Arts Council	football pools
the pub	sponsorship	'West End'	ethnic restaurants
rugby football	bear-baiting	brass bands	multiplexes
package tour	scratch cards	repertory theatres	'bed and breakfast'
National	high culture		
	cricket		

II. Answer the following questions:

a) Which is your favorite foreign group or singer? What do you like about it/him?

b) Discuss with other two classmates the similarities between some British and American bands. Consider the kind of music, the way of dressing, the lyrics, etc.

c) Have you ever been in a Music Festival/Concert/Musical? What singers or bands did you see in this festival?

d) What is an important music festival celebrated in the UK?

e) How accessible are festivals of music in your country?

III. Write five questions that can be answered with the information given about higher education in England.

IV. Write a paragraph about how you think British music has influenced music in your country.

V. Complete the table with the right information related to holidays

Holidays	Date	Description/Traditions
1. Easter monday		
2. April fools day		
3. May day		
4. Boxing day		
5. Summer Bank Holiday		
6. Spring Bank Holiday		
7. New Year's Eve		
8. Christmas Day		
9. Good Friday		
10. Battle of the Boyne (Orangemen's Day)		

VI. Think about British movies and popular actors and actresses and write a list of the 5 most popular films in history with their main actors and a brief description of them.

Movie	Actors	Main ideas/Description

VII. Write a description about the best movie filmed in the UK in your opinion, describe it and tell us why you like it.

VIII. What is your impression of the British people, in terms of their leisure sporting and artistic activities?

a) What does the term 'Christianity' mean in relation to British religious history?

b) Discuss religious membership and observance in contemporary British life.

- *Project***:** *Create a Wiki page. Firstly, consult different sites and make a presentation about the British society. (*Learners work in groups that will get information on one of the aspects: *fashion, literature, arts, school* or *entertainment.* Secondly, they create collages, add short information, music, videos and make their presentation original. The project tasks aim at elaborating products that come as a review of what learners have studied).

III. THE UNITED STATES



The *United States of America (USA),* commonly known as the *United States (U.S.) or America,* is a country primarily located in North America. The third-largest country in the world by land and total area, the U.S. consists of 50 states, a federal district, five major unincorporated territories, nine Minor Outlying Islands and includes 326 Indian reservations. It shares land borders with Canada to its north and with Mexico to its south and has maritime borders with the Bahamas, Cuba, Russia, and other nations. With a population of over 334 million, it is the most populous country in the Americas and the third-most populous in the world. The national capital of the United States is Washington, D.C., and its most populous city and principal financial center is New York City.

Ancestors of America's indigenous peoples migrated across the Bering land bridge more than 12,000 years ago. Beginning in 1607, British colonization led to the establishment of the Thirteen Colonies in what is now the Eastern United States. They clashed with the British Crown over taxation and political representation, which led to

the American Revolution and the ensuing Revolutionary War. The United States declared independence on July 4, 1776, and went on to become the first country founded on Enlightenment principles of unalienable natural rights, consent of the governed, and republicanism.

Geography

The United States is the world's third-largest nation by land and total area behind Russia and Canada. The 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia occupy a combined area of 3,119,885 square miles (8,080,470 km^2). The coastal plain of the Atlantic seaboard gives way to inland forests and rolling hills in the Piedmont plateau region.

The Appalachian Mountains and the Adirondack massif separate the East Coast from the Great Lakes and the grasslands of the Midwest. The Mississippi River System—the world's fourth longest river system—runs mainly north–south through the heart of the country. The flat, fertile prairie of the Great Plains stretches to the west, interrupted by a highland region in the southeast.

The Rocky Mountains, west of the Great Plains, extend north to south across the country, peaking at over 14,000 feet (4,300 m) in Colorado. Farther west are the rocky Great Basin and Chihuahua, Sonoran, and Mojave deserts.

The Sierra Nevada and Cascade mountain ranges run close to the Pacific coast. The lowest and highest points in the contiguous United States are in the state of California, about 84 miles (135 km) apart. At an elevation of 20,310 feet (6,190.5 m), Alaska's Denali is the highest peak in the country and continent. Active volcanoes are common throughout Alaska's Alexander and Aleutian Islands, and Hawaii consists of volcanic islands. The supervolcano underlying Yellowstone National Park in the Rockies is the continent's largest volcanic feature. In 2021 the United States had 8% of global permanent meadows and pastures and 10% of cropland.

With its large size and geographic variety, the United States includes most climate types. East of the 100th meridian, the climate ranges from humid continental in the north to humid subtropical in the south. The western Great Plains are semi-arid.

Many mountainous areas of the American West have an alpine climate. The climate is arid in the Southwest, Mediterranean in coastal

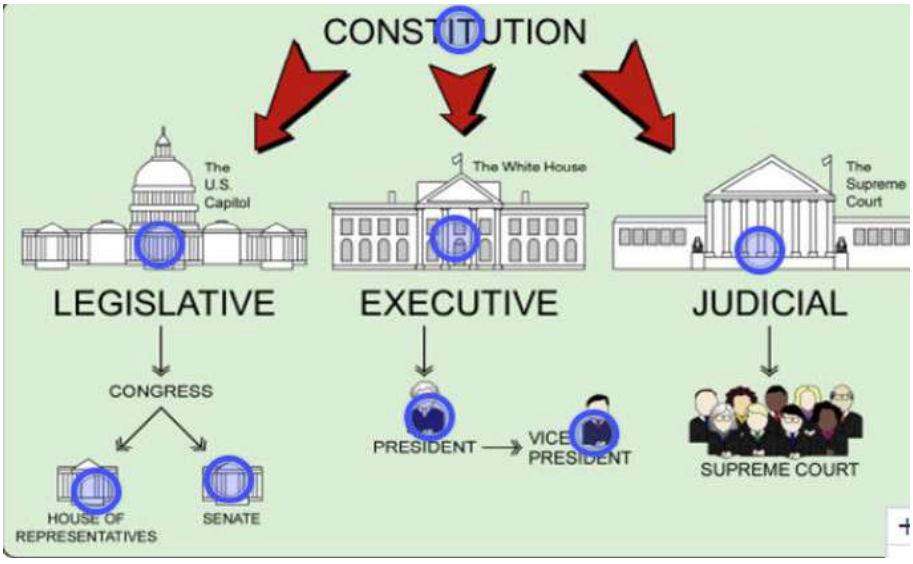
California, and oceanic in coastal Oregon, Washington, and southern Alaska. Most of Alaska is subarctic or polar. Hawaii and the southern tip of Florida are tropical, as well as its territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

States bordering the Gulf of Mexico are prone to hurricanes, and most of the world's tornadoes occur in the country, mainly in Tornado Alley. Overall, the United States receives more high-impact extreme weather incidents than any other country. Extreme weather became more frequent in the U.S. in the 21st century, with three times the number of reported heat waves as in the 1960s. In the American Southwest, droughts became more persistent and more severe.

Political System of the US

The United States was founded on the principles of the American Enlightenment. It is a federal republic of 50 states, a federal district, five territories and several uninhabited island possessions. It is the world's oldest surviving federation, and, according to the World Economic Forum, the oldest democracy as well. It is a liberal representative democracy "in which majority rule is tempered by minority rights protected by law." The U.S. Constitution serves as the country's supreme legal document, also establishing the structure and responsibilities of the federal government and its relationship with the individual states.

The federal government comprises three branches, which are headquartered in Washington, D.C. and regulated by a system of checks and balances.



- The U.S. Congress, a bicameral legislature, made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives, makes federal law, declares war, approves treaties, has the power of the purse, and has the power of impeachment. The Senate has 100 members (2 from each state), elected for a six-year term. The House of Representatives has 435 members from single member congressional districts allocated to each state on the basis of population, elected for a two-year term.
- The U.S. president is the commander-in-chief of the military, can veto legislative bills before they become law (subject to congressional override), and appoints the members of the Cabinet (subject to Senate approval) and other officers, who administer and enforce federal laws and policies through their respective agencies.[] The president and the vice president are elected together in a presidential election. It is an indirect election, with the winner being determined by votes cast by electors of the Electoral College. The President and Vice President serve a four-year term and may be elected to the office no more than twice.
- The U.S. federal judiciary, whose judges are all appointed for life by the President with Senate approval, consists primarily of the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. courts of appeals, and the U.S. district courts. The U.S. Supreme Court interprets laws and overturn those they find unconstitutional. The Supreme Court is led by the chief justice of the United States. It has nine members who serve for life. The members are appointed by the sitting president when a vacancy becomes available.



In the American federal system, sovereignty is shared between two levels of government: national and state. People in the states are also represented by local elected governments, which are administrative divisions of the states. States are subdivided into counties or county equivalents, and further divided into municipalities. The District of Columbia is a federal district that contains the capital of the United States, the city of Washington. The territories and the District of Columbia are administrative divisions of the federal government.

In the United States, politics functions within a framework of a constitutional federal republic and presidential system, with three distinct

branches that share powers: the U.S. Congress which forms the legislative branch, a bicameral legislative body comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate; the executive branch, which is headed by the president of the United States, who serves as the country's head of state and government; and the judicial branch, composed of the Supreme Court and lower federal courts, and which exercises judicial power.

Each of the 50 individual state governments has the power to make laws within its jurisdiction that are not granted to the federal government nor denied to the states in the U.S. Constitution. Each state also has a constitution following the pattern of the federal constitution but differing in details. Each has three branches: an executive branch headed by a governor, a legislative body, and judicial branch. At the local level, governments are found in counties or county-equivalents, and beneath them individual municipalities, townships, school districts, and special districts.

Officials are popularly elected at the federal, state and local levels, with the major exception being the President, who is instead elected indirectly by the people through the Electoral College. U.S. politics is dominated by two parties, which since the American Civil War have been the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, although other parties have run candidates. Since the mid-20th Century, the Democratic Party has generally supported left-leaning policies, while the Republican Party has generally supported right-leaning ones. Both parties have no formal central organization at the national level that controls membership, elected officials or political policies; thus, each party has traditionally had factions and individuals that deviated from party positions. Almost all public officials in America are elected from single-member districts and win office by winning a plurality of votes cast (i.e. more than any other candidate, but not necessarily a majority). Suffrage is nearly universal for citizens 18 years of age and older, with the notable exception of registered felons in some states

The United States is a constitutional federal republic, in which the president (the head of state and head of government), Congress and judiciary share powers reserved to the national government, and the federal government shares sovereignty with the state governments.

The federal government is divided into three branches, as per the specific terms articulated in the U.S. Constitution:

- The executive branch is headed by the president and is independent of the legislature.

- Legislative power is vested in the two chambers of Congress: the Senate and the House of Representatives.
- The judicial branch (or judiciary), composed of the Supreme Court and lower federal courts, exercises judicial power. The judiciary's function is to interpret the United States Constitution and federal laws and regulations. This includes resolving disputes between the executive and legislative branches.



The federal government's layout is explained in the Constitution. Two political parties, *the Democratic Party and the Republican Party*, have dominated American politics since the American Civil War, although other parties have existed.

There are major differences between the political system of the United States and that of many other developed countries, including:

- an upper legislative house (the Senate), with far more power than is found in equivalent bodies in most other countries;
- a Supreme Court that also has a wider scope of power than is found in most countries;
- a separation of powers between the legislature and the executive; and
- a political landscape dominated by only two main parties. The United States is one of the world's only developed countries where all additional parties have minimal or nonexistent influence and almost no representation at the national and state level. Causes for this mainly focus on the plurality-based first-past-the-post voting system, used in most elections, which encourages strategic voting and discourages vote splitting. This also results in both major parties having multiple internal factions

The federal entity created by the U.S. Constitution is the dominant feature of the American governmental system, as citizens are also subject to a state government and various units of local government (such as counties, municipalities, and special districts).

State governments have the power to make laws on all subjects that are not granted to the federal government nor denied to the states in the U.S. Constitution.

These include education, family law, contract law, and most crimes. Unlike the federal government, which only has those powers granted to it in the Constitution, a state government has inherent powers allowing it to act unless limited by a provision of the state or national constitution.

Like the federal government, state governments have three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The chief executive of a state is its popularly elected governor, who typically holds office for a four-year term (although in some states the term is two years). Except for Nebraska, which has unicameral legislature, all states have a bicameral legislature, with the upper house usually called the Senate and the lower house called the House of Representatives, the Assembly or something similar. In most states, senators serve four-year terms, and members of the lower house serve two-year terms.



I. Choose the best variant

Which statement is true?

(A) Amerigo Vespucci discovered America.

(B) Amerigo Vespucci discovered and explored the new land.

(C) Christopher Columbus discovered but did not explore the new land.

(D) Christopher Columbus found America and settled in the New World.

The Civil War resulted in _____

(A) the independence from Britain.

(B) the abolition of slavery.

(C) the American Constitution.

(D) the victory over France.

"Yankee" may mean _____

(A) a Northerner.

(B) an American.

(C) an Englishman.

(D) an Indian.

The motto of the USA is _____

(A) "God Save the President".

(B) "In God We Trust".

(C) "God's Will".

(D) "God and My Right".

One of the well-known nicknames for the USA is a _____

(A) "crazy tribe".

(B) "wild world".

(C) "melting pot".

(D) "great empire".

Which president was the first in the White House?

(A) George Washington

(B) John Adams

(C) Abraham Lincoln

(D) Thomas Jefferson

_____ is the most prominent author of the Declaration of Independence.

(A) George Washington

(B) John Adams

(C) Thomas Jefferson

(D) Abraham Lincoln

The Watergate scandal is connected with the president _____

(A) John Kennedy.

(B) Bill Clinton.

(C) Richard Nixon.

(D) Ronald Reagan.

The first ten amendments to the US Constitution are in _____

(A) the Bill of Rights.

(B) the Declaration of Independence.

(C) the Magna Carta.

(D) the British North America Act.

In the USA, executive and legislative officials are elected by a _____ *of citizens*.

(A) majority rule

(B) plurality vote

(C) proportional representation

(D) minority right

Senators are elected to serve for a period of _____ years.

(A) 6

(B) 4

(C) 3

(D) 2

There are _____ members in the House of Representatives.

(A) 50

(B) 100

(C) 200

(D) 435

The best-known American song is _____

(A) “America the Beautiful”.

(B) “America the Great”.

(C) “America the Wonderful”.

(D) “America the Marvellous”.

The national symbol of the USA is _____

(A) the rose.

(B) the bald eagle.

(C) the Statue of Liberty.

(D) the donkey.

The largest religious group in the USA is _____

(A) Protestants.

(B) Lutherans.

(C) Catholics.

(D) Moslems.

The capital of the USA was built on _____

(A) the Mississippi River.

(B) the Potomac River.

(C) the Ohio River.

(D) the Colorado River.

The symbol of the Republican Party is _____

(A) the donkey.

(B) the elephant.

(C) the bull.

(D) the bear.

Most of the American states are bounded by _____

(A) the Pacific Ocean.

(B) the Atlantic Ocean.

(C) the Gulf of Mexico.

(D) all of them.

Which of the Great Lakes is entirely in the USA?

(A) Lake Superior

(B) Lake Huron

(C) Lake Erie

(D) Lake Michigan

The biggest river in the USA is _____

(A) the Ohio River.

(B) the Hudson River.

(C) the Potomac.

(D) the Mississippi.

The oldest American college is _____

(A) Princeton.

(B) Yale.

(C) Harvard.

(D) Maryland.

A sophomore is _____

(A) a first-year student.

(B) a second-year student.

(C) a third-year student.

(D) a teacher.

Which of the following American presidents commanded the US forces during World War II?

(A) Franklin Roosevelt

(B) Theodore Roosevelt

(C) Dwight Eisenhower

(D) Harry Truman

Which of the following presidents was the youngest in the USA?

(A) John Kennedy

(B) William Clinton

(C) Barack Obama

(D) George Bush, Jr.

American Culture

Described as a "melting pot" of cultures, the US is the third-largest country in the world, with residents representing different ethnic groups such as African Americans, Asian Americans, Indigenous Americans, and Latin Americans. As a result, US culture may at once seem both familiar and different, whether its shared values, food portions, driving, fashion, and even slang. Learning about American culture in advance can give you a sense of what to expect while studying in the US!

Holidays

In the US culture, there are a few significant holidays that may be new to international students. Here's a list of federally recognized holidays in the US:

- **New Year's Day** — The first of January is a holiday in the US, with Americans celebrating the arrival of a New Year. As this day symbolizes new beginnings, many Americans start the New Year with family and loved ones.



- **Martin Luther King, Jr., Day (MLK Day)** — On the third Monday of January, the US honors the life of American civil rights activist Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK), who protested against racial discrimination and made immense contributions to end segregation and prejudice. On this holiday, Americans are encouraged to reflect on racial equality and social change, as well as to devote time to community service.

- **Memorial Day** — The last Monday of May is dedicated to US military personnel who lost their lives in service. To honor their lives and service, Americans place flowers and flags on the graves of military personnel; many towns also hold parades. Memorial Day is also considered the official kickoff to summer, and many Americans have outdoor parties, gathering with family and friends for barbecues, swimming, and/or outdoor recreation.



- **Juneteenth** — To recognize the day slavery officially came to an end (June 19, 1865), Juneteenth is commemorated across America with parades, fairs, barbecues, and more.



Independence Day — Celebrated with fireworks, barbecues, parades, and live festivals, the Fourth of July marks the day the United States declared their independence from British rule.

