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GREAT BRITAIN:

History and Culture



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БРИТАНІЯ:
історія і культура**

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ПЕРЕДМОВА

Навчальний посібник підготовлено для студентів-бакалаврів та магістрів закладів вищої освіти за напрямом підготовки 035 Філологія (Мова та література (англійська). Переклад). Посібник охоплює усі теми теоретичних курсів “Лінгвокраїнознавство англomовних країн” та “Історія культури англomовних країн”.

Посібником можуть також послуговуватися викладачі філологічних факультетів, вчителі й учні закладів загальної середньої освіти з поглибленим вивченням англійської мови, абітурієнти, аспіранти-філологи та всі, хто цікавиться історією та культурою Великої Британії.

Навчальний посібник створено з метою систематизації, збагачення й удосконалення знань у сфері історії та культури Великої Британії. У ньому висвітлено найважливіші історико-економічні події Великої Британії від давніх часів і дотепер, а також історію британської культури, зокрема: архітектури, мистецтва, театру, кіно, музики тощо.

Для полегшення сприйняття інформації, матеріал розподілено у розділи й підрозділи відповідно до історичних періодів розвитку Великої Британії. Після вивчення кожного розділу читачам пропонуються питання для самоконтролю. У кінці посібника є тести на засвоєння фактичного матеріалу, а також теми для презентацій та рефератів. Додатки систематизують інформацію про монархів і прем'єр-міністрів Великої Британії, її конституційний лад.

У Вступі подано основну актуальну інформацію про Велику Британію, зокрема прапор, гімн, столицю, площу, густоту населення тощо. Також викладено особливості географічного положення та адміністративного устрою. У підсумковому розділі XI йдеться про британську культуру в аспекті історичного розвитку Великої Британії, під рубрикою *Did you know?* наведено цікаві історичні факти.

Навчальний посібник підготували викладачі кафедри практики англійської мови Волинського національного університету імені Лесі Українки – кандидати філологічних наук, доценти: О. В. Василенко (Вступ, Розділи I–V, підсумкові запитання і завдання, додатки), І. М. Калиновська (Передмова, Розділ XI, підсумкові запитання і тестові завдання), професор Е. К. Коляда (Вступ, Розділи VI–X). Основні матеріали посібника слугують підґрунтям для словникових статей “Лінгвокраїнознавчого словника” та роботи студентських проблемних груп.

Автори висловлюють щире подяку Дону Пуффалту за допомогу, поради та високоякісне редагування першого видання.

PREFACE

This manual has been prepared for undergraduate and postgraduate students majoring in 035 Philology (English language and literature. Translation). The manual covers all the topics dealt with in the theoretical courses entitled “Linguistic and Cultural Studies of English-Speaking Countries” and “Cultural History of English-Speaking Countries”.

The manual may also be used by lecturers in philological faculties; teachers and pupils in secondary schools with an intensive focus on English; linguists; undergraduate and postgraduate students; and anyone else who is interested in the history and culture of Great Britain.

The manual was created to provide a systematized and enriched knowledge of the history and culture of the UK. It highlights the most important British historical and economic developments since ancient times and leading up to the present, as well as the history of all aspects of British culture, including architecture, art, theatre, film, and music.

For ease of use, the information is divided into chapters and sections in accordance with the major periods of British history. At the end of each chapter, questions are provided for readers to check their knowledge of the material that they have read. At the end of the manual there are tests, as well as topics for student presentations and reports. In the supplements, lists of British monarchs and prime ministers are given, along with a systematized description of the legal system in the British Isles.

In the introduction, there is a presentation of basic current information about the UK, including such details as its capital city, its total area and population, and its national anthem. It also contains a description of Great Britain from a geographical and administrative standpoint. The final chapter deals with British culture in terms of the historical development of the UK, and interesting additional historical details are provided under the heading *Did you know?*

The lecturers of Conversational English Department at Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University involved in the preparation of this manual were Olha Vasylenko, Ph.D., associate professor (introduction, chapters I–V, assignments, and supplements), Iryna Kalynovska, Ph.D., associate professor (preface, chapter XI, and assignments), and Elina Koliada, Ph.D., full professor (introduction, and chapters VI–X). The primary content of this manual has also been used as the basic material for entries in the “Dictionary of Linguistic and Cultural Studies” and for student research groups.

The authors express their most sincere gratitude to Don Puffalt for his assistance, advice and high-quality editing work of the first edition.

FACT FILE

1. Official name – The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK).
2. Capital – London, population 8,799,800 (Office for National Statistics, 2021); with its suburbs, about 10 million.
3. Flag – the Union Jack.
4. Anthem – “God Save the King/Queen”.
5. Currency – pound sterling = 100 pence.
6. Form of government – constitutional monarchy. This means that it has a monarch (a king or a queen) as its head of state.
7. Head of State: King Charles III (Charles Philip Arthur George Windsor). His full title is “His Most Excellent Majesty Charles III, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of His other Realms and Territories King, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith. He was born in London on 14 November, 1948. He acceded to the throne upon the death of his mother Queen Elisabeth II on September 8, 2022.
8. Parliament is made up of the elected House of Commons, the appointed House of Lords and the Crown (as personified by the monarch). The main business of parliament takes place in the two houses, but royal assent is required for a bill to become an act of parliament (that is, statute law). For general elections (elections to the House of Commons), the UK is currently divided into 650 constituencies, each of which is represented by one member of Parliament (MP) elected by the first-past-the-post system. MPs hold office for up to five years and must then stand for re-election if they wish to continue to be an MP. The Conservative Party, colloquially known as the Tory Party or the Tories, and the Labour Party have been the dominant political parties in the UK since the 1920s, leading to the UK being described as a two-party system. However, since the 1920s other political parties have won seats in the House of Commons, although never more than the Conservatives or Labour.
9. The Prime Minister is the head of government in the UK. Acting under the direction and supervision of a Cabinet of senior ministers selected and led by the prime minister, the Government serves as the principal instrument for public policymaking, administers public services and, through the Privy Council, promulgates statutory instruments and tenders advice to the monarch. While appointed by the monarch, in

modern times the prime minister is, by convention, an MP, the leader of the political party with the most seats in the House of Commons, and holds office by virtue of their ability to command the confidence of the House of Commons. The current Prime Minister, as of October 2022, is Rishi Sunak MP, leader of the Conservative Party.

10. Total area – 242,495 square kilometres.

11. Population – The total population in the UK was estimated at 67,026,300 million people (Office for National Statistics, 2021). The population of the UK represents 0.91 percent of the world's total population which means that one person in every 111 people on the planet is a resident of the UK (UK Population, 2022 Data).

Separated by countries, we have England, with a population of ca. 57 million, which is 84 % of the total population of the UK; Scotland – about 5,5 million, which is 8.1 % of the total population; Wales – 3,2 million, which is 4.7 % of the total population; and Northern Ireland – 1.9 million, which is 2.8 % of the total population (UK population 2020, by region).

Completed family size in the UK has fallen from 3.5 at the beginning of the twentieth century to 1.7 children at the end of this period.

12. Population density – 278,7/km² (compared with 72.5/km² in Ukraine).

This density is considered to be among the highest in the world. (By comparison, Hong Kong has 6,624/km², and Monaco, 19,010/km²).

13. Life expectancy is 80.9 (2020) for the population as a whole (compared with nearly 71,2 (2020) years in Ukraine).

14. Infant mortality – 3.2 deaths per 1000 live births (2023) (compared with 5,9 infants/1000 in Ukraine (2022)).

15. Official language – English.

16. Other languages – Welsh (in Wales), Scots Gaelic (in Scotland), Irish Gaelic in Ireland.

17. Literacy rate – 99 % (compared with 99.97 % in Ukraine).

The latest available statistics for adult literacy levels in England (2012), Scotland (2009), Wales (2010) and Northern Ireland (2012) show that each nation has a different definition of basic literacy skills, so country comparisons are not possible.

England: 1 in 6 (16.4 % / 7.1 million people) adults in England have very poor literacy skills. In Scotland: 1 in 4 (26.7 % / 931,000 people), in Wales: 1 in 8 (12 % / 216,000 people), in Northern Ireland: 1 in 5 (17.9 % / 256,000 people) adults have very poor literacy skills.

Approximately 100,000 school leavers (16 %) leave school every year unable to read, write and spell adequately for the demands of daily life.

18. Religions – Christianity (59.5 %); Irreligion (25.7 %); Islam (4.4 %); Hinduism (1.3 %); Sikhism (0.7 %).

Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the UK. According to the decennial census of the UK, the percentage of Muslims in the UK rose from 2.7 in 2001 to 4.4 in 2011.

19. Ethnic groups – 87 % of people in the UK are White, and 13 % belong to a Black, Asian, Mixed or other ethnic groups (2011 Census data).

20. According to a United Nations report on human development (2020), Britain ranks thirteenth out of 187 countries on a human development index that combines life expectancy, educational level and basic purchasing power (Ukraine – 74, Poland – 35, Belarus – 53, Russia – 52, Georgia – 61).

21. UK economy: Britain became the world's first industrialized country in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The UK has the world's sixth largest economy. The UK economy is the world's second biggest earner of services and income revenue. Money received from being invested overseas. The UK economy is the world's fifth biggest exporter.

22. London was the largest city in the world from 1831 to 1925.

23. The City of London has the greatest concentration of banks in the world and one of the largest stock exchanges.

24. London's Heathrow Airport is the busiest international airport in the world.

25. UK time – The UK is in the Greenwich Meridian time zone (GMT, Ukraine's time zone is GMT +2 hours) which is also called the Coordinated Universal Time zone (UTC). The UK does have daylight savings time. Places that are in the same time zone as the UK include: Portugal, Morocco, Ghana, Gambia, Senegal and the Ivory Coast.

26. Telephone code – 44

27. Internet country code for the UK is .uk

INTRODUCTION

General Information about Great Britain

Like that of all nations, the history of Great Britain has been affected by its geographical setting. The ongoing interaction of the many geographical and political factors connected with Britain is a subject of enormous magnitude and reflects the ebb and flow of power through the centuries.

Geography, Climate, and Natural Resources

Great Britain, which includes the constituent units of England, Wales, and Scotland, is the world's ninth-largest island. It covers about 209,331 square kilometres and extends about 966 kilometres from north to south and about 483 kilometres from east to west. Britain is the largest island of the British Isles, which could be termed an archipelago – a group of islands.

Despite Britain's position in the northern latitudes of Europe – the same distance from the equator as the southern parts of the relatively cold countries of Norway and Sweden – the presence of the warm waters of the Gulf Stream makes the archipelago much warmer than the areas at corresponding latitude in North America or Scandinavia. (Some fear that global warming will alter the course of the Gulf Stream away from the British Isles, which could make the local climate much colder). The climate is very wet, and rainfall is quite evenly distributed and frequent, meaning that British farmers have little need for the elaborate irrigation systems characteristic of drier climates. Britain is seismically stable, and British earthquakes are small and very rarely destructive.

Britain is well endowed with minerals, particularly tin, lead, iron, and coal. The availability of iron and coal is one of the reasons why Britain was the earliest site of the Industrial Revolution. Beneath its North Sea coastal waters there are also oil deposits, but they are rapidly being depleted.

No place on the island of Great Britain is more than 113 kilometres from the sea, and Britain's rivers and irregular coastline provide numerous harbours, particularly those facing south and east. The fact of Britain's separation from the continent also meant that most invaders of Britain were not entire peoples on the move but smaller groups of warriors. For this reason, successful invasions and conquests in British history usually

resulted in the imposition of a new ruling class rather than the emergence of an entirely new people.

Britain is marked by regional differences. The most basic division is that between **highland areas** and **lowland areas**. The “**highland zone**” is defined by being over 200 meters above sea level. Highland zones are found in Wales, much of Scotland, northern England, and parts of southwestern England. The British highland zone is not really mountainous, as the highest mountains reach the modest height of roughly 1,219 meters. The proportion of the land which could be called highland is much higher in Scotland than in England, and the difference between the highlands and the lowlands and their inhabitants plays a central role in Scottish history and culture.

The highlands are most suited for use as pasture land, as they have mostly chalky soil and are too wet and cold for successful agriculture. They are also much less densely populated than the lowlands, as pasture land could not support as large a population as agriculture.

Lowland areas are usually more fertile. The most fertile lowlands are in the south and south-east of Britain, where there is rich, heavy soil more suited to agriculture. This could take the form of either grain or livestock production, depending on the circumstances. In the Middle Ages much of the Lowlands territory was used for the highly profitable production of wool. Lowlanders tended to live in villages, whereas highlanders were in small hamlets or isolated farmsteads, or else had a nomadic existence.

Invasions of Britain had much less effect on the highlands than on the lowlands, which constituted the really valuable prize due to their greater agricultural productivity. The governing authority in the British Isles was usually based in lowland England, the only place then capable of supporting them. Extending control over the highlands was a difficult challenge due to the difficult terrain. Mountainous Wales preserved its independence for centuries despite its poverty and its inability to unite politically. The only invaders to subdue Wales before the thirteenth century were the well-organized and disciplined Roman legions, but it took them several years after they had conquered England. The less-organized Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, and Normans found it even more difficult, and Wales was only permanently annexed to England in 1284.

The greater poverty of the highlands meant that highlanders often raided lowlanders, creating hostility between the two. The highlands were also more culturally and linguistically conservative. Cultural innovations

usually originated in the lowlands and spread to the highlands. The highlands were where the Celtic languages lasted the longest, as English and its offshoots, originally the language of the Anglo-Saxon invaders, became the dominant tongue of the lowlands in the early Middle Ages. This cultural division further added to the hostility between highland and lowland peoples.

The diversity of British topography may also be described in terms of vegetation-related factors, such as those associated with the lighter soils of the open country; the forests, with their heavy, clayey soils; and fens and swamps. Britain in the earliest times was heavily forested and also contained many fens and swamplands. These areas were often associated with outlaws and people who lived freer but poorer lives. Over the course of the millennia, much of this land was converted for agricultural use.

There are no really large rivers in Britain due to the small size of the island. The most important is the Thames in the south; others include the Trent and the Tweed in the north. Despite the lack of possibilities for good internal water transport, the ocean's proximity makes it relatively easy to move goods from place to place, as coal was moved from the north to London. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries British entrepreneurs and landowners created a network of canals to make up for the relative lack of inland waterways. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, railroads served a similar function.

Great Britain in the British Archipelago

Great Britain has usually been the archipelago's dominant political and cultural power, and it is certainly the most heavily populated island. The other major island is Ireland, whose history is closely connected with Britain's. Today Ireland is divided into a large, independent country in the south, the Republic of Ireland, and a smaller section in the north, Northern Ireland, which along with Great Britain makes up the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, called the United Kingdom for short.

The United Kingdom is often commonly referred to as Britain, a political usage that differs from the geographical one. Interaction between Ireland and Great Britain has included invasions across the Irish Sea in both directions, although the last Irish invasion of any part of Great Britain was in the early Middle Ages. There are long-standing connections of trade and migration between north-western Britain and Northern Ireland. The archipelago also includes many smaller islands.

The Isle of Wight, about 381 square kilometres in size, lies about 6.5 kilometres off the southern coast of Britain. Due to the Isle of Wight's close proximity to southern Britain, its history has been linked with that of Britain rather than one with its own identity. Today it is politically united with Britain, as it has been for centuries.

Another nearby island is the Welsh island of **Anglesey**, off the northern coast of Wales. The Menai Strait, which separates Anglesey from the mainland of Wales, is only about 250 meters wide at its narrowest point; the island covers about 715 square kilometres. Its isolation made it a stronghold of Welsh tradition, the last area in Wales to fall to the Romans and currently one of the areas with the greatest density of Welsh speakers.

The Isle of Man, about 572 square kilometres in size, in the Irish Sea between Great Britain and Ireland and has a very different history and status, having belonged at various times to England, Scotland, Ireland, and Norway. Unlike Anglesey and the Isle of Wight, the Isle of Man is not formally part of the United Kingdom, but has the status of a separate Crown dependency.

Another Crown dependency is **the Channel Islands**, a chain of small islands between southern England and France in the English Channel. There are five inhabited islands – Jersey, Guernsey, Sark, Alderney, and Herm. The islands combine a French and British heritage, and their native language is a dialect of French. Their relationship to the European continent has been closer than that of the rest of the British Isles. During World War II (1939–1945), the Channel Islands were the only part of the British Isles occupied by the Germans.

Another group of small islands in the south are **the Isles of Scilly**. Unlike the Channel Islands, they are not Crown dependencies but are an integral part of Great Britain. Their culture and history are most closely linked to those of Cornwall, a county in southwest England.

Several island chains have become part of Scotland. **The Hebrides** and the northern chains – **the Shetlands** and **Orkneys** – have also been linked at various times to Scandinavia. The Hebrides are a large group of islands, divided into the Inner Hebrides, off the coast of Scotland, and the Outer Hebrides, farther northwest. The larger islands of the Inner Hebrides include Jura and Islay. The major island of the Outer Hebrides is called Lewis and Harris. Contested for centuries between the Norwegian kings, various local rulers, and the kings of Scotland, the Hebrides were eventually incorporated into Scotland. Like Anglesey, they are a stronghold of Celtic speakers. The Celtic language of Scotland, Gaelic, is

still spoken in the Hebrides. Orkney is a small chain of islands immediately to the north of Scotland. It, too, was contested between Scotland and Norway, only becoming Scottish in the fifteenth century. Its largest island is called Mainland. The people of Orkney have a strong Scandinavian tradition and differ culturally from the Scottish mainland. Their language also displays a distinct Norse influence. The most northerly British Isles are known as the Shetland Islands. The largest island is called Mainland, and its political and cultural history resembles that of Orkney; in fact, the two island groups have been politically and ecclesiastically united at several points.

Administrative Divisions of the United Kingdom

For much of its history, Great Britain has been divided into three main political and cultural units – **England** in the south; **Wales**, a peninsula to the west of England; and **Scotland** in the north.

The name **England** comes from the Germanic tribes known as Anglo-Saxons and is not connected with the southern area of Great Britain before the first Anglo-Saxon invasions in the fifth century. Even then the Anglo-Saxons, or “English”, were not politically united, and the Kingdom of England was not formed until the tenth century. However, southern Britain had a distinct identity before the coming of the English. The territory of the Roman province of Britannia was largely the same as that of modern England and Wales.

England is geographically the largest, the wealthiest, and demographically by far the most populous of the four major regions of the British Isles, including Ireland. For much of its history, England has dominated Britain and the British Isles. It is mostly a lowland country, with more fertile land and a more temperate climate than the other areas. The most prominent mountain range in England is the Pennines, which extends from the northern Midlands of central England to northern England and southern Scotland. The highest peak in the Pennines, Cross Fell, is only 893 metres high.

One of the most important regional distinctions within England, affecting several phases of English history, is the division between northern and southern England. Southern England is made up primarily of fertile lowland areas, and it is more closely connected to the European continent. In many periods of English history, northern England has been a frontier region, closer to the Scottish border than to the capital, London. The north contains a higher proportion of less agriculturally productive

highland country. There is more production and consumption of oats and barley as opposed to the wheat diet of the south. It is also more oriented to the North Sea in the east and the Irish Sea in the west rather than to the English Channel in the south.

The city of York in the northeast was one of the most important Viking strongholds in England, and Viking culture had far more impact on the north than the south. The culturally conservative north remained predominantly Catholic after the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, led predominantly by southerners closely connected with the Protestant movement on the European continent. In the eighteenth century it was the north, with its abundant deposits of coal that became the heartland of the Industrial Revolution rather than the richer south. In modern party politics the north tends to be the stronghold of the Liberal and Labour parties, as opposed to the Conservative inclinations of the south.

Another distinct English region is **Cornwall** in the far southwest, inhabited by the only large non-English ethnic group within England itself for most of its history. The Cornish were originally Celtic speakers like the Welsh and the Gaels, but they were too small in number to resist being politically absorbed into England at an early stage. Some medieval and early modern documents and proclamations, however, refer to “England and Cornwall,” and some Cornish nationalists have argued that Cornwall remains separate from England, although under the same government. The last speaker of Cornish as a native language died in the eighteenth century, but there have been modern efforts to revive it. For most of its history, industry in Cornwall was dominated by fishing and tin mining. The first recorded contacts between the British Isles and the classical Mediterranean world were through Mediterranean traders visiting the tin mines of Cornwall, possibly as early as the sixth century B.C. They gave Britain the name “Isle of Tin”.

England’s capital city, London, has been the largest city in England and the British Isles throughout its history, since its founding by the Romans as Londinium around the year 50 A.D. Modern London, the largest city in Europe and a great centre of world culture, is an agglomeration of urban units, including the core of medieval London – the City of London – as well as the administrative capital of the borough of Westminster and other cities, towns, and neighbourhoods.

Wales is a word of Anglo-Saxon origin that was connected with non-Germanic groups. Unlike England and Scotland, Wales was never a United

Kingdom at any time. Its poverty and mountainous terrain made it impossible to establish a centralized government, although on some occasions one Welsh prince was able to dominate the entire country, taking the title Prince of Wales, but never succeeding in establishing a royal dynasty. After encroaching on Wales's frontier for centuries, England conquered the country in the late thirteenth century, adopting the title Prince of Wales to designate the heir to the English throne. Wales was legally united with England, forming the Kingdom of England and Wales, in the sixteenth century, though the entire kingdom was usually referred to simply as "England", emphasizing Wales's inferior position. Nonetheless, it retained a separate cultural and linguistic identity that persists to the present day. Religiously, it developed in the direction of sectarian Protestantism rather than the Church of England.

Scotland remained a separate state through the Middle Ages and up to the beginning of the eighteenth century. There were numerous wars between Scotland and England, basically caused by the English desire to rule the whole island and the Scottish desire to remain independent. The border between England and Scotland was not fixed until the time when it was placed on its present course from the Solway Firth, an inlet of the Irish Sea, on the west to the Tweed River on the east. Like Wales, Scotland has a limited amount of good agricultural land compared to England. A combination of factors – good harbours, a fertile lowland, and relatively easy transportation – made England (and Ireland) much more vulnerable to invasion by sea than Wales and Scotland. The most fertile area of Scotland for most of its history, and the heartland of the Scottish monarchy, is the lowland area in the southeast. No city dominates Scotland the way London does England, but its political capital has long been Edinburgh in the southeast. Other major Scottish cities include Glasgow in the south, one of Britain's great industrial centres, and Aberdeen in the north.

Scotland is geographically even more isolated than England from the main centres of development on the European continent, and it was often considered by continental Europeans and even the English to be remote. However, it is a crossroads with respect to the North Atlantic, with easy access from the south of Britain, Ireland, and Scandinavia. The long-standing connection between Scotland and the north of Ireland has played an important role in British history. The original Scots were Irish immigrants, and many nobles held lands in both Scotland and Ireland. In the early modern period, many Scots settled in the northern parts of Ireland, becoming the ancestors of the modern Ulster Protestants.

Although the island of Britain is sometimes referred to geographically as Great Britain, the latter is mostly a political term. “Great Britain” has been linked with an identity that transcends that of English, Welsh, and Scottish, uniting all the peoples of the island in loyalty to a common head. It was first used as a title by James VI of Scotland, who inherited the English throne upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603. By calling himself “King of Great Britain”, James tried, without much success, to dissolve the centuries-long animosities between his English and Scottish subjects.

In 1707 the Kingdom of England and Wales and the Kingdom of Scotland were joined together in the Act of Union to form a new Kingdom of Great Britain. (The English and Scottish parliaments each passed an Act of Union. The new kingdom’s capital was established in London, and its institutions, such as Parliament, basically coincided with those of England, so many Scots viewed it as an English takeover rather than a union of equals – as did many English people!) While any hopes of ending separate English and Scottish identities and the ancient enmity were doomed to be disappointed, the term “British” did catch on for some things, and most importantly the British Empire, created by the people of the island as a whole. However, there are some indications that the dissolution of the British Empire has had a corresponding impact on the British sense of common identity; in fact, in the twenty-first century, a separate inclination toward English, Scots, and Welsh identities seems to be re-emerging.

Ireland had been incorporated into the “United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland” by the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland in 1801. The Act of Union abolished Ireland’s separate parliament, incorporating Irish members into the British parliament as the 1707 act had incorporated the Scots, but with much less success. In 1922, after most of the counties of Ireland joined together to form the Irish Free State (eventually taking the name “the Republic of Ireland”), which dissolved all ties with Britain, the realm that remained became known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Britain and its Neighbours

Although a separate island, Britain is closely tied to Europe, which the English refer to as the Continent. The geographical separation of Britain from the Continent is thought to have begun in roughly 9000 B.C. when the southern part of the North Sea began to appear. The narrowest gap between Britain and Europe is at the eastern end of the English

Channel, and is only 34 kilometres across, the Kentish cliffs being visible from France on a clear day. Most of the successful invasions of Britain, and many unsuccessful ones, were launched from northern France or the Low Countries across the Channel. There were many occasions when a single state controlled territory on both sides of the channel, as did the Roman Empire.

Another direction of contact between Britain and the Continent is with western Scandinavia (Norway and Denmark) across the stormy North Sea. This took much longer than the English Channel connection to become a factor in British history as the distances were much greater and direct links between Britain and Scandinavia were impossible until boats had evolved to a certain point. However, from the appearance of the Vikings in the late eighth century A.D. to the final Norwegian withdrawal from the Shetlands in the late fifteenth century, Scandinavian and British politics would be closely intertwined.

There has been long-standing tension in British and English history between identification with the culture and institutions of the Continent and the desire to assert a unique identity. This is felt most strongly by the English; the Welsh and particularly the Scots have often felt more comfortable with a European identity than with a British identity that seemed excessively English. Larger Continental groupings that have included all of Britain or at least a large part of it include the Roman Empire, the medieval Roman Catholic Church, and the European Union (EU).

Questions and Tasks

1. Name the constituent administrative units found in Great Britain.
2. Does Britain have abundant mineral resources?
3. What are the two regional zones that are the main features of the relief of Great Britain?
4. Name the main rivers of Great Britain and find them on a map.
5. What are some of the smaller islands among the British Isles?
6. What was the origin of the Cornish?
7. What name did Mediterranean traders give to Britain?
8. What are the constituent parts of modern London?
9. Has Wales ever been an independent country? Explain your answer.
10. Which area of Scotland is the most economically prosperous?
11. What were the stages in the political unification of the United Kingdom?

I. PREHISTORIC BRITAIN (to ca. 450 A.D.)

The earliest history of Britain is marked by its physical separation from the European continent, its settlement by immigrants from Europe, its inhabitants developing from hunter-gatherers to farmers, and eventually the formation of political units larger than individual villages. These early inhabitants made some remarkable cultural achievements, including the construction of Stonehenge and other earth and stone circles.

Beginning in the first millennium B.C., Britain was increasingly influenced by the European continent, which brought Iron Age technology. The British were part of the cultural world of the Celts before many of them were forcibly incorporated into the Roman Empire. Although the armies of that empire had withdrawn from Britain by the early fifth century A.D., the legacy of Christianity remained a religion that would shape British culture and institutions to the twenty-first century.

The Early Britons

Human and prehuman remains have been found in Britain dating as far back as 250,000 to 300,000 years ago, but these earliest inhabitants seem to have left during the last Ice Age which ended about 50,000 years ago. Britain was subsequently resettled from Europe. At that time, it was physically attached to the continent; it only separated to form the island chain with which we are familiar about 11,000 years ago. Not much is known about these early inhabitants of Britain. They were organized into small communities, and as the population increased they moved from hunting-gathering to agriculture in a way similar to that of many other peoples throughout the world. Britain in this early phase was very heavily forested, well suited to a hunter-gatherer economy. The beginnings of the Neolithic period, or New Stone Age, in the fifth millennium with farming cultures meant the clearing of some of the southern British forests, which started a process of deforestation that would go on for millennia. These Stone Age or Bronze Age peoples, who used flint or bronze implements rather than iron, exhibited different cultural traits, and there was no sign of a “British” identity. These Neolithic developments also meant a shift from the relatively egalitarian society of hunter-gatherers to a more stratified society based on class and gender hierarchies.

The most important physical remnants of the early Britons are the great stone or megalithic circles, notably **Stonehenge** on Salisbury Plain, which dates to about 3000 B.C.; and **Avebury**, built around the same time

or a little earlier about 32 kilometres (20 miles) to the north (see Chapter XI).

Stonehenge declined as a centre of activity in the second half of the second millennium B.C. as changes in climate leading to cooler and wetter conditions adversely affected British agriculture, leading to a drastic drop in population.

The Celts and the Iron Age

Britain from about the sixth century B.C. can be categorized as an Iron Age culture. Iron came relatively late to Britain compared to other parts of Europe, but the British were able to exploit their own iron mines. Smiths had a high status in British Iron Age culture, even being represented among the gods. Iron ingots were used as currency, and the introduction of iron axes, combined with the need for fuel to smelt and forge iron, meant that deforestation advanced more rapidly. Bronze continued to be used quite widely, as it was cheaper than iron.

In the Iron Age, Britain came to be dominated by a group of people known in modern times as the **Celts**, who are a difficult group to define. The term Celt was originally associated with peoples on the European continent, but there is little evidence of a common Celtic identity straddling the English Channel. While earlier historians viewed the changes associated with Celtic culture in Britain as resulting from an invasion by Celtic peoples from the European continent, more recently historians and archaeologists have found British people selectively adopting certain cultural characteristics of Celtic peoples of their own accord.

The indigenous British aristocracy may have adopted Celtic ways as a means of distinguishing themselves from ordinary Britons. The spread of cultural artefacts and styles we now call Celtic constitutes a significant aspect of the long transition from Bronze Age to Iron Age Britain. However, this does not mean that the people in Britain adopted a “Celtic” identity or even a “British” one. No ancient writer refers to the British as Celts, and there is some evidence that the “Celtic” languages of Britain – Gaelic, Cornish, and Welsh – had roots far predating the Celtic period. These languages, along with Breton and Irish, were only given the Celtic label in the eighteenth century. There is no indication that the ancient Britons thought of themselves as Celts, although there were substantial cultural, political, and trade connections with France, referred to in ancient times as Gaul and inhabited by Celts among other peoples. There is also no

evidence of a “British” identity spanning the different peoples that lived in the island.

Iron Age Britain developed larger communities than there had been during the time of the previous inhabitants, although there is no evidence of any island-wide organization or even anything on the scale of the later kingdoms of England and Scotland. Britain was divided into many territories of smaller or larger tribes, with fluctuating boundaries. Some of these tribes had a long-term influence on place-names, such as the Cantiaci, after whom the county of Kent in the far south-east is named. These tribal groupings were very fluid and often only lasted for a few decades, a century, or just the life span of a powerful leader. There were strong class divisions among the Britons, with a warrior aristocracy, some of whom may have been recent immigrants from the Continent, ruling over a peasantry that made up the majority of the population. Early Britain had a warlike culture, and many of the artefacts that survive are related to war. A common form of settlement was the hill fort, built on top of a hill to dominate surrounding territories. Britons used chariots in battle, a form of warfare obsolete in the Mediterranean and even Gaul but still formidable in the more primitive British setting. British armies also included cavalry, mounted on ponies, and infantry. One custom for which British warriors became well known was painting themselves blue, using a substance known as woad, before going into battle. The reason for this is not clear, but it may have had something to do with the display of individual valour. Upper-class British men also made a point of displaying personal courage through hunting, although of course much hunting was carried out primarily for meat. The spear, which economized on the use of metal, was a popular Celtic weapon.

Our knowledge of Iron Age British religion is fragmentary due to the lack of written sources. The British were polytheists, worshipping a variety of local goddesses and gods; in some cases their cults covered a larger area. They venerated animals associated with the gods, particularly horses and pigs, and plants, particularly oak and mistletoe. They sacrificed animals, and sometimes humans, to their gods and goddesses. There were growing economic connections between the British and the classical Mediterranean world in the Iron Age. Britain’s metal resources, including tin and copper (the components of bronze), as well as gold, attracted traders. The earliest link between Britain and the Mediterranean economy involved the Cornish tin trade, mainly through Phoenician traders based in Spain and ultimately in Carthage. The Phoenicians were followed by the

Greeks, and the Greek word for tin was derived from the Celtic word for Britain. Britain also became known for its pearls. One Greek navigator, Pytheas of Massilia, circumnavigated Britain in the fourth century, revealing to the Mediterranean peoples that Britain was an island. When Britons first appeared in the written as opposed to the archaeological record it was not their own written record but that of Mediterranean peoples – the Greeks and the Romans.

The Romans in Britain

The first important exact date in British history is 55 B.C., the date of the first invasion of Britain by the Romans. Although Roman forces very soon withdrew, their coming initiated a period in which British Celtic society was radically transformed, first by Roman contact and then, through much of the island, by actual Roman rule. It was also a time when the available evidence for British history explodes, due to the Roman habit of writing histories and commemorating events through stone inscriptions.

The Roman Empire in 55 B.C. was dramatically expanding both in Western Europe and in the Mediterranean. Britain became an object of the attention of the greatest of all Roman generals, Julius Caesar (100–44 B.C.), who conquered Gaul in 58 and became proconsul of the province *Prize*. Keenly aware of his own prestige and the glory that extending Roman rule to the edge of the known world would add to his legend, Caesar saw Britain as a logical follow-up to his earlier conquests.

Caesar's first expedition was not very successful, although it was intended more as a reconnaissance in force than as an expedition of conquest. The Greek geographer Strabo is the first writer recorded as using a form of the word Britain (*Britannike*), which derives from early Celtic, the same root as the Welsh word *Prydein*, when referring to the island, because of the fact that the Romans were not aware of the narrow strait separating Britain from continental Europe. Due to the superiority of the Roman army and Caesar's masterly use of the divisions he defeated the Britons. However, rather than adding Britain as a new Roman province, he was forced to leave within a couple of months to face new problems in Gaul.

However, Caesar's departure did not mean the end of Roman influence in Britain, as many tribes had made some sort of submission, given hostages, and promised to pay tribute. Even though the obligations of British tribes to pay tribute to Rome were generally ignored by both sides, both trade and diplomatic relationships flourished. Roman and

British contact was mostly concentrated among the peoples of the southern and eastern coasts. Following a common historical pattern, Britain's close relations with the large Roman Empire led to greater concentrations of political authority among the British tribes. The tribes competed with each other for control over the trade with the empire, and some leaders tried to use Roman support against other British kings. Some chiefs sent ambassadors to Rome or journeyed to Rome themselves.

The British aristocratic lifestyle became increasingly Romanized. This can be seen even gastronomically, as Britain imported wine and other items of Mediterranean cuisine such as olive oil or the fish sauce known as *garum*, a Roman delicacy. Britons paid for the luxury items with grain, metals, and slaves. Coastal rulers who controlled the trade with Rome became increasingly wealthy, and their wealth helped them against both the aristocracy of their own peoples and rival chiefs. Coins issued by some Celtic rulers showed Roman influence and were probably made by Roman die cutters. Although coins were in use in the pre-Roman period – some with Latin inscriptions – by the first century, coinage was widespread in Britain south of the River Trent.

The Roman conquest of Britain began in 43 A.D. under Emperor Claudius (10 B.C.–54 A.D., r. 41–54 B.C.). Claudius, an emperor with a rather undistinguished past, sought to build a reputation by adding new territory to the empire, traditionally regarded as the highest achievement of a Roman general. Increased Roman knowledge of and contacts with Britain made actual conquest much more feasible than it had been a century before in Caesar's time. In addition to Claudius' glory, there were structural reasons for Rome to be interested in control over Britain. At that time, the Britons were still fighting from chariots, a style of warfare that had been abandoned by Mediterranean cultures centuries earlier and which was ineffective against the Roman legions. After the first defeats, many British chiefs, hoping to keep their dominant positions under the new order rather than engaging in a doomed struggle against it, surrendered to the Romans without a fight.

One of the major changes brought by the Romans was the extirpation of the Druids, the Britons' religious and intellectual class. The Romans had already been campaigning against Druids in Gaul, partly because the Druids practiced human sacrifice and partly because they offered a nucleus for possible Celtic resistance to Rome. Given the importance of the British Druids, who provided much of the leadership for anti-Roman forces, the Romans considered it necessary to suppress Druidism in Britain as well. In

54 A.D. the Romans passed a decree banning British Druidism, and in 61 A.D. Roman forces under Suetonius Paulinus massacred Druids on the Isle of Anglesey as part of a campaign to pacify Wales, a remote area where traditional British culture and Druidism remained strong and anti-Roman. Descendants of the surviving Druids seem mostly to have merged into the general population. As a sign of the extent of the suppression of Druidism in Britain, there are no references to Druids in later Roman Britain. There was some Roman destruction at Stonehenge; they were the first in a long series that wrongly identified it as a Druidic temple, but much of it was too massive for the Romans to really damage it substantially.

Druidism and other native beliefs were replaced among the elite, the people the Romans cared about winning over, by Roman cults, particularly the cult of the emperor, which served to bind all areas of the empire together. A huge temple of the deified Claudius was built in Colchester shortly after the conquest to serve as a rallying point for pro-Roman Britons. The Romans, however, had no specific goal to eliminate the worship of British gods. In many places they simply built new shrines dedicated to the same gods on the site of old British shrines, both to placate the gods and to provide places for British and Roman subjects of the empire to honour their deities. For many Romans Britain was simply too remote for its addition to the empire to make much of an impression.

The Romans also introduced many gods that were new to the Britons, including the official Roman gods such as Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, and Minerva. The organs of the Roman state were permeated by official religion. A legion, for example, was expected to sacrifice to Jupiter the Supreme Ruler, Jupiter the Victor, Mars the Father, Mars the Victor, the goddess Victoria, the emperor's guardian spirit, and many others, as part of its official duties. All human activities required the favour of the relevant gods. In addition to the official gods, myriad gods were brought to the new province from all parts of the empire by immigrants and the Roman army. The Roman army of the empire was an extremely ethnically mixed force, and the Romans liked to station troops in areas far away from where they were recruited. More gods were worshipped in Britain in Roman times than at any time before or since. British and Roman gods were frequently combined or equated. The Roman military worshipped combinations of Roman and Celtic deities, such as the god of war, Mars Camulos. The Celtic goddess of the hot springs at Aquae, Sulis (today's Bath) was renamed Minerva Sulis.

Away from the centres of Roman civilization, British peasants and slaves probably continued worshipping British gods in the traditional way, although without the benefit of Druids or human sacrifice. Some Celtic customs seem to have been abandoned in that period, such as the burial of the dead with weapons as opposed to household goods, but there is no evidence this change had anything to do with the Roman occupation.

One reason for the Romans to conquer Britain was the desire to exploit its agricultural and mineral wealth. In addition to agricultural goods, Britain was an important source of minerals, particularly tin and lead, which for the ancients were necessary to refine silver. The Romans did not greatly change British agriculture, although they introduced several new crops, such as cherries and wine grapes. However, British wine was not very successful in competing with that of the empire's established wine regions in warmer climates.

Roman civilization took a very different form in the lowlands than in the highlands. The productive lowlands saw extensive colonization and the Romanization of the British elite. The Roman presence in the highlands was largely restricted to military outposts. The highland Celts gave the Romans their toughest opposition. Many Britons, both those who had fought the Romans and those who had supported them, resented the arrogance and grasping demands of Roman officials and Roman colonists. The brutality of Roman rule led to the largest revolt in the history of Britannia shortly after the initial conquest: the **rebellion of Boudicca (Boudicea)** in 60 A.D.

Boudicca was the widow of the king of the Iceni in eastern Britain who had been allied with Rome. Leaving two daughters and no son, the king had bequeathed half his kingdom to the emperor in hope that this would satisfy the Romans. In the Roman attempt to take over the whole kingdom, Boudicca was flogged, and according to the ancient historian Tacitus, her daughters were raped by Roman soldiers (Tacitus Annals, Book XIV). Her subsequent rebellion was the greatest challenge to Roman rule in Britain. Boudicca's forces attacked and burned the Roman provincial capital, Camulodunum, the old Catuvellaunian capital, massacring its inhabitants. The rebels also burned London, although the population was evacuated. However, they were not able to oppose a full Roman army. The rebellion was crushed when 10,000 Roman troops slaughtered 80,000 Britons in the Battle of Watling Street, and Boudicca committed suicide rather than become a prisoner of Rome. The rebellion resulted in the transfer of Roman provincial administration to London.

Boudicca's defeat was followed by harsh repression of the rebels, but subsequent Roman governors worked to win the support of the British aristocracy. Many British leaders received Roman citizenship, took Roman names, and adopted aspects of the Roman upper-class lifestyle such as Roman dress and the Latin language. This Romanization, however, was restricted to the upper classes. The lower classes were little affected by Roman influence, even compared to people living in the Roman Empire on the Continent. While many parts of the Western Roman Empire continued to speak Latin dialects such as French or Spanish even after the fall of Rome in the fifth century, this was not true in Britain, where Latin never became a common tongue.

The Romans never conquered the entire island of Britain. To most Romans, the north seemed too poor and mountainous to be worth the trouble of taking and holding. There was a long series of attempts to find a stable and defensible area for the northern frontier. The most radical policy was that of Caesar Julius Agricola (40–93), the governor of Britannia in the late 70s. Much more is known about Agricola than about most of the Roman provincial governors anywhere because he was one of the few Roman officials to be the subject of a biography. The biography was written by his son-in-law, the great Roman historian Cornelius Tacitus (ca. 56–ca. 117), an admirer of his father-in-law, whom Tacitus regarded as the embodiment of old-fashioned Roman virtue. Agricola planned to conquer all of Britain, and possibly Ireland as well. He carried out successful campaigns in southern Scotland, but the combination of trouble elsewhere in the empire and scepticism about the cost of conquering and occupying the whole island led to the abandonment of his plans. The border was eventually established at Hadrian's Wall, named after the Roman emperor Hadrian (r. 117–138). The wall ran from the fortress of Segedunum on the river Tyne (the site of the modern community of Wallsend) to the Solway Firth, south of the modern border between England and Scotland. Roman influence extended well beyond the border, however. The Romans traded with and indirectly influenced what became Scotland, and some of the people who lived there even served in the Roman army.

The position of governor of Britain was initially a military one resting on command of the three legions stationed in the province. It was usually given to a commander with experience along the imperial frontier in northern Europe. The army itself was increasingly drawn from native Britons, who were rewarded with Roman citizenship on retirement.

Britain's relative poverty can be seen in the undistinguished backgrounds of its procurators, the chief tax gatherers.

The incorporation of Britain as a frontier province of the Roman Empire was mostly successful. The Romans introduced much of the infrastructure of civilization, such as roads and cities, to the island. The Roman Empire was based on a structure that involved considerable local autonomy and self-government in its cities, which had administrative responsibility for their surrounding territories. The first British cities, including London, were founded by Rome, and Roman place-names persisted long after the empire's fall. The common place-name suffix *-chester*, as in *Manchester*, is a derivative of the Latin word *castra*, meaning *a military encampment*. Cities were centres for the diffusion of Roman culture to the British elite. Urban life in Roman Britain included some of the amenities of Mediterranean life such as public baths, games, and wine. Roman cities were usually built on the site of old tribal centres, with a mixed population of Romans and Britons and a temple dedicated to the emperor to foster the imperial cult and loyalty to Rome among the natives. Many cities were originally colonies of Roman veterans.

The most important town in Roman Britain was London, which quickly became the capital of Britannia and the main point of the Roman road system: in Britannia, all roads led to London. London was the most Romanized town in Britain and one of the largest Roman cities in the generally backward northwest of the Empire. The cities were the basis for the Romanization of lowland Britain, but eventually Roman art and the material trappings of Roman provincial life spread to the country villas of the British aristocracy, many of whom remained rurally based.

By the second century the British elite was largely Romanized and incorporated into the empire's governing class, although due to Britain's remoteness and relatively small population, they did not enter the Roman senate the way Gaulish aristocrats did.

The period also saw the province's division into two new provinces, mostly following the division between highlands and lowlands, in order to break up the concentration of troops and remove the temptation for Britain-based generals to try for the imperial throne. This division was followed by a long period of internal and external peace lasting for most of the third century.

Although Roman Britain was not threatened with full-scale invasion in the third century, there was an increasing problem with land and sea raids from the Picts of the north and sea raids from the Irish. Across the

North Sea a new threat emerged – that of a Germanic people, the Saxons. The Roman response was the creation of a larger fleet and a system of naval bases along the coast called the Saxon shore, supervised by an official called the count of the Saxon shore. Toward the end of the third century, there was a brief period when Britain was the headquarters of an independent empire under the leadership of the Roman fleet commander, who turned his command into a protection racket for pirates.

The late empire was a time of economic decline, which after the early fourth century was hitting marginal areas like Britain particularly hard. There was less use of coinage and less participation in interregional trade. The third and fourth centuries saw power move from Roman cities into the hands of great landowners. This was reflected in Britain in the rise of the so-called villa economy. Villas were large houses with varying degrees of economic prosperity and fields that were worked by tenant farmers. Many British aristocrats combined villa and city living.

In 410, members of Britain's ruling class, seeking to deal with some problem we do not know about, sent representatives asking the Western Roman emperor Honorius (r. 384–423) for help. The emperor, preoccupied with problems closer to home (Rome was sacked by the Visigoths that year), told them to take care of it themselves. This date is often considered the effective end of Roman rule in Britain.

Historical sources on Britain north of Hadrian's Wall, which remained independent of Rome, are much sparser than for the Roman-ruled areas. The people spoke languages of the Celtic group and were more reliant on livestock than the residents of the more fertile lands of the south in the Roman province. They were also much less urbanized. By the late third century, Roman writers were referring to the people on the other side of the frontier as Picts, a term meaning "painted people" and possibly referring to Pictish use either of body painting or tattooing. Celtic-speaking peoples referred to the Picts as Cruithne, and the official Roman name was Caledones. Like other peoples adjacent to Roman frontiers, the Picts were transformed by contact with the Roman economy. Being close to Rome generally seems to have increased a society's wealth and inequality as the elite sought to control trade with the wealthier Roman provinces. The Pictish kingdom subsequently had to share Scotland with the invaders from Ireland who settled in Britain and came to be known as the Scots.

The Decline of the Roman Empire in Britain

The period between the Roman withdrawal around 410 and the rise of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the late sixth century is one of the most shadowy in British history, and is now referred to as the sub-Roman era.

The collapse of central Roman authority in Britain after 410 was preceded by years of weakening Roman military presence as usurpers took British armies to the Continent, and the central government withdrew troops from the remote island to use elsewhere closer to home. Landowners' loyalty to Rome was undermined by their resentment of the taxation of their agricultural wealth and the loss of agricultural manpower to conscription. The Roman state was a parasite, draining men and wealth from the island while failing, or not even trying, to defend it from Picts, Irish, and Saxons. Into the gap stepped the local Celtic-Roman aristocracy.

Britain's upper class in many ways continued to identify itself as Roman, but the Roman Empire had become a hindrance in maintaining a Roman type of life. (Some links between Britain and the empire remained, and the Britons asked for support from the Western Roman Empire, then in its last throes, as late as the 440s, but they received none). Romano-British landowners were in a better position to defend the island than Roman commanders and bureaucrats who only wished to leave it for more civilized parts as quickly as possible. Southern Britain was also facing a fundamentally different type of outside threat than Roman continental Europe. It was dealing not with large armies or migrating peoples but with smaller groups coming from northern Britain or across the sea.

The British aristocracy, the one most recently incorporated into the empire of western Romans, seems to have maintained more of an independent military tradition than Roman gentry elsewhere. The British pattern of independent landowners taking up defence against barbarians was unique in the empire. It is possible that the Pelagian idea of attaining salvation by one's own actions could have influenced people to political action as well, and also that Pelagians would have felt less loyalty to the orthodox empire. However, Pelagianism appears to have disappeared shortly after the Roman withdrawal.

There is little written evidence for the sub-Roman period. The British economy may have initially benefited from the Roman withdrawal as the tax burden decreased. However, the overall economy of post-Roman Britain seems to have slowly declined. Coins were no longer produced after the Roman withdrawal or even used much after the 430s. The coins that have been found from that period were minted on the Continent and

treated by Britons as treasure rather than as a medium of exchange. Britain functioned with a mixture of coins and an increasingly dominant barter economy, but it was not economically isolated, as relations with the Mediterranean world continued. The tin trade and some other types of industrial production for export went on, and Mediterranean pottery has been found in archaeological sites from this period. There is evidence of the continuing importation of wine, olive oil, and other Mediterranean goods. However, continuing the trends evident under the later empire, there was a general decline in urban life. Many Roman cities were abandoned, and there was an almost immediate switch from stone to the far cheaper wood as the main building material. In some places, the bulk of the city was abandoned, but a smaller population regrouped in the amphitheatre, which was easily convertible into a fortress. This was not true everywhere. There were also other surviving cities where the empire's town councillors and their descendants maintained civic life, with a public treasury and waterworks that were maintained. Another alternative was the revival of the hill forts of the Celtic period, largely abandoned by the Romans but now offering the attraction of defensibility.

The sense of possessing a Roman identity proved to be tenacious. Patricius, writing in the mid-fifth century, decades after the withdrawal of Rome, continued to think of himself and his British countrymen as Roman. Although there was no Britain-wide institution taking the place of the Roman government other than the church, a British identity persisted. This was expressed in Latin with the word *cives*, or *citizen*, and in Celtic with various terms such as *combrogii*, or *co-brothers*. Britons saw themselves as a civilized and Christian people under constant threat from Irish, Pictish, and Saxon barbarians. There is little evidence of a revival of the Celtic tribal identities of pre-Roman Britain, and there was certainly no pan-Celtic identity – the Celtic Irish and Picts were as much the enemy of the Britons as were the Germanic Saxons (not to mention the wars between the Irish of Scotland, called the Scots, and the Picts). Patricius saw the Picts and Scots as evil and iniquitous, and he condemned a British king who enslaved Irish Christians for behaving like them. However, the disappearance of the Roman government and Britain's isolation from Mediterranean centres of culture eventually took its toll. As Britain became steadily less Roman in culture, Latin died out as a spoken language outside the church.

British identity was not reflected in political union or even a desire for such. Local territories became more important politically as the period

saw a slow evolution from a dominant urban and landowning class, through warlords whose power rested on effective force, to a dynastic monarchy. For most of the sixth century, the British continued to hold most of the old Roman province, waging a slow, fighting retreat in the face of pressure from the Germanic Anglo-Saxons, while Anglo-Saxons and Britons also fought among themselves.

Questions and Tasks

1. How old are the first human and pre-human remains in Britain?
2. What is known about the earliest inhabitants of Britain?
3. What were the most important and famous monuments of pre-Roman England? Express your opinion about their function.
4. How long ago did Britain split away from Europe to create the English Channel?
5. Analyse the roots of the Celts.
6. Did the ancient Britons think of themselves as Celts?
7. How can you prove that early Britain had a warlike culture?
8. Were there any economic connections between the British and the classical Mediterranean world in the Iron Age?
9. Who circumnavigated Britain in the fourth century?
10. When did the Roman conquest of Britain begin?
11. What skills were necessary to become a druid?
12. What strategic role did England play in the Roman Empire?
13. In what part of England was coinage widely used?
14. Why did Romans suppress Druidism in Britain?
15. What did the Romans bring to Britain?
16. Do you agree with the statement that Roman civilization took a very different form in the lowlands than in the highlands?
17. What was the largest revolt in Roman Britain? When did it happen? What were the results of the revolt?
18. Did the Romans conquer the entire island of Britain?
19. Why was it unlikely for members of the British elite to become Roman senators?
20. What name did the Romans use when referring to the Picts?
21. From what period was the first evidence of the Christians in Roman Britain?

II. ANGLO-SAXON BRITAIN AND THE VIKING RAIDS (ca. 450–850)

From the middle of the fifth to the end of the sixth century, representatives of a new culture came to dominate most of Britain apart from Wales, the far southwest, and the north. These were the Anglo-Saxons, originally a group of Germanic peoples from the European continent. Around the same time, the Scots, a group that had emigrated from Ireland, were settling in the territory which became Scotland. These two cultures, both of which later adopted Christianity, became the foundation for what would be the dominant kingdoms of Britain – England and Scotland. The centuries after the Roman withdrawal were also marked by the development of a distinct insular culture. This made them different from both the preceding Roman period and the period after the Norman conquest in 1066, when British culture came to be more integrated into the European mainstream.

The peoples of Britain were then faced with another invasion – that of the Scandinavians or Vikings. The Vikings ultimately brought Britain into their world of raiding and trading and added another element to the cultural mix of Britain's peoples.