- **Labor Day** — The first Monday in September honors and appreciates the American labor movement, as well as laborers' contributions to the country's progress and achievements. This holiday is considered the close of summer, and Americans gather outdoors for food, swimming, games, and other festivities.
- **Veterans Day** — Observed on November 11, Veterans Day acknowledges living veterans who previously served in the United States military.
- **Second Monday of October Columbus Day**- Honors Christopher Columbus, traditional discoverer of the Americas. In some areas it is also a celebration of Italian culture and heritage. It is celebrated as American Indian Heritage Day and Fraternal Day in Alabama; celebrated as Native American Day in South Dakota. In Hawaii, it is celebrated as Discoverer's Day, though is not an official state holiday.
- **Thanksgiving** — Thanksgiving is a holiday of gratitude, commemorating the Pilgrim settlers' first harvest back in the 1600s. Now, every fourth Thursday of November, Americans celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends over a hearty meal of turkey and all the trimmings. *Thanksgiving* is the principal traditionally-American holiday, evolving from the English Pilgrim's custom of giving thanks for one's welfare. Thanksgiving is generally celebrated as a family reunion with a large afternoon feast. Independence Day (or the Fourth of July) celebrates the anniversary of the country's Declaration of



Independence from Great Britain, and is generally observed by parades throughout the day and the shooting of fireworks at night.

- **Christmas Day** — Celebrating the birth of Jesus, Christmas Day is celebrated every December 25. It's a huge holiday in America, with parades, shopping events, music, and decorations. You may experience the country getting into the festive spirit even before October ends! **Christmas Day,** celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, is widely celebrated and a federal holiday, though a fair amount of its current cultural importance is due to secular reasons. European colonization has led to some other Christian holidays such as Easter and St. Patrick's Day to be observed, though with varying degrees of religious fidelity.
- Along with these holidays, individual states or regions will observe local holidays based on their cultural history, or for members of specific communities or religions. For example, Massachusetts celebrates Patriots' Day the third Monday of April, honoring the first battles of the Revolutionary War in Lexington and Concord; the Boston Marathon is also held that day.

Some interesting things about the US

The United States of America is a federal republic in North America, bordered to the north by Canada, to the south by Mexico, and to the east and west by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

The country has the third greatest land area in the world and over 330 million inhabitants, making it the world's third most populated country.

The United States is noted for its diverse landscapes, which include immense deserts and towering mountains, as well as rich woods and long coasts.

New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, and Philadelphia are among its main cities, each with its own distinct culture and personality.

The United States is a worldwide superpower and the world's largest economy, with a sophisticated infrastructure, a varied and highly skilled workforce, and an entrepreneurial culture.

It has 50 states, one federal district (Washington, D.C.), and five main territories. Its political system is a federal republic with a presidential system of government.

The country has a rich cultural past that draws influences from its Native American, European, African, and Asian inhabitants, and it is well-known for its contributions to music, art, literature, and film.

The United States has also been at the forefront of scientific and technological developments, with some of the world's most prestigious colleges and research organizations.

1**. The United States is the fourth largest country in the world.**

The United States is the fourth largest country in the world by land area, with a total area of approximately 9.8 million square kilometers, after Russia, Canada, and China. It is located in North America and is bounded to the north by Canada and to the south by Mexico. The country's geography is extremely diversified, ranging from enormous deserts in the southwest to rocky mountains in the west to undulating plains in the Midwest. The country also boasts a lengthy coastline, with the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to the east and west, respectively.

2. **The United States has the largest economy in the world in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).**

In terms of Gross Domestic Product, the United States possesses the world's largest economy (GDP). According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the US economy will have a GDP of more than $21 trillion by 2021, accounting for nearly 24% of global GDP.

Finance, technology, healthcare, and entertainment are just a few of the businesses that make up the American economy. In addition, the country is a major producer of items like as vehicles, aerospace products, and consumer electronics.

Furthermore, the US has a robust service industry that comprises areas such as finance, real estate, and professional services.

Overall, the US economy is a major driving force in the global economy, with a large impact on financial markets and trading patterns around the world.

3. The United States has the world's largest military by active duty personnel.

By active duty personnel, the United States possesses the world's largest military. According to the most recent figures, the United States has

over 1.3 million active-duty military troops as of 2021, making it the world's largest military force.

The United States maintains a substantial number of reserve and National Guard members in addition to active-duty military personnel, bringing the overall number of US military personnel to over 2 million.

The United States has a strong military, with superior weaponry and a global network of military bases and stations.

The military of the United States also plays an important role in global security, with the country frequently leading or participating in foreign military missions and peacekeeping initiatives. Aside from military might, the United States is a significant producer and exporter of military equipment and technology. The country's military sector is one of the greatest in the world, with businesses such as Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and Raytheon among its members. Overall, the military strength of the United States is a substantial component of its global influence, as well as a vital determinant in its national security and foreign policy.

4. The United States has been the birthplace of many famous inventions.

The United States is often regarded as a center of innovation, having given rise to many remarkable innovations that have altered modern life. The following are some of the most noteworthy inventions that originated in the United States:

- The telephone was invented in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell.
- The light bulb, which Thomas Edison invented in 1879.
- The internet, which was established in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s and has since revolutionized worldwide communication and information sharing, was invented in the 1960s and 1970s.
- The airplane was conceived in 1903 by the Wright brothers.
- The personal computer, which was pioneered in the 1970s and 1980s by businesses such as Apple and Microsoft.
- The mobile phone, which was invented in the United States in the 1970s and has since become a common communication and computing tool.

These and other inventions had a significant impact on civilization and contributed to build the world as we know it today. The United States

continues to be a prominent hub for technical innovation and a driving force in the development of new technologies and inventions.

5. The United States is home to many famous landmarks.

Many notable landmarks in the United States are well-known around the world. Some of the most well-known and well-known landmarks are:

- The Statue of Liberty, which stands in New York Harbor and was given to the United States by France. It is one of the most recognizable emblems of American freedom and democracy, standing over 305 feet tall.
- The Golden Gate Bridge is one of the most iconic suspension bridges in the world, spanning the Golden Gate Strait in San Francisco. It was finished in 1937 and has since become an iconic symbol of San Francisco and the United States as a whole.
- The Grand Canyon, located in Arizona, is one of the world's most stunning natural wonders. The canyon is more than 277 miles long and more than a mile deep, and it is home to a wide variety of plant and animal life.
- Mount Rushmore, located in South Dakota's Black Hills, includes the faces of four US presidents carved into the side of a mountain. The sculpture, which was finished in 1941, is one of the most recognizable symbols of American democracy and leadership.
- The Empire State Building, which was built in 1931 in New York City. It is nearly 1,400 feet tall and was the highest building in the world for many years.

These and other landmarks have become iconic emblems of American culture, history, and achievement, attracting visitors from all over the world.

6. The United States is a federal republic consisting of 50 states.

The United States of America is a federal republic made up of 50 states, one federal district (Washington, D.C.), and five main territories. Each state has its own government, which includes a governor and a state legislature and is in charge of a variety of laws and programs such as education, healthcare, and public safety.

The federal government, headquartered in Washington, D.C., is in charge of national policies and programs such as defense, foreign policy, and interstate commerce regulation.

American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands are the country's five largest territories.

These territories are not states and do not have voting representation in the United States Congress; instead, they are controlled by independent territorial administrations that are subordinate to the federal government's ultimate power.

The United States has a distinct federalism system that divides authority between the federal government and individual states. This system, which is incorporated in the US Constitution, is intended to balance the authority of the central government with the autonomy of the states.

7. English is the most widely spoken language in the United States.

Although English is the most commonly spoken language in the United States, Spanish is the second most commonly spoken language. Almost 80% of the population in the United States speaks English at home, according to the United States Census Bureau.

With almost 41 million individuals speaking Spanish at home, Spanish is the second most commonly spoken language. Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese are also widely spoken in the United States. Apart from its diversified language terrain, the United States has a long history of cultural interchange and assimilation, with several cultural traditions and influences affecting American society.

Several facets of American society, from music and art to food and fashion, reflect this diversity. The United States also has a long history of immigration, with people traveling from all over the world to seek better chances and start new lives.

8. The United States has a highly developed infrastructure.

The United States has a sophisticated infrastructure that comprises an extensive road network, a massive air transportation system, and a complicated railway network.

Around 4 million miles of roads exist in the United States, including a network of highways and interstates that connect cities and regions across the country. The United States also has some of the world's busiest airports, with significant hubs in cities such as Atlanta, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

The country's air transportation system is one of the largest and most efficient in the world, connecting the country to locations all over the world.

The United States has a complex network of railways that transport products and people around the country in addition to its road and aviation transportation networks. The railway system in the United States is one of the most extensive in the world, with both passenger and freight trains.

The railway system is a vital part of the US economy since it transports raw materials and completed goods across the country, thereby supporting industries like manufacturing, agriculture, and mining.

Overall, the United States' highly developed infrastructure has been a crucial component in driving the country's economic growth and prosperity, allowing it to become a global economic and political power.

9. The United States is a very diverse country.

The United States is a diversified country that is home to individuals from all over the world.

The country is home to people of many various ethnic and racial backgrounds, and it has a long history of immigration, with people coming from all over the world to seek better chances and build new lives.

Several facets of American society, from music and art to food and fashion, reflect this diversity.

The United States is a geographically diverse country with a vast range of landscapes and climates, in addition to its cultural diversity.

The country's natural wonders extend from the deserts of the southwest to the forests of the Pacific Northwest, and include mountains, lakes, and beaches.

The United States is sometimes described as a melting pot, where many cultures and traditions blend to form a distinct American identity.

While there have been obstacles and disputes involving race and identity, the country's variety is also a source of strength, creativity, and innovation.

10. The United States is famous for its sports



The United States is well-known for its sports, with various disciplines originating in the country and reaching international acclaim. The following are some of the most popular sports in the United States:

Baseball, the country's national pastime, has a long and illustrious history in American culture.

In terms of television ratings and income, American football is the most popular sport in the United States. The National Football League (NFL) is the country's most popular professional sports league.



Basketball was invented in the United States and has since become a global sensation, with the National Basketball Association (NBA) serving as the world's leading professional basketball league.

Ice hockey is popular in colder parts of the country, particularly in the northeast and the Great Lakes region.



Soccer (football), which has gained in popularity in recent years in the United States, especially among young people and immigrant populations.

Aside from these sports, the United States has a strong sports culture that includes a variety of other sports such as tennis, golf, and boxing. The country also serves as a significant host of international sporting events such as the Olympics, World Cup, and World Series, which draw millions of spectators from all over the world. Ultimately, sports are an important element of American culture and help to shape the country's national identity.

11. The United States has a diverse cultural background

The United States has a diverse cultural background influenced by Native Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Asians. Several facets of American culture, from music and art to food and fashion, reflect the country's cultural past.

Native American culture is an important aspect of the history and identity of the United States. Before Europeans arrived, Native American tribes and countries roamed the territory that is now the United States.

Several Native American traditions and practices are still commemorated and practiced throughout the United States today.

Many of the country's early inhabitants came from European countries such as England, Spain, and France, and their effect on American culture is equally considerable.

European traditions and customs have inspired American music, art, architecture, and literature, and they continue to play a significant role in shaping the country's cultural identity.

African American culture has had a significant impact on American culture, particularly in music, literature, and fashion.

For years, African American cultural traditions such as jazz music, blues, and hip hop have affected American music and culture.

Lastly, with many diverse Asian cultures and traditions represented across the country, Asian American culture is a significant and expanding element of the country's cultural legacy.

These civilizations have inspired American art, music, and cuisine, and have contributed significantly to the country's diversified scene.

Generally, the United States is a rich and diversified cultural mosaic, with many different cultural traditions and influences blending to form a distinct and dynamic American identity.

12. The United States is home to many world-class universities.

Many world-class colleges in the United States are widely renowned for their academic brilliance and research capabilities. Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Stanford University are among the most well-known and highly rated universities in the world.

Harvard University, headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, is one of the country's oldest and most famous universities.



It was founded in 1636 and is frequently recognized as one of the world's top institutions, producing several Nobel laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, and other noteworthy alumni.

MIT, situated in Cambridge, is one of the world's major research institutes, especially in science and engineering. It is well-known for its inventive research, which has resulted in numerous ground-breaking discoveries and products.

Stanford University, located in Palo Alto, California, is one of the most prestigious universities in the United States, specializing in technology, business, and entrepreneurship. It has produced a number of outstanding entrepreneurs and business leaders and is largely regarded as a premier institution in the Silicon Valley region.

These and many other colleges in the United States have contributed to the country's position as a leader in research and development, as well as in increasing knowledge and creativity in a variety of sectors.

13. The largest freshwater lake in the world by surface area is Lake Superior.

Lake Superior, which is located in both the United States and Canada, has the world's largest freshwater lake by surface area. Lake Superior covers an area of about 82,100 square kilometers.

Lake Superior is one of North America's Great Lakes, and it lies on the boundary between the United States and Canada, with the majority of the lake in the United States.

The lake is a famous tourist site as well as a vital source of freshwater for the surrounding area.

14. The oldest city in America that has been continuously inhabited by European settlers is St. Augustine, Florida.

St. Augustine, Florida, is America's oldest continuously inhabited city by European settlers.

In 1565, Spanish naval and conquistador Pedro Menéndez de Avilés founded St. Augustine, making it the oldest continuously occupied European town in what is now the continental United States.

The city was built to safeguard Spanish interests in the New World and to act as a base for Spanish exploration and colonization endeavors. Nowadays, St. Augustine is a renowned tourist destination with many historic landmarks and attractions, including the Castillo de San Marcos, the United States' oldest masonry fort.

15. The tallest mountain in the United States is Denali.



Denali, commonly known as Mount McKinley, is the tallest mountain in the United States and is located in the state of Alaska. Denali is part of the Alaska Range and has the highest summit elevation in North America at 20,310 feet (6,190 meters). Denali is a popular climbing and hiking destination, however it is a difficult and risky ascent with extreme weather conditions and technical problems. Denali, despite its difficulties, attracts thousands of people each year who are lured to its natural beauty and rough terrain.

The U.S. Education System

The United States of America is the land of opportunity. It is known for its diverse, beautiful panoramic views, variegated culture, and dynamic, vast, and robust education system. Well-known around the globe for its academic excellence and innovative approach, the educational system of the USA stands as a hope for several scholars and visionaries.

How does the education system in the USA work?

1. **Kindergarten:** The kindergarten schooling system in the USA is the first year of formal education and bridges preschool and elementary education. The course is specifically designed for children aged between 5 and 6.

These classrooms are typically less formal than higher education and include play areas and creative activities. Kindergarten organs vary from full day to half day depending on the schools and focus on developing early learning standards like foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, science, and social studies.

2. Primary Education

Elementary School: The elementary school system encompasses a fundamental part of the K-12 educational system, covering K-5 or kindergarten through 5th grade. This schooling system introduces students to a structured learning environment with teachers mentoring them through the various subjects.

The school curriculum focuses on developing fundamental skills in subjects like English Language Arts (ELA), maths, science, and physical education. Along with academics, elementary schools focus on social and emotional development, helping students build life skills such as teamwork, communication, etc.

Middle School or Junior School: The USA's Middle or junior school system is a crucial transitional stage in students' educational journey and typically covers grades 6-8.

The curriculum becomes more memorable and specialised, focusing on core subjects like English, maths, social studies, and science, but these subjects become more advanced and detailed. Middle schools often introduce students to specific topics to understand their areas of personal interest. Besides these, students are exposed to several extracurricular activities, sports, and clubs to foster overall growth and expand the reach of career opportunities.

3. Secondary Education

High School: High school education in the USA forms. A critical and formative of a student's educational journey. It covers grades 9 to 12 and the final stage of the K-12 education system before the advent of college courses.

The high school curriculum is designed to serve a well-rounded education on core subjects like English, science, and social studies. It even allows students to choose from several elective courses, allowing them to explore their interests and career goals. It even offers a range of extracurricular activities, including sports, music, drama, and community service opportunities, which promote personal development.

4. Post-Secondary Education:

College or University: The post-secondary education system comprises many educational opportunities beyond high school and includes various paths like colleges, community colleges, vocational and technical schools, and online institutions.

It typically consists of a four-year bachelor's degree program and master's and doctoral degrees after completing graduate courses. Each of these courses allows students to choose from various majors.

Post-secondary education is not just limited to recent high school graduates; even adults who wish to continue their education and earn a professional degree can restart their careers.

Types of Higher Education Institutions in the USA

The US education system offers a wide range of options in higher education, catering for the interests and career goals of everyone. Here is a list of the different higher education programs available in the USA.

State colleges

State colleges or universities are public institutions that provide various undergraduate and graduate degree courses. They mainly focus on providing undergraduate education and have limited intakes. These colleges cater to a specific region or community's educational and workforce needs. These universities often have a student body, including regional institutions and more prominent universities with broader reach.

Some prominent private institutions in the USA are Harvard University, Yale University, Williams College, Boston College, etc.

Private Colleges

Private colleges or institutions in the USA offer higher education and are not government-funded. Such institutions are operated by the funds given by private organisations, which include non-profit organisations, for-profit corporations or religious entities. Private colleges function differently as compared to public colleges funded by the government.

Some prominent private universities, like Princeton University, Columbia University, Duke University, etc., are in the USA.

Community colleges

Community colleges or institutions in the USA provide affordable and accessible educational opportunities to students. These institutions are often called "open-access" institutions, meaning these colleges have minimal admission requirements.

Community colleges offer a two-year certification program that is transferable, which means graduates from these universities transfer to higher universities to pursue four-year college to complete their courses. Some community colleges in the USA are Community College of Philadelphia, City College of San Francisco, Miami Dade College, etc.

Interesting Facts About the United States

The United States of America, the land of the free consists of 50 states. Over 330 million people reside in America making it the third most populous country in the world. The US is also the fourth largest country in the world by total area. This vast country is well known across the world and has a cultural imprint that is driven by technological innovation, popular movies, television, and music.

Discover all the amazing and interesting things America has to offer with these interesting facts.

- **America Is Home To Many Natural Wonders**

America is home to many natural wonders of the world. In fact, the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have recognized many heritage sites in America. According to UNESCO, a world heritage site is a place of special cultural or physical significance.

Some examples of the UNESCO world heritage sites in America are *the Grand Canyon National Park, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Yellowstone National Park,* and a few others.

- **The US Has The 4th Longest River System In The World**

Aerial view of the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers in western North Dakota. Arriving at the junction of these two great rivers was a milestone for the Lewis and Clark Expedition in the early 1800's.

The Missouri River is the longest river in North America. The river derives from Montana, located at the base of the Rocky Mountains, and flows for approximately 2, 341 miles (3, 767 kilometers) before it empties

into the Mississippi River just north of St. Louis, Missouri. The Missouri River and the Mississippi River combine to create the 4th longest river system in the world.

For thousands of years, many people have depended on the Missouri River. From drinking water to transportation, irrigation, flood control, and now even for the generation of hydroelectric power. As you can see this long body of water has played an important role over the years.

- **The American Flag Has Had 27 Versions**

The first American flag only displayed 13 stripes as well as 13 stars that were arranged in a circle. The stars and stripes represented the 13 colonies that declared independence from Great Britain. While the origins of the first American Flag are unknown, some do believe that is was designed by a New Jersey Congressman, Francis Hopkinson, and sewn by a Philadelphia seamstress, Betsy Ross.

Since the founding of the United States, there have been 27 versions of the American flag. Each new flag represented the addition of new states. Today, the American flag displays 50 stars that represent the 50 states that make up the US.

- **Home To Some of The Best Musical Artist Of All Time**

Not only is America a huge country, but their musical impression has made a big impact on the world too. America dominates the music industry as there are so many talented musicians that call America home.

Some of the best musical artists include *Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Jimmy Hendrix, Madonna, Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson, Beyonce*, and many many more.

- **Center of Entertainment**



Hollywood sign atop Mount Lee, in ***Hollywood Hills*** area of Santa Monica Mountains. Sign's letters are 45' tall. Seen from rooftop WET Deck at W Hollywood Hotel & Resort, Los Angeles, California, USA.

America has a huge impact on global culture and a portion of that stems from entertainment. Many romance and action movies we enjoy are filmed and produced in the United States.

Hollywood is globally well-known as the center of entertainment and some would consider that it is one of the most famous places on earth. Hollywood attracts tourists from all over the world with landmarks such as the brass star embedded Walk of Fame and the TCL Chinese

- **Washington, DC Wasn't Always The Capital Of America**

Many recognize Washington, DC as the capital of the United States but that wasn't always the case. Washington didn't become the capital until 1790.

Believe it or not, from 1785 until 1790, New York City served as the countries capital. While it may not be the capital today, over 8 million people reside in New York City, making it the most populous city in America, and it's one of the best cities to visit in the USA. While it is one of the best places to visit it is also one of the rudest cities in America, so be sure to choose your words carefully with the locals.

- **Las Vegas Is The Gambling Capital Of The World**



Las Vegas, Nevada is the 28th-most populated city in the United States and is the most populous city in Nevada. This famous city is renowned for its nightlife, entertainment, gambling, shopping, and fine dining. Las Vegas has the largest strip of casinos which has earned this city the Gambling Capital of the World title.

The city is also famous for its mega casino-hotels which has also earned Las Vegas the title of Entertainment Capital of the World. Further, Las Vegas is one of the world's most visited tourist destinations as well as one of the top destinations for business conventions in the United States.

- **There Is a City Named Boring And It's In Oregon**

When you hear the word boring, nothing exciting comes to mind. So you might be asking yourself who would ever want to reside in a city name Boring. Believe it or not, tucked away in the state of Oregon about 20 miles from Portland, is a city named Boring with a population of over 7 thousand people.

While this may sound like an obscure name for a city, the name was chosen for a reason. The city was named after its founder, William H Boring, who farmed the land in the 1870s. To make things more exciting, Boring, Oregan partnered with Dull, Scotland, and have even declared August 9 as the annual Dull, Boring Day. This newfound partnership has sparked tourist's interest and is putting Boring, Oregan back on the map.

- **The US Doesn't Have An Official Language**

While English is predominantly spoken across the United States, on a federal level there are no laws stating that English is the official language. However, even though there are no federal laws, 31 states have declared English the official language.

Further, there are only a few states that are officially bilingual. For example, in New Mexico, the official language is English and Spanish, whereas, in Louisiana, the official language is English and French, and finally, in Hawaii, the official language is English and Hawaiian.

- **Iconic Food In America**

Like other countries, America is famous for a few dishes. To begin, the iconic Twinkies were invented in Illinois in the 1930s by a baker named James Alexander Dewar. Legend has it that the name for this sugary snack was inspired by a billboard that was advertising for "Twinkle Toe Shoes".

The inventor of corn dogs is uncertain, but it was definitely invented by someone in America in the later 1930s. Since then this popular State Fair food has made its way into the many freezers across North America and beyond. A few other iconic American foods include cheeseburgers, peanut butter, and jelly sandwiches, s'mores, BBQ ribs, and more.

- **The Statue Of Liberty Was A Gift**

The Statue of Liberty, formally known as "Liberty Enlightening the World", was a gift from France. This gift was sent to celebrate 100 years of Franco-American friendship. The statue was sculpted by Frederic Auguste Bartholdi while the framework was designed by a French engineer, Gustave Eiffel, who also designed the Eiffel Tower.



The Statue of Liberty is located on Liberty Island in New York, NY. The torch is a symbol of enlightenment and lights the way to freedom by showing us the path to liberty.

- **The Gateway Arch Is The Tallest Monument In The US**



The Gateway Arch, also known as the “Gateway to the West” is a monument in St. Louis, Missouri, and sits along the west bank of the Mississippi River. At 630 feet tall, the Gateway Arch claims the title of the tallest man-made monument in the US.

The monument commemorates the westward expansion of the United States and is officially dedicated to “the American People”. The Arch is internationally recognized as a symbol of St. Louis and because of this, it is a popular tourist destination.

- **Iolani Palace is the only royal palace used by a monarch in the US**

The Iolani Palace in Honolulu, Hawaii is the only royal palace used by a monarch in the United States. It served as the royal residence for the rulers of the Kingdom of Hawaii from 1845 to 1893. Located in the capitol district of downtown Honolulu, the palace is now a National Historic Landmark. Built in 1879, it showcases Hawaiian renaissance architecture with a blend of Italian Renaissance and Hawaiian elements known as "American Florentine." The palace features four corner towers, two center towers, and double lanais on the first and second floors. It was considered one of the world's finest palaces at the time, equipped with modern amenities like indoor plumbing, electric lighting, and a telephone.

Following the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893, the Iolani Palace served as the capitol building for the Provisional Government, Republic, Territory, and State of Hawaii until 1969. In 1978, it was restored and opened to the public as a museum, allowing visitors to experience its grandeur and learn about Hawaii's rich history and royal heritage. As the sole royal palace on U.S. soil, the Iolani Palace holds great cultural and historical significance, representing the symbol of Hawaiian independence and the legacy of the kingdom's former rulers.



I. Choose the best variant

Which statement about the US economy is wrong?

(A) The US has a capitalist mixed economy.
(B) The US national debt is the world's largest.
(C) The US economy is shaped by the country's huge natural resources, well developed infrastructure, and high productivity.
(D) The USA is the largest exporter and importer of goods in the world.

The Disney World is located in _____

(A) Orlando.
(B) Florida.
(C) neither of them.
(D) both of them.

The American city of Moscow is located in _____

(A) Florida.
(B) Alaska.
(C) Alabama.
(D) Idaho.

The Pentagon has _____ sides and angles.

(A) 3
(B) 4
(C) 5
(D) 6

Which statement is true about Alaska?

(A) It was found by the American explorers.
(B) It was conquered from the Eskimoes.
(C) It was purchased from Russia.
(D) It was America's first state.

The NATO was founded in _____

(A) 1944.
(B) 1945.
(C) 1947.
(D) 1949.

The US and Soviet leaders signed SALT I in _____

(A) New York.

(B) Washington.

(C) Leningrad.

(D) Moscow.

"The cold war" gave way to the international cooperation in the USA – USSR relationships in _____

(A) 1976.

(B) 1987.

(C) 1992.

(D) 2000.

Detroit is the center of _____ industry.

(A) textile

(B) food

(C) shipbuilding

(D) automobile

Thanksgiving Day is celebrated in _____

(A) February.

(B) August.

(C) November.

(D) December.

The highest peak in the USA is in _____

(A) the Appalachian Mountains.

(B) the Cordilleras.

(C) the Highland regions.

(D) Sierra Nevada.

We can see many jack-o'-lanterns on _____

(A) New Year's Day.

(B) Christmas Day.

(C) Columbus Day.

(D) Halloween.

John Ford, Howard Hawks, Francis Coppola are _____

(A) film makers.

(B) writers.

(C) scientists.

(D) car makers.

Oscar Pierce (the founder of the movie Oscars) was _____

(A) a film maker.

(B) an actor.

(C) a scientist.

(D) a wheat and fruit grower.

The author of "An American Tragedy" is _____

(A) Mark Twain.

(B) Ernest Hemingway.

(C) Theodore Dreiser.

(D) John Steinbeck.

Which of the following writers is the Nobel Laureate for Literature in 1954?

(A) Mark Twain

(B) Ernest Hemingway

(C) John Steinbeck

(D) William Saroyan

Which novel is not written by Ernest Hemingway?

(A) "A Farewell to Arms"

(B) "The Fifth Column"

(C) "Cabbages and Kings"

(D) "For Whom the Bell Tolls"

_____ is considered the creator of the classical detective story.

(A) Arthur Conan Doyle

(B) Agatha Christie

(C) Edgar Alan Poe

(D) Each of them

Charlie Chaplin did not star in the film _____

(A) "The Kid".

(B) "The Gold Rush".

(C) "The Great Dictator".

(D) "Pulp Fiction".

Norma Jeanne Mortensen is the true name of _____

(A) Elizabeth Taylor.

(B) Marilyn Monroe.

(C) Audrey Hepburn.

(D) Sharon Stone.

Which of the following literary works is recognized as "the Great American Novel"?

(A) Herman Melville's "Moby-Dick"

(B) Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn"

(C) F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby"

D) Each of them

The first architect of the US Capitol is _____

(A) William Thornton.

(B) Frank Wright.

(C) Frank Gehry.

(D) Philip Johnson.

The first Afro-American woman to become a TV news reviewer was_____

(A) Oprah Winfrey.

(B) Condoleezza Rice.

(C) Whitney Houston.

(D) Angela Davis.

The American "cultural icon" is _____

(A) the apple pie.

(B) baseball.

(C) the American flag.

(D) each of them.

Which of these people did not take part in the presidential primaries of 2008?

(A) John McCain

(B) Barack Obama

(C) Hillary Clinton

(D) George Bush

II. What traditional dishes are served in the United States on Thanksgiving, and what is the history behind them?

III. Write five questions that can be answered with the information given about the higher education in the USA.

IV. Fill the information about this prestigious universities, and add another University in UK, and two of the USA

	Oxford	Cambridge	Harvard	MIT	Princeton	University College London
Location						
Year of foundation						
Founder						
Characteristics						
Famous graduated Students						

V. Choose one holiday and predict what it might 'look like' in 25 years? In 100 years? Explain what primary forces will shape those changes and defend why you think those changes might occur.

VI. How might different cultures around the world view American holiday customs different than Americans do? Why might these differences exist? What can Americans learn from those differences in perspective that might help them better understand other cultures?

VII. Write a description about the best movie filmed in the USA in your opinion, describe it and tell us why you like it.



VIII. a.Brainstorm the differences between restaurants in your home country and a foreign country (in this case, the United States). These differences can refer to any aspect of eating out, such as service style, portion size, etc. Share some of these interesting ideas with the whole class. Provide your colleagues with a realistic image of what restaurants in different countries are like. Present 2 recipes of American dishes served at the restaurant.

b. Create one new custom or tradition that you can bring into your life/family that has the 'staying power' to endure over a lifetime, and explain why you believe it has that kind of endurance. Use other customs and traditions (both within and beyond your family) as models to draw from.

IV. CANADA

Geography



A topographic map of Canada, in polar projection (for 90° W), showing elevations shaded from green to brown (higher)

By total area (including its waters), Canada is the second-largest country in the world, after Russia. By land area alone, Canada ranks fourth, due to having the world's largest area of fresh water lakes.[1] Stretching from the Atlantic Ocean in the east, along the Arctic Ocean to the north, and to the Pacific Ocean in the west, the country encompasses 9,984,670 km^2 (3,855,100 sq mi) of territory. Canada also has vast maritime terrain, with the world's longest coastline of 243,042 kilometres (151,019 mi). In addition to sharing the world's largest land border with the United States—spanning 8,891 km (5,525 mi)—Canada shares a land border with Greenland (and hence the Kingdom of Denmark) to the northeast, on Hans Island, and a maritime boundary with France's overseas collectivity of Saint Pierre and Miquelon to the southeast. Canada is also home to the world's northernmost settlement, Canadian Forces Station Alert, on the northern tip of Ellesmere Island—latitude 82.5°N—which lies 817 kilometres (508 mi) from the North Pole.

Canada can be divided into seven physiographic regions: the Canadian Shield, the interior plains, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Lowlands, the Appalachian region, the Western Cordillera, Hudson Bay Lowlands, and the Arctic Archipelago. Boreal forests prevail throughout the country, ice is prominent in northern Arctic regions and through the Rocky Mountains, and the relatively flat Canadian Prairies in the southwest facilitate productive agriculture. The Great Lakes feed the St. Lawrence River (in the southeast) where the lowlands host much of Canada's economic output. Canada has over 2,000,000 lakes—563 of which are larger than 100 km^2 (39 sq mi)—containing much of the world's fresh water.

There are also fresh-water glaciers in the Canadian Rockies, the Coast Mountains, and the Arctic Cordillera. Canada is geologically active, having many earthquakes and potentially active volcanoes,

notably Mount Meager massif, Mount Garibaldi, Mount Cayley, and the Mount Edziza volcanic complex.

Political System of Canada

Canada is described as a "full democracy", with a tradition of liberalism, and an egalitarian, moderate political ideology. An emphasis on social justice has been a distinguishing element of Canada's political culture. Peace, order, and good government, alongside an Implied Bill of Rights, are founding principles of the Canadian government.

Canada has a parliamentary system within the context of a constitutional monarchy—the monarchy of Canada being the foundation of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The reigning monarch is also monarch of 14 other Commonwealth countries (though, all are sovereign of one another and each of Canada's 10 provinces. To carry out most of their federal royal duties in Canada, the monarch appoints a representative, the governor general, on the advice of the prime minister.





Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada
Charles III, King of Canada
Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

The monarchy is the source of sovereignty and authority in Canada. However, while the governor general or monarch may exercise their power without ministerial advice in certain rare crisis situations, the use of the executive powers (or royal prerogative) is otherwise always directed by the Cabinet, a committee of ministers of the Crown responsible to the elected House of Commons and chosen and headed by the prime minister, the head of government. To ensure the stability of government, the governor general will usually appoint as prime minister the individual who is the

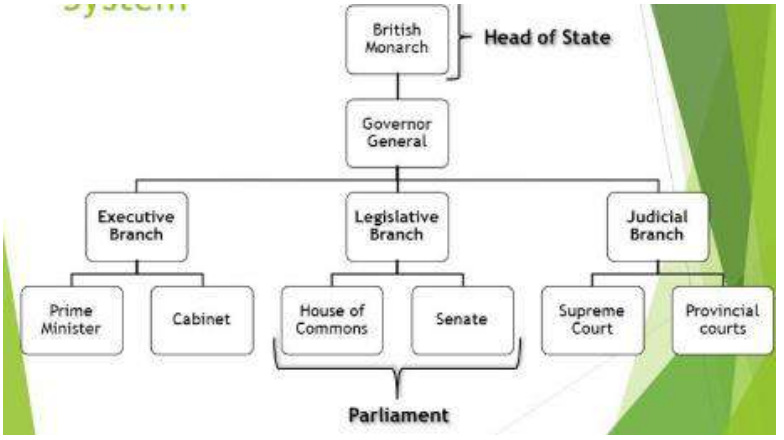
current leader of the political party that can obtain the confidence of a majority of members in the House of Commons.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is thus one of the most powerful institutions in government, initiating most legislation for parliamentary approval and selecting for appointment by the Crown, besides the aforementioned, the governor general, lieutenant governors, senators, federal court judges, and heads of Crown corporations and government agencies. The leader of the party with the second-most seats usually becomes the leader of the Official Opposition and is part of an adversarial parliamentary system intended to keep the government in check.

The House of Commons in its temporary location, the West Block

The Parliament of Canada passes all statute laws within the federal sphere. It comprises the monarch, the House of Commons, and the Senate. While Canada inherited the British concept of parliamentary supremacy, this was later, with the enactment of the Constitution Act, 1982, all but completely superseded by the American notion of the supremacy of the law.

Each of the 338 members of Parliament in the House of Commons is elected by simple plurality in an electoral district or riding. The *Constitution Act, 1982,* requires that no more than five years pass between elections, although the *Canada Elections Act* limits this to four years with a "fixed" election date in October; general elections still must be called by the governor general and can be triggered by either the advice of the prime minister or a lost confidence vote in the House. The 105 members of the Senate, whose seats are apportioned on a regional basis, serve until age 75.



Canadian federalism divides government responsibilities between the federal government and the 10 provinces.

Provincial legislatures are unicameral and operate in parliamentary fashion similar to the House of Commons. Canada's three territories also have legislatures; but, these are not sovereign and have fewer constitutional responsibilities than the provinces. The territorial legislatures also differ structurally from their provincial counterparts.