Anglo-Saxon England

The traditional date for the first settlement of Anglo-Saxons in Britain is 449. According to legend, this was not an invasion but a response to an invitation by a Celtic ruler named Vortigern. If this story contains even a grain of truth, it is probably an example of the late Roman policy of encouraging Germanic groups to settle and defend the land they settled on against other Germanic groups. Legend also states that the first Anglo-Saxon leaders to arrive were named Hengist and Horsa. The Anglo-Saxons were originally concentrated in the eastern parts of Britain, adjacent to the North Sea. The indigenous people, the Britons, lost control over much of eastern and southern Britain in the second half of the fifth century, but they retained extensive areas elsewhere in Britain until around 600.

Anglo-Saxon society and culture were less influenced by Rome and the Mediterranean than those of other Germanic peoples such as the Franks of France or the Ostrogoths of Italy, because they were from northern Germany and Denmark rather than the southern regions that had had prolonged contact with the Roman Empire. The Anglo-Saxons were

originally pagan in religion. The main group that originated on the North Sea coast of Europe was divided into Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, but some also came from other Germanic groups, as tribal affiliations were loose at that time.

Britain was one of the few areas of the former Western Roman Empire where Germanic speakers entirely displaced Roman or Romanized culture. The best evidence for this is language. Whereas France, Spain, and other areas speak Romance languages descended from Latin, English is largely a Germanic language. The Anglo-Saxon takeover led to the creation of a new British society, “England”, spreading from the east and southeast of the island and closely integrated into the Germanic world. The greatest classic of Anglo-Saxon literature, the epic poem *Beowulf*, which was probably composed in Northumbria in the first half of the eighth century, is a story of the heroic killing of a monster not among Anglo-Saxons but among the equally Germanic Danes.

On a demographic level, many Britons, particularly women, were assimilated into the Anglo-Saxon population by marriage, enslavement, or adoption of Anglo-Saxon culture. The Anglo-Saxon takeover took two centuries, slowed by both British resistance and the limited numbers of Anglo-Saxons who could arrive by ship. The early Anglo-Saxons were part of a warrior culture that valued men for their courage and skill in battle, as reflected in Anglo-Saxon literature. One of the marks of a successful early Anglo-Saxon leader was his generosity to his warrior followers. Great leaders were called *ring-givers*, after the gold rings they gave their followers.

Celtic culture remained strong in several areas of the old Roman province of Britannia. One was the far southwest, in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, where speakers of Cornish – fisher folk and tin miners – retained cultural distinctness and some political independence. Another was the mountainous region of Wales. The term “Welsh” derives from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “foreigner”, and the Welsh principalities retained their independence and a distinct Celtic culture and literature. Their own term for themselves was *Brythoniaid*, “Britons”, which was gradually replaced by *Cymry*, “the people”. A British state in the north of Strathclyde lasted until the eleventh century, when it was absorbed by the rising Scottish monarchy. Some Britons also fled to the extreme north-western peninsula of modern France, which eventually became known as Brittany.

The pagan religion of the early Anglo-Saxons was marked by a strong sense of fatalism and doom. They worshipped the same gods as other pagan Germanic peoples, and many of the royal houses boasted of descent from Woden, chief of the gods. The Anglo-Saxons were oriented not to an afterlife, although they may have believed in one, but to glory. The hero of Beowulf stated: “Each of us must experience an end to life in this world; let him who can achieve glory before he die that will be best for the lifeless warrior afterward” (quoted in Whitelocke 1952, 27).

The Anglo-Saxons strongly valued family ties; the kinless man was an object of pity. If an Anglo-Saxon was killed, it was the duty of his or her family to exact either vengeance or a monetary payment, known as *wergild*, from the killer. Wergilds varied by social class and gender. Kinship practices differed from those of the Christian British. One example which horrified Christians was that the Anglo-Saxons allowed a man to marry his stepmother on his father’s death. (This helped keep property in the family). Anglo-Saxons were also able to divorce, a practice forbidden by the church. Even after the Anglo-Saxons became Christian, the church had little influence over their marriage practices.

As it stabilized, Anglo-Saxon society came to be divided roughly into three main social classes under the kings. At the top were *the thanes*, or as they were called in Kent, the earls. They held a specified quantity of land, usually five hides. The hide was a measure that varied by region, but it basically referred to the amount of land necessary to support a family. A single hide in the Midlands could cover 120 acres, while the same unit in Wessex was about half that.

The next class were *the churls*, a term that later denoted a rude countryman but in Anglo-Saxon times referred to an independent freeman who owned less than a thane did. The churl’s wergild might be as little as one-sixth of the thane’s. As Anglo-Saxon society developed, the position of churls deteriorated as they became more dependent on thanes.

Slaves comprised the third class. They had no wergilds, although if a slave was killed by a person other than the owner, compensation was owed as in other cases of the destruction of property. Slaves had certain rights to be supported, and the church generally promoted humane treatment of slaves and even their manumission. Some slaves were descendants of the indigenous Britons, while others were prisoners of war or persons forced to sell themselves into slavery out of hunger. Some crimes were punishable by enslavement, and the children of a slave were also slaves.

There were major cultural differences between the Britons and the Anglo-Saxons, particularly religious differences. British Christians despised Anglo-Saxon paganism. The Anglo-Saxons reciprocated this dislike and added contempt for British weakness – the word for “Briton” eventually became the word for “slave”.

Despite these prejudices and cultural differences British and Anglo-Saxon values converged. British culture and society became more warrior-dominated, and eventually the Anglo-Saxons converted to Christianity. Anglo-Saxon art influenced British art, and Anglo-Saxon objects have been found in British graves from shortly after the first Anglo-Saxon landings.

The fall of Rome was also followed by great changes in the north beyond the Roman province. The Picts of the north faced challenges similar to those faced by the Britons. While the first Anglo-Saxons were settling in eastern Britain, a similar process of Irish settlement was taking place in Wales and the north. The Irish in Wales were eventually driven out or absorbed into the Welsh population, but the Irish of the north, known as Scots, would have a far greater impact. By the ninth century their settlements would form the kingdom of the Scots, a word that at that time meant *Irish*.

There was a long history of conflict between the peoples of north Britain – Picts had raided northern British communities, and the Britons regarded the Picts with nearly as much loathing as they did the Anglo-Saxons – but there were also forces uniting these disparate peoples. Increasingly prominent among them was Christianity, a religion that would eventually include the Anglo-Saxons as well.

Anglo-Saxon Domination of England

By the seventh century the Anglo-Saxons dominated lowland Britain, which was both more valuable than the highlands and easier to conquer. This meant they controlled the more economically prosperous areas, giving them a long-term advantage over the remaining Britons in the highlands of Wales and the north.

There were both elements of continuity and of discontinuity between the post-Roman period and the coming of the Anglo-Saxons. The deurbanization that had begun in the late empire continued, and many communities which the Romans had established came to be abandoned. However, others (including London) survived, even if with reduced

populations. There was continuity in rural England. Not much land seems to have gone out of cultivation.

The victory of the Anglo-Saxons marks the beginning of the history of the English people and language and the establishment of a unique culture in England and lowland Scotland which was distinct from that of the speakers of Celtic languages in other parts of the British archipelago. The English are not purely, or even primarily, of Anglo-Saxon descent. Anglo-Saxons intermixed with Britons and subsequent immigrants, but Anglo-Saxon language, tradition, and history have been fundamental to the shaping of a distinctively English people. The Anglo-Saxon period also saw the basic development of English agriculture, and the amount of land under cultivation and the number of settlements did not change much between the eleventh and nineteenth centuries. Basic agricultural techniques such as the use of the heavy plough were also established by Anglo-Saxons.

Christianity in Anglo-Saxon England

The most important event of the first centuries of Anglo-Saxon Britain was the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity. Initially there seems to have been little interest on the part of the Christian Britons in converting the Anglo-Saxons. Some Britons were even reluctant to accept the Christianity of the Anglo-Saxons as genuine even after conversion. The religious dynamic in the first Anglo-Saxon century may have actually gone the other way, with Christian Britons converting to Anglo-Saxon paganism as part of their assimilation into the dominant Anglo-Saxon community.

The conversion of the northern Anglo-Saxons and many of the pagan Celtic peoples of the north was first taken up by the Irish, who had no particular grudge against the Anglo-Saxons. Anglo-Saxon England was merely one theatre of the prodigious Irish missionary effort in the British archipelago and Europe during the sixth and seventh centuries. The traffic between Ireland and England was not one-way: there are records of Englishmen in Irish monasteries. Christianity spread from the great monastery of Iona, founded in the Hebrides by the great Irish monk and missionary Columba in 563.

The second wave of conversion originated from the papacy in Rome and started in the southern part of the island, closest to the European continent. This was the first papal mission to a foreign land.

King Arthur

One of the most mysterious figures in British history is the legendary king named Arthur. Most historians agree that if there actually was a King Arthur, he was a leader of the British resistance to the Anglo-Saxons, that is how he appears in the earliest legends. The legend of Arthur may be based on someone for whom we have a little more evidence – an Ambrosius Aurelianus who was a successful leader against the Saxons in the fifth century and a man of Roman descent—but it is not even certain that Ambrosius existed.

In 596 Gregory the Great (ca. 540–604; Pope, 590–604) sent Augustine (d. 604), a missionary of Greek origin and an experienced church leader. In 597 Augustine landed in the small but relatively wealthy Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Kent in south-eastern England. Kent was the area of England closest to Europe, and it had a long-standing relationship with the Frankish Christian kingdom of France. Augustine's choice had long-lasting historical consequences, as to this day the Church of England is headed by the archbishop of Canterbury. The British Christians of what would become Wales would long maintain their separation from the Roman mission.

Christianity in its Roman form was particularly attractive to Anglo-Saxon rulers who wanted to strengthen links between their kingdoms and the more developed areas of the Continent. The conversion of Ethelbert occurred at a time of increasing political and economic ties between the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and the Frankish monarchy of Gaul. There was some pagan resistance, particularly among the common people and in the extreme south, Sussex and the Isle of Wight. Some Anglo-Saxons were not converted until the middle of the eighth century, and some pagan customs held out for centuries. Christian Anglo-Saxon kings continued to trace their descent from the god Woden, and there was a constant struggle against such Anglo-Saxon customs as men marrying their widowed stepmothers in order to keep the property in the family. Conversion was not a steady process but saw many ups and downs, as when Ethelbert of Kent was succeeded by his pagan son.

Although the Irish and Roman missions generally cooperated, there was a conflict between them centred on the issue of when to celebrate Easter. The differences between the two could cause all kinds of problems, as when some members of a family or community celebrated the Lenten fast while others of the same family or community celebrated the Easter feast at the same time. There were also minor issues such as differing

tonsures: the Irish shaved the heads of clerics from ear to ear, leaving hair in the front and back, while the Romans shaved the entire head.

Northumbria settled the matter at the Synod of Whitby in 664. The convent of Whitby in East Yorkshire was an example of a unique institution in Anglo-Saxon Christianity. Founded in about 657, it combined a monastery of men and a nunnery of women under the overall control of the abbess. The victory of the Roman position in Northumbria, the central focus of Irish missionary effort among the Anglo-Saxons, was followed by its imposition on the whole of England by the archbishop of Canterbury. The English church became particularly devoted to the papacy, to which it credited its conversion. The British Christians of Wales, however, took more than a century to follow the English into the Roman customs, not falling into line until 768.

The period after Whitby was marked by a flowering of English Christianity and the first organization of an institution for all Anglo-Saxons, the English church. Much of this was due to the leadership of Archbishop Theodore of Tarsus (ca. 602–690), a Greek sent by Pope Vitalian (Pope, 657–672) to be archbishop of Canterbury in 668, and shortly after Whitby.

Theodore slowly and carefully moved away from a system of a few big dioceses into a system of many smaller dioceses, each with a central town with good communications via rivers and Roman roads and well-defined borders. This was resisted by some of the English bishops of big dioceses, who feared the diminishment of their power and wealth, but Theodore was patient and successful. For example, he took advantage of a bishop's death and the resultant vacancy to split a diocese rather than try to do it under a sitting bishop. Theodore brought the bishops together in a series of synods that for the first time provided a meeting place for people from all the Anglo-Saxon lands. The first took place at Hertford, about 19 miles (31 km) north of London, in 673. The laws of the church put forward in the synods were the first legislation binding on all Anglo-Saxons. Theodore also tried to cut down on the mobility of clergy and monks and began to set up a system of parishes to bring Christianity and the power of the church into the villages.

The episcopate of the increasingly institutionalised English church originally included men from the Continent such as Romans and Franks, but as it developed there was an increasing predominance of Anglo-Saxons. The Anglo-Saxon church's growing independence from outside forces, Irish or Roman, can be seen in the fact that it was now producing

its own saints, mostly from the upper classes. There was a growing cult of saints such as Cuthbert (d. 687), a monk and hermit who had an enormous following in the north of England.

Anglo-Saxon kings, queens, and nobles founded numerous monasteries, sometimes as charitable works and sometimes as places for their own retirement. (Some also retired to Rome to die in the holy city). Monasticism in the Irish style, with its flamboyant individualism and asceticism, was slowly displaced by more moderate, anti-individualist Benedictine monasticism originating on the Continent and more closely identified with Rome. Benedictine monasticism had a greater emphasis on discipline and stability: monks were forbidden to leave the monastery without the permission of the abbot, as opposed to the wanderings of the Irish. Whereas the Irish emphasized abstention from food, one monastery having a standard diet of herbs and water, Benedictines ate adequate although plain meals. They lived in large group rooms called dormitories as opposed to the individual cells of the Irish. This monastic style fit in well with the emphasis on stability characteristic of the English church after Theodore. The monks spread the Christian word to the people in the surrounding villages and provided the translations necessary for reaching the Anglo-Saxon-speaking people in the country.

The conversion led to the opening of England, until then a rather isolated culture, to a variety of foreign influences. One way this happened was pilgrimages. The first recorded Anglo-Saxon visitor to Rome was there in 653, and he was followed by thousands of others over the centuries. Since pilgrims travelled through France to get to Italy, pilgrimages also strengthened ties between France and Britain. Churchmen learned about the practices of other regions such as Gaul and Italy and came back to England eager to try them out. Glass windows in churches were introduced from the Continent in this way.

The Anglo-Saxons also joined the Irish in taking the Christian message abroad. The first target of Anglo-Saxon missionaries was Frisia, in the modern Low Countries, whose Germanic-speaking peoples had long-standing connections with England through trade. Anglo-Saxon missionaries also participated in the conversion of Germany.

The Reign of King Offa

King Offa (r. 757–796) of Mercia became one of the most powerful of Anglo-Saxon kings, referred to in later records by the title *Rex Anglorum*, or king of the English, although those documents dating from

Offa's own time call him king of the Mercians. Like many rulers in those dangerous times, Offa came to power after a civil war. Quickly consolidating power in Mercia, Offa extended his suzerainty to Sussex and Kent, and after a series of wars he established a loose overlordship over Wessex, marrying one of his daughters to its king. But he was never able to dominate Northumbria as he did the southern kingdoms.

Offa's coinage reached a height in terms of artistic quality for Anglo-Saxon currency and exceeded that of contemporary Frankish rulers. Offa was one of the few Anglo-Saxon rulers to mint gold coins. These coins closely imitate contemporary Islamic models, including Arabic lettering. This was remarkable for several reasons. Offa's is the only Anglo-Saxon coinage to depict a queen, his consort Cynethryth (d. after 798). He is also one of the few Anglo-Saxon rulers to mint gold coins which have survived. The dominant currency of Anglo-Saxon England was the silver penny known as the sceatta, and Offa's gold coins were probably minted for foreign trade or tribute rather than circulation. They are modelled on the dinar minted by the Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad, the dominant economic power in western Eurasia at the time. One includes Arabic lettering, of whose significance the moneyer would have had no knowledge.

Offa's most enduring historical achievement was Offa's Dyke, a gigantic earthwork roughly establishing the border between England and Wales. He fought several wars with Welsh rulers, and the dyke may have been part of a shift to a defensive strategy or part of a negotiated settlement. The dyke did not cover the entire border but extended for about 103 kilometres. There are other defensive earthworks along the border, but their relationship to Offa's Dyke is unknown. Although today's border between Wales and England does not exactly follow the line of the dyke, it became a physical and cultural marker of the division between England and Wales. Offa died in 796; his England did not long survive him.

The Scandinavian Invasions of England

Beginning in the late eighth century, the British Isles were one of the many areas in Europe that experienced the aggressive force of new kind, from the Scandinavian peoples called Vikings. The term Viking actually denotes a profession or activity rather than an ethnic group; it essentially means "sea raider". The Scandinavians initially came in search of loot and slaves, both for personal exploitation and for sale in the active Mediterranean slave markets.

The Scandinavians consisted of three main groups – Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians. The Danes and Norwegians were the ones who directed the most attention to the British Isles: the Danes led the invasion of England, while Norwegians attacked Ireland and Scotland. The situation was complicated by the fact that England and Wales were also raided by Norwegians based in Ireland. While different groups of Vikings were often in competition with one another, they were similar enough that the British peoples did not usually distinguish between them. The English collectively referred to the invaders as Danes whether they were Danes or Norwegians, since the Danes were the initial leaders in attacks on south-eastern England.

As members of the group broadly classed as Germanic peoples, the Scandinavians had many cultural, religious, and linguistic similarities to the pagan Anglo-Saxons, although their languages were not initially mutually comprehensible. Their tradition of fishing in the North Sea and North Atlantic led to the development of good ships and of seafaring skill. The so-called dragon ships, long and narrow, only carried about 30-60 men apiece, but the Scandinavians were able to exploit the principal military weakness of the British peoples and, indeed, western Christian powers generally – their lack of sea power. The British, used to trade links and invasions across the relatively narrow seas of the English Channel, the southern North Sea, and the Irish Sea, were shocked by the Scandinavians' ability to sail directly across the North Sea.

Although Scandinavians were the nucleus of the Viking bands, they were often joined by runaway slaves or outlaws from English or Celtic society. The Vikings were able to sail rivers as well as seas and use horses for transportation, although they preferred to fight on foot. Their mobility made it difficult to concentrate the forces of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms against them. Anglo-Saxon and other British military forces were mostly independent farmers serving as soldiers part-time, and they were not as committed or as skilful as the Scandinavian professional warriors.

The Scandinavian penetration of Britain took place in three phases. At the end of the eighth century, it began with fierce pillaging Viking raids by single ships or small groups of ships. These attacks were made by rather small bands of a thousand warriors at the most. The most noteworthy of these early raids, often treated as the beginning of the Viking phase in British history, was the savage attack on the monastery of Lindisfarne, on the coast of Northumbria, by three Viking ships in 793. Then, beginning in the mid-ninth century, the Scandinavians formed larger

groups for bigger projects; a fleet of 350 ships arrived on the Thames near London in 851. They developed permanent bases, began to winter over in England, and sometimes even formed small kingdoms. The last phase was the invasion by military forces of Scandinavian kings, both Danish and Norwegian. This led to an entanglement of Scandinavian and British politics that lasted until the late eleventh century in England and into the fifteenth century in Scotland.

The first recorded encounter between Scandinavians and English took place around 790, when a small group of Scandinavians who had landed in Dorset killed the royal emissaries sent to find out who they were. The Viking attacks, like those of the early Anglo-Saxons, initially focused on eastern and northern Britain, the areas closest to the North Sea. They sacked and temporarily ruled London and Canterbury, even killing an archbishop of Canterbury as well as several Anglo-Saxon kings. They made their greatest impact in the north. The Scandinavian invasions marked the end of the Northumbrian Renaissance and the kingdom of Northumbria. Northumbria became the site of constant warfare between Britons, Scots, Danes, Norwegians, and Anglo-Saxons. Many scholars from Northumbria and elsewhere in the British Isles fled to the court of Charlemagne in Aachen, contributing to the revival of learning known as the Carolingian Renaissance.

Having resisted conversion to Christianity, the Vikings sacked and looted monasteries and churches; killed and enslaved monks and priests; and killed, raped, or enslaved nuns. Monasteries were particularly attractive targets to early Viking raiders since they were usually unfortified and full of precious things that had been donated by kings, queens, and other wealthy and pious Christians. They also contained populations that could be enslaved or ransomed, as well as saints' relics, which could be sold for large sums. Vikings raided famous monasteries, including Iona, which they first attacked in 795 and returned to on several occasions thereafter. These raids were particularly shocking to the British Christians, as they usually respected the property and personnel of the church and the saints in their wars with each other. Since the surviving sources on the Scandinavian invasions are almost entirely monastic in origin, they place a heavy emphasis on the devastation the Vikings wrought. In many areas the Viking attacks meant the destruction of monastic life, and British monasticism would later have to be restarted virtually from scratch. But despite their love of sacking sacred treasuries, the Vikings had no interest in persecuting Christians. Some bishops and archbishops were willing to

work with Scandinavian leaders, who after all were not much more uncivilized than the Anglo-Saxon and British monarchs with whom the church was already working. At the end of the Viking occupation of an area, church estates were generally better off than secular estates.

In England, Scandinavians from Denmark settled mostly in the north and northwest, the area of the old kingdom of Northumbria. However, the areas of the British Isles where Scandinavian culture would have the most long-term impact were the western and northern islands – including the Shetlands, Hebrides, and the Isle of Man – which were settled by Scandinavians from Norway. The Viking-founded lordship of Man, centred on the Isle of Man and including the Hebrides, was an independent power under the distant overlordship of the Norwegian kings until 1266, when the Scots took it over. Orkney and Shetland remained under Norway until the fifteenth century. The areas taken over were originally in the form of large estates, but the disruptions of the various wars between the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians and different groups of Scandinavians led to fragmentation and the emergence of a freer peasantry.

The Vikings had the least impact in Wales, a relatively poor country with little to attract looters and whose mountain fastnesses were difficult for Scandinavian bands to attack. Scandinavian mercenaries also served the Welsh kings, and Scandinavian traders bought slaves and grain from the Welsh. Although there is some evidence for the formation of small communities in Wales, there were no Welsh Scandinavian kingdoms as there were in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

The Scandinavian impact on England and lowland Scotland was particularly marked with respect to the language. Since both English and the Scandinavian tongues were part of the Germanic family of languages, the English adopted Scandinavian loanwords much more easily than did Celtic peoples such as the Welsh. English was the language used to communicate between people speaking different Germanic tongues, so over the course of time English grammar became simpler, with less use of gender and case endings than other Germanic or European languages.

The Reign of Alfred the Great

The English recovery from the Viking invasions was led by King Alfred of Wessex (849–899). Alfred was the youngest brother of the Anglo-Saxon royal family of Wessex; he inherited the throne in 871 after all his brothers died. Alfred himself saw many ups and downs over the course of his career. At one point his authority was reduced to the control

of one small island. However, he fought an able guerrilla campaign and eventually managed to expel the Scandinavians from Wessex. His unification of much of southern and western England was facilitated both by his leadership of the struggle against the Vikings and by the fact that the Scandinavians had killed off all the other Anglo-Saxon royal families and disrupted the relatively stable multi-kingdom structure of early Anglo-Saxon England.

Alfred's achievements were such that he is the only monarch in English history to be given the title of the Great. He reorganized the army of Wessex to keep it in the field longer and set up a system of defended cities or burghs, eventually referred to as *boroughs* from the Germanic term for *a fortified place*. Alfred's plan required the local landowners to build and maintain the fortifications under strong central direction. His reign saw the beginning of the system of shires around boroughs, often based on a pre-existing settlement. Roman walls were restored in some areas, and new walls built in others. Ideally, everyone was close enough to a burgh to have someplace to go when under attack. This led to increased royal support of markets as well. Alfred issued charters granting economic privileges to towns, such as the right to hold markets on specified occasions. Cities continued to be small. London was by far the largest with a population of about 10,000, while others were mostly between 2,000 and 3,000. Alfred also built a navy to defend Wessex.

Alfred was eventually accepted as king of the English, although he was not the ruler of all the land later to be known as England. He was the first king of the English as a people, as opposed to kings of particular English kingdoms, but his enlarged Wessex coexisted with an area of Danish settlement and rule in the northeast known as the Danelaw, covering the old kingdom of Northumbria in the north, east Anglia, and part of central England, where Danish customs held sway. He lamented the passing of the golden age of English Christianity. Alfred's efforts to attract scholars from Britain and the European continent to his court and his own scholarship and translations of early Christian writings into Anglo-Saxon were attempts to revive the Christian culture of pre-Viking England. He also sponsored the translation of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and other works into Anglo-Saxon, and he promulgated a Code of Law. Alfred's reign saw the beginnings of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a record of current events kept in Anglo-Saxon; eventually the chronicle would be kept at monasteries. The extensive use of the written vernacular language

for scholarly and religious purposes in Alfred's England had very little parallel elsewhere in Europe, where Latin was the language of writing.

Alfred also attempted to restore English monasticism, but his newly-founded monasteries were not very successful, possibly because the country, devastated by decades of raids and wars, was unable to support large religious houses. Works speaking of Alfred's greatness were produced at his court by people who worked for him. Alfred's efforts, the political unification of the Anglo-Saxons, and the awareness of differences between Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians would all contribute to the creation of a common Anglo-Saxon, or English, identity. Alfred's heirs worked out the political implications of the new English unity. However, the Anglo-Saxons located north of the old kingdom of Northumbria in present-day Scotland were separated by the Danelaw from the main body of Anglo-Saxons who were united under Alfred. The northern Anglo-Saxons were gradually and permanently drawn into the Kingdom of Scotland. In both England and Scotland, native resistance to Scandinavian invaders eventually forced territorial compromise, the integration of Scandinavian settlers and native populations, and stronger, centralized kingdoms.

Questions

1. In what part of Britain did the first Anglo-Saxons settle?
2. Who was called "a ring-giver"?
3. How many main social classes could be distinguished in Anglo-Saxon society? What were they?
4. When did the conversion of Anglo-Saxons to Christianity begin?
5. Why was the idea of the new religion attractive to Anglo-Saxon rulers?
6. Why were religious conflicts so frequent in Northumbria?
7. What actions were carried out by Theodore of Tarsus, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to organize the life of Anglo-Saxon communities under Christian power?
8. Did Benedictine monasticism originate on the Continent?
9. What do you know about Bede, the great contributor to the Northumbrian Renaissance?
10. What kingdoms were under the power of King Offa?
11. What groups of Scandinavians invaded England, Scotland and Ireland?
12. Why has King Alfred of Wessex been given the title "the Great"?