Law

The Constitution of Canada is the supreme law of the country and consists of written text and unwritten conventions.] The *Constitution Act, 1867* (known as the British North America Act, 1867 prior to 1982), affirmed governance based on parliamentary precedent and divided powers between the federal and provincial governments. The *Statute of Westminster, 1931*, granted full autonomy, and the *Constitution Act, 1982*, ended all legislative ties to Britain, as well as adding a constitutional amending formula and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The *Charter* guarantees basic rights and freedoms that usually cannot be over-ridden by any government; though, a notwithstanding clause allows Parliament and the provincial legislatures to override certain sections of the *Charter* for a period of five years.

The Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa, west of Parliament Hill

Canada's judiciary plays an important role in interpreting laws and has the power to strike down acts of Parliament that violate the constitution. The Supreme Court of Canada is the highest court, final arbiter, and has been led since December 18, 2017, by Richard Wagner, the Chief Justice of Canada. The governor general appoints the court's nine members on the advice of the prime minister and minister of justice. The federal Cabinet also appoints justices to superior courts in the provincial and territorial jurisdictions.

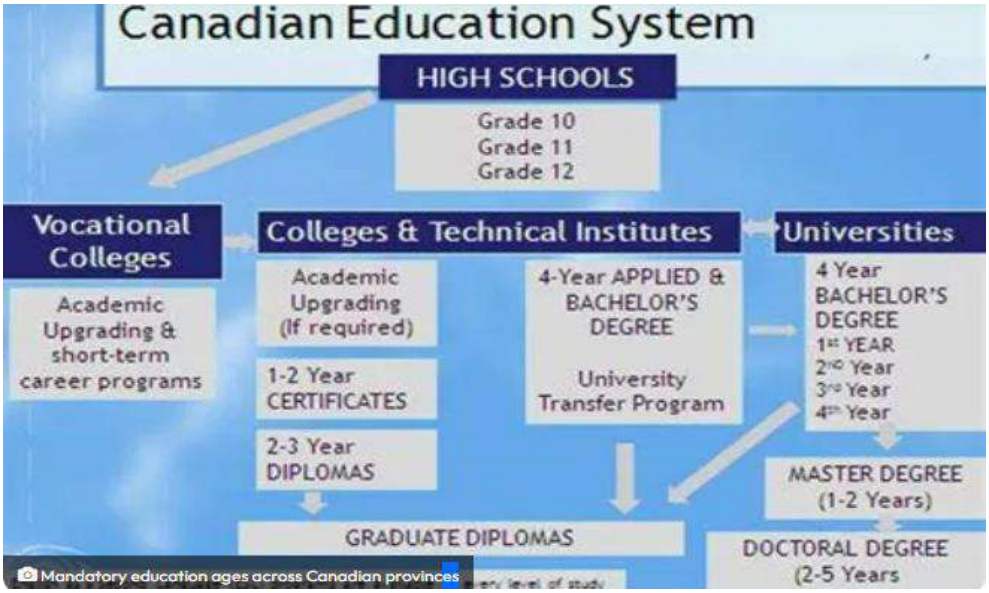
Common law prevails everywhere, except in Quebec, where civil law predominates. Criminal law is solely a federal responsibility and is uniform throughout Canada. Law enforcement, including criminal courts, is officially a provincial responsibility, conducted by provincial and municipal police forces. In most rural and some urban areas, policing responsibilities are contracted to the federal Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Canadian Aboriginal law provides certain constitutionally recognized rights to land and traditional practices for Indigenous groups in Canada. Various treaties and case laws were established to mediate relations between Europeans and many Indigenous peoples. Most notably, a series of

11 treaties, known as the Numbered Treaties, were signed between the Indigenous peoples and the reigning monarch of Canada between 1871 and 1921. These treaties are agreements between the Canadian Crown-in-Council, with the duty to consult and accommodate The role of Aboriginal law and the rights they support were reaffirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. These rights may include provision of services, such as healthcare through the Indian Health Transfer Policy, and exemption from taxation.

Canadian Education System

Education in Canada is for the most part provided publicly, funded and overseen by federal, provincial, and local governments. Education is within provincial jurisdiction and the curriculum is overseen by the province. Education in Canada is generally divided into primary education, followed by secondary education and post-secondary. Education in both English and French is available in most places across Canada.



Canada has a large number of universities, almost all of which are publicly funded. Established in 1663, University Laval is the oldest post-secondary institution in Canada. The largest university is the University of Toronto with over 85,000 students. Four universities are regularly ranked among the top 100 world-wide, namely University of Toronto, University of British Columbia, McGill University, and McMaster University, with a total of 18 universities ranked in the top 500 worldwide.

According to a 2019 report by the OECD, Canada is one of the most educated countries in the world; the country ranks first worldwide in the percentage of adults having tertiary education, with over 56 percent of Canadian adults having attained at least an undergraduate college or university degree. Canada spends about 5.3 percent of its GDP on education. The country invests heavily in tertiary education (more than US$20,000 per student). As of 2014, 89 percent of adults aged 25 to 64 have earned the equivalent of a high-school degree, compared to an OECD average of 75 percent.

The mandatory education age ranges between 5–7 to 16–18 years, contributing to an adult literacy rate of 99 percent. Just over 60,000 children are homeschooled in the country as of 2016. The Programme for International Student Assessment indicates Canadian students perform well above the OECD average, particularly in mathematics, science, and reading, ranking the overall knowledge and skills of Canadian 15-year-olds as the sixth-best in the world, although these scores have been declining in recent years. Canada is a well-performing OECD country in reading literacy, mathematics, and science, with the average student scoring 523.7, compared with the OECD average of 493 in 2015.

Canada's educational system is composed of three sections: primary, secondary and post-secondary. As Canada's educational system is provincially funded, education systems vary depending on which province you live in. By law, Canadian children are required to attend school. However, the age of compulsory education varies slightly between the provinces. With some exceptions, children between the ages of five and 18 must attend school. In most provinces, primary school, also known as elementary school, runs from Kindergarten (ages five or six) to Grade 8 (ages 13 to 14).

Secondary school, also known as high school, then runs from Grade 9 (ages 14 to 15) to Grade 12 (ages 17 to 18). This may vary by province, so if you have school-aged children, you should absolutely take some time to research the education system in your destination province. Primary school and most of secondary school are compulsory for all Canadian children, while pursuing post-secondary education, such as university or college, is optional

Holidays

Canada's culture draws influences from its broad range of constituent nationalities and policies that promote a "just society" are constitutionally protected. Since the 1960s, Canada has emphasized equality and inclusiveness for all its people. The official state policy of multiculturalism is often cited as one of Canada's significant accomplishments and a key distinguishing element of Canadian identity. In Quebec, cultural identity is strong and there is a French Canadian culture that is distinct from English Canadian culture.

As a whole, Canada is in theory a cultural mosaic of regional ethnic subcultures. Canada's approach to governance emphasizing multiculturalism, which is based on selective immigration, social integration, and suppression of far-right politics, has wide public support. Government policies such as publicly funded health care, higher taxation to redistribute wealth, the outlawing of capital punishment, strong efforts to eliminate poverty, strict gun control, a social liberal attitude toward women's rights (like pregnancy termination) and LGBT rights, and legalized euthanasia and cannabis use are indicators of Canada's political and cultural values. Canadians also identify with the country's foreign aid policies, peacekeeping roles, the national park system, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Historically, Canada has been influenced by British, French, and Indigenous cultures and traditions. Through their language, art, and music, Indigenous peoples continue to influence the Canadian identity. During the 20th century, Canadians with African, Caribbean, and Asian nationalities have added to the Canadian identity and its culture.

Public holidays

There are a number of dates during the year when specific forms or returns are due to be filed, or certain payments or remittances are due to be paid.

When a due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday recognized by the CRA, your payment is considered on time if the CRA receives it on or before the next business day. Note that several provinces and territories have their own unique holidays. Therefore, due dates may be affected depending on where you reside.

For more information, go to Important dates for individuals, Important dates for corporations, or Filing information returns electronically (T4/T5 and other types of returns).

Public holidays for 2024

- New Year - Monday, January 1
- Good Friday - Friday, March 29
- Easter Monday - Monday, April 1
- Victoria Day - Monday, May 20
- Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day - Monday, June 24
- Canada Day - Monday, July 1
- Civic Holiday - Monday, August 5, (excluding Quebec)
- Labour Day - Monday, September 2
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - Monday, September 30
- Thanksgiving Day - Monday, October 14
- Remembrance Day - Monday, November 11
- Christmas Day - Wednesday, December 25
- Boxing Day - Thursday, December 26





Symbols

Themes of nature, pioneers, trappers, and traders played an important part in the early development of Canadian symbolism. Modern symbols emphasize the country's geography, cold climate, lifestyles, and the Canadianization of traditional European and Indigenous symbols. The use of the maple leaf as a Canadian symbol dates to the early 18th century. The maple leaf is depicted on Canada's current and previous flags and on the Arms of Canada. Canada's official tartan, known as the "maple leaf tartan", has four colours that reflect the colours of the maple leaf as it

changes through the seasons—green in the spring, gold in the early autumn, red at the first frost, and brown after falling. The Arms of Canada are closely modelled after those of the United Kingdom, with French and distinctive Canadian elements replacing or added to those derived from the British version.

Other prominent symbols include the national motto, "*A mari usque ad mare*" ("From Sea to Sea"), the sports of ice hockey and lacrosse, the beaver, Canada goose, common loon, Canadian horse, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Rockies, and, more recently, the totem pole and Inuksuk.

Canadian beer, maple syrup, tuques, canoes, nanaimo bars, butter tarts, and poutine are defined as uniquely Canadian. Canadian coins feature many of these symbols: the loon on the $1 coin, the Arms of Canada on the 50¢ piece, and the beaver on the nickel. An image of the previous monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, appears on $20 bank notes and the obverse of all current Canadian coins.



I. Choose the right variant

The motto of Canada is _____

(A) “A Mari Usque Ad Mare”.

(B) “From Sea to Sea”.

(C) Neither of the above.

(D) Both of the above.

Who is regarded to have been the founder of Canada?

(A) John Cabot

(B) Jacques Cartier

(C) Samuel de Champlain

(D) Mr. Trudeau

The term “the First Nation” replaces the word _____

(A) “Indian”.

(B) “Mulatto”.

(C) “Metis”.

(D) “Best”.

*Canada’s constitutional autonomy from Britain was proclaimed in*_____

(A) 1867.

(B) 1899.
(C) 1921.
(D) 1931.

The official head of the state in Canada is _____

(A) the Monarch of Britain.
(B) its Prime Minister.
(C) its Parliament.
(D) its Governor-General.

In Canada, _____ holds the position of the head of the government.

(A) the Governor-General
(B) the Speaker
(C) the Prime Minister
(D) the British Monarch

The Canadian Parliament consists of _____

(A) the House of Commons and the House of Representatives.
(B) the Senate and the House of Commons.
(C) the Senate and the House of Representatives.
(D) the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Who chooses the ministers from the MPs?

(A) The British Monarch
(B) The Governor-General
(C) The Prime Minister
(D) The Speaker

Most of the Canadian population is of _____ origin.

(A) English and American
(B) British and French
(C) French and Indian
(D) Indian and English

On the official flag of Canada, we can see _____

(A) a green birch leaf.
(B) a yellow star.
(C) a red maple leaf.
(D) white stripes.

Which country is Canada's neighbour across the Arctic Ocean?

(A) The USA
(B) Norway

(C) Russia

(D) The UK

Canada is made up of _____

(A) states and districts.

(B) counties and regions.

(C) provinces and territories.

(D) districts and provinces.

By total area, Canada is the _____ largest country in the world.

(A) first

(B) second

(C) third

(D) fourth

The oceans that wash Canada's shores are _____

(A) the Arctic, the Atlantic, the Indian.

(B) the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Indian.

(C) the Arctic, the Atlantic, the Pacific.

(D) the Arctic, the Pacific, the Indian.

Canada has the _____ coastline in the world.

(A) shortest

(B) longest

(C) the most indented

(D) the least indented

The central part of Canada is called _____

(A) the Canadian Shield.

(B) the Appalachians.

(C) the Rocky Mountains.

(D) the Great Lakes.

What is the largest component of the Niagara Falls?

(A) The St. Lawrence River

(B) Hudson Bay

(C) The Horseshoe Falls

(D) The Great Slave Lake

Which statement is true?

(A) The Virginia Falls are as high as the Niagara Falls.

(B) The Virginia Falls are twice as high as the Niagara Falls.

(C) The Niagara Falls are higher than the Virginia Falls.

(D) The Niagara Falls are the highest waterfall in the world.

Which river is the longest in Canada?

(A) The Mackenzie

(B) The Columbia

(C) The South Nahanni River

(D) The St. Lawrence River

The highest mountain in Canada is _____

(A) the pick of St. Elias.

(B) Elbrus.

(C) Mount Logan.

(D) Ben Nevis.

The Great Lakes are situated between Canada and _____

(A) Mexico.

(B) the USA.

(C) Great Britain.

(D) Russia.

The largest national park in Canada and in the world is _____

(A) Wood Buffalo.

(B) Yoho National Park.

(C) St. James' Park.

(D) Hyde Park.

Canada's largest city is _____

(A) Ottawa.

(B) Toronto.

(C) Quebec.

(D) Montreal.

Canada's national winter sport is _____

(A) ice hockey.

(B) skiing.

(C) skating.

(D) golf.

The Canadians have always been struggling for _____

(A) their independence of Great Britain.

(B) their cultural identity.

(C) their influence on the world's economy.

(D) their position in the world's policy making.

Which statement is true about the Quebeckers' sovereignty sentiments?

(A) The other Canadians do not notice these sentiments at all.

(B) The other Canadians respect these sentiments.

(C) The other Canadians neither understand nor appreciate these sentiments.

(D) The other Canadians pay no heed to these sentiments.

The National Museum of Canada is in _____

(A) Ottawa.

(B) Toronto.

(C) Vancouver.

(D) Calgary.

The main national holiday in Canada is _____

(A) Labour Day.

(B) Victory Day.

(C) Thanksgiving Day.

(D) Dominion Day.

The author of the novel "Tomorrow Is With Us" is _____

(A) Dyson Carter.

(B) Robertson Davies.

(C) Brian Moore.

(D) Alice Munro.

Which of the following Canadian Nobel laureates got his prize in 2007?

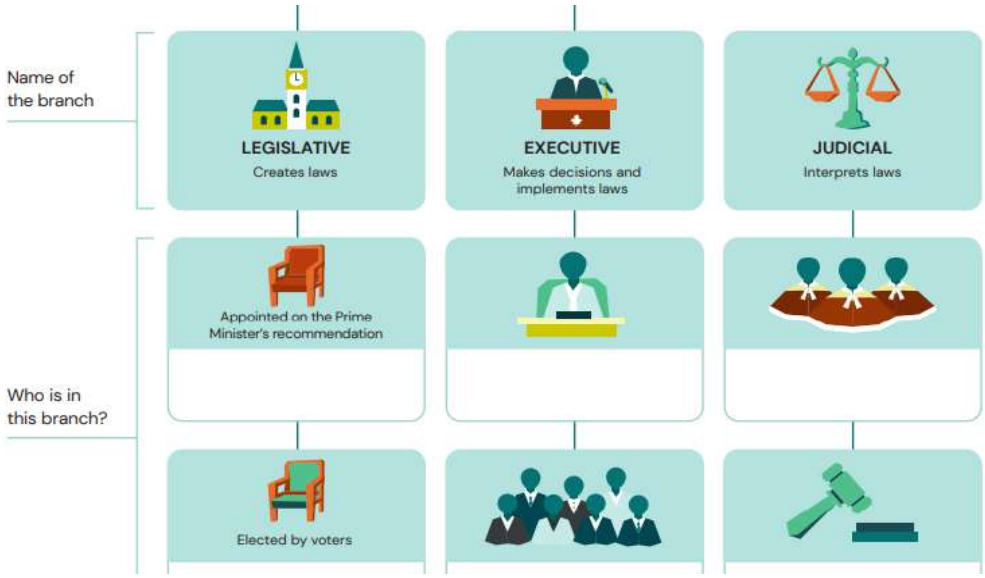
(A) Frederick Banting

(B) John MacLeod

(C) Gerhard Herzberg

(D) Clement Boman

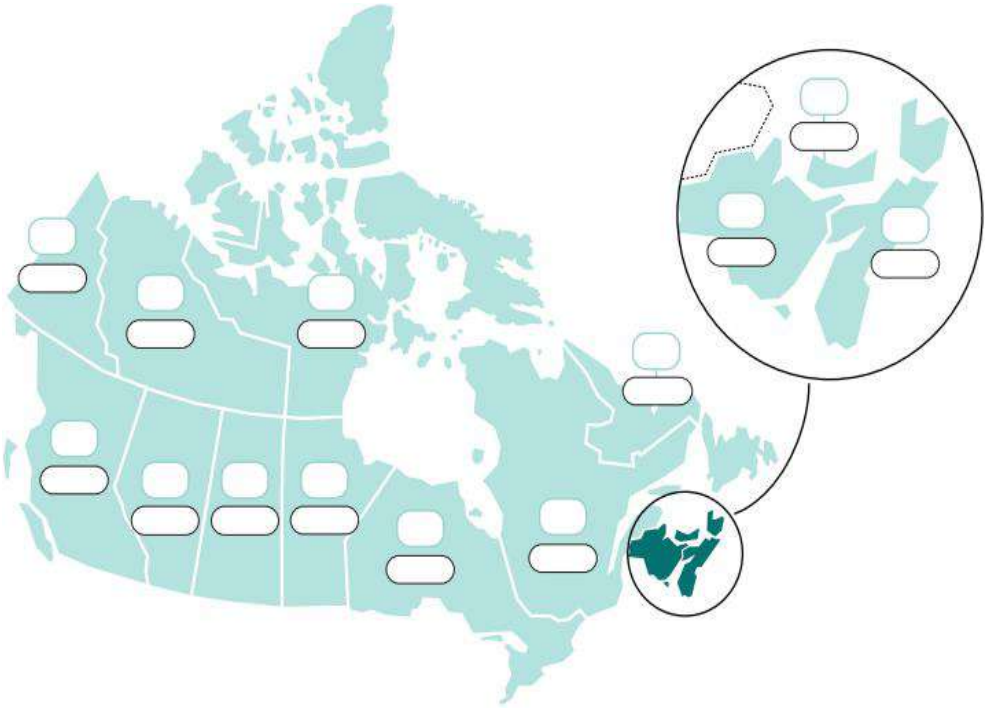
II. **Canada's system of government has three parts, or branches**: the executive, the legislative and the judicial. Each one has its own powers and responsibilities. Complete the puzzle below to find out who's who in the three branches of government.