III. SCOTLAND, ENGLAND AND WALES IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES (ca. 850–1272)

Out of the chaos of the Scandinavian invasions in the late first millennium came the political entities that would dominate British history into the early eighteenth century: the kingdoms of England and Scotland. In the tenth and eleventh centuries the kingdoms and societies located between the English king in the south and the Scottish king in the north were squeezed out of existence. Only Wales and some of the islands remained outside the jurisdiction of the new monarchies. This process continued into the late thirteenth century, as the Scottish monarchs pushed back successfully against Scandinavian rule in the archipelago while the English rulers took over Wales. The new monarchies also moved out of the cultural and political orbit of Scandinavia and into that of the cultures across the English Channel, the most important being France.

England moved into France's political and cultural orbit when it was conquered by the duke of Normandy, a region of France, in 1066. The resulting entanglement of England and France would last for nearly five centuries and strongly affect the history of both countries.

The Kingdom of England in the tenth and eleventh centuries

King Edward the Elder (ca. 870–924; reigned 899–924) advanced Alfred's goal of creating a unified England. The Kingdom of England is traditionally considered to have been founded in 927 when Edward's son Athelstan (d. 939) subjugated the Danish and English parts of Northumbria. Northumbria remained a nominal kingdom under Scandinavian rulers, though under overall English lordship, until 954.

Small, relatively isolated England was ahead of other European kingdoms in developing centralized institutions. It had a national army, the *fyrð*, commanded by the king, and the English kings were unique in Europe in possessing a monopoly on coinage. The English silver penny was of a high standard. There was a centralized tax, *the Danegeld*, so called because it was first raised to pay off Danish armies. The English monarchy also developed a procedure called *the writ*, a letter from the king carrying the force of a command. This theoretically put the entire kingdom under the king's authority, a marked contrast to the weak feudal kingships of the European continent or the loosely associated Kingdom of Scotland. The Anglo-Saxon government of England also differed from its continental contemporaries in that the language of government was the

same language people spoke in everyday life, Anglo-Saxon, rather than Latin.

The Anglo-Saxon kings took a strong interest in the church, which repaid them with loyalty. The new rulers rebuilt English monasticism after the disaster of the Viking invasions. Following the Continental example, the new monasteries emphasized an elaborate schedule of services. Both abbots and bishops were royal appointees. A ritual of coronation and anointing was imported from the Continent to emphasize the sacredness of kings and kingship. The legitimacy of kingship was based largely on tradition: the king was the realm's owner, protecting its people and leading them in war. The clergy emphasized the king's justice and his protection of the church. Royal succession was based on the monarch's selecting an heir within the royal family. This led to problems when he nominated more than one successor at different points in his reign, or when he failed to nominate a successor at all.

Anglo-Saxons believed the king should have a *witenagemot*, or council, whose members were called *witan*. These leading nobles and churchmen had little independent power as a group, except sometimes in disputed successions. Despite the mythology of some later historians seeking the roots of the English parliament in the Anglo-Saxon period, the *witan* did not gather in a formal assembly with legal rights but advised the king when he sought their counsel. The country was relatively prosperous in the late Anglo-Saxon period, partly due to the Scandinavian raids tapering off, partly due to improvements in the climate. The people were divided into *thanes* (nobles), *freemen*, and *slaves*, whose numbers seem to have diminished in the late Anglo-Saxon period as the distinction between slaves and the larger category of the unfree was breaking down. Freemen were expected to have lords; the "lordless man" was an outlaw.

Administratively, England was divided into shires with royally appointed *shire-reeves*, or sheriffs. Shires were further divided into units called *hundreds*. The most powerful nobles were the ealdormen, who eventually became known by the Scandinavian term *earls*. The earls were originally royal officials, who assigned big, contiguous blocks of English territory, particularly in the north. The position became increasingly hereditary, and by the end of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, the earls of the house of Godwin, who ruled Wessex in south-central England, were more powerful than the king himself. One of them, Harold II Godwinson, even seized the throne in 1066, becoming the last Anglo-Saxon king of England.

By the late tenth century the English kings were strong enough to claim hegemony over Great Britain. The frontier of English settlement expanded, particularly at the expense of the Welsh.

The conversion of Denmark and Norway to Christianity in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries diminished the cultural distance between the Scandinavians and the English, and their contacts were less hostile in the eleventh century than in earlier periods. Scandinavian attacks on England persisted throughout the eleventh century, but the survival of the English state was no longer endangered. Opportunistic Scandinavian raiders took advantage of weak kings, and strong Scandinavian kings attempted to seize the English throne. The most successful of these was the Danish king Canute (995–1035), king of England from 1016 to his death in 1035. Canute was invited to rule by the *witan* who feared a disputed succession more than Scandinavian rule. Rather than incorporating England into Denmark or settling it with Danes, Canute ruled England as an English king through English nobles and English bishops and following English law and customs. His reign saw a partial blending of English and Scandinavian culture; Scandinavian poets and soldiers served English kings and nobles, and thus emerges a North Sea aristocracy with interests and connections in different kingdoms.

In the eleventh century the English connection to Scandinavia was complemented by increased contact with the Continent, particularly Normandy, along the northern coast of France, and Flanders, a region which is now divided between Belgium and France. It was important to have good relations with them both to prevent them from providing bases for Scandinavian raiders and for the health of the English wool trade, the most important English export trade. These connections were strengthened by royal intermarriage and the fact that the next-to-last English king of England, Edward the Confessor (ca. 1003–1066), spent much of his youth in exile at French courts. Edward was the son of King Aethelred II (ca. 966–1016) – who had lost the support of the *witan* and was replaced by Danish king Canute – and Emma of Normandy (ca. 985–1052). When Edward became king of England in 1042, he returned with Norman warriors and churchmen, the beginning of the Norman presence that would overwhelm England after Edward's death. The court of the Confessor (so called due to his reputation for personal holiness) was quite cosmopolitan, a meeting place of the Romance, Celtic, Germanic, and Scandinavian worlds.

England under the Normans

The most famous date in English history is 1066, the year Duke William of Normandy (1027–1087) conquered the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of England. The duchy of Normandy, in northern France, was originally ceded to a Scandinavian Viking ruler in the early tenth century by the king of France for protection from other raiders. The ships that brought William over to England, as depicted in the famous Bayeux Tapestry, were Viking longships in design. However, by the late eleventh century the Normans had become entirely French in identity.

William's victory was precipitated by the death of Edward the Confessor in early January 1066. Edward had left no children, and the witan proclaimed Harold II Godwinson to be king. William, however, claimed that Edward had recognized him as the successor and that Harold had accepted this claim. Complicating the situation was the king of Norway, Harald Sigurdson (1015–1066; also known as Hardrada, or "hard ruler"), who also invaded England in an attempt to seize the throne.

The decisive battle between the English and the Normans took place on October 14, 1066, at Hastings in Sussex. Harold, along with most of the fighting aristocracy of Anglo-Saxon England, was killed in battle, and William was crowned king. The Battle of Hastings was a victory of Continental military technology, particularly the mounted warrior, against the old-fashioned, infantry-dominated army of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. The actual conquest was a more protracted process than a single battle. English earls who had initially supported William rebelled against him; English resistance continued in various regions, particularly the highlands of the west and north; and Danish and Scottish invasions tried the new regime. However, William's own military skill and his control of the vital south and southeast enabled him to surmount these challenges. William was also a leader of immense brutality whose massacres and devastation in the north left a mark on the region for a century. After years of warfare, William finally crushed the resistance of the Anglo-Saxon nobility in 1075; the few surviving male Anglo-Saxon aristocrats went into exile.

William presented himself both as the legitimate heir of Edward the Confessor and as the conqueror of England. During his reign the prestige of the monarchy continued. Many English governmental institutions, such as writs, royal control over coinage, and national taxation, remained helping to foster the high degree of centralization characteristic of the Norman-English monarchy. The organization of the kingdom into shires also remained, and the title earl remained the highest secular honour and

responsibility that could be given to a subject. The name Edward was one of the few Anglo-Saxon names to survive the conquest, and it would later be adopted by the French-descended kings themselves. On the other hand, William fostered the image of himself as a conqueror and the ultimate owner of all the land in the kingdom. The conquest was followed by a massive redistribution of land, the greatest in all English history, and power along with it. The richest single landowner was the king, who by the end of the century owned about 18 percent of the land.

The Norman triumph was followed by the importation of a new ruling class rather than widespread settlement. The English ruling class was replaced by Norman, Breton, and French nobility. This process was facilitated by the high death toll of the Anglo-Saxon nobility in 1066 and during the following rebellions, and by the subsequent exile of the remaining leaders. Anglo-Saxon widows were married to the newly arrived French nobles.

William took inventory of his kingdom in the Domesday survey ordered in 1085 and recorded in the Domesday Book completed before his death in 1087. The Domesday Book was a written description or inventory of all the productive land in the kingdom; it named about 13,400 places. Although its coverage was not quite complete, it was the most all-inclusive and precise document produced by any medieval government, and it remains an enormously important source for historians. However, it was less useful to the English government in subsequent decades as its information quickly grew out of date.

The conquest tied England to the French cultural sphere and essentially severed the Scandinavian connection. The last attempt of a Scandinavian monarch to rule England was by King Svein Esrithson of Denmark (r. 1046–1074), who invaded England in 1069, but despite early successes it came to nothing. For centuries afterward, the English elite was mostly French in descent, French in culture, and avidly engaged in French politics. Many English kings saw themselves first and foremost as French barons and were lords of extensive territories in France. When the Angevin Henry II ascended to the throne of England in 1154, he added the French territories of Anjou and Aquitaine to Normandy. England was deeply involved in French politics for centuries and open to French cultural tendencies – in language, religion, architecture, literature, and many other areas. This political and cultural orientation to Europe was accompanied by an economic orientation. The dominant English export was now wool for the clothiers of Flanders, who valued fine English wool above the wool

of Flanders itself. The wool trade had roots in the Anglo-Saxon era but expanded after the conquest. Flemish payment for wool in silver helped England maintain a high-quality currency, with little of the debasement of precious metal common in most European countries. Wool continued to be the most important English export until the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century.

William the Conqueror was succeeded as king of England by his second son, William II Rufus (ca. 1056–1100; r. 1087–1100). The Duchy of Normandy went to his eldest son, Robert II Curthose (ca. 1051–1134), putting those Norman landowners with estates in both England and Normandy in a difficult position should conflict arise between the two brothers. William Rufus, so nicknamed for his red beard and flamboyant personality, had several disagreements with the church over the extent of royal control over it and his habit of taking church revenues for his own. The king gained a bad reputation for violence, irreligion, and sodomy. However, as a military and political leader William Rufus was quite successful. He turned back an invasion of the north by Malcolm III of Scotland (Malcolm Canmore, r. 1058–1093) and forced the Scottish king's submission. Taking advantage of his brother Robert's determination to join the First Crusade, he took possession of Normandy in return for a loan to finance Robert's expedition.

William Rufus died in a hunting accident in 1100. There were rumours that the arrow that killed him had been shot deliberately, although rumours were inevitable in such cases, and most modern historians believe that it was indeed an accident. Robert, the next in the strict line of succession, was still off crusading when William died, so his ambitious younger brother, Henry I (r. 1100–1135), seized the opportunity and succeeded William Rufus to the throne. After Robert returned and challenged him, Henry defeated his brother at the Battle of Tinchebrai in 1106, reuniting kingdom and duchy.

After some early disagreements over royal versus episcopal authority, Henry adopted a more conciliatory approach to the church. He also founded institutions of centralized justice and finance, such as the exchequer, introduced around 1110 to handle royal accounts. Henry focused a great deal of effort on expansion in France. He retained good relations with the Scottish kings to whom he was related by marriage and asserted Anglo-Norman power in Wales. His marriage to Matilda (1080–1118), a descendant of the Scottish and Anglo-Saxon royal

families, may have helped to reconcile the Anglo-Saxon leaders who still remained important in the localities to Norman rule.

Henry's only legitimate son, William (1103–1120), died in a shipwreck, and when Henry died in 1135, the succession was disputed between his only legitimate daughter, Matilda (1102–1167), and his nephew, Stephen of Blois (ca. 1096–1154). The subsequent wars severely tested the framework the Norman kings had built.

The Norman regime was based on different principles than that of the Anglo-Saxons. William the Conqueror and his heirs wanted to prevent the development of large, semi-independent territorial lordships such as the Anglo-Saxon or Scottish earldoms or the Duchy of Normandy itself. Rather than giving away huge blocks of territory, the Norman kings dispersed the lands of the great feudal lords in smaller parcels. Building on Anglo-Saxon centralism, they imposed a very tight feudal structure where all lords swore allegiance to the king and all land was held feudally – that is, in return for services, usually military services. The aristocracy was small: about half the income from the country went to around 200 barons, the rest to the king and the church. The most powerful landowners in England were also landowners in Normandy, which caused difficulties for them when the kingdom and the duchy were in different hands. The king also owned land outright in every part of the kingdom, giving him a presence throughout his realm that the medieval monarchs of France, Scotland, or elsewhere lacked.

The feudal system rested on a new military technology of castles and mounted knights. The Normans put up hundreds of castles all over England, and these became the new nobility's military strongholds. Unlike Anglo-Saxon earthwork burghs, which covered an area averaging 25 acres (10 hectares), these fortified places covered only about a couple of acres (8 hectares), and were designed to hold only the lord, his family, and his troops. Unlike the wooden halls of the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian nobility, the castles contained wooden towers, usually located on mottes – artificial hills built with the forced labour of English peasants and surrounded by a wooden palisade, sometimes a ditch or moat, and an earthwork bank. Castles could be bases for royal authority or for predators and brigands when the king was weak. The stone castle was a later innovation and much more expensive. The White Tower, which William the Conqueror built in London in 1078 to control and overawe his new capital city, was one of the few early Norman stone castles. The largest stone building built in England for secular purposes since the Romans; it

became the nucleus for the building complex known as the Tower of London.

Horsemanship became one of the most important qualities of the male aristocrat, since lords had to support their horsemen in battle by fighting from horseback themselves. A nobleman who could not ride was fit only to be a priest. In fact, the aristocratic class of the new England was primarily one of knights – cavalymen who wore a coat of chain mail, helmet, shield, lance, and sword and rode warhorses.

The Normans also ended the relatively complex Anglo-Saxon class structure in favour of a two-class system of the free and the unfree, although the unfree were not considered slaves – they had some rights and were not bought and sold as chattels. The boundary between the lord and the ordinary freeman was initially quite fuzzy, and the nobility of Norman England was not protected by the unique set of legal rights that would clearly distinguish the English nobility of the later Middle Ages and the early modern period from ordinary people. They were more leading freemen than distinguished by a defined higher status. In the lower classes, there was movement in both directions as slaves moved upward into the status of serf and free Anglo-Saxon peasants moved downward. All peasants, but particularly the unfree, owed produce and labour dues to the lord of the manor. Lords also maintained private courts, a practice unknown in Anglo-Saxon England.

Latin quickly displaced Anglo-Saxon as the language of government in the first few years after the conquest. The aristocracy mostly spoke French but had some fluency in English by the early twelfth century, accentuated by the marriage of Norman and French incomers to Englishwomen. Some of the new language eventually worked its way down to the lower classes, where English was steadily marginalized as a written language, and traditional English names such as Aethelred were replaced by French-influenced ones like William. However, French always remained an aristocratic language. Unlike Latin, Anglo-Saxon, or Scandinavian, it had little impact on place-names.

The decentralized nature of feudal power proved disastrous during the civil wars ignited by the succession dispute between William the Conqueror's grandchildren, Stephen and Matilda. Many lords who led their followers into either army seem to have been more motivated by the desire to loot and to increase their holdings at the expense of the rival faction than by any real loyalty to either Stephen or Matilda.

King Henry II (1133–1189; r. 1154–1189) was less interested in Ireland for its own sake than in preventing English nobles like Strongbow from establishing independent power bases there. Henry's army was the greatest ever seen in Ireland and won the submission of most Irish rulers. English control over Ireland would wax and wane for the rest of the medieval period.

The Beginning of Feudalism in England

The Norman Conquest changed the church as well as the state. The higher levels of the church – archbishops, bishops, and abbots – were almost entirely Normanized in the first few years after the conquest. Numerous monasteries saw tension between the old English monks and new monks from the Continent, but in the long run the English lost. New ideas and new books from the Continent came to revive the church intellectually. Many new Norman or French abbots were shocked at the meagre libraries of the English monasteries, which had never really recovered from the Viking attacks.

Discontinuities of personnel between the pre- and post-conquest churches masked institutional continuities. Norman-appointed archbishops of Canterbury based their cases for Canterbury's primacy within Britain on English precedents. Norman-dominated monasteries found or forged grants from English kings to establish their rights to property. Although some Normans pointedly spurned the Anglo-Saxon saints, many of these continued to be venerated, and where a successful cult of an Anglo-Saxon saint existed, the Norman-dominated church kept it going.

The church was also feudalised with the imposition of military obligations and tighter organization under a series of strong archbishops of Canterbury. The requirement that bishops and abbots furnish troops to the king was a novelty that initially aroused great horror. Bishops and abbots even served as military commanders on occasion. Alternatively, religious landowners fulfilled their obligations by praying for the soul of the person who had donated the land or endowed the monastery and his or her family.

Those affiliated with the church, however loosely, were referred to as the clergy, and they had legal privileges and exemptions that limited the king's power over them. This issue led to the greatest conflict between church and state in medieval England: the Becket affair. Thomas Becket (ca. 1118–1170) was a chancellor and friend of the first king Henry II, who appointed Becket archbishop of Canterbury in 1162. Henry wanted to transfer jurisdiction over criminal clergy to secular courts, as church courts

were often reluctant to convict guilty clergymen. Becket refused, and a long struggle involving the pope and the king of France ended with Becket's murder in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170. The murderers were knights carrying out what they thought was the king's will, although Henry never gave a formal order. Becket was widely recognized as a saint and martyr across Europe, and Henry did penance for his part in the murder in 1174, being publicly flogged by monks at Canterbury. Becket's shrine at Canterbury became a major pilgrimage site not just for English people but for Europeans, and criminal clergy continued to enjoy lenient ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Norman England participated in the general revival of European urban life in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The 1087 Domesday Book listed 112 boroughs, or towns; most of the largest were built on old Roman sites.

Even when these towns had lost population or been deserted after the withdrawal of the Roman Empire and the subsequent decline of the English economy from its Roman height, their walls made them natural sites for reurbanization. The largest towns were also bishop's seats. The English mercantile class survived the Norman Conquest, and the urban world continued to grow. More than 125 new towns were built in England in the 150 years following the conquest.

Medieval English towns were small by modern standards, or even compared to the great medieval cities of the East. London was clearly the largest city. Although there is no hard record of the total population of medieval London at any point in its history, and estimates by modern scholars vary widely, one common estimate is that the capital had a population of about 18,000 in 1100. Townspeople were a mixture of French and English. The Norman Conquest also led to the introduction of the first Jewish population in England since the Romans. The Jewish immigrants were French speakers from the Norman capital Rouen, and the medieval Jewish population of England remained Francophone.

Jews originally settled in London. Beginning around the middle of the twelfth century, they established small communities in other urban centres. The Jewish community was useful to the kings as moneylenders, and Jewish moneylenders also lent to private individuals. The law of the church forbade Christians lending money at interest, so the Jews filled this economic need. However, Jews were increasingly targets of Christian anti-Semitism, some based on the Christian myth that the Jewish community

was responsible for Christ's crucifixion and some on the Christian debtor's resentment of Jewish creditors.

Towns were part of the feudal system. What legally constituted a town, the possession of a charter, was in the hands of either the feudal lord of the territory or the king. Each town was put under a particular legal regime at the establishment of its charter; often, one legal regime was simply copied from town to town. A town's rights included the right to hold markets, the right to have its own courts, and the right to sell land freely in a less legally complicated way than land held by a feudal lord. Towns were strongly associated with personal freedom: an unfree peasant or villain who lived in a town for a year and a day became free – hence the saying “town air makes free”. A lord could also free a town's citizens from paying the toll on his roads or bridges, and thus the most desirable lord for a town was the king, who could do this for the entire country.

The king was by far the most important lord of towns in England. Nearly all the large towns, including London and about 40 percent of towns overall, were directly under the king. Towns in England never attained the self-governing independence characteristic of many European towns, particularly in Germany and Italy. London, whose particular weight in the kingdom was widely recognized and whose wealth gave it a certain amount of leverage, achieved some measure of independence in 1141 when King Stephen, then a captive of Matilda, recognized a commune in the city, a stronghold of his supporters. A commune in the Middle Ages was a group of leading citizens who took on the responsibility for town governance. For the first time London had an elected mayor.

Feudal Scotland

Much less is known about Scottish medieval history than about that of England. The less-sophisticated Scottish administration did not produce the masses of records that the English did, and many Scottish records were destroyed in wars and disasters.

The Scottish monarchy underwent many changes similar to England's in feudalisation and even the arrival of Norman warriors, but Scotland was not conquered, and the Scottish monarchy retained control over the changes.

Norman kings inherited the Anglo-Saxon monarchs' claims to British overlordship, and after the conquest many Anglo-Saxons regarded the Scottish monarchy, intermarried with the English one, as a leading Anglo-Saxon institution. The Anglo-Saxon claimant Edgar the Atheling

(ca. 1051–ca. 1126) was received in the Scottish court following the Norman Conquest. Malcolm III of Scotland (r. 1058–1093) married Edgar's sister Margaret (ca. 1045–1093) and supported rebels against William the Conqueror. William eventually forced Malcolm to become his vassal, but this status was difficult to enforce.

Queen Margaret was a remarkable woman whose piety was such that she was canonized in 1251. She was a great patron of the Scottish church, building churches and taking an active role in promoting reforms such as stricter observance of church law. She was also known for acts of piety and humility such as fasting, frequent attendance at Mass, and feeding the poor and orphans. Margaret sponsored the influence of English and Continental culture in Scotland. Her sons received English names or names derived from the ancient world rather than the traditional Celtic names of the Scottish royal Canmore dynasty. Margaret and Malcolm's daughter Edith or Matilda (ca. 1080–1118) married King Henry I of England, William the Conqueror's son, linking the new Norman dynasty to the old Anglo-Saxon line.

Later Scottish kings sponsored Norman immigration from England or directly from France to build up nobility familiar with the latest French and English military and administrative technology. The new nobles, with no roots in the land, owed immediate loyalty to the king. The most important Scottish king of the Middle Ages, Malcolm and Margaret's son David I (ca. 1080–1153; r. 1124–1153), had spent many years at the English court and possessed territories and vassals in England. David brought many of his Anglo-Norman liege men with him when he succeeded, giving them control over vast territories in the south of the country. He also set up a network of castles throughout parts of the country to serve as royal strong points under the control of appointed sheriffs, a title and office derived from the English example, with modification for Scottish circumstances. David was the first Scottish king recorded as minting coins and the first to grant charters to cities or burghs. An Anglo-Scottish nobility with holdings and family connections on both sides of the border developed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Generally speaking, strong kings of England tried to impose their will on the Scottish kings. Henry II forced William the Lion (ca. 1142–1214; r. 1165–1214) to swear homage to him after William joined a rebellion of English barons against the monarchy in the Treaty of Falaise in 1174. Henry occupied strong points in Scotland, including Edinburgh, and kept interfering in Scottish politics. However, Scotland was seldom a

high priority for the English kings. Henry's son Richard I (1157–1199; r. 1189–1199) essentially sold the Scots their independence back for 10,000 silver marks in 1189 to raise money to go on a crusade.

The Scottish church in the early twelfth century still lacked a settled diocesan organization. Bishops existed but did not have defined territorial sees. This made Scotland particularly vulnerable in the late eleventh century, when the papacy was imposing a great wave of reform and standardization over the European church. One obvious instrument of reform from the papal point of view was the English church hierarchy. Both the archbishop of Canterbury, who could still claim a superiority over the British church as a whole based on Pope Gregory the Great's charge to Augustine in the sixth century, and the archbishop of York, who outranked any Scottish bishop since the Scots did not have archbishops at this time, could claim to direct the Scottish church. This had been made explicit by William the Conqueror, in whose church the archbishop of Canterbury was recognized as primate of all Britain and the archbishop of York as primate of all regions from the Humber to the utmost limits of Scotland.

The central issue was who would consecrate the Scottish bishops. The papacy was a strong supporter of York's claims, believing that York offered the best hope for Scottish reform. The popes sent streams of bulls to the Scottish bishops telling them they were subject to York. However, during the Becket affair the York archbishop was a firm supporter of Henry II. This caused the pope to recognize the independence of the Scottish church, subject only to himself. An 1192 bull declared that Scotland was a special daughter of the see of Rome, subject directly to the pope with no intermediary. By this time the Scottish church had a much more settled diocesan organization with defined territories and synods.

During these struggles, Scotland developed a national cult of St. Andrew, the apostle credited with the conversion of Scotland in Christian legend. The bishop of St. Andrew's, a community built around Andrew's shrine, was known as the bishop of Scotland and often took the leading role in Scottish church affairs, although at most he was first among equals in relation to other Scottish bishops. St. Andrew's was the capital of Scotland as much as any place was, as Scottish kings had to travel extensively to maintain control over their subjects.

Scottish kings' control over the west and north of their kingdom control was weak but increasing. The king of Norway, never able to exert much over the Hebrides, ceded them to the king of Scotland in 1266, but

the Hebrides and the northern islands remained separate from the rest of the kingdom in culture and politics for centuries.

Feudal Wales

Although it never reached the level of centralization of Scotland, let alone England, Wales in the thirteenth century was also transformed by the impact of feudalism. The Anglo-Norman Marcher Barons – feudal lords established on the “Marches”, or frontiers, between England and Wales – had more independence than other feudal lords and were expected to defend the kingdom from the Welsh and seek to expand at Welsh expense. The Marcher Barons took an aggressive stance, introducing the new techniques of cavalry warfare based on the mounted knight and fortification, while the area of Wales under the rule of Welsh princes shrank. Welsh rulers did homage to English kings, intermarried with the Anglo-Norman nobility, and even allied with the English against Welsh rivals. Nor was Wales merely a passive receiver of European feudal culture; it was also the source of one of the most important elements of feudal art and literature. The Welsh mythology concerning the legendary British hero King Arthur would spread as far as Iceland, Italy, and Russia and find an enthusiastic audience within and beyond the feudal nobility.

The political and military challenge to Wales was taken up by the princes of Gwynedd in north Wales. In the thirteenth century two Gwynedd princes, Llewelyn the Great (ca. 1173–1240) and Llewelyn ap Gryffud (ca. 1223–1282), brought Wales to its peak of unification since the eleventh century, for the first time controlling the entire country. In 1267 England recognized Llewelyn ap Gruffyd by the new title of Prince of Wales, bringing Welsh independence to a new height. The crash would not be long in coming.

The Magna Carta (1215)

In addition to being king of England and duke of Normandy, Henry II (1133–1189; r. 1154–1189) was count of Anjou – hence the word Angevin to describe the dynasty – in his own right and ruler of Aquitaine by right of his wife, Eleanor (1122–1204). An alternative designation of Henry’s dynasty is Plantagenet, after his father, Geoffrey Plantagenet. In addition to being king, Henry was the most powerful of French barons, and much of his and his son Richard I’s time, resources, and energy would be devoted to their French holdings. Henry’s reign was particularly important in the development of English law and judicial procedures. He established

a system whereby royal judges – called justices in Eyre – travelled circuits covering the entire kingdom and worked in cooperation with local juries – a partnership that would lie at the heart of English justice for centuries. The law worked out by the royal justices in Henry's reign – the common law – would build on Anglo-Saxon and Norman precedents to become one of the world's great legal systems. Richard lacked Henry's administrative abilities and showed little interest in England during his reign, but his outstanding abilities as a warrior and crusader added to the prestige and power of the English throne.

The centralization and fiscal extortion practiced by the early Angevin dynasty led to resentment on the part of the aristocracy. This came to a head under Richard's brother and successor, King John (r. 1199–1216). John was a highly intelligent man but untrustworthy and cruel, evoking little loyalty. Significantly, he was unsuccessful in his most important wars, those with the rising power of western Europe, the king of France, Philip II Augustus (r. 1180–1223). John lost Normandy and much of the inheritance of Henry II in France, with disastrous consequences for his prestige in England. This loss had long-term consequences as well, ending the time when English kings were predominantly French magnates. John spent more time in England than any king since the conquest, setting the pattern for future English rulers.

For all the reasons, John needed money. His ruthlessness in squeezing money from his barons, including the confiscation of baronial lands and the promotion of gangsterish favourites, aroused massive resistance. Exploiting the rights of ward ship, a legal claim the king had to be the guardian of minor children of deceased nobles, he married off the daughters of nobles to rich merchants for money, an insult to noble families. Following the catastrophic defeat of the forces allied to John at the battle of Bouvines (July 27, 1214) in the war with Philip II that had begun in Normandy in 1202, there was a baronial revolt. John was forced to sign the Magna Carta – the great charter – in 1215. The Magna Carta was designed to stop the king's abuses and safeguard the baronage's feudal rights. It established tight aristocratic control over the central government through the requirement that new taxes could only be imposed with the consent of a great council of the baronage. The Magna Carta guaranteed both rights of interest to the baronage, such as restrictions on ward ship, and rights of all freemen in the kingdom, such as trial by peers. However, most men in the kingdom were not freemen but serfs. There was nothing democratic in the Magna Carta: a committee of 25 barons would

oversee its enforcement, with the right of revolt if the king failed to observe the charter. The establishment of the idea that the king could be limited by some form of agreement with his subjects was more important than the actual limitations.

John hoped that these concessions would unite the country behind another attempt to recover the French possessions, but it didn't happen. Another civil war broke out, with the participation of Louis, the son of the king of France – who hoped to become king of England – along with the English barons. The war ended when John died and his nine-year-old son, Henry III, became king. The new regency government reissued a slightly modified version of the charter minus the baronial committee and the right of revolt to gain baronial support against the French. This measure was successful, and the French prince left England shortly thereafter. England was now in the hands of a child.

Henry III and the Origin of Parliament

Henry III (1207–1272; r. 1216–1272) was very unlike his father. He was very pious, not cruel or ruthless, but rather feckless. His unsuccessful attempts to recover the lost French provinces required much money and led to resentment by the barons. There were two disastrous attempts at conquering France during his reign. In the eventual Treaty of Paris in 1258, Henry acknowledged the loss of his provinces and became the vassal of the French king for the remaining English territories in southern France.

Parliaments began as great councils convoked through writs to various magnates and prelates, as called for in the Magna Carta. There was no sharp dividing line when great councils became parliaments. Great councils were used to raise taxes, both in particular areas and nationwide. The move from great councils to parliaments was precipitated by a crisis in 1258. Out of the desire to provide a crown for his second son, Edmund (1245–1296), and to oblige the papacy, Henry had become involved in a war in Sicily by agreeing to guarantee the papal debts incurred there. When those debts became exorbitant, the king announced that he would not pay them, leading the pope to threaten him with excommunication – an effective threat to a pious man like Henry. A group of barons who included Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester (1208–1265), demanded that Henry agree to reforms and get the pope to back down before the money was granted. The Sicilian adventure collapsed quickly, but the council of barons set forth an ambitious program to make the king merely the head of a system of baronial councils that would actually rule the realm. This form

of government worked for a while, forcing Henry to the humiliation of having to rearrange his personal household to conform to what the barons wanted, but it was eventually brought down by divisions within the baronage and its own weaknesses and ambiguities. Questions about the length of terms on committees and how people were to be replaced had been left unaddressed. In 1261 the pope absolved King Henry of his obligation to keep the provisions and declared them and the baronial government dissolved.

The dissolution of the baronial government was followed by the rebellion of Simon de Montfort. Montfort was actually a Frenchman married to the king's sister Eleanor and godfather to the king's eldest son, Edward. After capturing the king and his heir, Prince Edward, at the battle of Lewes in 1264, Montfort established a much tighter and more baronial government for England, with himself at its head. Concerned about baronial opposition, he tried to broaden the social base of his regime by setting up a system of regular parliaments incorporating elected burgesses and knights as well as the barons, and he began to claim that parliaments should exercise authority beyond that of the king. This was when the word parliament came into general use.

Edward escaped from captivity and defeated and killed Montfort at the battle of Evesham in 1265. Henry faded into the background, and Edward was the effective ruler of the country for the rest of Henry's reign until he succeeded to the throne at Henry's death in 1272.

Questions

1. What people inhabited the territory of Scotland in the ninth century?
2. What prevented Wales from developing unity and a stable monarchy?
3. What was the tradition of royal succession in England in the tenth and eleventh centuries?
4. Why is the Domesday Book so important for historians?
5. In what way did the Norman regime and French culture influence English culture?
6. What class system predominated in Norman times?
7. What was the greatest problem in the relationships between the king and the church?
8. What were the important actions of Margaret, the Queen of Scotland in the thirteenth century?
9. Whose interests protected the Magna Carta (1215)?
10. What event is considered to represent the origin of Parliament?

IV. BRITAIN IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES (ca. 1272–1529)

The period of the late Middle Ages in Britain was a testing time for the British social and political order, marked by war, civil discord, plague, and economic crisis. The island's surviving rulers, the kings of England and Scotland, fought a series of bloody wars, which ensured the separate identity of Scotland for centuries to come, but at a cost of many deaths. Both countries were affected by the worldwide calamity of the Black Death. The English government faced both peasant and aristocratic violence, while the Scottish monarchy was brought to a point of humiliation as two of its rulers were murdered. However, Britain also shared in the Renaissance movement, with exciting new cultural developments and a key invention of the fifteenth century – the printing press.

The Reign of Edward I

In Edward I (1239–1307; r. 1272–1307), England got its most competent king since William the Conqueror. A fine general, superb military organizer, and farsighted statesman, Edward was the first king of England since the conquest with an English name, a product of his father Henry's devotion to the cult of Edward the Confessor but also an indication of the growing sense of English identity among the aristocracy. The warlike Edward had an insatiable need for money and used parliaments as a means of raising it. Getting a group of community leaders together to accept a tax increase was actually easier than just trying to do it through royal fiat. At this time it was up to the king's discretion who was invited to a parliament. No one possessed a legal right to be summoned, although the greater lords nearly always were since without them a parliament would have little authority. One of the parliaments' functions was to prevent the king from alienating his great barons, as had happened to John and Henry III. Edward sometimes followed Simon de Montfort's precedent in sending summons to the knights or burgesses of a given area to select representatives – that is, the commons – as well as summons to the barons and prelates – usually the bishops and about 30 of the major abbots. The barons and prelates later became the House of Lords. The commons were not usually summoned in Edward I's reign, however, and those parliaments that did include representatives of the commons were not considered as possessing more authority than those that did not.

In addition to raising taxes, parliaments were occasions for grievances and petitions to be heard and specific wrongs to be remedied. They were not, however, institutions for carrying on the realm's day-to-day government, which continued to be done by the king, his advisers, and his bureaucracy. Hearing petitions took up most of a parliament's time. In theory, any petition submitted to a parliament was supposed to be answered during that parliament. Since petitions often referred to legal disputes, a parliament was in many ways a court of last resort. It was usually referred to as a court – the High Court of Parliament. As a court of law, it was sacrosanct. No one could come to it carrying arms, and those who attended it could not be hindered in their comings and goings, nor could their property be seized or harmed in their absence.

Edward's greed led him to attack a vulnerable target – England's Jewish population. In 1290 a series of measures aimed at gaining tighter royal control over Jewish wealth culminated in the expulsion of the Jews from England, the first such expulsion from a medieval European kingdom. Jews would not be allowed to live openly in England again until the mid-seventeenth century. Some may have fled to Scotland, creating a Jewish community in that kingdom, but the history of Jews in Scotland before the modern era is very obscure, and the community would have been tiny. In their absence in England, Edward was able to turn to alternative sources of credit, such as the rising Italian banking houses. Lombard Street in London, for centuries thereafter the centre of English banking, was originally named after the financiers from the Italian region of Lombardy who did business there.

Wales under English Rule

Like most medieval and early modern rulers, Edward principally desired money in order to wage war. He was concerned with preserving England's deteriorating position in France, where the demands of the French king that he pay homage for Gascony, the last remaining English possession in France, was a constant source of friction between the two kingdoms. However, Edward's reign was most notable for the expansion of English power within Britain itself. It had the greatest effect in Wales, then under the Gwynedd prince Llewelyn ap Gruffud. Taking advantage of divisions in the house of Gwynedd, and bringing together some of the largest armies yet seen in Britain, Edward smashed Gwynedd's power in two campaigns in 1276–1277 and 1282. Llewelyn himself was murdered, and his head was sent to Edward.

To cement English rule in Wales, Edward built some of the largest and most formidable stone castles to be found anywhere. He also created English colonies in Wales where Welsh people were forbidden to live or to trade. Wales was administratively reorganized, and while some of it was shared out among Edward's followers or left in the hands of Welsh collaborators, much was put under direct royal control. By bringing Wales under English law, Edward's Statute of Rhuddlan (1284) ended the history of independent Wales. Its future was as a dominion of the English Crown.

The Anglo-Scottish Wars

The subjugation of Wales was only the beginning of Edward's program of expansion. Two years later, he seized the opportunity to realize an ancient English dream, the union of England and Scotland, when the adept Scottish king Alexander III (1241–1286; r. 1249–1286) died and his granddaughter, the infant Margaret of Norway (d. 1290), was left as heir to the throne. Margaret's mother had married Norway's Erik II (r. 1280–1299), and therefore Edward negotiated the Treaty of Brigham with Erik, which called for the marriage of Margaret to Edward's son, Edward of Caernarvon (1284–1327), who would later reign in England as Edward II. The Scottish assembly approved the arrangement, but four years after her grandfather, young Margaret herself died. Thus ended Scotland's Canmore dynasty and began a series of conflicts between the two remaining British states, the kingdoms of England and Scotland.

Without a direct heir, there were several Scottish nobles descended from the royal house who could make a claim on the throne. Scottish leaders who feared civil war were willing to turn to the only possible person with the power and legal position to adjudicate the dispute: Edward I. In addition to the old English claim of overlordship over Scotland, Edward had the intelligence to make a decision that would hold up legally and politically, as well as the power to make his decisions stick. Unfortunately, he also had his own agenda.

The main competitors for the throne were John Balliol (ca. 1249–1314) and Robert Bruce (ca. 1215–1295), both descendants of King David I. After exhaustive hearings, Edward decided on Balliol, who became king in 1291 after swearing fealty to Edward and acknowledging him "superior and direct lord of the Kingdom of Scotland". The conflict began because Edward and the Scots had fundamentally different concepts of what Balliol's acknowledgment meant. The Scots were thinking of a loose political association to be used in situations of disputed succession or

other major problems Scotland could not handle on its own. Edward was thinking of full legal and feudal superiority and demanded as early as 1291 that the Scottish nobles acknowledge his supremacy. After declaring Balliol's right to the Scottish throne, Edward treated the new king as a vassal and entertained appeals from the Scottish courts. Even worse, he required Balliol to send troops to fight in Edward's wars in France, which had nothing to do with Scotland.

Scottish leaders were unhappy at the prospect of losing their independence, and Balliol, seen as Edward's puppet, faced a full-fledged baronial revolt. This military and political challenge to Edward's overlordship as well as his dreams of victory in France could not be ignored. On May 28, 1296, Edward invaded Scotland.

At first Edward was overwhelmingly successful. Balliol was forced to resign the crown and sent into exile in England and eventually France, although Scottish rebels continued to invoke his authority. No new king was named; instead, an English nobleman was installed as governor. Edward even took the Stone of Destiny – traditionally used for the coronation of Scottish kings – back to England with him, where it would remain for the next 700 years. Despite his initial success, however, Edward found it was much easier to conquer Scotland than to hold it. Much of the land was remote, poor, inaccessible, and unable to support an occupying army.

Due to their harsh rule and the contempt they displayed for the Scots, the English became very unpopular among both the Scottish nobility and ordinary people. There was a series of risings, the most important under the petty noblemen William Wallace (ca. 1272–1305) in the south and Andrew Moray (d. 1297) in the north. The rebels scored some victories against the English troops left to garrison Scotland.

Edward lacked the resources to follow up his victory at Falkirk and failed to restore English rule outside the southeast, as much of the country fell into the hands of local Scottish nobles. With the surrender in 1304 of the Comyns, one of the leading families of Scots who claimed the throne, and the capture of Wallace, who had returned to Scotland the following year, things began to look better for the English. In London, Wallace received a painful and elaborate execution as a traitor, cementing his role as a Scottish national martyr.

However, the following year Robert the Bruce (1274–1329), the grandson of the original Bruce claimant, went into open rebellion. Edward's crushing of the Balliol faction and Bruce's own murder of the

head of his rivals, the Comyns, in 1306 gave him a clear shot at the crown. There was also optimism that the terrifying Edward, the “Hammer of the Scots”, was not going to survive for much longer, and indeed he died in 1307. His son and successor, Edward II (1284–1327; r. 1307–1327), was not nearly as effective. Bruce managed to establish himself as king of Scotland with the great victory of Bannockburn in 1314. He was allied to leaders in the Scottish church, from whom he received a declaration in 1308 supporting his rights to the throne. This was followed by another, more famous declaration in 1320. The Declaration of Arbroath, the foundation of Scottish nationalism, was addressed to the pope and stated that the cause of Scotland was separate from Bruce’s claim to the throne, although the two were allied. Bruce, who had served Edward I early in his career, was to be recognized as king only as long as he supported Scottish independence from England.

The war between Scotland and England dragged on, but peace was eventually achieved in 1328. The Treaty of Edinburgh was a clear-cut victory for the Scots, as the English recognized that Scotland was a completely separate kingdom, free of any subjection to England. (The treaty was actually written in French, the common language of the English and Scottish aristocracy). Bruce did not have much of a chance to enjoy peace, though, as he died the following year. He was succeeded by his son, David II (1324–1371; r. 1329–1371).

The Reign of Edward III

Edward III (1312–1377; r. 1327–1377) came to the English throne under a cloud due to the misfortunes of his father, Edward II. The fact that England fell victim to the great northern European famine from 1315 added to Edward II’s unpopularity, as did his infatuations with ambitious male favourites such as Piers Gaveston (ca. 1284–1312) and Hugh Despencer (1223–1265). Both Gaveston and Despencer were killed by English noblemen who feared their influence on the king. Edward’s wife, Isabella of France (1295–1358), turned on him with French backing, and he was imprisoned and then presumably murdered in 1327 (although there is some evidence suggesting he survived and fled the country). Isabella and her lover, Roger Mortimer (1287–1330), after making peace with the Scots in 1328, settled down to loot the country until they were overthrown by a baronial faction backing the young Edward III in 1330.

Edward III’s long reign was marked by the disaster of the Black Death, the beginnings of the Hundred Years’ War between England and

France, and the rise of Parliament as a governing institution. In some ways the handsome and chivalrous Edward was the model of a medieval king, and his power over his kingdom was not significantly challenged. But unlike his grandfather, he left few permanent achievements behind him.

The Growth of Parliament

The English parliament grew increasingly complex and differentiated in the time after Edward I. Edward II's ineffectiveness and Edward III's interest in foreign wars rather than administration created a gap in the kingdom's government that Parliament partially filled. Increased taxation also led to the strengthening of Parliament as a tax-approving institution. In the early fourteenth century, attendance at Parliament began to be seen not simply as a matter of the king issuing an invitation. Instead, members of certain families, so-called peers of Parliament, asserted that they possessed a hereditary right to be summoned. The difference between peers and ordinary knights led to increased legal and social stratification within the landed class and a growing separation between the different elements of Parliament. Originally, parliaments had included representatives from the lower clergy, but they now met at their own convocations, a sort of parliament for the English church. There was also a gradual division between those holding baronies from the king – bishops, abbots, and peers – and others that eventually developed into the division between the House of Lords and House of Commons. After 1327, the representatives of the counties and boroughs, or towns, began to be invited to every parliament, rather than only occasionally. However, the lords continued to dominate politically, while the commons were expected to petition rather than be the actual decision makers.

The Scottish parliament grew in a similar fashion, although its growth is not as well documented or as dramatic as the English. It began as a council of the king's advisers, supplemented by the leading nobles, bishops, and other leaders of the realm. These full parliaments could advise the king, and on some occasions magnates could even publicly speak against the king's policies. Like its English contemporary, the Scottish parliament made laws, ratified treaties, and settled legal disputes. Although kings summoned parliaments, they were not dependent on kings to meet: Parliaments met and had an active role in the governance of the realm during royal minorities or when a king was held captive.

The Hundred Years' War (1437–1553)

Edward III initially devoted his foreign policy to attacks on Scotland, where at first he was much more successful than his father or Mortimer. In the long run, however, Edward aggravated the Scottish problem. Edward's hostility to both Scotland and France helped lead to an alliance between the two countries that would become a prominent feature of western European politics for centuries. Edward responded to his enemies' alliance by working with the leadership of the Flemish cities and intriguing against the count of Flanders, a vassal of the French king.

In addition to the conflicts over Scotland and Flanders, there were several other issues contributing to increased hostility between England and France. The French monarchy was aggressively asserting its sovereignty over the English possessions in south-western France that remained from the wars between the English kings and the French in the thirteenth century. The requirement that the English king pay homage to the French for Gascony continued to poison relations between the two countries, as the French king had declared land to be confiscated when there were difficulties with England. The immediate cause of the Hundred Years' War between England and France was the rival French and English claims to the French throne when the direct line of the French ruling family, the Capetians, became extinct. The last French king of the direct line of the Capetians, Charles IV, died in 1328. The Salic law which declared all claims from the female line, including Edward's, to be invalid, was resurrected by French jurists with the intention of keeping the English out. Edward had a claim derived from his mother, Isabella, the daughter of the Capetian king Philip IV.

The Hundred Years' War lasted from 1337 to 1453, although the conflict was not continuous and there were long periods of inactivity. It differed from the previous wars between England and France in that the English actually defined themselves as English. Unlike the previous wars of the English Plantagenets and the French Capetians, the Hundred Years' War was not a struggle between two French magnates, one of whom happened to be king of England, but between two nations. In 1362 the English parliament switched its official language from French to English. Even though the English armies in France included many French soldiers, they were referred to collectively as "the English".

The enmity that developed between the two nations was particularly bitter on the French side due to the savagery of English warfare in France. One of the basic tactics of warfare used by the English was the

chevauchée, essentially large-scale devastation through burning and pillaging that was meant to deny agricultural resources to the French and spread fear of the English. The devastation brought by the English in southwestern France remains part of French historical memory to this day.

The French brought their alliance with Scotland into play, carrying the war to northern England. Scottish activity was mostly limited to raiding; when the Scots tried to invade in force in 1346, they were resoundingly defeated and their king, David II, taken prisoner. This provoked a breakdown in Scottish government, as it took 11 years for the king to be ransomed. It also took Scotland out of the war.

The first few decades of the war saw mostly English victories, but France's size excluded the possibility that it could be completely absorbed as English territory. Given the French monarchy's greater resources and prestige, then the greatest in Europe, this was a remarkable achievement, but in the long run the English lacked the resources to conquer France.

The Black Death

British society was fundamentally changed by the Black Death, a plague that first struck England in 1348, a year after its arrival in Europe, and spread rapidly throughout the British archipelago. The disease was named after the black pustules it raised on the bodies of its victims. It first came through the southern ports which were in direct contact with the Continent. By 1349 the plague had spread to the entirety of the British Isles, the northern isles of Scotland, and the western part of Ireland. It killed about 35–45 per cent of the English population in its first assault and was particularly devastating in cities, due to overcrowding and poor sanitation. The plague was not a one-time event but recurred with diminishing intensity into the seventeenth century. These recurrences made it difficult for the population to recover.

Depopulation brought economic benefits to those who survived, however. One striking testimony to the large population of England relative to its resources at the time is that most vacancies on the land caused by the plague's first wave were filled immediately. Tenants were also in a favourable position to bargain on rents, as there was more land available than there were people to work it. Marriage rates rose after the plague since more people took spouses as part of the process of establishing themselves on the land. However, subsequent plagues created vacancies that could not be filled. Living conditions improved for the survivors, as the smaller agricultural workforce was able to concentrate on

more productive land. The diet of the peasants improved greatly after the plague, since more marginal land was devoted to raising livestock and meat became more common. There was also more beer, as barley and oats were used for brewing rather than human consumption.

The more favourable situation for peasants and labourers was a disaster for landowners, who were forced to pay higher wages as the labour pool shrank. However, they dominated the English parliament, so they used laws as weapons in the economic struggle. In 1351 Parliament enacted the Statute of Labourers in an attempt to control wages. It required all able-bodied men and women without land to serve anyone who offered them work at the rates which had prevailed in 1347, before the plague arrived in Britain, and prohibited any employer from offering higher wages than that. The statute also forbade peasants from breaking a contract and inflicted harsh penalties on those who dared to leave their land. Local authorities, the justices of the peace drawn from the landowning classes, were to confiscate excess wages. The statute was enforced for several years after its passage, and though it did not succeed in the goal of keeping wages to pre-plague levels, it did keep them from rising as much as they would have without it. The statute helped sharpen and embitter class conflict in the rural areas, eventually leading to the great Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

In the long run, landlords realized that enhancing personal freedom was an effective way to keep workers on the land. The late Middle Ages saw the end of serfdom as an institution in most of England. Unfree tenants – bondmen, villains, and day labourers who were subject to the lord of the manor – often simply migrated from their home manors and took up free tenures on newly available land in other parts of the country.

The plague wreaked great damage in Wales as well, killing about a third of the population. The old kinship-based Welsh society began to dissolve with the deaths and with the Welsh people's increased social and geographical mobility after the plague had ended. The new availability of land due to depopulation also encouraged the immigration of English people and other non-Welsh into Wales. Towns and villages were abandoned for sheep farming, and land was sold for cash, allowing a rising gentry class, the *uchelwyr*, to buy land and build estates. The Welsh economy declined for the rest of the century.

The plague was introduced to Scotland in 1349 through contact with English soldiers on the border. The Scots originally called it "the death of the English" and identified it as divine punishment for England, a view

they soon abandoned as it penetrated their country. The effects of the plague on Scotland were similar to those in England but less intense, probably because the disease spread more slowly in the less densely-populated country. Perhaps a quarter of the population died, with the poor the most vulnerable. It had some of the same effects as it did in England, encouraging the shift of lands from grain to raising stock and benefiting tenants against landlords. One difference was that the Scottish parliament was not oriented to passing laws like the English, and there was no Scottish Statute of Labourers. Scottish peasants did not rebel against their lords. The need for workers in England after the plague drew some Scots south of the border, either as farmers or as soldiers in the Hundred Years' War. The increased availability of land in the fertile lowlands also halted the immigration of lowland speakers of Scots, a Scottish dialect of English, to the Scottish Highlands, widening the divisions between highland Gaelic-speaking and lowland Scots-speaking Scotland.

Internal Conflicts in England. The Peasants' Revolt of 1381

The violence and devastation of the Hundred Years' War and the Black Death had devastating effects on English society. For the century between the death of Edward III in 1377 and the accession of the House of Tudor to the English throne in 1485, the country was racked by class conflicts; national conflicts between English and Welsh; the struggles of aristocratic factions; and the rise of a new religious movement, Lollardry. However, the period also saw important cultural transformations, including the rise of the printing press and the revival of English as a literary language.

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was ultimately a response to the Black Death and the Hundred Years' War. The Statute of Labourers, the attempt of England's landowning rulers to keep peasants' wages down in the wake of the labour shortage caused by the plague, sharpened peasant resentment, as did attempts to introduce a poll tax to pay for the war with France. The rebellion began in areas of south-eastern England exposed to raids from French vessels, leading to peasant anger at the royal government's failure to fulfil its responsibilities in guarding the coast. A peasant army marched on London and actually took the city, killing Archbishop of Canterbury Simon Sudbury (ca. 1316–1381). Sudbury was also Lord Chancellor, the head of the English legal system and the top government official after the king, and the rebels considered him responsible for the poll tax. Many

foreigners resident in London, mostly Flemings and Italians, were also killed.

The rising was not republican or antiroyalist, but rebels called for better counsel to be given to the young king, Richard II (r. 1377–1399), Edward III's son. They demanded the end of serfdom, a ceiling on rents, and the abolition of the legal privileges of nobility and gentry. While parleying with the king outside London, the revolt's leader, Wat Tyler, was stabbed to death by the city's lord mayor, William Walworth, and one of the king's esquires, Ralph de Standish. The revolt broke up shortly after that.

There were subsequent peasant rebellions into the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but they were not as widespread or successful. Richard II (1367–1400; r. 1377–1399) faced more successful opposition from aristocratic politicians, led by Henry Bolingbroke (1366–1413). Bolingbroke overthrew Richard and took power as King Henry IV (r. 1399–1413). The uncertainty which this introduced into the succession would have calamitous consequences in the fifteenth century, leading to the Wars of the Roses (1455–1485).