III. Brainstorm the following:

1. What is the status of Canada?
2. Which is the capital of Canada?
3. Who is the patron saint of Canada?
4. Which are the official languages of Canada?
5. When did Montreal host Olympics?
6. Who was the Prime Minister of Canada from 1968 to 1979?
7. What is in the centre of Canada's flag?
8. Who said "The medium is the message."?
9. Who after winning gold medal in 100 metres race in Seoul Olympics 1988 tested positive for drugs and was thrown out?
10. Which province of Canada has predominantly French population?
11. Which is the national animal of Canada?
12. Which are the two Houses of Canadian Parliament?
13. Which country has larger area than Canada?
14. In which province a referendum on independence was held in 1995?
15. Who is the Head of State of Canada?
16. Which country is on the south of Canada?
17. Which is the predominant religion of Canada?
18. Which is the longest river in Canada?

IV. Do you know when each province and territory became a part of Canada? Fill in the correct abbreviation and year of Confederation for each of the provinces/territories on the map,



ON – Ontario
QC – Quebec
NU – Nunavut
NS – Nova Scotia
NL – Newfoundland and Labrador
NT – Northwest Territories
PE – Prince Edward Island
YT – Yukon
AB – Alberta
MB – Manitoba
NB – New Brunswick
BC – British Columbia
SK – Saskatchewan

V. Determine which elements are static and which are subject to change over time. Identify and circle the aspects that you believe remain constant.

Climate	*Food*	*Land Use*
Animals	*Homes*	*Culture*
Clothing	*Recreation*	*Transportation*

VI. Tim Jocelyn, a Canadian artist from the 1970s Toronto art scene, created wearable art, installations, banners, and collages. He playfully combined Canadian animals with modern technology to explore national identity, as exemplified in this piece. **In what ways do colours impact the playfulness of an image? What do you think is happening in this image?**



VII.



What is the typical school day like for a student in Canada, and how is it different from yours?

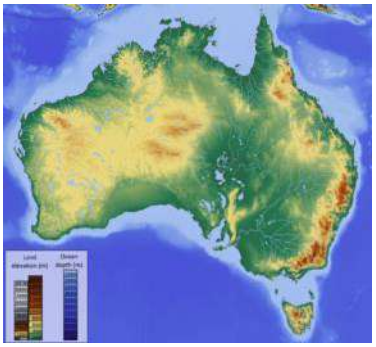
V. AUSTRALIA



Australia, officially the *Commonwealth of Australia*, is a sovereign country comprising the mainland of the Australian continent, the island of Tasmania, and numerous smaller islands. Australia is the largest country by area in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country. Australia is the oldest, flattest, and driest inhabited continent, with the least fertile soils. It is a megadiverse country, and its size gives it a wide variety of landscapes and climates, with deserts in the centre, tropical rainforests in the north-east, tropical savannas in the north, and mountain ranges in the south-east.

Australia is a federal parliamentary constitutional monarchy, comprising six states and ten territories. Australia's population of nearly 27 million is highly urbanised and heavily concentrated on the eastern seaboard.] Canberra is the nation's capital, while its most populous *cities are Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide.* It is ethnically diverse and multicultural, the product of large-scale immigration, with almost half of the population having at least one parent born overseas. Australia's abundant natural resources and well-developed international trade relations are crucial to the country's economy, which generates its income from various sources including services, mining exports, banking, manufacturing, agriculture and international education. Australia ranks highly for quality of life, health, education, economic freedom, civil liberties and political rights.

Australia has a highly developed market economy and one of the highest per capita incomes globally. Australia is a regional power, and has the world's thirteenth-highest military expenditure. It is a member of international groupings including the United Nations; the G20; the OECD; the World Trade Organization; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; the Pacific Islands Forum; the Pacific Community; the Commonwealth of Nations; and the defence/security organisations ANZUS, AUKUS, and the Five Eyes. It is a major non-NATO ally of the United States.



Geography

Surrounded by the Indian and Pacific oceans, Australia is separated from Asia by the Arafura and Timor seas, with the Coral Sea lying off the Queensland coast, and the Tasman Sea lying between Australia and New Zealand. The world's smallest continent and sixth largest country by total area, Australia—owing to its size and isolation—is often dubbed the "island continent and is sometimes considered the world's largest island. Mainland Australia lies between latitudes 9° and 44° South, and longitudes 112° and 154° East. Australia's size gives it a wide variety of landscapes, with tropical rainforests in the north-east, mountain ranges in the south-east, south-west and east, and desert in the centre. The desert or semi-arid land commonly known as

the outback makes up by far the largest portion of land. Australia is the driest inhabited continent; its annual rainfall averaged over continental area is less than 500 mm. The population density is 3.4 inhabitants per square kilometre, although the large majority of the population lives along the temperate south-eastern coastline. The population density exceeds 19,500 inhabitants per square kilometre in central Melbourne. In 2021 Australia had 10% of the global permanent meadows and pastureland.

Biodiversity



Although most of Australia is semi-arid or desert, the continent includes a diverse range of habitats from alpine heaths to tropical rainforests. Fungi typify that diversity—an estimated 250,000 species—of which only 5% have been described—occur in Australia. Because of the continent's great age, extremely variable weather patterns, and long-term geographic isolation, much of Australia's biota is unique. About 85% of flowering plants, 84% of mammals, more than 45% of birds, and 89% of in-shore, temperate-zone fish are endemic.

Australia has at least 755 species of reptile, more than any other country in the world. Besides Antarctica, Australia is the only continent that developed without feline species. Feral cats may have been introduced in the 17th century by Dutch shipwrecks, and later in the 18th century by European settlers. They are now considered a major factor in the decline and extinction of many vulnerable and endangered native species. Seafaring immigrants from Asia are believed to have brought the dingo to Australia sometime after the end of the last ice age—perhaps 4000 years ago—and Aboriginal people helped disperse them across the continent as pets, contributing to the demise of thylacines on the mainland. Australia is also one of 17 megadiverse countries.

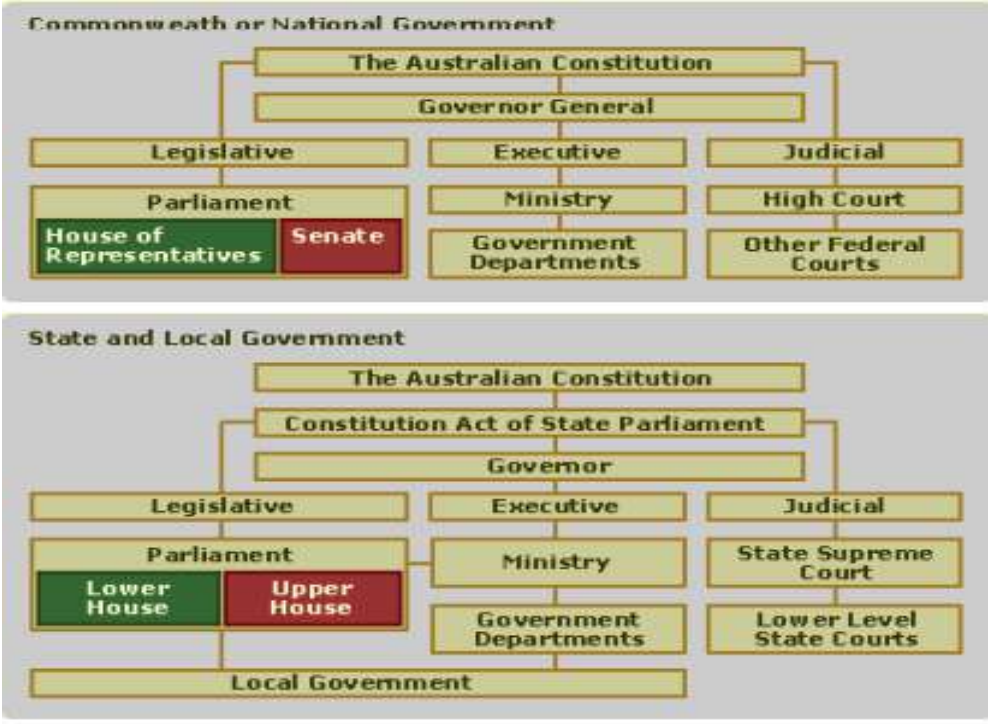
Australian forests are mostly made up of evergreen species, particularly eucalyptus trees in the less arid regions; wattles replace them as the dominant species in drier regions and deserts. Among well-known Australian animals are the monotremes (the platypus and echidna); a host of marsupials, including the kangaroo, koala, and wombat, and birds

such as the emu and the kookaburra. Australia is home to many dangerous animals including some of the most venomous snakes in the world.

The dingo was introduced by Austronesian people who traded with Indigenous Australians around 3000 BCE. Many animal and plant species became extinct soon after first human settlement, including the Australian megafauna; others have disappeared since European settlement, among them the thylacine.

Political System of Australia

Australia is a federal parliamentary constitutional monarchy. The country has maintained a stable liberal democratic political system under its constitution, which is one of the world's oldest, since Federation in 1901. It is also one of the world's oldest federations, in which power is divided between the federal and state and territorial governments.



The Australian system of government combines elements derived from the political systems of the United Kingdom (a fused executive, constitutional monarchy and strong party discipline) and the United States (federalism, a written constitution and strong bicameralism with an elected upper house), along with distinctive indigenous features.

The federal government is separated into three branches:

- **Legislature:** the bicameral Parliament**,** comprising the monarch (represented by the governor-general), the Senate, and the House of Representatives;
- **Executive**: the Federal Executive Council, which in practice gives legal effect to the decisions of the cabinet, comprising the prime minister and other ministers of state appointed by the governor-general on the advice of Parliament;
- **Judiciary**: the High Court of Australia and other federal courts, whose judges are appointed by the governor-general on advice of Parliament.

Charles III reigns as King of Australia and is represented in Australia by the governor-general at the federal level and by the governors at the state level, who by convention act on the advice of his ministers. Thus, in practice the governor-general acts as a legal figurehead for the actions of the prime minister and the Federal Executive Council. The governor-general, however, does have reserve powers which, in some situations, may be exercised outside the prime minister's request. These powers are held by convention and their scope is unclear. The most notable exercise of these powers was the dismissal of the Whitlam Government in the constitutional crisis of 1975.

In the **Senate** (the upper house), there are 76 senators: twelve each from the states and two each from the mainland territories (the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory). The House of Representatives (the lower house) has 151 members elected from single-member electoral divisions, commonly known as "electorates" or "seats", allocated to states on the basis of population, with each original state guaranteed a minimum of five seats. Elections for both chambers are normally held every three years simultaneously; senators have overlapping six-year terms except for those from the territories, whose terms are not fixed but are tied to the electoral cycle for the lower house; thus only 40 of the 76 places in the Senate are put to each election unless the cycle is interrupted by a double dissolution.

Australia's electoral system uses preferential voting for all lower house elections with the exception of Tasmania and the ACT which, along with the Senate and most state upper houses, combine it with proportional representation in a system known as the single transferable vote. Voting is compulsory for all enrolled citizens 18 years and over in every jurisdiction, as is enrolment. The party with majority support in the House of Representatives forms the government and its leader becomes Prime Minister. In cases where no party has majority support, the Governor-

General has the constitutional power to appoint the Prime Minister and, if necessary, dismiss one that has lost the confidence of Parliament

There are two major political groups that usually form government, federally and in the states: the Australian Labor Party and the Coalition, which is a formal grouping of the Liberal Party and its minor partner, the National Party. The Liberal National Party and the Country Liberal Party are merged state branches in Queensland and the Northern Territory that function as separate parties at a federal level. Within Australian political culture, the Coalition is considered centre-right and the Labor Party is considered centre-left. Independent members and several minor parties have achieved representation in Australian parliaments, mostly in upper houses. The Australian Greens are often considered the "third force" in politics, being the third largest party by both vote and membership.

The most recent federal election was held on 21 May 2022 and resulted in the Australian Labor Party, led by Anthony Albanese, being elected to government.

Australian Education System

School attendance, or registration for home schooling, is compulsory throughout Australia. Education is the responsibility of the individual states and territories so the rules vary between states, but in general children are required to attend school from the age of about 5 until about 16. In some states (Western Australia, Northern Territory and New South Wales), children aged 16–17 are required to either attend school or participate in vocational training, such as an apprenticeship.

Australia has *an adult literacy* rate that was estimated to be 99%. However, a 2011–2012 report for the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that Tasmania has a literacy and numeracy rate of only 50%.

Australia has 37 government-funded universities and three private universities, as well as a number of other specialist institutions that provide approved courses at the higher education level. The OECD places Australia among the most expensive nations to attend university. There is a state-based system of vocational training, known as TAFE, and many trades conduct apprenticeships for training new tradespeople. About 58% of Australians aged from 25 to 64 have vocational or tertiary qualifications and the tertiary graduation rate of 49% is the highest among OECD countries. 30.9% of

Australia's population has attained a higher education qualification, which is among the highest percentages in the world.

Australia has the highest ratio of international students per head of population in the world by a large margin, with 812,000 international students enrolled in the nation's universities and vocational institutions in 2019. Accordingly, in 2019, international students represented on average 26.7% of the student bodies of Australian universities. International education therefore represents one of the country's largest exports and has a pronounced influence on the country's demographics, with a significant proportion of international students remaining in Australia after graduation on various skill and employment visas. Education is Australia's third-largest export, after iron ore and coal, and contributed over $28 billion to the economy in 2016–17.

Culture and Lifestyle

The country is home to a diversity of cultures, a result of its history of immigration. Prior to 1850, Australia was dominated by Indigenous cultures. Since then, Australian culture has primarily been a Western culture, strongly influenced by Anglo-Celtic settlers. Other influences include Australian Aboriginal culture, the traditions brought to the country by waves of immigration from around the world, and the culture of the United States. The cultural divergence and evolution that has occurred over the centuries since European settlement has resulted in a distinctive Australian culture.

Australia is a great place to live and learn. Vibrant cities and towns offer safe, friendly and welcoming communities.

Friendly and welcoming communities

International students from all over the world are welcomed by Australia's friendly, vibrant and multicultural communities.

- Australia's culturally diverse communities make it a special place to live. Almost a third of the population was born overseas and 23 per cent speak a language other than English at home.
- When you study in Australia, you will also join a vibrant international student community. More than half a million international students from 192 countries choose to study in Australia.

- From the moment you arrive in Australia, you can expect to feel welcome. There are student welcome services at every international airport to help you find your way around your new home.

A safe place to live and study

Australia is a popular destination for international students because of its reputation as a safe place to live and study.

Personal and religious freedom

- In Australia, people are encouraged to respect the rights and freedoms of others, no matter where they come from, their political choices or religion. Whether you practise Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity or any other religion, you will find communities and places of worship where you can connect with people of the same faith. You can feel safe to practise your chosen faith with laws that protect your religious freedom.
- Australia is one of the world's most politically stable countries. The country's leaders are elected through a process that is transparent and fair.
- Citizens enjoy freedom of speech and individual rights.
- Australia's long-term stability is backed by a well-established system of law and government that protects the individual rights of citizens and visitors.

A high standard of living

- Australia has a high standard of living supported by an educated workforce and a high level of innovation.
- The quality of education, healthcare, transport, infrastructure and government services in Australia are all above international averages.
- Australian cities and towns have some of the lowest crime rates in the world. Its streets and public spaces offer security and freedom not always found in other parts of the world.
- Strict laws protect Australia's clean, green environments so you can enjoy a safe and healthy environment, including in our cities and regional centres.

Relaxed lifestyle

People in Australia are known for their love of the outdoors, laid-back approach to life, and weekend café culture.

- As most of Australia's major cities are found along the coastline, many people go to the beach for a swim or to the park for lunch.
- Café culture is a big part of the lifestyle too. You will always find people enjoying a relaxed brunch (a mixture of breakfast and lunch) on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Watching or playing sports is a common way to relax and socialise. Cricket and Australian Rules football (AFL) are popular, as are rugby league (NRL), tennis, swimming, surfing, field hockey, basketball, soccer, netball and cycling.
- Australia's varied landscapes provide plenty of opportunities to keep active by going hiking or exploring the national parks and nature reserves in and around the cities.
- Australia also has a thriving arts and culture scene. Most cities and towns are home to museums, art galleries, theatres and entertainment venues.

Symbols

When the Australian colonies federated on 1 January 1901, an official competition for a design for an Australian flag was held. The design that was adopted contains the Union Flag in the left corner, symbolising Australia's historical links to the United Kingdom, the stars of the Southern Cross on the right half of the flag indicating Australia's geographical location, and the seven-pointed Federation Star in the bottom left representing the six states and the territories of Australia. Other official flags include the Australian Aboriginal Flag, the Torres Strait Islander Flag and the flags of the individual states and territories.