The Reign of Henry V

The reign of Henry V (1387–1422; r. 1413–1422) is an interlude of domestic peace and stability between the troubles of the reign of his father, Henry IV (1366–1413; r. 1399–1413), and the far greater crises during the reign of his son, Henry VI (1421–1471; r. 1422–1461, 1470–1471). On the basis of his unchallenged control over England, Henry V brought the English the closest they would ever come to the conquest of France. He became a national hero, as portrayed in Shakespeare's patriotic play *Henry V*. Henry was a great military leader although a brutal and somewhat psychopathic man, even by the standards of late medieval warfare.

One important advantage for the English in the Hundred Years' War was their use of the longbow, a weapon restricted to Britain due to the scarcity of yew trees, whose wood was necessary for its construction. Long training was necessary to use it effectively, and the English and Scottish kings tried to encourage longbow training by issuing decrees forbidding the practice of other sports.

The high point of English power in France followed the victory of English longbow men over French knights at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. French knights charged straight ahead into devastating longbow fire

from the greatly outnumbered English army, and 6,000 Frenchmen died within a few minutes. Following the battle, the French king, Charles VI (1368–1422), acknowledged Henry V as his heir, cutting out his own son, the dauphin Charles. English monarchs would retain the official title King of France until the eighteenth century. Henry spent his subsequent career in France until his early death in 1422, and some English people worried that England would become a satellite kingdom of a monarchy headquartered in Paris.

The English Aristocracy at Wars

The greatest of the internal British struggles of the fifteenth century was the Wars of the Roses (1455–1485) in England. The conflict is named after the white rose and the red, emblems of the rival houses of Lancaster and York, which were contending for the throne of England. However, the real force driving the conflict was not dynastic rivalry but the emergence of powerful nobles known as magnates, whose wealth, much of it gained in the French wars, enabled them to build personal armies paid in cash, as opposed to the smaller feudal forces characteristic of the earlier Middle Ages. The contest for the throne became entangled with noble feuds or regional struggles for predominance, such as that between the Percy and the Neville families in the north.

The problem was compounded by the extraordinary weakness of royal leadership under Henry VI, arguably the most incompetent king in English history. Henry's reign saw both the final loss of France in 1453 and protracted civil war leading to his abdication in 1461. Henry himself was murdered. This interlude is known as the Readeption of Henry VI. The Wars of the Roses would culminate in the crowning of Henry VII in 1485. Fifteenth-century Scotland faced struggles similar to those of England. Scottish magnates were increasingly calling on large followings who shared their clan names; the clan system was prevalent in the highlands, but similar practices could be found in the Scottish lowlands, where surname groups, such as the Montgomeries, wielded more power than the Scottish state. Despite the murder of two Scottish kings, the Scottish throne never fell to quite as low a level as did that of England under Henry VI. The Scottish monarchs were never reduced to puppets of their nobles. While English rulers were driven from all of France except the Norman town of Calais, Scotland was still expanding. The last remaining Scandinavian possessions in the archipelago, the islands of Orkney and the Shetlands, passed from Norway to Scotland in 1472 as part of the dowry of Princess Margaret of

Norway, thus bringing an end to the long Scandinavian involvement in the British Isles.

The Revival of the English language

The internal and external conflicts of the fourteenth century were accompanied by a great cultural revival in England – the revival of English as a literary language. After the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, English had virtually disappeared as a written language, as literary works were written in French or Latin. English always remained the spoken language of ordinary people, however, and its vocabulary was enriched by French and Latin words. By the fourteenth century, English – now Middle English, as opposed to the Old English of the Anglo-Saxons – reappeared as a language of literature and poetry in the works of a striking group of contemporaries: Geoffrey Chaucer (ca. 1343–1400), William Langland (ca. 1332–ca. 1386), John Gower (ca. 1330–1408), and the anonymous Pearl poet.

Confessio Amantis was one of the most popular long poems in English during the later Middle Ages, surviving in 49 manuscripts and even being translated into Portuguese and Spanish. Translation into other languages was extremely rare for English writings in the Middle Ages.

While Chaucer, Gower, and Langland were all concerned with their contemporary society, the Pearl poet was more backward-looking. His or her vocabulary was also more Germanic, less influenced by words of French or Latin origin. The work of Chaucer, Gower, and Langland survives in numerous manuscripts, but the Pearl poet is known from only one. English literature also benefited from introduction of the printing press in 1476 by William Caxton (ca. 1422–1493). Caxton had learned the new technology of printing on the Continent and was eager to bring it to England. He printed chivalric tales and poems for aristocratic customers, including an edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

Scotland during the Reign of the Stuarts (Stewards)

After a long and eventful reign, including a period of exile in France and several years spent as a prisoner of the English, David II died in 1371 without a legitimate son. The crown passed to a descendant of a daughter of Robert Bruce, Robert the Steward (r. 1371–1390). The Steward – or, as it was later known, Stuart – dynasty would be the last dynasty of Scottish monarchs.

The consequences of the Scottish wars of independence included the creation of a long-standing tradition of anti-English Scottish nationalism. In many ways the extensive Scots literature on the wars became the Scottish national epic, with William Wallace and Robert the Bruce the Scottish national heroes. Scotland and England also moved politically and culturally further apart as the old class of Anglo-Scots nobility with holdings on both sides of the border disappeared. In place of the relationship with England, the Scots built a new and much closer relationship with France. The alliance between Scotland and France is known in Scottish history as the Auld Alliance.

The Anglo-Scottish border became the site of an increasingly militarised society, where localized war involving murders, ambushes, and cattle raids was carried on between English and Scottish lords into the sixteenth century. The stories of these conflicts are recounted in the so-called border ballads. Both English and Scottish kings found the borders difficult to control, and Scottish and English rebels and dissidents often sought help from the other country.

James IV (1473–1513; r. 1488–1513) is often considered the most successful of the Stuart kings of Scotland, although his reign ended in disaster. James IV was a hardworking king who took a passionate interest in justice and in new technological developments. It was during his reign that printing came to Scotland in 1507. The reign also saw the founding of a new university, Kings College in Aberdeen, and the founding of a college of surgeons in 1505.

Like other early modern rulers, the king tried to maintain powerful military forces. He was at peace with the traditional enemy, England, for most of his reign but did not allow his army to deteriorate. James's parliament passed laws forbidding the playing of golf or football, in order to encourage the king's subjects to practice with the bow. The king was also interested in artillery and maintained a formidable weapons shop in Edinburgh Castle. On the seas, James built huge ships, including the *Michael*, built in 1511, which was the largest ship in Europe at the time.

The Early Tudors

The House of York proved unable to hold the English throne. The ultimate winner of the Wars of the Roses was Henry Tudor, Henry VII (1457–1509; r. 1485–1509), who was of Welsh, English, and French descent. Having spent most of his youth in European exile, he came to power after defeating the last Yorkish king, Richard III (r. 1483–1485), at

the Battle of Bosworth Field on August 22, 1485. Henry was shaped by his long experience of exile, during most of which no one thought of him as a serious contender for the throne.

As a king, Henry was known for his love of money and lack of interest in military glory. His successful foreign policy was based on staying friends with everyone, renouncing ambitions on the Continent, and even avoiding the perpetual temptation of English kings to meddle in Scotland. The king followed a conciliatory policy with his northern neighbour, Scotland, signing the Treaty of Perpetual Peace in 1502. The peace was reinforced the next year by the marriage of Henry's daughter Margaret (1489–1541) to James IV, a marriage that after a century would bring a Scottish dynasty to the English throne.

Henry VII also began to change the English relationship with Wales. On his landing from France, Henry had appealed for Welsh support with promises to redress their grievances.

His succession to the crown was seen by some Welsh bards as fulfilling the ancient prophecy that someday the Welsh, the descendants of the inhabitants of Britain before the coming of the Anglo-Saxons, would once again rule the country. As king, Henry eased but did not eliminate discrimination against the Welsh. He employed Welshmen in his administration; named his eldest son Arthur, after the legendary British king and Welsh hero (Arthur never succeeded to the throne as he died before his father); and created a council for Wales.

Henry was unusually interested in financial transactions, inspecting books and receiving cash, highly unusual behaviour in a medieval or early modern king. He did not increase taxes, which would have involved calling Parliament, but rigorously enforced customary dues. He set up a more efficient system of handling the king's guardianship of the wards of feudal tenants who had died leaving children who were still minors. He also made extensive use of forced loans, requiring wealthy Englishmen to lend money to the king. Henry's avarice was unpopular and considered unkingly. Henry died leaving a surplus in the treasury, which was almost unheard of. In addition to spending the surplus in a hurry, the old king's only surviving son, Henry VIII (1491–1547; r. 1509–1547), judicially murdered two of his father's tax collectors at the beginning of his reign, courting popularity.

At the beginning of his reign, Henry VIII seemed to restore strength and glamour to the English monarchy. He shunned his father's policy of peace and hoped to re-establish English power in France in alliance with

Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, whose aunt, Catherine of Aragon (1485–1536), was Henry's queen. Henry's military efforts in northern France were unsuccessful, but his early reign saw a decisive English victory over Scotland at the battle of Flodden in 1513. James IV of Scotland took advantage of the English army's absence to invade England with the largest army Scotland had ever assembled. The fact that this carefully assembled army, led by the king himself, was crushingly defeated not by the main English army, off in France, but by a hastily put together English force led by local noblemen crushingly demonstrated Scotland's military inferiority. The death of James IV along with nine Scottish earls and 14 lords of Parliament was one of the great disasters of Scottish history, and it eliminated Scotland as a threat to England for more than a century. Catherine, regent for King Henry while he was with his army in France, sent James's bloody coat to France as a gift to her husband. Meanwhile, Henry was increasingly worried about Catherine's failure to deliver a son who would solidify the Tudor claim on the throne of England. This failure would lead to the greatest transformation in early modern British history.

Questions and Tasks

1. What changes were brought into the work of Parliament during the reign of Edward I?
2. When were the Welsh kings subdued?
3. How were Edward's ambitions towards the union between England and Scotland realized?
4. Describe the process of the strengthening of English and Scottish Parliaments in the fourteenth century.
5. Who initiated the Hundred Years' War?
6. What were the results of the Hundred Years' War?
7. Describe the changes in British society which were caused by the Black Death.
8. What is the historical importance of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381?
9. What were the reasons for the Welsh rebellion of 1400–1409?
10. What do you know about the Wars of the Roses?
11. Describe religious tendencies in England and Scotland.
12. Was English widely used in Great Britain in the fourteenth century?
13. Which dynasty was the last one of Scottish monarchs?
14. When did Henry VII Tudor come to power?
15. What was Henry VII Tudor's most important influence on British history?

V. PROTESTANT BRITAIN (1529–1689)

The history of Britain from the early sixteenth to the late seventeenth century was dominated by two processes. One was the cultural, religious, and political transformation of both England and Scotland involving the move from Catholicism to Protestantism. The other was the joining of the two nations under a single dynasty ruling the entire British archipelago – the “kingdom of Great Britain”, when James VI of Scotland became James I of England after the death of the last Tudor queen, Elizabeth I.

These two processes were closely related. The Reformation ended a time of relative cultural isolation between England and Scotland, inaugurating a period when their history would be closely intertwined. Although the establishment of Protestantism in both countries was complete by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the political implications of the new religion and the complex relationship of England, Scotland, and Ireland was worked out, often violently, over the course of that century.

The Reformation in England and Wales

Many of the present-day differences between England and Scotland can be traced to the different processes by which they adopted the Protestant Reformation. England’s Reformation was driven more by decisions made by the central government, while Scotland’s began later and was largely carried out by convinced Protestants outside and sometimes against the government.

The most important individual in the story of the English Reformation was King Henry VIII (1491–1547; r. 1509–1547). Henry’s Reformation began not because of an interest in Protestant doctrines, to which he was opposed, but due to difficulties with the Catholic Church, in particular those surrounding his wish to obtain a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon (1485–1536), in order to marry his lover, Anne Boleyn (ca. 1507–1536). Henry was particularly worried because Catherine had failed to give birth to a male heir who would cement the Tudor claim to the English throne. Frustrated in his attempts to receive a divorce, Henry eventually removed the English church from the pope’s jurisdiction and put it under his own headship in the Act of Supremacy of 1534. Henry further dissolved monasteries and other religious institutions, selling much of their land and adding their wealth to the royal coffers. Although Henry’s Reformation was not fully Protestant, it did require

people to deny beliefs and institutions that had been accepted dogma for many generations, such as papal supremacy, priestly celibacy, monasteries, saints' days, masses for the dead, and relics. Widespread opposition was expressed in one major rising in the north in 1536, the Pilgrimage of Grace, which was defeated by royal forces. Generally speaking, the early Reformation was strongest in the south and east, and weakest in the north and west.

Anne Boleyn became one of the most hated women in England, as many English women identified with the cause of Queen Catherine, seeing the Spanish queen as a wronged but faithful wife as well as a champion of the traditional religion of England. As it turned out, Anne, like Catherine, failed to produce a son and heir for Henry, although (again like Catherine) she did have a daughter, Elizabeth, who would eventually ascend the throne. Anne was executed on trumped-up charges of adultery in 1536.

There was a vast increase in the activity of the central government which was associated with the Reformation. The Reformation did not openly violate established ideas of the rule of law, nor was it simply carried out by royal decree. At every stage, new laws were passed in Parliament. The Reformation is often dated from 1529, when the parliament that became known as the Reformation Parliament first met, and their legislation culminated in the Act of Supremacy. Henry occasionally had trouble with his parliaments, but he was usually able to control them, particularly since he had independent financial resources. The legislation was usually enforced with regard to legal procedure, including the rights of the accused, and some persons who publicly opposed the Reformation were able to get away with it by manipulating the laws. However, local authorities and a small but enthusiastic minority of convinced English Protestants undertook to be sure that the measures were implemented.

The Reformation in Wales also involved with Henry VIII's insistence on decreasing or abolishing the legal distinctions between England and Wales. In 1536 Parliament passed an Act of Union abolishing the special status of Wales and legal distinctions between the Welsh and the English. The special privileges of the residents of the Welsh Marches dating back to the Middle Ages, such as exemption from some royal taxation, were also abolished, and the whole area was divided into shires based on the English model. For the first time, Wales was represented in the English parliament. The government attempted to impose the Reformation on Wales, but the poverty of much of the country made the

task difficult, as did the necessity of producing Protestant religious materials in Welsh.

For the English monarchy, the dissolution of the Catholic monasteries and the confiscation of their lands was an enormous windfall, most of which was spent on Henry's court and wars in France and Scotland. The families from the nobility and the gentry who bought the lands were a powerful obstacle to any reestablishment of Catholicism, because that would have threatened their right of ownership. The majority of the independent landowners created by the dissolution would eventually come to challenge both the great magnates and the Crown.

Henry was succeeded by his much more Protestant son, Edward VI (1537–1553; r. 1547–1553), the product of his union with his third wife, Jane Seymour (1509–1537). Edward's brief reign was followed by that of Henry and Catherine of Aragon's Catholic daughter Mary (1516–1558; r. 1553–1558), who in turn was followed by Henry's daughter by Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth (1533–1603; r. 1558–1603), a moderate Protestant. Each changed the church to suit him- or herself. The disruption from these abrupt shifts created a number of martyrs willing to die for their religion, but among the population at large it encouraged passivity as people followed the government's successive movements. The removal of England from the universal church also marked a growing separation of England from Europe. The last bit of land England held in France, the Norman city of Calais, was lost to the French in 1558 under Mary.

The Scottish Reformation

In Scotland before the Reformation, there was even less religious activity that was heretical with regard to Roman Catholic teaching than there was in England. The principal leader of the Reformation in Scotland was John Knox (1513–1572), a disciple of the great Continental Protestant leader John Calvin (1509–1564). Knox was inspired by Calvin's city of Geneva in Switzerland, which he called a perfect school of Christ. Calvin and Knox wanted Christianity with austere forms of worship, and one which would emphasize obedience to a strict moral code. Calvinists saw the true church as a small gathering of the "elect" whom God had chosen for salvation, rather than as a gathering of the whole community. Knox was a man of great boldness and little tact whose emphasis on church discipline and rigid doctrine became hallmarks of Scottish Protestantism. To the very end of the 1550s, a Protestant party among the Scottish

aristocracy saw the possibility of an alliance with England's new Protestant queen, Elizabeth.

In the 1550s Scotland was ruled by the regent Mary of Guise (1515–1560), a French Catholic noblewoman and the widow of King James V (ca. 1512–1542; r. 1513–1542), in the name of the young Mary, Queen of Scots (1542–1587; r. 1542–1567). Mary herself was in France, the wife of the French dauphin, Francis (1544–1560). Francis's death in 1560 led to Mary's return to Scotland. Mary was a good Catholic but fundamentally uninterested in recatholicizing Scotland, both because she was not very ideologically inclined and because she was uninterested in Scotland. She had a greater interest in the English throne, to which she had a fairly good claim as a great-granddaughter of Henry VII. Accusations that she had participated in the murder of her second husband, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley (1545–1567), another descendant of Henry VII, whom she had married to strengthen her claim to the English succession, followed her throughout her reign. Her later marriage to James Hepburn, earl of Bothwell (1534–1570), a man of great abilities but a very bad personal reputation who was probably involved in Darnley's murder, further diminished her reputation as a woman and a ruler. This precipitated a massive revolt organized by Protestant lords and resulted in Mary's expulsion from the kingdom. Mary's illegitimate half-brother, James, earl of Moray (1531–1570), a strong Protestant, became regent after Mary was driven from the kingdom into England. There she became involved with English plotters against Elizabeth and was executed in 1587, an act that shocked many people across Europe.

Scottish Protestant reformers attacked the structure and practices of the old church much more zealously than the English. The movement contained a strong Presbyterian element. Presbyterians believed in erecting a new church organization without bishops, based on the equality of parish ministers and rule by synods and committees. Their movement was called Presbyterianism after the Greek New Testament word for "priest". Presbyterians were much stronger in Scotland than in England, and after a struggle that lasted more than a century, they got their way.

The combination of Mary's opposition to Protestantism with her refusal simply to crush it led Scottish reformers to foster the principle of the independence of the church, or kirk, from the state, and to regard any government involvement in religious affairs with suspicion. Scottish ministers emphasized the subordination of secular rulers to the kirk, most memorably summed up by the minister Andrew Melville's reference to

James VI, Mary's son, as "God's silly vassal". (Silly at the time meant "weak"). The kirk was headed by a general assembly rather than an individual.

James (1566–1625; r. 1567–1603) rose above a traumatic childhood to become one of the most successful Scottish kings. Before he reached adulthood, James was kidnapped by noble factions, as was common in Scotland, and he was the subject of assassination attempts, both by violence and by sorcery – which made him an avid hunter of witches. Large-scale Scottish witch-hunting began after the passage of the Witchcraft Act in 1563, and over its course to the late seventeenth century, between 1,000 and 1,500 witches were executed – a large number for a small country. About 85 percent were women.

James's reign saw a complex struggle between the king, the great noble houses (some of which were still Catholic), and the ministers of the kirk. The king was the main winner, advancing centralization and the rule of law in Scotland. In response to church ministers' anti-royalist political concepts, James elaborated a theory of divine-right monarchy that became very influential in both Scotland and England. As the cousin and heir of Queen Elizabeth of England, James maintained a policy of friendship with England that not only helped keep the peace between the two countries but smoothed his own way to the succession after the queen's death.

Elizabethan England

The reign of Elizabeth I from 1558 to 1603 saw the formation of a distinctively English Protestantism and of religious parties which were in conflict with each other. Sometime after 1570, England became a predominantly Protestant country. The generation that grew up under Elizabeth was the first to have no experience of an England under Catholicism. Her reign was also a key period in the defining of "Englishness" and was also the source of many of England's historical myths.

Only Protestants believed Henry VIII's marriage to Anne Boleyn was legitimate, and that Elizabeth was therefore the rightful heir to the throne. The queen's own religious inclinations seem to have been more in the direction of her father's "national Catholicism" – following Catholic doctrine but rejecting the supremacy of the Pope or any earthly non-English authority – than anything else, but her allies in Mary's time were mainly Protestants worried about Mary's Catholic restoration. Once Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558, she set to work to mend the

division between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in the country. She created a new religious practice that brought together elements of both traditions and issued a new statement of church beliefs, the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, and a new prayer book, the Book of Common Prayer, guiding worship in the Church of England. Her middle way became the distinctive perspective of the Anglican Church. Elizabeth accepted the separation from Rome but was a conservative on church discipline and order. The church was led by bishops, but its doctrine tended toward Protestantism.

However, not everyone was happy with the compromise. The crucifix which Elizabeth kept in her chapel irritated many Protestants, and she had a difficult time dealing with her married bishops. The church's problems were aggravated by Elizabeth's contemptuous attitude. She confiscated church lands for financial purposes and often left bishoprics vacant for years so that their revenue went to the government. Many Protestants, including bishops appointed by Elizabeth at the beginning of her reign, wanted a much more radically Protestant church, without elaborate vestments or the formal liturgy set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. Others argued that vestments and ceremonies could be tolerated for the sake of preaching the true word. Few Protestants argued that these practices were actually good until late in the reign.

As resentment of lingering Catholic practices grew, an English Presbyterian movement emerged that saw the institution of bishops as tainted with Catholicism. Early connections between the English and Scottish Presbyterian parties would lead to some specific results in the next century. Some defenders of the church responded by claiming to have rediscovered the value of some Catholic traditions. Their intellectual leader was the Reverend Richard Hooker (1554–1600), author of *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie* (1594–1597). Hooker and his followers emphasized the role of church rituals and the church as a religious gathering of the whole community rather than of the 'elect', that small fraction of the Christian community which Calvinists believed that God had singled out for salvation. By the end of Elizabeth's reign, Presbyterianism had been suppressed.

There remained a Catholic population which was considerable in numbers, even if steadily shrinking. Numerous Catholic priests from Mary's reign continued to practice as chaplains to Catholic families of the nobility and the gentry. Catholic landowners were in a favourable position to promote Catholicism among their tenants and dependants, and in many

territories – particularly in the north, where the central government had less authority – there were hardly any Protestants. Elizabethan Catholicism became a religion of rural gentry, establishing a pattern that would last until the nineteenth century. This slowly diminishing Catholic community within the gentry eventually became isolated from the mainstream of the English landed aristocracy, marrying among themselves and sending their children to be educated in Catholic institutions on the Continent. Catholics were in a particularly dangerous position because of the fact that Pope Pius V (1504–1572; Pope 1566–1572) in his 1570 bull *Regnans in Excelsis*, had declared Elizabeth to be an illegitimate monarch, to whom her Catholic subjects owed no allegiance. Loyalty to the pope could now imply treason to the queen. Some English Catholics, although not a majority, plotted and intrigued against Elizabeth and her successor, King James I.

Anti-Catholicism grew in the Elizabethan era, as the memories of the persecution of Protestants under Elizabeth's sister Mary projected an image of Catholicism as cruel and intolerant. John Foxe (1517–1587), a Protestant minister, published a gigantic church history called *Acts and Monuments* (1563), better known as *the Book of Martyrs*, explaining how the true church through the centuries had always been persecuted by the false papal church. It became very popular and was frequently reprinted in the following centuries, often with gruesome illustrations of the torture and execution of heretics. It would help shape the self-image of English Protestants for centuries.

In the context of the struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism on the international level, the pope urged the king of Spain, Philip II (1527–1598; r. 1556–1598), to invade England. Philip had been married to Mary Tudor and had a tenuous claim to the throne.

For Philip himself, however, the fundamental problem was not English Protestantism *per se* but English support for the Dutch rebels against Spain and the attacks against Spanish shipping by English pirates, such as the legendary Sir Francis Drake (1540–1595). The conflict between England and Spain led to the attempted 1588 invasion by the famous Spanish Armada, a fleet of Spanish warships whose defeat led to national rejoicing in England.

Elizabeth had no love for parliaments and summoned them as seldom as possible. Parliaments early in the reign were arenas for pressuring the queen to marry and to provide an heir to the throne, which she did not wish to do, or to further reform the church.

Elizabeth's reign saw a fundamental realignment of English external relations. The loss of Calais in 1558 had ended the 500 years of English history, beginning with the Norman Conquest in 1066, when English monarchs had ruled lands in France, but there was little interest in recovering it. Instead, English expansionism was refocused from Europe in other directions, both global and British. After an abortive attempt under Henry VII, England had not participated in the first thrust of European expansion, but the conflict with Spain, which had used its New World resources to become Europe's dominant power, led the country in the direction of global involvement. The English acquired a taste for many commodities from the New World and Asia, of which the most famous was the American plant tobacco. Tobacco was introduced to English high society by one of Elizabeth's favourites, Sir Walter Raleigh (1552–1618), and eventually became widely popular, promoted as a health drug. Narratives of experiences in foreign lands sold briskly, and there was wide interest in problems relating to navigation and economic development.

Closer to home, in Ireland, the Elizabethan period saw the English government's first organized effort to control the whole island, along with the first definition of the struggle as a religious one. The Tudor policy of strengthening English control over Ireland, which had declined significantly in the later Middle Ages, was complicated by religious issues. After defeating rebels and using the Irish parliament to impose the Reformation on Ireland, Henry VIII had been the first English king to take the title King of Ireland, in 1541. Henry's policy seems to have been to encourage Irish nobles to assimilate English ways (paralleling the far more successful Welsh policy), but after his death this was replaced with a more aggressive policy of colonization and the remaking of Irish society, which was strongly resisted by many Irish. Eventually the English put down the last organized Irish resistance in the last year of Elizabeth's reign.

Lay education and lay male attendance at universities increased in the sixteenth century. This process continued fifteenth-century trends and was greatly enhanced by the personal example of the first two Tudor monarchs, both of whom arranged for their children, even the girls, to receive an extensive education. Attendance for a few years at a university, though not usually culminating in the taking of a degree, came to be expected of young noblemen. Literacy at all levels of society was also advanced by the Protestant emphasis on Bible reading. By the end of Elizabeth's reign, it was rare for a gentleman or even a gentlewoman to be illiterate.

The Elizabethan era also saw the beginnings of witch hunting in England. The total number of witches executed in the witch hunt that began after the passage of a law against witchcraft in 1563 and which lasted until the late seventeenth century was between 500 and 1,000, although many more died while awaiting trial in filthy jails, or as the victims of mob violence. About 90 percent of the witches executed were women, a higher percentage than in most European countries.

The Union of the Crowns and the Formation of the British State

The death of Elizabeth in 1603 was followed by the succession of the Scottish king James VI, who ruled as James I until his death in 1625. In that same year the English suppressed the last Irish rebels, for the first time bringing the whole island under English rule. During James's reign, the first British state – with England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland all ruled effectively by the king in London – was created.