The Australian Coat of Arms was granted by King George V in 1912 and consists of a *shield containing the badges of the six states, within an ermine border*. The crest above the shield and helmet is a seven-pointed gold star on a blue and gold wreath, representing the 6 states and the territories. The shield is supported by a red kangaroo and an emu.

Green and gold were confirmed as Australia's national colours in 1984, though the colors had been adopted by many national sporting teams

long before this. The Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) was officially proclaimed as the national floral emblem in 1988.

Reflecting the country's status as a constitutional monarchy, a number of royal symbols exist in Australia. These include symbols of the monarch of Australia, as well as the monarch's vice-regal representatives.

National Symbols of Australia



- **National Day**: 26th January
- **National Anthem**: Advance Australia Fair
- **National Currency:** Australian Dollar
- **National Colors:** Green and gold
- **National Tree:** Golden wattle
- **National Flower:** Golden wattle
- **National Animal:** Kangaroo
- **National Bird:** Emu
- **National Dish:** Roast lamb
- **National Sweet:** Pavlova

The national Flag of Australia consists of three elements placed on a blue background.

The first element is the Union Jack seen in the left upper corner, which represents the history of the British settlement in Australia.

Despite the fact that the King of Australia is not resident in Australia, the Crown and royal institutions remain part of Australian life. Australian currency, including all coins and the five-dollar note, bears an image of the late monarch, Queen Elizabeth II.

Around 12% of public lands in Australia are referred to as Crown land, including reserves set aside for environmental conservation as well as vacant land. There are many geographic places that have been named in honour of a reigning monarch, including the states of Queensland and Victoria, named after Queen Victoria, with numerous rivers, streets, squares, parks and buildings carrying the names of past or present members of the Royal Family. Through royal patronage there are many organisations in Australia that have been granted a *Royal* prefix. These organisations, including branches of the Australian Defence Force, often incorporate royal symbols into their imagery.



I. Mention the music icons of each country in the next decades

	USA	UK	Canada	Australia
60´s				
70´s				
80´s				
90´s				
2000's				
Actual				

II. Choose the best variant

Which of the Europeans discovered Australia first?

(A) The Portuguese
(B) The Dutch
(C) The British
(D) The Spanish

Before the British explored the eastern coast of Australia, the continent had been called _____

(A) New Holland.
(B) New France.
(C) New England.
(D) New Spain.

_____ *suggested Australia as a suitable place to transport Britain's criminals to?*

(A) Captain Arthur Philip
(B) Captain James Cook
(C) Sir Joseph Banks
(D) Henry Hudson

Which document formally ended the links between Australia and the UK?

(A) The Statute of Westminster
(B) The ANZUS Treaty of Mutual Security

(C) The Australian Constitution

(D) All of the above

Australia's best known state was given its name by _____

(A) Henry Hudson.

(B) Joseph Banks.

(C) Arthur Philip.

(D) James Cook.

Australia is not _____

(A) a country.

(B) an island continent.

(C) a city.

(D) a state.

Australia consists of _____

(A) six states and two mainland territories.

(B) fifty states and a district.

(C) ten provinces and three territories.

(D) six counties and six regions.

Australia is not _____

(A) a constitutional monarchy.

(B) a federative state.

(C) a presidential republic.

(D) a parliamentary democracy.

The large seven-pointed star on the Australian flag represents _____

(A) the Southern Cross.

(B) the Commonwealth of Australia.

(C) the historical link with Britain.

(D) Australia's geographical position.

On the Australian coat of arms, we can see a kangaroo and _____

(A) a dingo.

(B) a koala.

(C) an emu.

(D) a parrot.

The British Monarch is represented by _____ *at the federal level and by* _____ *at the state level.*

(A) the Governor-General … administrators

(B) the Prime Minister … ministers of states

(C) the Governor-General … governors

(D) the Chief Minister … state ministers

The Australian Parliament consists of _____

(A) the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(B) the Senate and the House of Commons.

(C) the House of Commons and the House of Representatives.

(D) the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

_____ is the executive governing body in Australia.

(A) The Cabinet of Ministers

(B) The Privy Council

(C) The Federal Executive Council

(D) The Commonwealth Parliament

Which oceans wash the Australian shores?

(A) The Pacific and the Atlantic

(B) The Indian and the Atlantic

(C) The Indian and the Pacific

(D) The Arctic and the Atlantic

Which of these countries is Australia's nearest neighbour?

(A) India

(B) The USA

(C) New Zealand

(D) China

The largest part of Australia is _____

(A) sandy beaches.

(B) fertile soils.

(C) forests.

(D) a desert.

The Australian Parliament is located in _____

(A) the White House.

(B) the Parliament House.

(C) Westminster.

(D) Whitehall.

The Australian Aborigines are strangers in their own land _____

(A) because they were never treated as human beings by the new settlers.

(B) as they want to live in harmony with their environment.

(C) since they are a dying race and remain "economically disadvantaged".

(D) due to all of the above.

Which statement is right?

(A) The Aborigines have never been struggling to survive and to resist the official policy.

(B) The modern political issue now is for the government of Australia to apologize to the Aborigines for all the injustices suffered by them.

(C) Before the British colonization, the Aborigines spoke one language.

(D) None of the Aboriginal languages has ever been taught at school as a second language.

T*he capital of Australia is* _____

(A) Canberra.

(B) Melbourne.

(C) Sydney.

(D) Brisbane.

_____ *is considered the cultural capital of Australia.*

(A) Sydney

(B) Canberra

(C) Brisbane

(D) Melbourne

Originally, the name "Melbourne" was _____

(A) a person's name.

(B) a city's name.

(C) an aboriginal word.

(D) a river's name.

_____ *is called the Garden City of Australia.*

(A) Canberra

(B) Melbourne

(C) Sydney

(D) Brisbane

Australia's oldest university is _____

(A) the University of Sydney.

(B) New South Wales University of Technology.

(C) the University of Melbourne.

(D) Emory University.

The Australian culture bears the stamp of _____ ancestry.

(A) British

(B) American

(C) Aboriginal

(D) none of the above

Which of the following writers is an Australian classic?

(A) Henry Lawson

(B) Peter Carey

(C) Thomas Keneally

(D) K. Johnson

"Opera Australia" was made prominent by _____

(A) Joan Sutherland.

(B) Nick Cave.

(C) Nicole Kidman.

(D) Patrick White.

"The Australian" and "The Australian Financial Review" are national _____

(A) TV stations.

(B) radio stations.

(C) daily newspapers.

(D) popular magazines.

Aussie Rules are _____

(A) the Australian legislation.

(B) the Australian constitution.

(C) the Australian unique sport.

(D) the Australian grammar.

Australian hockey is called _____

(A) ice hockey.

(B) field hockey.

(C) grass hockey.

(D) ball hockey.

Which statement is wrong about Australia?

(A) Australia is still trying to come to terms with its dependence on foreign powers.

(B) Australians prefer to keep to what has already been tried and tasted.

(C) Australians never attempt to avoid anything original and unfamiliar.

(D) Australians have their own folk life.

At present, Australia is _____

(A) the least developed country in the South Pacific.

(B) the most developed country in the South Pacific.

(C) an agriculture country.

(D) a developing country.



III. What are the popular sports of Australia, and how do they reflect the culture of that country?
IV. Make posters or collages demonstrating aspects of the Australian culture.

Strangest Australian Customs and Traditions

- **Canned Spaghetti and Toast**

For many Americans, a good breakfast includes coffee and eggs. In Australia, they have their own way of doing breakfast, and it's not what you'd expect. There's a tradition of starting with a slice of toast — seems simple enough — but then topping it with canned spaghetti.



Believe it or not, this is a classic breakfast option for Aussies. But don't knock it before you try it — the meal is not so different from a spaghetti dinner with garlic bread, only they eat it first thing in the morning! You'll certainly be full until lunch.



- **Shortened Words**

While Australians *technically* speak

English, they have so many slang words and abbreviations that it can be impossible for Americans to understand them. For example, “afternoon” becomes “arvo,” “mosquito” becomes “mozzie,” and a “cup of tea” becomes “cuppa.” And that’s just the tip of the iceberg.

A “coldie” is a beer, “Chrissie” is Christmas, and “chook” is chicken. Needless to say, Australians love giving things nicknames, and it’s hard for foreigners to keep up. If you’re planning a trip to Sydney, it’s a good idea to pick up a phrasebook.



- **Cockroach Races**

This is one of Australia’s most fun — and perhaps ridiculous — traditions. Every year on Australia Day, January 26th, people get together in bars and watch cockroaches race to the finish line. People even place bets on which cockroach they think will win.

Proceeds from these races usually get donated to charity, so it’s entertainment *and* philanthropy all in one! What could be better than that? In the United States, cockroaches aren’t much more than an annoying pest, but in Australia, they’re central players in celebrating one of the biggest holidays.

- **Thong Throwing**

No, we’re not talking about underwear, we’re talking about flip-flops. They’re called thongs down under, and they’re another important part of Australia Day. All around the country, people join tog





ether in a fun thong-throwing contest. Whoever throws them the farthest wins.

These contests are usually casual, but sometimes they can be as competitive as a professional sport —

some people take their thong-throwing very seriously. There are also specific rules and regulations to follow should you compete. Unsurprisingly, an Australian town holds the Guinness World Record for most people throwing "thongs" at once.

- **Sausage Sizzles**

Sausage sizzles started out as a means for local fundraising, and you can now find them outside of many hardware stores in Australia. What you get is a hot sausage, a slice of bread and sometimes condiments like ketchup or onions. After all, you can really work up an appetite doing all that shopping! Nowadays, sausage sizzles can be found by polling booths on election day as well. It's a well-known Australian custom that tourists just *have* to try — they're low-cost and casual, but just as satisfying as any restaurant meal.

- **Fairy Bread**



It seems like there is no end to the amount of strange food combinations that Australians manage to invent. One of these combinations is fairy bread, which consists of white bread, butter and many, many rainbow sprinkles. That's it! Three simple ingredients and you have a favorite Australian snack.
Unsurprisingly, this is a popular party snack for kids — in fact, it sounds like something an 11-year-old came up with. However, don't be surprised to see adults enjoying it, too. And hey — you might just get a taste for it yourself!



- **Drinking Out of Shoes**

You probably know that Aussies like to drink. They also know how to party, and it's not uncommon for someone to shout "do a shoey!" during a celebration. As you may have guessed, doing a "shoey" means drinking alcohol out of your own footwear.
You can find Australian celebrities doing this for their fans, or simply the guy next door doing it during a cookout. It began as an act to bring good

fortune to the drinker, but at this point, it's mostly a bit of entertainment for your audience.

- **Nicknames**

If there's one thing Australians love to do, it's giving people nicknames. Visitors to the country might be surprised at just how fast they create these nicknames — after a recent introduction, they may be calling you "Bethie" instead of "Elizabeth."

This is because Australians view nicknames as an expression of acceptance. It's a way of making someone feel comfortable and welcome in the group — if they give you a nickname shortly after meeting them, you should feel pretty flattered. Don't hesitate to invent a nickname for them, too, if you can think of one.

- **Try a Bite of Their National Animal**



Australia is unique in that they offer their national animal on the dinner menu. That's right — step into many Australian restaurants, and you can find kangaroo steaks available for eating. They're not so popular that every Australian has tried them, but they certainly aren't hard to find. Many people swear by kangaroo meat and claim that it's even better than beef or lamb. This is a subject of some controversy, however. It only became legal in South Australia in 1980. Either way, it's a dish that is rising in popularity.

- **Sports Costumes**



Australians, like Americans, love their sports. This is something to which many foreigners can relate. The way they celebrate their sport of choice, however, might be a little more involved than other countries. If you go to a sports game in Australia, it's not uncommon to see the whole crowd dressed in the same costume.

Cricket fans, for example, often don a grey wig, tie and suit. Some of them complete the look with a microphone. This get-up pays homage to a famous cricketer from the 60's named Richie Benaud. Talk about dedication!



- **Car Costumes**

The festive spirit doesn't stop there. Australians are known for decorating their cars depending on which holiday is around the corner. Approaching Christmas? Expect to see antlers. For Australia Day, the Australian flag proudly flies from many vehicles. Cars and holidays are not taken lightly by the Aussies.

These displays of enthusiasm show just how patriotic and fun Australians can be — if they celebrate something, they go the whole nine yards. If you're lucky enough to be there during one of these holidays, why not join in?

- **Bring a Plate!**



An invitation to an Australian dinner party might include the sentence, "Bring a plate!" For some outsiders, this means literally showing up with a dinner plate in hand. That would be a mistake, however — in Australia, it means you should bring food of some kind.

Australians tend to be quite hospitable, so even if a host doesn't say they should "bring a plate," they might bring something, anyway. A nice appetizer, a side dish or salad or even a dessert are all viable options should you be invited into someone's home.



- **Goon**

In the United States, we have boxed wine. In Australia, they have goon. Goon is essentially a boxed wine that people lift above their heads and chug from a foil bag. It's inexpensive and can get you

intoxicated quickly. If you ever backpack through Australia, you'll probably be drinking this on your nights out.

Some goon isn't bad and can be consumed as-is. Be aware, however, that some goon tastes pretty disgusting alone, and you'll probably want to mix it with something else. Try it with fruit slices and ice.

- **Acca/Dacca**



When Australians talk about Acca/Dacca, they're actually talking about AC/DC. It seems strange to change a name that's already short and sweet, but as you know, Australians love to nickname things.

In fact, it's common for Australians to add "azza," "oz," or "ez" to people's nicknames, and it looks like "acca" is another one. If Dan is listening to AC/DC in America, Dazza is listening to Acca/Dacca in Australia.

- **No White Christmas**



This one is a bit of Australian culture that some US citizens can relate to. In Australia, Christmas is never white. Snow doesn't fall on Christmas Eve and there is no "winter wonderland" to frolic through. Plenty of tourists find this strange — after all, what's Christmas without fuzzy sweaters and cups of hot cocoa?

Travel to the southern United States, however, and you'll find that people don't have a white Christmas there, either. Despite the many differences between cultures, you can always find something people have in common!

- **Magpie Swooping Season**



Anyone who's ever heard that Australia is home to many dangerous animals is right, and one of those animals is the magpie. These smart birds have gotten used to living around humans in Australia, and this

has brought with it some unfortunate consequences.

During the breeding season — late August to mid-October — some magpies become very aggressive. They are known to swoop and attack people passing by, especially those on bikes or scooters. During the "swooping season," pedestrians have to watch out for these animals — their beaks and talons can do some real damage!

- **Lemonade = Sprite**



Lemonade as Americans are used to drinking is not very prevalent in Australia — that is, lemonade made from lemons. As a result, Australian often call drinks "lemonade" if they contain even a hint of lemon, which includes drinks like Sprite.

This is important to know when you head to restaurants; you may think you're ordering lemonade, but Sprite will show up at your table! Quite a curious cultural difference for foreigners, and one that can cause contention with some tourists. After all, can Sprite *really* be called lemonade?

- **No Shoes, No Worries?**

Visitors to Australia might find that some areas are more, shall we say, *casual* than they're used to. This means that seeing someone barefoot on the street, or even inside the supermarket, isn't entirely out of the ordinary. No shoes? No problem!

Perhaps the most mind-boggling part of this cultural trait is that Australians can stand being barefoot on asphalt in the first place — that sun really heats things up. Depending on the foreigner, this could be either endearing or disgusting. But one thing's for sure: Those Aussies don't care!



- **They Love Big Things**

Australia has something of an obsession with "big" things, and they dot the country serving as tourist

attractions. The Big Banana, for example, marks an amusement park in South Wales, and the Big Prawn can be found at a carpark in New South Wales.

Other big objects include pears, a mushroom, a cow, an axe, a beer can, a ram, and many more. You could plan an entire cross-country trip around Australia just to see the big things, and that's exactly what some people do. A strange tour for sure!

- **Triple J Australia Day**



Australians have many ways they celebrate Australia Day — including thong throwing and cockroach racing — but they also listen to one specific radio station. Many Aussies tune into Triple J on this holiday in order to hear which song was voted number one of the year.

Throughout the day, Triple J plays the top 100 songs of the year, until finally revealing which song came in first place. These rankings are all based on listener vote, and listeners are certainly active! Approximately 2.7 million people voted in 2018.

- **Seafood for the Holidays**

When Americans think of Christmas food, they often think of hearty dishes like potato casseroles, turkey, and gravy. But of course, every culture has its own holiday foods, and in Australia, a Christmas dinner usually consists of lobster, salmon, shrimp and any other food that comes from the sea.



This is partly because Christmas falls during the summer months in Australia, and also because it's a country surrounded by ocean. Who *wouldn't* want to eat platters of fresh seafood on Christmas? This is one Australia custom that could make many Americans jealous.

- **Vegemite**



If you know anything about Australian culture, you probably know that they eat Vegemite — a lot. They often spread this dark paste on bread, biscuits and sandwiches. It has a very distinct taste that most foreigners don't like, but as a tourist, it's a must-try.

You can expect a salty, slightly bitter taste when eating Vegemite. Try it on toast with butter or in a sandwich with cheese and tomato. Just make sure you only add the tiniest amount. Vegemite has a very strong flavor, so a little goes a long way.

- **Emu for Dinner**



Not only do people eat kangaroo in Australia, but they also eat emu. It's not as common as kangaroo, but indigenous Australians have been eating it for thousands of years. It makes sense, too, considering emu are abundant in Australia. You can definitely find emu dishes in some restaurants.

When you think about it, Australia offers its entire national emblem as a dinner option — both the kangaroo and the emu appear on the coat of arms. If you're curious about trying exotic meats, Australia is a good place to visit.

- **Two-Up**

This Australian gambling game isn't legal to play on most days; in Victoria, it's only allowed on Anzac Day. It's history, however, is a long one, and so it's a beloved tradition in Australia. It consists of flipping two pennies and betting on the results - will they land both heads, both tails, or one heads and one tails?

It was played a lot by soldiers during World War I, and underground groups emerged in the years that followed to play despite its illegal status. A simple premise, but a lot of significance for Australians.

Cuisine



Most Indigenous Australian groups subsisted on a simple hunter-gatherer diet of native fauna and flora, otherwise called bush tucker. The first settlers introduced British and Irish cuisine to the continent. This influence is seen in the enduring popularity of several British dishes such as fish and chips, and in quintessential Australian dishes such as the Australian meat pie, which is related to the British steak pie. Post-war immigration transformed Australian cuisine. For instance, Southern

European migrants helped to build a thriving Australian coffee culture which gave rise to Australian coffee drinks such as the flat white, while East



Asian migration led to dishes such as the Cantonese-influenced dim sim and Chiko Roll, as well as a distinct Australian Chinese cuisine. Sausage sizzles, pavlovas, lamingtons, meat pies, Vegemite and Anzac biscuits are regarded as iconic Australian foods.

Australia is a leading exporter and consumer of wine. Australian wine is produced mainly in the southern, cooler parts of the country. The nation also ranks highly in beer consumption, with each state and territory hosting numerous breweries. Australia is also known for its cafe and coffee culture in urban centres.

Food to suit every taste

- Thanks to Australia's diverse, multicultural population and clean, green environments, our food scene is thriving.
- Fertile rural and coastal regions supply healthy produce to supermarkets in cities and towns nationwide. This means you can enjoy fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, and seafood all year.
- Australia enjoys a rich variety of food from around the world. You can find almost every international cuisine in restaurants, cafés, takeaway eateries and hotels across the country.

- During your stay, you will also have plenty of opportunities to try traditional Aussie foods like Vegemite, ANZAC biscuits, Tim Tams, and Lamingtons.

Sport and Recreation

Cricket and football are the predominant sports in Australia during the summer and winter months, respectively. Australia is unique in that it has professional leagues for four football codes. Originating in Melbourne in the 1850s, Australian rules football is the most popular code in all states except New South Wales and Queensland, where rugby league holds sway, followed by rugby union. Soccer, while ranked fourth in popularity and resources, has the highest overall participation rates. Cricket is popular across all borders and has been regarded by many Australians as the national sport. The Australian national cricket team competed against England in the first Test match (1877) and the first One Day International (1971), and against New Zealand in the first Twenty20 International (2004), winning all three games. It has also participated in every edition of the Cricket World Cup, winning the tournament a record six times.

Australia is one of five nations to have participated in every Summer Olympics of the modern era, and has hosted the Games twice: 1956 in Melbourne and 2000 in Sydney. It is also set to host the 2032 Games in Brisbane. Australia has also participated in every Commonwealth Games, hosting the event in 1938, 1962, 1982, 2006 and 2018. As well as being a regular FIFA World Cup participant, Australia has won the OFC Nations Cup four times and the AFC Asian Cup once—the only country to have won championships in two different FIFA confederations.

Other major international events held in Australia include the Australian Open tennis grand slam tournament and the Australian Formula One Grand Prix. The annual Melbourne Cup horse race and the Sydney to Hobart yacht race also attract intense interest. Australia is also notable for water-based sports, such as swimming and surfing. The surf lifesaving movement originated in Australia, and the volunteer lifesaver is one of the country's icons. Snow sports take place primarily in the Australian Alps and Tasmania.



I. Use the information from the Political System of Australia and ask 5 WH-questions:

Who, What, When, Where, Why

II. Look at the following pictures and explain which of these dishes are eaten in Australia? Name the ingredients.

III. Circle the following sentences True or False.

True or False: The British Monarch is represented by the Prime Minister at the federal level in Australia.
True or False: The Australian Aborigines are considered one of the oldest living cultures in the world.
True or False: Sydney is the capital of Australia.
True or False: Australian Rules Football is also known as soccer.
True or False: The Australian flag features the Union Jack in its design.
True or False: Australia has a desert climate throughout the entire country.
True or False: The Australian Open is a Grand Slam tennis tournament held in Melbourne.

IV. Match the animal to its description

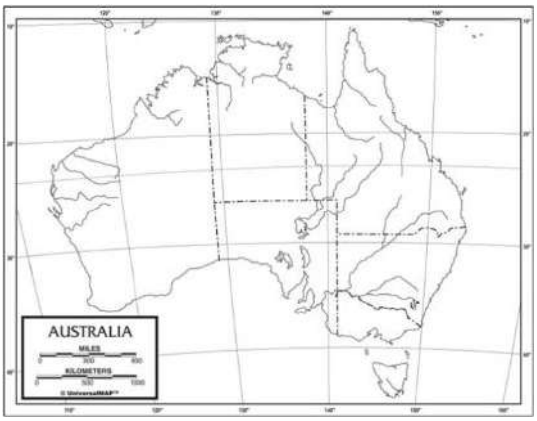
a. Koala	1. Marsupial that primarily eats eucalyptus leaves
b. Platypus	2. Egg-laying mammal with a bill similar to a duck
c. Kangaroo	3. Large marsupial known for hopping and a strong tail
d. Emu	4. Large flightless bird native to Australia

V. Fill in the blanks with the suitable word.

a. The _____ is the national legislative body of Australia.
b. The Aboriginal flag features the colors _____, _____, and _____.
c. ._____ is known as the cultural capital of Australia.
d. The annual _____ festival celebrates Australian arts and culture in Sydney.
e. _____ is the name given to Australia's unique form of football.

VI. Read the sentences below and say whether you agree or disagree with them, justifying your answers.

1. Australia is ethnically diverse and multicultural.
2. Australia has a poor variety of landscapes.
3. Australia's biodiversity is the same as in the USA.
4. Australia is the only continent that developed without feline species.
5. In Australia, people are encouraged to respect the rights and freedom of others, no matter where they come from.
6. The head of the Australian state is the president elected by the people.



VII. **Look at the map of *Australia.*** In pairs, identify and label the following on the map. Be sure to color and write clearly.

- *Locate the provinces*
- *Locate the most populous cities*
- *Locate the oceans that surrounds this country*

VIII. Answer the following questions:

1. Which Australian city is known for its street art?
2. What is the tallest building in Australia?
3. What is the name of the largest coral reef system in the world, located off the coast of Australia?
4. What is the name of the tallest tree species in Australia?
5. Which animal is native to Australia and known for its ability to hop long distances?
6. What is the name of the rock formation located in the Northern Territory of Australia?
7. Which Australian outlaw is known as the "bushranger"?
8. Which Australian film won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1995?

9. Who is the famous Australian artist known for his unique depictions of the outback and Aboriginal culture?
10. Which Australian novel was written by Markus Zusak and tells the story of a young girl in Nazi Germany?
11. What is the name of the famous Australian wildlife conservationist who was known as the "Crocodile Hunter"?
12. Which Australian state is the largest by area?
13. What is the name of the Australian mountain range that runs along the eastern coast of the country?
14. Which Australian city is known for its wine production?
15. What is the name of the Australian bird that is known for its distinctive laugh-like call?

IX.. Complete the Mind Map based on the information about Australia revealing what makes it different from other places around the world.



X. Complete the table below, highlighting the similarities and differences between the flags of Australia and New Zealand. Determine the significance of the elements of the flags.

	Similarities	**Differences**
The Flag of Australia		
The Flag of New Zealand		

XI. Games to use in the English classroom

a. Australian Sports Vocabulary Game:

Create flashcards with vocabulary related to popular Australian sports, such as *cricket, Australian rules football, rugby, and tennis.*

- Divide the class into two teams and explain the rules of the game.

- Show a flashcard to the first team and give them a limited amount of time (e.g., 30 seconds) to describe the sport using the vocabulary on the card without saying the name of the sport.

- The other team must guess the sport based on the description.

b. Australian Geography Treasure Hunt:



- Create a map of Australia with various landmarks, cities, and geographical features labeled.
- Divide the class into teams and provide each team with a copy of the map.
- Give the teams a list of clues or descriptions related to different locations on the map.
- Teams must work together to locate each place on the map based on the clues provided.
- The first team to correctly identify all the locations wins the treasure hunt.

c. Australian Wildlife Charades:

- Prepare a list of Australian animals, both native and unique to the continent, such as kangaroo, koala, platypus, and emu.
- Divide the class into two teams and explain the rules of charades.
- One student from each team takes turns acting out the name of an Australian animal without speaking while their team tries to guess the animal within a time limit.
- The team that correctly guesses the most animals within the given time wins the game.

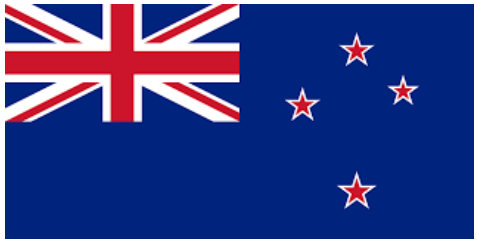
- This game not only reinforces vocabulary related to Australian wildlife but also encourages non-verbal communication and teamwork.

XII. Create a mini-book about *Australia's National Symbols.* Attach pictures and a little description for each national symbol.

VI. NEW ZEALAND

Geography

New Zealand (Māori: *Aotearoa* [aɔˈtɛaɾɔa]) is an island country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. It consists of two main landmasses—the North Island (*Te Ika-a-Māui*) and the South Island (*Te Waipounamu*)—and over 700 smaller islands. It is the sixth-largest island country by area and lies east of Australia across the Tasman Sea and south of the islands of New Caledonia, Fiji, and Tonga. The country's varied topography and sharp mountain peaks, including the Southern Alps, owe much to tectonic uplift and volcanic eruptions. New Zealand's capital city is Wellington, and its most populous city is Auckland.



The islands of New Zealand were the last large habitable land to be settled by humans. Between about 1280 and 1350, Polynesians began to settle in the islands and then developed a distinctive Māori culture. In 1642, the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman became the first European to sight and record New Zealand. In 1840, representatives of the United Kingdom and Māori chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitangi, which in its English version declared British sovereignty over the islands.

In 1841, New Zealand became a colony within the British Empire. Subsequently, a series of conflicts between the colonial government and Māori tribes resulted in the alienation and confiscation of large amounts of Māori land. New Zealand became a dominion in 1907; it gained full statutory independence in 1947, retaining the monarch as head of state. Today, the majority of New Zealand's population of 5.25 million is of European descent; the indigenous Māori are the largest minority, followed by Asians and Pacific Islanders. Reflecting this, New Zealand's culture is mainly derived from Māori and early British settlers, with recent broadening of culture arising from increased immigration. The official languages are

English, Māori, and New Zealand Sign Language, with the local dialect of English being dominant.

New Zealand is located near the centre of the water hemisphere and is made up of two main islands and more than 700 smaller islands. The two main islands (the North Island, or *Te Ika-a-Māui*, and the South Island, or *Te Waipounamu*) are separated by Cook Strait, 22 kilometres (14 mi) wide at its narrowest point. Besides the North and South Islands, the five largest inhabited islands are Stewart Island (across the Foveaux Strait), Chatham Island, Great Barrier Island (in the Hauraki Gulf), D'Urville Island (in the Marlborough Sounds)[] and Waiheke Island (about 22 km (14 mi) from central Auckland).

A developed country, it was the first to introduce a minimum wage, and the first to give women the right to vote. It ranks very highly in international measures of quality of life, human rights, and it has low levels of perceived corruption. It retains visible levels of inequality, having structural disparities between its Māori and European populations. New Zealand underwent major economic changes during the 1980s, which transformed it from a protectionist to a liberalised free-trade economy. The service sector dominates the national economy, followed by the industrial sector, and agriculture; international tourism is also a significant source of revenue.



Nationally, legislative authority is vested in an elected, unicameral Parliament, while executive political power is exercised by the Government, led by the prime minister, currently Christopher Luxon. Charles III is the country's king and is represented by the governor-general. In addition, New Zealand is organised into 11 regional councils and 67 territorial authorities for local government purposes. New Zealand is a member of the United Nations, Commonwealth of Nations.

New Zealand has an advanced market economy, ranked 13th in the 2021 Human Development Index, and fourth in the 2022 Index of Economic Freedom. It is a high-income economy with a nominal gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of US$36,254. The currency is the New Zealand dollar, informally known as the "Kiwi dollar"; it also circulates in the Cook Islands.

New Zealand has experienced a series of "brain drains" since the 1970s that still continue today. Nearly one-quarter of highly skilled workers live overseas, mostly in Australia and Britain, which is the largest proportion from any developed nation. In recent decades, however, a "brain gain" has brought in educated professionals from Europe and less developed countries. Today New Zealand's economy benefits from a high level of innovation.

Poverty in New Zealand is characterised by growing income inequality; wealth in New Zealand is highly concentrated, with the top 1% of the population owning 16% of the country's wealth, and the richest 5% owning 38%, leaving a stark contrast where half the population, including state beneficiaries and pensioners, receive less than $24,000. Moreover, child poverty in New Zealand has been identified by the Government as a major societal issue; the country has 12.0% of children living in low-income households that had less than 50 percent of the median equivalised disposable household income as of June 2022. Poverty has a disproportionately high effect in ethnic-minority households, with a quarter (23.3%) of Māori children and almost a third (28.6%) of Pacific Islander children living in poverty as of 2020.

New Zealand's population today is concentrated to the north of the country, with around 76.5% of the population living in the North Island and 23.5% in the South Island as of June 2023.

During the 20th century, New Zealand's population drifted north. In 1921, the country's median centre of population was located in the Tasman Sea west of Levin in Manawatū-Whanganui; by 2017, it had moved 280 km (170 mi) north to near Kawhia in Waikato.

New Zealand is a predominantly urban country, with 84.2% of the population living in urban areas, and 50.6% of the population living in the seven cities with populations exceeding 100,000.]Auckland, with over 1.4 million residents, is by far the largest city. New Zealand cities generally rank highly on international livability measures. For instance, in 2016, Auckland was ranked the world's third most liveable city and Wellington the twelfth by the Mercer Quality of Living Survey.

Political System of New Zealand

New Zealand is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy, although its constitution is not codified. Charles III is the king of New Zealand and thus the head of state. The king is represented by the governor-general, whom he appoints on the advice of the prime minister. The governor-general can exercise the Crown's prerogative powers, such as reviewing cases of injustice and making appointments of ministers, ambassadors, and other key public officials, and in rare situations, the reserve powers (e.g. the power to dissolve Parliament or refuse the royal assent of a bill into law). The powers of the monarch and the governor-general are limited by constitutional constraints, and they cannot normally be exercised without the advice of ministers.

The New Zealand Parliament holds legislative power and consists of the king and the House of Representatives. It also included an upper house, the Legislative Council, until this was abolished in 1950. The supremacy of parliament over the Crown and other government institutions was established in England by the Bill of Rights 1689 and has been ratified as law in New Zealand. The House of Representatives is democratically elected, and a government is formed from the party or coalition with the majority of seats. If no majority is formed, a minority government can be formed if support from other parties during confidence and supply votes is assured. The governor-general, *Cindy Kiro*, appoints ministers under advice from the prime minister, who is by convention the parliamentary leader of the governing party or coalition. Cabinet, formed by ministers and led by the prime minister, is the highest policy-making body in government and responsible for deciding significant government actions. Members of Cabinet make major decisions collectively and are therefore collectively responsible for the consequences of these decisions. The 42nd and current prime minister, since 27 November 2023, is *Christopher Luxon.*

A parliamentary general election must be called no later than three years after the previous election.

Almost all general elections between 1853 and 1993 were held under the *first-past-the-pos*t voting system. Since the 1996 election, a form of proportional representation called mixed-member proportional (MMP) has been used,. Under the MMP system, each person has two votes; one is for a candidate standing in the voter's electorate, and the other is for a party.

Based on the 2018 census data, there are 72 electorates (which include seven Māori electorates in which only Māori can optionally vote), and the remaining 48 of the 120 seats are assigned so that representation in Parliament reflects the party vote, with the threshold that a party must win at least one electorate or 5% of the total party vote before it is eligible for a seat.

Elections since the 1930s have been dominated by two political parties, National and Labour. More parties have been represented in Parliament since the introduction of MMP.

New Zealand is identified as one of the world's most stable and well-governed states. As of 2017, the country was ranked fourth in the strength of its democratic institutions, and first in government transparency and lack of corruption. LGBT rights in the nation are also recognised as among the most tolerant in Oceania. New Zealand ranks highly for civic participation in the political process, with 82% voter turnout during recent general elections, compared to an OECD average of 69%.

However, this is untrue for local council elections; a historically low 36% of eligible New Zealanders voted in the 2022 local elections, compared with an already low 42% turnout in 2019. A 2017 human rights report by the United States Department of State noted that the New Zealand government generally respected the rights of individuals, but voiced concerns regarding the social status of the Māori population.

In terms of structural discrimination, the New Zealand Human Rights Commission has asserted that there is strong, consistent evidence that it is a real and ongoing socioeconomic issue. One example of structural inequality in New Zealand can be seen in the criminal justice system. According to the Ministry of Justice, Māori are overrepresented, comprising 45% of New Zealanders convicted of crimes and 53% of those imprisoned, while only being 16.5% of the population.

Climate

Wellington and Christchurch all receive a yearly average of more than 2,000 hours of sunshine. The southern and southwestern parts of the South Island have a cooler and cloudier climate, with around 1,400–1,600 hours; the northern and northeastern parts of the South Island are the sunniest areas of the country and receive about 2,400–2,500 hours.