James, founder of the Stuart dynasty in England, was widely welcomed. A family man with children, his rule promised to be free of the marriage and succession troubles that had plagued the Tudors since Henry VIII. James's reign over England is referred to as the Jacobean period, after the Latin equivalent of James, Jacobus.

The concept of a personal union – two countries with the same ruler but otherwise separate – had many medieval precedents and contemporary European parallels. However, James wanted more than that, and he employed and promoted the title King of Great Britain. James's project for a closer union of his two kingdoms failed early in his reign due to English reluctance to be associated too closely with Scotland. This was not simply a matter of anti-Scottish prejudice, great as that was, but also the issue of whether the common law of England would continue to hold in a new kingdom. The only form of British union the mainstream of English public opinion would accept followed the model of Wales – an incorporation of Scotland into England with the subjection of the Scots to English laws, which in the opinion of the English were the best in the world. The Scots – who, unlike the Welsh, had never been conquered – were unenthusiastic about this idea.

Despite the failure of the union project, James was successful in other moves toward unity, such as the collusive Calvin's law case of 1608, which established that James's subjects in Scotland born after his accession were allowed to reside and trade in England. James was also successful in maintaining some unity between the English and Scottish

churches, which despite their differences recognized each other as legitimate Protestant bodies on substantive doctrinal issues. On a practical level, the subordination of Scotland and England to one monarch led to far more effective law enforcement on the border, and the lawless border society dating back to the Middle Ages began to be tamed. James set up a swift postal service to cut the time for a round-trip between London and Edinburgh to a week and encouraged the use of English in Scotland. Intermarriage between Scottish and English noble families began to create an Anglo-Scottish nobility.

In England James maintained the late Elizabethan religious peace and began to rebuild the Church of England from the financial devastation it had suffered in the Reformation and under Elizabeth. James's bishops, with some exceptions, were hardworking men respected by the different parties in the church. He tried to encourage a pattern whereby there would be a preaching minister in every parish, but with an emphasis on Christian life rather than theological disputes. A small group of extreme Protestant, or Puritan, ministers were expelled from the church, but most accepted James's leadership. The king's later parliaments were almost all free of disputes relating to religion, in contrast to Elizabeth's parliaments. His greatest contribution to religion in Britain was the sponsorship of the King James version of the Bible, translated by a committee of bishops and scholars on the basis of previous translations. James also seemed lose interest in witch-hunting after he inherited the English throne, and in some cases he intervened to defend accused witches.

James's major political problems were financial, with both long-term and short-term causes. The English taxation system was archaic, unable to raise the money that the state needed. Parliamentarians who wanted a more aggressively Protestant foreign policy (as they considered Elizabeth's to have been) were unwilling to vote for the vast sums necessary for a major war. Taxation in Tudor and Stuart England, with the exception of customs, consisted primarily of taxation on land. The landowners, who dominated both the House of Lords and the Commons, frequently blocked tax increases. Tax collection was entrusted to local landowners, who were reluctant to assess each other's properties at their full value. Elizabeth had dealt with this problem by exploiting the church and being parsimonious, but this was not an option for a new king seeking allies among the English aristocracy. The political need for generous spending was compounded by James's fiscal irresponsibility. After experiencing the relative poverty of

Scotland, the king never acquired a sense of responsibility in spending England's greater wealth.

James's extravagance was partly possible due to England's non-involvement in European wars for most of his reign. The war with Spain ended in 1604 because of exhaustion on both the Spanish and English sides. James managed to keep his kingdoms out of the great European Thirty Years' War that began in 1618, even though it involved his German son-in-law Frederick of the Palatinate (1596–1632). James was a very unwarlike king, with a vision of himself as a great peacemaker in Europe. This policy had some successes early in his reign but was not successful during the Thirty Years' War. Some suspected James of an overly friendly policy toward Spain, particularly when he was negotiating for the marriage of his son and heir, Charles, to a Spanish princess. However, those negotiations failed due to Spanish insistence that any children of the match be raised as Catholics.

Like other British and European thinkers, James believed kings were divinely appointed and that they ruled by divine right. However, he was the most intellectually inclined of the British kings up to that time and wrote books on many subjects, including kingship, so he is identified with the idea of divine right to a greater degree than other monarchs. His divine-right theories were nonetheless not of absolute monarchy unfettered by the law. Many of his strong divine-right statements were put forth in a Scottish context, where their target was not the Scottish parliament, which James actually strengthened while keeping it under much tighter royal control than the English one, but radical Scottish Presbyterians who believed in the church's primacy over the state. For James, the divine right of kings was mainly a theological concept, compatible with political limits on the king's power. He did not view himself as above the law, nor did he attempt to levy taxes without a parliament, or to make laws himself. There were some legal problems during his reign with the jurisdiction of various courts, but they were mostly contained.

The debauchery of some members of James's court provoked some resentment among Englishmen, particularly those not invited to the party. There were prominent scandals, such as when one woman at court, Frances Howard (1596–1632), was accused of poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury (1581–1613). James, whose predilection for handsome young men was widely known, was also suspected of being a sodomite. However, there was little or no open opposition during James's reign, which was one of the few in the early modern period during which no serious public

disturbances occurred. The defeat of a 1605 plot by some disaffected Roman Catholics to blow up the king and Parliament, known as the Gunpowder Plot, would have serious consequences for English Catholics, who faced more intense persecution in its wake, but the anniversary of its discovery on November 5 became a major Protestant and, eventually, national holiday.

In Ireland James continued on a massive scale the colonization that had started in the sixteenth century. While the medieval and early Tudor strategy had been to superimpose an English or anglicised ruling and land-owning class on the Irish peasantry, James's policy was to populate the country with large numbers of British – mainly Scottish Calvinist – peasants. His policy in Ireland was similar to the one used in the Scottish Highlands, to whose traditional society he was quite hostile. There were far too few colonists to simply replace the Irish peasants, but the new colonies functioned as garrisons for British rule in Ireland. This colonial policy built on the traditional connection between Northern Ireland and western Scotland, and it inextricably involved the three kingdoms with one another in ways that reverberate to the present day.

The Reign of King Charles I

James I always remained a Scotsman, on friendly terms with many Scottish nobles and intimately involved with his northern kingdom even when in London. His son Charles I (1600–1649; r. 1625–1649) was very different. Despite his Scottish birth, Charles was thoroughly English, and his religion was a very ceremonialist and conservative version of Anglicanism.

Charles's reign culminated in the greatest disaster ever to befall the British monarchy, beginning with a civil war, and culminating in his execution and a temporary abolition of the monarchy. There were many reasons for this, from the complex relations between England and Scotland to the ongoing religious divisions in England, but a major reason was the personality of Charles himself. The complete opposite of his father, Charles was a man with a correct and sober personal life; even his enemies acknowledged that his court was a model of decorum after the disrepute of James's reign. He had superb aesthetic tastes and built one of the finest art collections of any English ruler. However, he was weak personally, and he believed that any theoretical claim he could make about the power of the monarchy was enforceable from a practical standpoint. Charles thought that anyone who opposed him must be motivated by malice or another unworthy emotion. That made it difficult for him to negotiate, something he was always reluctant to do. Even his aesthetic tastes became a personal liability.

Under Elizabeth and even James, court life had had much more in common with English life in general. Under Charles, court culture was influenced by the baroque culture of continental Catholicism. Married to a French Catholic princess, Henrietta Maria (1609–1669), Charles never shared the strong anti-Catholicism of many of his subjects. The misogynistic and xenophobic prejudices of most of his opponents often led them to exaggerate the queen's influence, but it was nonetheless substantial.

Unlike Elizabeth and James, who had tried to be impartial mediators of the church's different factions, Charles identified himself with the High Church Party, which emphasized ceremony and the beauty of holiness. He had very extreme views on the divine right of bishops for a seventeenth-century Protestant, holding that bishops were absolutely necessary for a true church. This position was far too radical for most English bishops, who viewed the continental Protestant churches which were organized without bishops as true churches, even if their organization was less than ideal.

The set of changes Charles attempted to enforce were associated with the archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud (1573–1645). They are often referred to as Laudianism, although they are at least equally due to Charles himself. Laudians emphasized the integrity and maintenance of the church's physical structure and its freedom from lay control. Many churches were in a poor condition after the Reformation and the impoverishment of the church under Elizabeth; one church building was actually used as a hog sty. Laud and Charles wanted to improve the situation, but their emphasis on church furnishings led to charges of Romanising and idolatry. The Laudian emphasis on prayer and ritual activity in the ministry rather than the traditional Protestant emphasis on sermons seemed to point in the same direction. There were increased efforts to enforce strict adherence to the Book of Common Prayer, as opposed to the *de facto* toleration of diverse practices under Elizabeth and James. These changes led to great resentment among the population. Some Puritans even immigrated to America to find a more tolerant setting.

Charles's early reign saw a foreign policy that was more vigorous in contrast to James's passivity. However, it was a diplomatic and military disaster, involving England in wars with both of the great powers of the time, France and Spain, which were also at war with each other. Following his military defeat, Charles adopted an isolationist policy similar to his father's but without James's conception of himself as an international mediator. This policy coincided with his so-called personal rule during the 1630s, an attempt to rule without calling Parliament after a series of failed parliaments in the

1620s. However, Charles' refusal to summon parliaments contributed to a growing alienation between the central government and the leaders of English society in local areas.

In the context of the Thirty Years' War, Charles wanted to raise money for a navy but did not want to call a parliament to raise taxes for it. Instead, he revived and extended an old tax called ship money, ordinarily levied on port cities but now extended throughout the country. This eventually caused great resentment, both because of the question of the unconstitutionality of a tax levied without Parliament's consent and the increased administrative burden on the local notables who had to collect the tax in the absence of a centralized tax-collection bureaucracy.

Charles basically perceived himself as being the king of England, referring to Scotland as "your country" when addressing Scottish nobles. His rule in Scotland began badly. In 1625, shortly after his accession to the throne, he revoked all land grants made after the accession of Queen Mary in 1542. Since Scottish nobles had acquired much church land in the Reformation, this ruling posed a threat to nearly every noble family. Subsequently, some compromises were reached, allowing owners the continued use of some lands. Charles also attempted to force through changes in the Scottish Church, not necessarily in the direction of making it more English but in the direction of making it more ritualistic than centered on preaching. Charles did this solely on his own authority, without bothering to get the consent of any Scottish body, either kirk or Parliament. His high-handedness aroused Scottish fears of creeping Catholicism and subjection to England. The 1638 Prayer Book Riot began when some Edinburgh parishioners attacked a minister reading from the Book of Common Prayer, accusing him of bringing back the Catholic mass. According to legend, the riot began when a woman named Jenny Geddes threw a wooden stool at the minister's head. The riot was followed by a rebellion of Scottish Calvinists, with the support and leadership of Scottish aristocrats. The sleeping dragon of Scottish Presbyterianism awoke, as the Scottish bishops were strongly identified with Charles's policies. In 1638 the rebels gathered to formulate and agree on a Scottish National Covenant, a defiant declaration of the Scots' intention to maintain their traditional Presbyterian religion and resist all attempts at Anglican intrusion and modification. They became known as Covenanters. The Covenanters took over Scotland with relative ease, as the king had few supporters.

The War of the Three Kingdoms (1639–1640)

The ensuing conflicts between Scotland and England in 1639 and 1640 became known as the Bishops' Wars. Charles's response to the Scottish rebellion was to mobilize Irish and especially English resources against it. England was a wealthier and more populous country, but the English military was severely underfunded, disorganized, and untested in war, whereas the Scots had generals with experience in the Thirty Years' War. Furthermore, many English people believed that the king's quarrel with the Scots was unjust, which further hindered the royal effort. The Bishops' Wars were the first attempt in centuries by an English king to fight a war without parliamentary approval, which limited Charles financially. His failure resulting from these problems forced him to call a parliament, which was dominated by political and religious reformers. This parliament lasted, with considerable gaps, for twenty years, and came to be known as the "Long Parliament". A broad coalition emerged between those who were troubled by Charles's political innovations and those who were troubled by Laudianism, and the members of this "coalition" reached out to the Scots. The rapprochement between the Scots and some of the English, however, led to the formation of an English anti-Scottish party who viewed the Scottish actions as interference in English affairs.

In 1641 there was a great Catholic revolt in Ireland precipitated by the anti-Catholicism expressed by both the Scots and the English party dominant in the London parliament. Ireland had been seething for a long time due to the harsh government of Charles's deputy in Ireland, Thomas Wentworth, earl of Strafford (1593–1641), who in his attempts to increase the revenues from Ireland had managed to alienate every social group in the country, leaving the Crown with no effective allies. The situation worsened when Irish rebels massacred some Protestant settlers. Vastly exaggerated accounts of the atrocities reached England, further inflaming English Protestant anti-Catholicism. The Irish problem involved the Scots as well as the English due to the heavy representation of Scots among the settlers in Ireland, and the political connections between Ulster and the Scottish Highlands. The Civil War in England thus began over the issue of whether the army that was being raised to fight the Irish rebels should be under the control of the king or Parliament. The two sides in England were known as the Parliamentarians and the Royalists, or "Roundheads" (after the cropped haircuts favoured by many Parliamentarians) and the "Cavaliers". The Solemn League and Covenant of 1643 brought Parliament and the Scots together in a military alliance, but whereas the English saw the alliance as essentially political,

many Scots saw it as a religious agreement for the establishment of Presbyterianism in both kingdoms. Many English found Scottish Presbyterians excessively dominated by ministers and favoured “Independency”, vesting power in individual congregations. The Westminster Assembly of Divines, a gathering of theologians, hammered out common religious positions. One product of this was the Westminster Catechism, which is still used in Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the British tradition.

When the Scots perceived that the English were fundamentally uninterested in adopting Scottish-style Presbyterianism, and that the English resented Scottish interference, the alliance declined. The English disliked the independent power of a Scottish Presbytery, and even English Presbyterians wanted to keep any Presbyterian church under Parliamentary control. The Scots themselves were divided because of the rise of a Scottish Royalist party. The poorly-supplied Scottish army, now having to fight on two fronts, was less of an asset to the English.

Superior organization and generalship, particularly from the cavalry commander Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), and the control of the navy and the kingdom’s economic centre in London, contributed to the Parliamentarians’ victory in the Civil War (Ironically, after all the talk about the horrors of ship money, Parliament taxed the country more severely than it had ever been taxed before).

The king had the strongest support in Wales and the south and west of England, the less economically developed areas where Catholicism had also been strong. The Parliamentarians were strongest in London and East Anglia, controlling the more economically developed parts of England. In 1646, after his military defeat, King Charles surrendered to the Scots rather than to the English parliament; but the Scots then turned him over to the English. However, divisions among the Scots and within the Presbyterian-dominated Parliament which was horrified by the social levelling that was one consequence of the war, in addition to the reality of an independent and Cromwellian-dominated army that wanted to receive its massive sums of back pay, all led to a second and far more vicious civil war in which the Scots, the king, and the English royalists were allied. This culminated in the king’s execution in 1649, provoking horror in ordinary people and gentry alike. People circulated stories about the miracles supposedly performed with the king’s blood and wondered if the kingdom was now cursed. The ghost-written book of the king’s meditations and prayers, *Eikon Basilike* [the image

of the king], became a best seller, going through numerous editions despite Parliament's best efforts to suppress it.

The English Civil War (1641–1645)

The violence of the 1640s was nonetheless accompanied by great cultural innovativeness in England. The collapse of censorship after the revolutionaries took over London early in the war, and the intense public interest in the political and military struggle, led to the creation of the first English newspaper press with multiple and competing newspapers. England was opened up to many new religious and political movements. One religious sect, the Diggers, believed that land should be shared out equally. Another more secular and influential sect, the Levellers, believed that all men should have a vote, or at least all men not dependent on someone else for wages. The Levellers were for some time powerful in the army, but radical movements were ultimately suppressed or marginalized. The most famous and influential of the radical movements emerged after the Parliamentary victory, although its roots were in the 1640s. This was the Society of Friends, also known as Quakers, originally a derogatory name based on their alleged habit of “quaking” before the Lord. Its founder, George Fox (1624–1691), was a religious quester who adopted pacifism and taught reliance on the Spirit of God within each individual, what Fox called the Inner Light. Friends opposed all aspects of the organized church including church buildings (which they called “steeple-houses”); a ministry as a separate order; tithes; and any structured authority. They also challenged authority in state and society. Friends would not take oaths, which they believed the Bible forbade. They shocked people by refusing to take off their hats in the presence of a superior, as they considered “hat honour” inappropriate for a mere human. Many were beaten for refusing to take off their hats. Quakers were seen as radical and troublemakers, and persecuted for decades.

The Government of Oliver Cromwell

The victory of the English Parliament over their king was followed by the victory of England over Scotland and Ireland. The victorious “Rump Parliament” – so called because only a minority of the original Parliament was left after the successive divisions and purges of the civil war – imposed a relatively mild English rule on Scotland and but one which was quite harsh on Ireland. Cromwell defeated both the Irish rebellion and a Scottish attempt to restore Charles I's son Charles as a

Presbyterian ruler. Wales, legally incorporated into England, had also been a strongly royalist area, and it was subjected to intense evangelisation. For the first time in history the British Isles were combined as a single political and administrative unit ruled from London. Much of Cromwell's reputation had been established when he defeated the Irish and the Scots. After using his control of the army to overthrow Parliament in 1653, Cromwell took the title Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Like other revolutionary regimes, Cromwellian rule was faced with the basic problem of finding a basis for legitimacy comparable to that of the old monarchy. Cromwell's efforts to establish a parliament that lived up to his own standards of godliness and public spirit were failures. He subjected England to its only phase of outright military rule in 1655, when he divided the country into 12 regions, each under a major general. This experiment was extremely unpopular and ended in 1657 when one of Cromwell's parliaments refused to fund it. It left England with a pronounced distaste for rule by an army. The traditional land-owning elite continued to reassert itself in the parliaments of Cromwell's protectorate, even offering him the royal crown, which he refused because of opposition from the army.

The establishment of peace in the 1650s was accompanied by increased repression. The once-vibrant newspaper press dwindled to a few officially-approved organs. Parliament attempted to suppress many aspects of Anglican parish worship, particularly the Book of Common Prayer, replacing it with a new liturgy, the Directory of Public Worship. Puritan iconoclasm and distrust of sensuality in worship also led to the smashing of images; the destruction of musical instruments; and the removal of candles, tapers, and basins from communion tables. The observance of Christmas, Easter, and saints' days was banned, although in practice there was little effective enforcement. Much of the church's cultural and social infrastructure was maintained. Despite the fact that churches were forbidden to own a Book of Common Prayer, more than one-third of all church inventories during the time show possession of one. Even in London there was an active underground Anglican religious life, and many Anglican ministers who had been ejected from parish churches obtained jobs as chaplains in the homes of conservative aristocrats and gentry.

Two events in Cromwell's protectorate that would influence British history for centuries were the conquest of Jamaica from the Spaniards in 1655 and the readmission of Jews to England. The conquest of Jamaica was a product of Cromwell's "Western Design", an assault on the Spanish

Empire in the Caribbean. His goal was to conquer Hispaniola, but when that failed, Jamaica was viewed as a consolation prize. It subsequently became the linchpin of the British Empire in the Caribbean. Cromwell's anti-Spanish policy extended to an alliance with the Catholic French, who proved more than willing to swallow their reluctance to enter an alliance with the English king-killer.

Edward I had expelled England's Jews in 1290, and those few Jews who had lived in England after that had either hidden their religious identity or had been short-term visitors under special arrangements. The motivation of English people who supported the readmission included hopes that Jewish commercial skills and connections would benefit English trade and the millenarian belief that the end of the world could not come about until the Jews were scattered throughout the world. Increasing scholarly interest in Hebrew had also led to contacts between English scholars and foreign rabbis. Anti-Semitic opposition, in part fuelled by London merchants' fear of Jewish competition, meant that Cromwell's parliament did not pass a law formally readmitting the Jews to England. However, since Edward I's expulsion of the Jews was not actually a parliamentary law but a royal act, it could be simply ignored rather than repealed. Under Cromwell's de facto toleration, a small Jewish community developed in London, and subsequent governments continued to tolerate the growing Jewish presence.

Cromwell died on September 3, 1658 (the anniversary of two of his greatest victories against the Scots), and like a king he was succeeded by his son, Richard Cromwell (1626–1712). However, Richard had neither the legitimacy of the old dynasty nor his father's force of personality and military prestige. He remained in power for only nine months, and his fall was followed by various unsuccessful attempts to form a military regime. The Long Parliament, elected before the revolution, remained the most legitimate body of authority, and its surviving members were now recalled. However, the real decision-maker was another general, George Monk (1608–1670), who had fought for the Crown during the Civil War but later assisted Cromwell in his campaigns against Ulster and Scotland. After Cromwell died, Monk brought his army from Scotland and spoke out in favour of a restoration of the Stuart monarchy, which proved decisive in settling the matter.

Charles II and the Restoration of the Monarchy

The Restoration of 1660 constituted a restoration not only of the king but also of the institutions that had been abolished by the victorious Parliamentarians and that remained central to British life, such as the House of Lords and the episcopally organized Church of England.

The Restoration was popular with the ordinary people, and there was much rejoicing. Maypoles, banned by the Puritans, became a symbol of the Restoration and the rejection of Puritan rule. The Restoration Church of England created new holidays, including January 30 as a day of mourning and repentance commemorating the execution of Charles I and May 29 as a day of rejoicing marking the Restoration of his son, Charles II (1630–1685; r. 1660–1685).

The original idea of the religious restoration was to combine the bishops, their supporters, and the moderate Presbyterians into a church that would allow some local variation in styles of worship. When this failed because of the Presbyterians' stubbornness and the growing confidence of hard-line Anglicans, it was replaced by a harshly repressive Anglican order. The so-called Clarendon Code was named after Charles's first Lord Chancellor and the head of his government, Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon (1609–1674). The code was enacted by Charles's first parliament, called the Cavalier Parliament, which was dominated by old royalists. Local officials, ministers, professors, and schoolmasters were required to renounce the Solemn League and Covenant, to promise not to take up arms against the king, and to take the Anglican sacrament. The Corporation Act of 1661 required all those elected to serve as officers of a city or corporation to take the sacraments – that is, to consume the bread and wine of the Eucharist – at an Anglican Church, to renounce the Solemn League and Covenant, and to take oaths of allegiance and supremacy. As of August 24, 1662, all ministers were required to use the Book of Common Prayer and to swear to consent to be guided by it in all things, or else they would be deprived of their financial support.

Nearly 2,000 ministers were subsequently forced out of the church, which created a nonconformist clergy. To prevent the deposed clergy from starting their own congregations, the Conventicle Act of 1664 banned conventiclors (religious gatherings) of five or more persons (excluding families) who were not in conformity with the Church of England. These acts were supplemented with the Test Act of 1673, which required all officeholders to take the Anglican sacrament, the Oath of Supremacy, and the Declaration against Transubstantiation, in force until 1829. However,

enforcement of all these acts, which continued to depend on local authorities, was sporadic. A new religious order emerged in which, instead of different factions competing for control of the Church of England, the Anglican Church coexisted with marginally legal Dissenting churches. Although not yet centrally organized, the three largest groups were Presbyterians, Independents (who became known as Congregationalists), and Baptists. Quakers, while harshly persecuted, were also prominent in Restoration England.

The House of Lords was also restored, with its traditional complement of hereditary peers and bishops. The exclusion of the bishops from the House of Lords had taken place early in the revolution and had received the assent of Charles I, but the exclusion was quickly repealed after the Restoration.

Charles II's experience in exile on the Continent had shaped his personality in many ways. He became one of the least insular of early modern British kings. He did not share the anti-Catholic prejudices of many of his subjects and in fact converted to Catholicism on his deathbed. Charles was particularly attracted to the rich and sophisticated culture of the France of Louis XIV (1638–1715; r. 1643–1715), then Europe's dominant political, military, and cultural power. A constant stream of French visitors came to Charles's court. More significantly, for much of his reign Britain was basically a French satellite, particularly in the French wars against the Dutch Republic. Charles's wars against the Dutch were mostly unsuccessful. In 1667 there was a famous incident when Dutch warships entered the Medway and burned English ships. However, the English acquired New York in the course of these wars, and that proved to be their most enduring result.

In the British Isles the Restoration marked the end of the parliamentary and Cromwellian policy of incorporative union and English military rule over Scotland and Ireland in favour of a return to multiple kingdoms, but with much closer supervision of Scotland and Ireland than before the revolution. The Scottish situation was particularly difficult, as the restoration of bishops was quite unpopular throughout much of the country. Whatever glamour attached to the Restoration was dimmed by disasters, most notably the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London. The year 1665 saw the last major outbreak of the plague in the British Isles, with perhaps 110,000 deaths, a quarter of London's population. The Great Fire occurred the following year; its rapid spread was partly due to the city's wooden housing stock and the slowness of the city government to

respond. More than 13,000 houses were destroyed, as well as some of London's most important buildings. However, the fire created the opportunity for reconstruction, the most important example being Christopher Wren's new St. Paul's Cathedral.

The greatest political crisis of Charles's reign is usually referred to as the Exclusion Crisis of 1678–1681. Charles and his wife, the Portuguese princess Catherine of Braganza (1638–1705), had no children (although Charles had several children by his mistresses). That made his brother James, a Catholic, the heir to the throne. Many English Protestants, already paranoid about Catholics (many blamed the Great Fire of 1666 on Catholic plotters), were even more worried after the Popish Plot scare in 1678. This was an alleged Catholic plot to murder the king and reimpose Catholicism by force. In this situation, the idea of a Catholic exercising royal power alarmed many Protestants in the three kingdoms. Some said that the legitimate heir should be the successor, regardless of his religion. Others had various schemes, ranging from letting James inherit with legal limitations on his power, to excluding him and all Catholics from the succession.

Two groups that would long influence British politics, the Whig and Tory parties, were formed at this time. Although both were English parties, they drew their names from elsewhere in the British Isles. The Whigs were originally called Whiggamores – Scottish covenanting rebels—while the word Tory originally referred to Irish Catholic bandits. Although there were many political shadings and people moved from Whig to Tory and vice versa, the Whigs generally stood for exclusion and the Tories for the legitimate succession of a powerful monarch. Charles II, James, and the Tories eventually won, as a larger part of the English public believed that Whig rebelliousness, threatening a revival of civil war, was more dangerous than James's Catholicism. On his brother's death in 1685, therefore, James succeeded to the English and Scottish thrones, with no opposition, as James II (1633–1701; r. 1685–1688).