The general snow season is early June until early October, though cold snaps can occur outside this season. Snowfall is common in the eastern and southern parts of the South Island and mountain areas across the country.

Average daily temperatures and rainfall for selected towns and cities of New Zealand					
Location	**January high °C (°F)**	**January low °C (°F)**	**July high °C (°F)**	**July low °C (°F)**	**Annual rainfall mm (in)**
Auckland	23 (73)	15 (59)	15 (59)	8 (46)	1,212 (47.7)
Wellington	20 (68)	14 (57)	11 (52)	6 (43)	1,207 (47.5)
Hokitika	20 (68)	12 (54)	12 (54)	3 (37)	2,901 (114.2)
Christchurch	23 (73)	12 (54)	11 (52)	2 (36)	618 (24.3)
Alexandra	25 (77)	11 (52)	8 (46)	−2 (28)	359 (14.1)

Biodiversity



The endemic flightless ***kiwi*** is a national icon.

New Zealand's geographic isolation for 80 million years and island biogeography has influenced evolution of the country's species of animals, fungi and plants. Physical isolation has caused biological isolation, resulting in a dynamic evolutionary ecology with examples of distinctive plants and animals as well as populations of widespread species.

The flora and fauna of New Zealand were originally thought to have originated from New Zealand's fragmentation off from Gondwana, however more recent evidence postulates species resulted from dispersal. About 82% of New Zealand's indigenous vascular plants are endemic, covering 1,944 species across 65 genera.

The number of fungi recorded from New Zealand, including lichen-forming species, is not known, nor is the proportion of those fungi which are endemic, but one estimate suggests there are about 2,300 species of lichen-forming fungi in New Zealand and 40% of these are endemic. The two main types of forest are those dominated by broadleaf trees with emergent podocarps, or by southern beech in cooler climates. The remaining vegetation types consist of grasslands, the majority of which are tussock.

Before the arrival of humans, an estimated 80% of the land was covered in forest, with only high alpine, wet, infertile and volcanic areas without trees. Massive deforestation occurred after humans arrived, with around half the forest cover lost to fire after Polynesian settlement. Much of the remaining forest fell after European settlement, being logged or cleared to make room for pastoral farming, leaving forest occupying only 23% of the land.



The giant Haast's eagle died out when humans hunted its main prey, the moa, to extinction.

The forests were dominated by birds, and the lack of mammalian predators led to some like the kiwi, kākāpō, weka and takahē evolving flightlessness.

The arrival of humans, associated changes to habitat, and the introduction of rats, ferrets and other mammals led to the extinction of many bird species, including large birds like the moa and Haast's eagle.

Other indigenous animals are represented by reptiles (tuatara, skinks and geckos), frogs, such as the protected endangered Hamilton's Frog, spiders, insects, and snails. Some, such as the tuatara, are so unique that they have been called living fossils. Three species of bats (one since extinct) were the only sign of native land mammals in New Zealand until the 2006 discovery of bones from a unique, mouse-sized land mammal at least 16 million years old. Marine mammals, however, are abundant, with almost half the world's cetaceans (whales, dolphins, and porpoises) and large numbers

of fur seals reported in New Zealand waters. Many seabirds breed in New Zealand, a third of them unique to the country. More penguin species are found in New Zealand than in any other country, with 13 of the world's 18 penguin species.

Culture

Early Māori adapted the tropically based east Polynesian culture in line with the challenges associated with a larger and more diverse environment, eventually developing their own distinctive culture. Social organization was largely communal with families, subtribes and tribes ruled by a chief, whose position was subject to the community's approval.

The British and Irish immigrants brought aspects of their own culture to New Zealand and also influenced Māori culture, particularly with the introduction of Christianity. However, Māori still regard their allegiance to tribal groups as a vital part of their identity, and Māori kinship roles resemble those of other Polynesian peoples.

More recently, American, Australian, Asian and other European cultures have exerted influence on New Zealand. Non-Māori Polynesian cultures are also apparent, with Pasifika, the world's largest Polynesian festival, now an annual event in Auckland. At the time, New Zealand was not known as an intellectual country. From the early 20th century until the late 1960s, Māori culture was suppressed by the attempted assimilation of Māori into British New Zealanders. In the 1960s, as tertiary education became more available, and cities expanded urban culture began to dominate. However, rural imagery and themes are common in New Zealand's art, literature and media.

New Zealand's national symbols are influenced by natural, historical, and Māori sources. The **silver fern** is an emblem appearing on army insignia and sporting team uniforms. Certain items of popular culture thought to be unique to New Zealand are called "Kiwiana".

As part of the resurgence of Māori culture, the traditional crafts of carving and weaving are now more widely practised, and Māori artists are increasing in number and influence. Most Māori carvings feature human figures, generally with three fingers and either a natural-looking, detailed head or a grotesque head. Surface patterns consisting of spirals, ridges, notches and fish scales decorate most carvings. The pre-eminent Māori architecture consisted of carved meeting houses decorated with symbolic

carvings and illustrations. These buildings were originally designed to be constantly rebuilt, changing and adapting to different whims or needs.

Māori decorated the white wood of buildings, canoes and cenotaphs using red (a mixture of red ochre and shark fat) and black (made from soot) paint and painted pictures of birds, reptiles and other designs on cave walls. Māori tattoos consisting of colored soot mixed with gum were cut into the flesh with a bone chisel. Since European arrival paintings and photographs have been dominated by landscapes, originally not as works of art but as factual portrayals of New Zealand. Portraits of Māori were also common, with early painters often portraying them as an ideal race untainted by civilization. The country's isolation delayed the influence of European artistic trends allowing local artists to develop their own distinctive style of regionalism. During the 1960s and 1970s, many artists combined traditional Māori and Western techniques, creating unique art forms. New Zealand art and craft has gradually achieved an international audience, with exhibitions in the Venice Biennale in 2001 and the "Paradise Now" exhibition in New York in 2004.

Māori cloaks are made of fine flax fibre and patterned with black, red and white triangles, diamonds and other geometric shapes. Greenstone was fashioned into earrings and necklaces, with the most well-known design being the hei-tiki, a distorted human figure sitting cross-legged with its head tilted to the side. Europeans brought English fashion etiquette to New Zealand, and until the 1950s most people dressed up for social occasions. Standards have since relaxed and New Zealand fashion has received a reputation for being casual, practical and lackluster. However, the local fashion industry has grown significantly since 2000, doubling exports and increasing from a handful to about 50 established labels, with some labels gaining international recognition.

Media and entertainment

New Zealand music has been influenced by blues, jazz, country, rock and roll and hip hop, with many of these genres given a unique New Zealand interpretation. Māori developed traditional chants and songs from their ancient Southeast Asian origins, and after centuries of isolation created a unique "monotonous" and "doleful" sound. Flutes and trumpets were used as musical instruments or as signaling devices during war or special occasions. Early settlers brought over their ethnic music, with brass bands and choral music being popular, and musicians began touring New

Zealand in the 1860s. Pipe bands became widespread during the early 20th century. The New Zealand recording industry began to develop from 1940 onwards, and many New Zealand musicians have obtained success in Britain and the United States. Some artists release Māori language songs, and the Māori tradition-based art of ***kapa haka*** (song and dance) has made a resurgence. The New Zealand Music Awards are held annually by Recorded Music NZ; the awards were first held in 1965 by Reckitt & Colman as the Loxene Golden Disc awards. Recorded Music NZ also publishes the country's official weekly record charts.



The ***Hobbiton Movie Set***, located near ***Matamata***, was used for *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy.

Public radio was introduced in New Zealand in 1922.

A state-owned television service began in 1960. Deregulation in the 1980s saw a sudden increase in the numbers of radio and television stations.[401] New Zealand television primarily broadcasts American and British programming, along with many Australian and local shows. The number of New Zealand films significantly increased during the 1970s. In 1978 the New Zealand Film Commission started assisting local film-makers, and many films attained a world audience, some receiving international acknowledgement. The highest-grossing New Zealand films are *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, *Boy*, *The World's Fastest Indian*, *Whale Rider*, *Once Were Warriors*, *Heavenly Creatures* and *The Piano*. The country's diverse scenery and compact size, plus government incentives, have encouraged some producers to shoot very big-budget and well known productions in New Zealand, including

The Lord of the Rings and *The Hobbit* film trilogies, *Avatar*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *King Kong*, *Wolverine*, *The Last Samurai* and *The Power of the Dog*. The New Zealand media industry is dominated by a small number of companies, most of which are foreign-owned, although the state retains ownership of some television and radio stations. Since 1994, Freedom House has consistently ranked New Zealand's press freedom in the top twenty, with the 19th freest media as of 2015.

Sport

Most of the major sporting codes played in New Zealand have British origins.] Rugby union is considered the national sport and attracts the most spectators. Golf, netball, tennis and cricket have the highest rates of adult participation, while netball, rugby union and football (soccer) are particularly popular among young people. Horse racing is one of the most popular spectator sports in New Zealand and was part of the "rugby, racing, and beer" subculture during the 1960s. Around 54% of New Zealand adolescents participate in sports for their school. Victorious rugby tours to Australia and the United Kingdom in the late 1880s and the early 1900s played an early role in instilling a national identity. Māori participation in European sports was particularly evident in rugby, and the country's team performs a **haka**, a traditional Māori challenge, before international matches. New Zealand is known for its extreme sports, adventure tourism and strong mountaineering tradition, as seen in the success of notable New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary. Other outdoor pursuits such as cycling, fishing, swimming, running, tramping, canoeing, hunting, snowsports, surfing and sailing are also popular.] New Zealand has seen regular sailing success in the America's Cup regatta since 1995. The Polynesian sport of **waka ama** racing has experienced a resurgence of interest in New Zealand since the 1980s.

New Zealand has competitive international teams in rugby union, rugby league, netball, cricket, softball, and sailing. New Zealand participated at the Summer Olympics in 1908 and 1912 as a joint team with Australia, before first participating on its own in 1920. The country has ranked highly on a medals-to-population ratio at recent Games. The All Blacks, the national rugby union team, are the most successful in the history of international rugby and have won the World Cup three times.

Some interesting facts about New Zealand



- Christianity is the predominant religion in New Zealand, although its society is among the most secular in the world. In the 2018 census, 44.7% of respondents identified with one or more religions, including 37.0% identifying as Christians. Another 48.5% indicated that they had no religion. Of those

who affiliate with a particular Christian denomination, the main responses are Anglicanism (6.7%), Roman Catholicism (6.3%), and Presbyterianism (4.7%). The Māori-based Ringatū and Rātana religions (1.2%) are also Christian in origin. Immigration and demographic change in recent decades have contributed to the growth of minority religions, such as Hinduism (2.6%), Islam (1.3%), Buddhism (1.1%), and Sikhism (0.9%). The Auckland Region exhibited the greatest religious diversity. A church in New Zealand is called Rātana

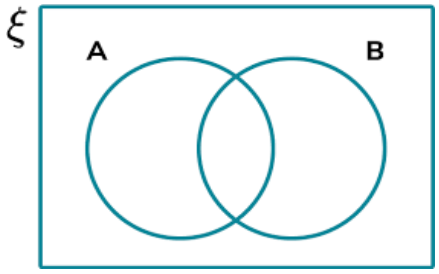
- Primary and secondary schooling is compulsory for children aged 6 to 16, with the majority of children attending from the age of 5. There are 13 school years and attending state (public) schools is free to New Zealand citizens and permanent residents from a person's 5th birthday to the end of the calendar year following their 19th birthday. New Zealand has an adult literacy rate of 99%, and over half of the population aged 15 to 29 hold a tertiary qualification. There are five types of government-owned tertiary institutions: universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, specialist colleges, and wānanga, in addition to private training establishments. In 2021, in the population aged 25–64; 13% had no formal qualification, 21% had a school qualification, 28% had a tertiary certificate or diploma, and 35% have a bachelor's degree or higher. The OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment ranks New Zealand as the 28th best in the OECD for maths, 13th best for science, and 11th best for reading.
- The **national cuisine** has been described as Pacific Rim, incorporating the native Māori cuisine and diverse culinary traditions introduced by settlers and immigrants from Europe, Polynesia, and Asia. New Zealand yields produce from land and sea - most crops and livestock, such as maize, potatoes and pigs, were gradually introduced by the early European settlers. Distinctive ingredients or dishes include lamb, salmon, *kōura* (crayfish), Bluff oysters, whitebait, *pāua* (abalone), mussels, scallops, *pipi* and *tuatua* (types of New Zealand shellfish), *kūmara* (sweet potato), kiwifruit, tamarillo, and pavlova (considered a national dessert). A hāngī is a traditional Māori method of cooking food using heated rocks buried in a pit oven; still used for large groups on special occasions, such as *tangihanga*.



I. Fill in the blanks with the suitable word.

a. The _____ is the highest peak in New Zealand.
b. The indigenous people of New Zealand are called _____.
c. The capital city of New Zealand is _____.
d. The _____ is a traditional Maori war dance.
e. The _____ is a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its stunning fjords and marine life.
f. New Zealand was the first country in the world to grant women the right to _____.
g. The kiwi is a flightless bird native to _____ and serves as a national symbol.
j. The Treaty of _____ was signed between the British Crown and Maori chiefs in 1840.
k. The Waitomo Glowworm Caves are famous for their underground _____ formations.

II. Identify the values and lifestyle traits of New Zealand culture.



III. Study the political system of Australia and New Zealand and complete the graphic Venn (3-5 features for each circle).

IV. Look through the following New Zealand's Symbols. Identify the category they belong to.

Complete the table.

The All Blacks
National Anthem
National Bird
Haka
Bungy Jumping
Kiwifruit
National Plant/Flower
National Colours
Coat of Arms
Hei-tiki



Official National Symbols	Unofficial National Symbols	Cultural Icons	

V. Answer the following questions:

What's New Zealand's biggest city?

Who are New Zealand's original inhabitants?

What's New Zealand's capital?

What's New Zealand's highest mountain?

What's the small bird living in New Zealand called?

What is New Zealand's closest neighbour?

How many islands does New Zealand consist of?

Who were the first settlers? When did they come? What culture did they develop?

Who was the first European to sight and record New Zealand?

VI. Choose the best variant

1.*What is the capital city of New Zealand?*

(A) Auckland
(B) Wellington
(C) Christchurch
(D) Dunedin

2.*The highest peak in New Zealand is:*

(A) Mount Tasman
(B) Mount Cook (Aoraki)
(C) Mount Ruapehu
(D) Mount Taranaki

3.*Which body of water separates the North Island and the South Island of New Zealand?*

(A) Tasman Sea
(B) Cook Strait
(C) Pacific Ocean

(D) Foveaux Strait

4.*Who was the first European to sight New Zealand*?

(A) James Cook

(B) Abel Tasman

(C) Ferdinand Magellan

(D) Christopher Columbus

5.*New Zealand became a Dominion within the British Empire in*:

(A) 1835

(B) 1840

(C) 1907

(D) 1947

6.*The traditional Maori war dance is known as:*

(A) Poi

(B) Haka

(C) Korowai

(D) Moko

7. *The indigenous people of New Zealand are called*:

(A) Aborigines

(B) Inuit

(C) Maori

(D) Sami

8. *The Kiwi is*:

(A) A fruit native to New Zealand

(B) A type of dance

(C) A flightless bird and a national symbol

(D) A traditional Maori weapon

9. *The All Blacks are New Zealand's national team in which sport?*

(A) Soccer

(B) Rugby Union

(C) Cricket

(D) Netball

10. *New Zealand's famous yacht race event is called*:

(A) America's Cup

(B) Whitbread Round the World Race

(C) Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race

(D) Fastnet Race

11. *The New Zealand Silver Ferns compete in which sport?*
    (A) Rugby
    (B) Basketball
    (C) Netball
    (D) Field Hockey
12. *The head of government in New Zealand is the*:
    (A) Governor-General
    (B) President
    (C) Prime Minister
    (D) King/Queen
13. *New Zealand's Parliament is called*:
    (A) Congress
    (B) Dáil
    (C) National Assembly
    (D) House of Representatives
14. *The legal voting age in New Zealand is:*
    (A) 16
    (B) 18
    (C) 20
    (D) 21
15. *Which tree is known as the "Christmas tree" of New Zealand*?
    (A) Kauri
    (B) Pohutukawa
    (C) Rimu
    (D) Totara
16. *Which of these animals is native to New Zealand*?
    (A) Kangaroo
    (B) Kiwi
    (C) Emu
    (D) Koala
17. *The Tuatara is a:*
    (A) Bird
    (B) Mammal
    (C) Reptile
    (D) Fish

18. *Which natural disaster significantly affected Christchurch in 2010-2011?*
   (A) Flood
   (B) Earthquake
   (C) Cyclone
   (D) Volcanic Eruption
19. *New Zealand was the first country to grant women the right to vote in*:
   (A) 1893
   (B) 1918
   (C) 1920
   (D) 1945

VII. **Reveal the main differences between Australia and New Zealand.**



VIII.

- Name some features of New Zealand's sport?
- Comment on 10 interesting facts about New Zealand.
- Specify some facts regarding New Zealand's economy.
- Brainstorm the concepts "brain drains" and "brain gain".
- **How do the following ideas promote New Zealand on an international level***? In pairs, discuss the reason below and explain your point of view.*
  - New Zealand is a diverse nation;
  - New Zealand presents great lifestyle opportunities;
  - New Zealand are well-known to be friendly and inclusive people;
  - Wildlife and conservation;
  - Excellent food and dining experiences.

IX. Write an essay on the topic "***If I go to New Zealand, I will visit***". Describe your trip. Make up a poster on what you would like to see in New Zeeland

X. **Imagine you are a film director**. In about 80 words, write the reasons why *New Zeeland* is the best place for a film project.

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