James II and the Glorious Revolution of 1688

James's personality was the opposite of Charles's. James was straightforward, unsubtle, and completely insensitive to other people. He inherited a very strong position from the Tory victory in the Exclusion Crisis, yet lost it all in a few years. Rebellions at the beginning of his reign in both England and Scotland were easily crushed.

James's main political goal was to obtain toleration and legal equality for his fellow Catholics. He encouraged the open printing of Catholic books, both of liturgy and theology, and the open performance of Catholic services. People knew that conversion to Catholicism was a way to win James's favour, and his accession was followed by a small wave of conversions. However, the king realized that no matter what success he had with conversion, Catholics would remain a small minority of the British population, and thus he tried to build a tolerationist coalition between Dissenters (those Protestants who did not accept the doctrine or observe the rites of the Church of England, including those of the Baptist, Independent, Presbyterian, and Quaker faiths) and Catholics. There were two major problems with this idea. One was the distrust and hatred many Dissenters felt for Catholics and the other was the politically entrenched position of the Church of England, which commanded the allegiance of the majority of both the people and the political nation, and whose leaders opposed any tolerance. Getting rid of the laws against other churches would require a major political effort.

James encouraged Dissenting leaders to attend his court, and he won some of them over to believe in his sincerity, including the founder of Pennsylvania, the Quaker William Penn (1644–1718). However, many remained suspicious of his motives. The impasse between the Anglican parliament, determined to maintain restrictive religious laws, and the king, who retained control of the central administration and the military, was difficult to resolve. The solution was foreign intervention.

The Dutch stadtholder and staunch Protestant William of Orange (1650–1702) was James's son-in-law and nephew. He was the husband of James's older daughter, Mary (1662–1694) and the heir presumptive to the throne, as James had no legitimate sons. Since William was the dominant partner in their marriage, everyone knew that when Mary reigned, William would rule. William's life was dominated by his hostility to Louis XIV, who had attempted to smash the Dutch Republic. William spent much of his career building coalitions of European states alarmed by Louis's ambitions, including Catholic states. During James's reign, more and more English and Scottish exiles arrived at William's court, and as James was already in his fifties, there was hope that his death and Mary's succession would quickly end the pro-Catholic campaign.

This hope was ended by the birth of a son to James and his wife, the Italian princess Mary of Modena (1658–1718), in 1688. As a male, the new prince, named James, immediately jumped to the head of the line of

heirs, and since he would be brought up as a Catholic, he opened the door to a line of Catholic successors. Many of the Catholics around James saw the birth of the young prince as a divine blessing. Some Protestants spread the false rumour that the child was an impostor, that the real child was a girl or born dead, or that the whole pregnancy was fake and the boy had been smuggled in a warming pan – the myth of the “warming-pan baby”.

In 1688 William invaded with the support of many Whig and Tory elements who had asked him to come. Even with English support, his invasion was a desperate gamble; the key question was whether the English fleet and military would support him. The “Protestant wind”, as it was described by Protestants claiming divine support for their cause, kept the English fleet in harbour and therefore unable to turn back the Dutch ships. William’s agents managed to win key army leaders to his side. The most important was John Churchill (1650–1722), later to be the first Duke of Marlborough.

The king’s regime collapsed quickly, and James escaped to France with William’s connivance. Although the Glorious Revolution was bloodless in England, it was quite a different story in the rest of the isles. Scottish supporters of James, or Jacobites, were forcibly and brutally suppressed, and a war in Ireland in 1690, in which both William and James directly participated, ended the military power of Catholic Ireland and ushered in a century of Protestant domination.

After the Glorious Revolution, the English elite wanted to focus their energies on domestic English problems, such as religious toleration. English supporters of the revolution ranged from radical Whigs who looked back to the “English republic” – the brief period under the Rump Parliament between the fall of the monarchy and Cromwell’s coup (although most people accepted that England would remain a monarchy) – to Anglicans who wanted to preserve as much as possible of the Anglican monopoly. William, a patriotic Dutchman, was basically interested in bringing England into his coalition against Louis XIV.

Fear of another civil war lay behind the push for an agreement between the different parties supporting William’s takeover. William had actually allowed James to escape to France to avoid another trial like that of Charles I. The rapidity with which the revolution took place meant that there was no need, and no desire, to appeal to popular support.

The first problem was about who would make the decision about the choice of a king. Most people agreed that Parliament should make the decision, but no one knew how to call Parliament without a king to

summon it. The eventual solution was for William to call a convention, elected on a parliamentary franchise (and including the House of Lords). The Whigs did quite well in the election, which was bad news for those who wanted to keep James on in some kind of capacity, ranging from treating William as a conqueror to installing him as a regent for James. James could also be declared legally dead, abdicated, or having forfeited the crown. The crown could be given to William or devolved to Mary as hereditary successor, an option favoured by many Tories suspicious of both James and William. William, however, wanted royal authority, not the role of a king consort. The convention declared that James had abdicated by fleeing the country, and offered the crown to William and Mary as joint monarchs, a situation without precedent or sequel in English history.

Some Whigs were reluctant to offer the crown without conditions, believing that monarchy was a contract with rights and responsibilities on both sides. William was reluctant to accept the crown with conditions. The compromise was a document called the Bill of Rights, presented in such a way during the coronation that it could be viewed as either a condition or not. The bill banned the practice of suspending laws or raising money without the consent of Parliament, and it guaranteed the king and queen's Protestant subjects the right to have arms suitable for their defence. It also included guarantees of the rights of subjects to petition Parliament and other individual rights. The Bill of Rights was largely enacted into law by Parliament in 1690. There was also a major change in the coronation oath, which now included a promise to govern according to the statutes of Parliament – the first time this had been mentioned in the oath. The revolution settlement also enshrined religious toleration (for Protestants) in law in the Toleration Act of 1689, while leaving the Anglican monopoly of public offices untouched. Catholics were tolerated on a *de facto* rather than *de jure* basis.

The crowns of England and Scotland remained separate, so the whole process had to be repeated in Scotland. The Scottish settlement was more radical than the English one. The Whigs, who dominated the Scottish parliament, deemed that James had forfeited rather than abdicated the crown and offered the monarchy to William and Mary on certain conditions. The situation was complicated by a Scottish revolt dominated by highlanders, but it was defeated by forces loyal to William. Revolutionary Scotland was run by an alliance between the pro-revolution forces in England, some of the Scottish political leadership, and the

Presbyterians. The Scottish bishops had been much more strongly and uniformly pro-James than the English bishops, which was a factor in their exclusion during the settlement. Presbyterians took over the Scottish kirk in a sometimes violent process that presented the revolutionary government with a *fait accompli*. At the same time, the Catholic challenge had finally been beaten back, the dream of a uniform Protestant church covering all of Britain was abandoned in favour of toleration, and very different churches were established in the two kingdoms.

Many of the religious and political issues that stemmed from the Reformation had been settled, and Protestantism in its Anglican English and Presbyterian Scottish forms had won decided victories. Although the monarchy was still powerful, the battle to impose limits on it had been won. However, the arrival of King William meant that the British kingdoms had been brought into his anti-French coalition. Conflicts with France would shape the next century of British history, which would see the formation of the greatest global power the world had ever known.

Questions and Tasks

1. Name the two important processes which dominated the history of Britain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
2. Who launched the Reformation, and when did this occur?
3. What religious tendencies prevailed in Scotland in the sixteenth century?
4. Describe Elizabeth's I religious views.
5. What was the result of the struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism on the international level?
6. Why do historians call the Elizabethan era a "Golden Age" in British history?
7. What problems led to the conflict between James I and parliamentarians?
8. What was Charles I's view of the structure of government?
9. When did Bishops' Wars happen?
10. Analyse the differences between Oliver Cromwell's rule of the country and that of the king who ruled prior to Cromwell.
11. Explain the word "restoration". What were the results of the Restoration?

VI. INDUSTRY AND CONQUEST (1689 – 1851)

The Roots of World Empire

Britain in the eighteenth century was more deeply involved with the world beyond its shores than it had ever been before. British ships plied the world's oceans, displacing the Dutch from their leadership in world trade. African slaves, Indian cotton textiles, and Chinese tea all served to fill the coffers of British merchants. There was a rise not only in British trade but also in British international domination. The Royal Navy was establishing a virtually insurmountable lead over all rivals and setting up a global network of bases. The colonies in North America changed from isolated outposts into complex societies which expanded into the American interior. The British colonies of the Caribbean, Jamaica and Barbados, with their vast, slave-worked sugar plantations, were a source of immense wealth, even though slavery itself was increasingly controversial by the second half of the century. The Hudson's Bay Company, founded in 1670, traded with Native Americans for furs, although in the first part of the new century it was outpaced by French rivals. The East India Company, founded in 1600, had established a firm foothold in Bengal in north-eastern India that became a base for further expansion by the mid-eighteenth century.

Knowledge went with power. Along with other strong European nations, Britain amassed knowledge of global navigation, cartography, and hydrography. British captains followed in the wake of the Elizabethan captain Francis Drake, but with an emphasis on knowledge rather than mere plunder. The most notable of these explorers was James Cook (1728–1779), who charted the coast of Newfoundland and the Pacific Northwest coast of America, circumnavigated New Zealand, and was the first European to encounter the islands of Hawaii. Like other British explorers, Cook was accompanied by cartographers and natural historians who made the layout and resources of the newly discovered lands and peoples known to Britain and Europe.

The Nine Years' War (1688–1697), the Union of England and Scotland (1707), and the House of Hanover

After taking power in the Glorious Revolution of 1688, Britain's new king, William III (r. 1689–1702), planned to use England's resources against Europe's most powerful ruler, Louis XIV of France (r. 1643–1715). The War of the League of Augsburg, or Nine Years' War, was

fought from 1688 to 1697 between France and William's coalition, which included Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Dutch Republic. The war itself was inconclusive, but it marked Britain's arrival as a great power. British society became increasingly militarised, as both the army and the navy grew in the eighteenth century.

The wars between England and France did not end with William's death in 1702. A widower when he died, he was succeeded by Mary's sister Anne (1665–1714; r. 1702–1714), the last Stuart monarch. Following the 1701 death of James II, the exiled Catholic sovereign, Louis XIV had violated previous agreements by recognizing James's son, also Catholic and also named James (1688–1766), as the legitimate king of England and Scotland. (James III also became known as the Old Pretender). The French refusal to recognize the "Protestant Succession" – the English and Scottish refusal to allow a Catholic on the throne – continued to poison relations between the two powers.

The next great conflict between Britain and France, the War of the Spanish Succession, was prompted by the death of Carlos (Charles) II of Spain without a direct heir in 1700. The grandson of the king of France, Philip, had a claim to the throne that the British feared would result in an effective union of France and Spain. By crushing the power of France, the war would also secure the Protestant succession. It lasted from 1701 to 1714 (although Britain, the Dutch Republic, and France ended their participation by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713). The British war effort was marked by amazing victories at Blenheim (1704) and Ramillies (1706) under one of the greatest British generals, John Churchill (1650–1722), who was made Duke of Marlborough in recognition of his achievement. British gains from the Treaty of Utrecht included French recognition of the Protestant succession; the expulsion of the pretender James III; the acquisition of Newfoundland (now, the easternmost province of Canada) and Gibraltar (a tiny territory at the southern tip of Spain which is still a British possession today); and the *asiento*, the exclusive right to engage in the slave trade in Spain's American empire.

One important result of the war was domestic – the Act of Union of 1707, which made England and Scotland one country under the new name of United Kingdom of Great Britain. The Act of Union was essentially forced through by the English, who were concerned that after the death of Queen Anne, the Scots would give the crown to James III. If the Scots made James king, he could then threaten to use Scotland's resources against England, possibly with French support. There was not much

popular support for the union in Scotland, despite Scottish government propaganda about the economic benefits Scotland would receive. The act abolished the Scottish parliament, replacing it with elected representatives to the English House of Commons and House of Lords, which was theoretically a new British parliament but in practice it was simply the English parliament with the addition of Scottish members. The Scots retained their Presbyterian Church and their legal system. In the eighteenth century, Scottish politicians (including some who were members of the powerful house of Argyll) managed Scotland for the London government.

An arrangement was settled whereby the crown of the new kingdom was to pass eventually to Queen Anne's closest Protestant relatives, the German rulers of the Electorate of Hanover, a north German principality that incidentally continued to be held by British monarchs until 1837. On the basis of this, when Anne died in 1714, she was succeeded by the German Prince George, the elector of Hanover, who became the first British sovereign of the Hanoverian dynasty. (*Elector* was a term that referred to the right of Hanover to participate in the election of Holy Roman Emperors). George I (1660–1727; r. 1714–1727) was an unprepossessing man who had no knowledge of English and no familiarity with English institutions, but he was a respected statesman in much of central Europe and the Baltic.

The British Parliament

Although monarchs continued to wield great influence throughout the eighteenth century, power was increasingly shifting into the hands of Parliament and its leaders. Maintaining its traditional division into an elected House of Commons and a mostly hereditary House of Lords, the Parliament now met every year for the supervision of government finances. By this time the Commons was growing in importance relative to the Lords, as “money bills” (those relating to taxes) could only originate in the Commons. The House of Lords consisted of many of the most powerful men in the country, holders of extensive lands and palatial country houses, but as an institution it took second place to the Commons. However, members of the upper house had great influence over the Commons through the use of family connections and patronage, which was a means of influencing elections.

There was no uniform system of franchise for election to the Commons. Instead, it was divided into county members; two elected for each county on the votes of those adult men owning land assessed at least

40 shillings a year – the “forty shilling freeholders”. The vast majority of the members of Parliament (MPs) were elected from boroughs on a wide variety of franchises; in some boroughs less than a dozen men elected their representative, while in others all or nearly all adult men could vote. Some of the small boroughs were “pocket boroughs”, where a single local landowner could effectively name the representative – he had the borough in his pocket, so to speak. Other small boroughs could be controlled or heavily swayed by the government of the day.

Contested elections were frequent and were decided by the House of Commons itself, leading to many disputes during the first days of a new parliament. The importance of the political parties of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries – the Whigs and the Tories – was diminishing, mostly as a result of the Whig involvement in the matter of the Hanoverian succession, which was a major victory for their party. The Tories were increasingly, and in many cases unfairly, identified with Jacobitism (those supporting Stuart claims to the throne), and despite the fact that they succeeded in electing dozens of MPs, they were politically irrelevant. Politics became a contest between Whig factions, and successful politicians were those who could manipulate elections to benefit their own causes or maintain coalitions of different Whig factions. The most successful of these politicians in the eighteenth century was Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745), the most powerful man in Britain as the head of the king’s government from 1721 to 1742. Walpole is often identified as the first “Prime Minister”, although the title of Prime Minister did not officially exist at that point. However, the overall tendency in the eighteenth century was toward a single individual at the head of a parliamentary government.

The period roughly between 1714 and 1760, the year George I’s great-grandson George III ascended to the throne, is often referred to as the Whig ascendancy. The Whigs were less popular in the country than their rivals the Tories, who could rely on the support of the influential Church of England clergy, but they seized power shortly after George I’s succession. The Whigs considered themselves the party of the Hanoverian succession referred to above, and they supported an aggressive anti-French foreign policy. Both of these factors put them in a favourable position with respect to King George I, while the Tories were compromised by their association with Jacobitism and the Peace of Utrecht that ended the War of the Spanish Succession. The acquiescence of Queen Anne’s Tory government in Philip V’s retaining the throne of Spain enraged many

English people, who viewed it as throwing away the duke of Marlborough's victories. Whig leaders, headed by Sir Robert Walpole, continued to present themselves as the defenders of the Hanoverian claim against the Stuarts. They also had a personal ascendancy over George's son, who succeeded him on his death in 1727 as George II (1683–1760; r. 1727–1760), and a good relationship with George II's wife, Queen Caroline of Anspach (1683–1737).

Despite their royal connections, Whig leaders were not court figures the way that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century governmental leaders had been. Parliament met every year and controlled taxation, so any leader was ultimately dependent on parliamentary support. Since the government – the politicians entrusted by the king with the management of public affairs – could nearly always control the House of Lords through the bishops and the elected Scottish peers, the control of the House of Commons was always a contentious problem. Even the most successful Whig minister, Walpole, was forced to resign in 1742 when the Commons turned against him, though the king still supported him and reportedly wept when accepting his resignation.

With respect to elections, the Whigs discouraged voter participation. The Septennial Act of 1716, allowing parliaments to sit for seven years before facing a new election, meant that elections were infrequent. It replaced the system under Queen Anne, in which new elections had to be conducted every three years. The requirement of frequent elections had kept voters interested and political organizations mobilized. The Septennial Act meant that for long stretches of years, politics was in the hands of professional politicians, which decreased public interest in affairs of state. The Whig ascendancy also saw efforts to interpret the franchise in favour of fewer people being allowed to vote. Much of the Whig leadership was corrupt and known to be so, particularly during the long period when Walpole was first lord of the treasury, the position which eventually became known as Prime Minister. Accusations of corruption accentuated the inevitable struggle of Whig factions and provided a platform for those Whigs who were opposed to the groups that were in power. Opposition Whig factions often clustered around the heir to the throne, who in the Hanoverian period almost never got along with the king.

Toryism steadily diminished throughout this period, although it never entirely disappeared. Its main focus remained the defence of the Church of England. The fact that the episcopal church of Scotland had been replaced

by Presbyterianism after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 greatly concerned English Tories. However, Presbyterianism was not as popular a movement in England as it was in Scotland, and as it became clear that the Whigs, despite some of their differences with the leaders of the Church of England, were not going to destroy it, Toryism began to lose its point. The control the Whigs exercised over the Hanoverian kings made it unlikely that Tories would ever come back into power. The Tory party as an organized grouping was gone by mid-century, and even the word *Tory* began to pass out of use.

The weakening of the Tories did not mean that the dominant Whigs faced no competition. Parliamentary opposition was led by proponents of the so-called country ideology, which took both Tory and opposition Whig forms. Country ideology essentially implied a distrust of government. Country members introduced measures such as place bills, which forbade government officeholders from also holding seats in the Commons, one of the chief government strategies for controlling that body. Country members, mostly rural, opposed taxes and a vigorous foreign policy, arguing that Britain should stay out of Continental affairs in order to reduce the tax burden. They often charged Whig leaders with excessive concern for Hanover. During wars they supported a “blue water” strategy, preferring naval arms and warfare in the colonies over expensive armies in Europe. Country patriots were suspicious of commercial and financial wealth and believed that political power should be in the hands of those with a stake in the country – namely, the landowners.

However, the most widespread form of opposition was that of the lower classes, which often found expression in the form of riots during this period. Eighteenth-century British common people were largely free from the threat of starvation but continued to lead hard lives of heavy work and poor diet. They rioted frequently, often over mundane issues such as taxes or the price of bread, but also over religious issues. There were also politically inspired anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic riots, including one against a bill for the simplified naturalization of foreign Jews, the so-called Jew Bill, in 1753. English culture generally was quite violent. Capital punishment was used extensively as literally hundreds of offences applying to children as young as the early teens could be punished by death. Leaders of riots sometimes received the death penalty, but in other cases the authorities made concessions to the rioters’ demands, such as when the Jew Bill was dropped.

The most radical and probably the least effective opposition to the Whig ascendancy was that represented by Jacobitism. Jacobites denied the legitimacy of the Hanoverian dynasty and held that the Stuart heirs, at that time living abroad, were the rightful rulers of Britain. Scottish Jacobites had a particular animus against the Act of Union and emphasized the Scottish origin of the Stuart dynasty. Although they viewed Scotland as a base of operations, the Stuarts themselves were fixed on the goal of London and the British throne.

Since Jacobitism was essentially about supporting a particular person, Jacobites could and did take a variety of different political and religious positions. Scottish Jacobites emphasized repealing the union and restoring Scottish independence, English Jacobites hoped to clean up the corrupt political system, and Irish Jacobites hoped to restore Catholic Ireland. Both die-hard Tory defenders of the Church of England and deists who hoped for greater religious toleration might be found supporting the Stuarts. Many common people were attracted to the Jacobite movement because of its promises of lower taxation and religious tolerance. The largest pockets of support for the Stuarts were in Ireland and Scotland, especially in the Highlands. Catholic Ireland was kept down during most of the eighteenth century by the government's rigid repression as well as by the introduction of English and Scottish Protestant settlers, and it had little to offer to the Jacobite cause. Problematic factors for the Jacobites were the Stuarts' unbending Catholicism and the fact that a second restoration would require foreign, and probably French, assistance. Jacobites were constantly involved in intrigues with whichever powers were in conflict with Britain, making it easy for the Whigs to portray them, often accurately, as foreign agents. Whig governments, particularly Walpole's, were paranoid about the Jacobites and kept an extensive network of spies and informers.

The high points of Jacobite activity in Britain were the invasions of 1715 and 1745 (also known as "The Fifteen" and "The Forty-Five"). On both of these occasions, the invading forces, the first led by James III and the second by his son, Prince Charles Stuart (1720–1788), initially landed in the Scottish highlands, where the government had little military presence (particularly during The Forty-Five, when much of the army was on the Continent fighting the War of the Austrian Succession) and where there was the most popular support due to the cultural alienation of many highlanders from the lowland Whigs who dominated Scottish politics. After some initial successes, both risings were defeated due to bad luck,

the failure of the English to rally around, and the superior leadership of the government forces. The Forty-Five did leave behind a romantic legend of its leader, Bonnie Prince Charlie.

The end result of the invasions was much closer government control of the Scottish Highlands and a successful strategy of recruiting highlanders into the British army, one of the great integrative forces in the British Isles. Traditional highland society was broken up by government repression and also by the actions of highland chiefs, many of whom dispossessed their clansmen to free land for more lucrative enterprises – essentially exchanging their roles as traditional chiefs for a new one as improving landlords. These so-called highland clearances would persist well into the nineteenth century, depopulating large areas of the highlands and encouraging the emigration of highlanders to other parts of the British Empire or America.

The Enlightenment in England

The eighteenth century is often identified as the century of the European Enlightenment – the rise of reason. Many of the most characteristic elements of the Enlightenment originated in England, including Newtonian physics, John Locke’s approach to politics and epistemology, and limited monarchy. However, for a long time historians doubted whether there was an “English Enlightenment”. Some of the most important thinkers of eighteenth-century England, such as John Wesley or the London essayist and journalist Samuel Johnson (1709–1784), were opponents rather than representatives of the Enlightenment. However, while it did not always take centre stage in the intellectual history of eighteenth-century England, the Enlightenment was definitely a strong presence.

English intellectuals operated with certain advantages that others lacked. In 1695 the Licensing Act, which had established censorship in England, expired, and Parliament never renewed it. English writers could still be persecuted for what they published, but they no longer had to receive permission for publication. Although the Church of England remained a force to be reckoned with in the eighteenth century, it lacked the institutional power and cultural hegemony wielded by the French Catholic Church or the Scottish Presbyterian Church. Not only were deist and anti-Christian positions aired with relative openness, the church also coexisted with other religious bodies, including a marginalized Roman Catholicism as well as several Dissenting Protestant churches, including

Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers. Perhaps because the Church of England was ineffective at repressing dissent, one characteristic of the English Enlightenment was that it produced few outspoken opponents of Christianity. Indeed, some of the most prominent Enlightened intellectuals of late eighteenth-century England, such as the chemist and materialist philosopher Joseph Priestley (1733–1804) and the Welsh political philosopher Richard Price (1723–1791), were Dissenting ministers. Price and Priestley targeted not the doctrine so much as the privileged position of the Church of England, which held a *de jure* monopoly on political power. This led them to support political reform and, eventually, to sympathize with the French Revolution.

The eighteenth-century English writer most strongly identified with the Enlightenment was the historian Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (six volumes, 1776–1788). An admirer of the French anticlerical radical Voltaire and the Scottish historians David Hume and William Robertson, Gibbon took a sceptical approach to the early history of Christianity. Volume 1 aroused great opposition from some Church of England clergy; however, there was no possibility of church opposition preventing subsequent volumes of the history from being published.

England did not have the network of state-sponsored academies characteristic of France and other continental European countries, and unlike Scotland, its universities were not intellectual leaders. In science the gap was filled by Britain's major scientific organization, the Royal Society, and by a variety of informal clubs and groups. Although the Royal Society claimed a footing of equality with France's Royal Academy of Sciences as a leader of the scientific world, it was a very different organization, with voluntary, unpaid membership and little state support. A similar organization, aimed at technological improvement rather than scientific discovery, was the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce, familiarly known as the Society of Arts and founded in 1754.

Many of the informal groups that spread Enlightenment ideas and values in England were based outside London, in the provinces and particularly in the north, where Dissenting was strong. There was a pronounced emphasis on the contributions of science and philosophy to economic development, as these areas were also cradles of the Industrial Revolution. The Lunar Society of Birmingham, one such provincial gathering of intellectuals and businessmen, included a leading

Enlightenment philosopher and scientist, Priestley, as well as the great engineer James Watt (1736–1819), inventor of the steam engine with separate condenser, his business partner Matthew Boulton (1728–1809), and the great porcelain manufacturer Josiah Wedgwood (1730–1795).

The eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were an age of entertainment as well as enlightenment. The period saw the rise of a new form of literature, long prose stories about common people, often appealing to a working-class or middle-class audience. The first best-selling novel in English was Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), based loosely on the story of a man marooned on an island. *Robinson Crusoe* was an examination of an important eighteenth-century theme, sociability, by telling the story of someone deprived of it. Defoe (1660–1731) was a popular writer and journalist writing for a market, not to attract the attention of an aristocratic patron.

Subsequent best-selling novelists in the eighteenth century included Samuel Richardson (1689–1761), author of *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1748), “epistolary novels”, told in a series of letters, about virtuous heroines in stressful situations who kept their virtue. Richardson's work, often called sentimental due to its skilful tugging of the heartstrings, had a particularly strong appeal to women, a growing audience for literature in the eighteenth century. Henry Fielding (1707–1754) mocked Richardson and wrote vigorously comic novels with male protagonists, such as *Tom Jones* (1749). The Scottish author Tobias Smollett (1721–1771) wrote picaresque narratives of adventuresome heroes such as *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748).

The modern historical novel is largely the creation of the Scottish writer Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832). Scott specialized in stirring action set against great historical events, such as his first novel, *Waverley* (1814), which tells the story of a young Englishman of Jacobite sympathies who fights in the rebellion but is finally reconciled to the Hanoverian regime. Much of the sentimentalization of both the Jacobites and the Scottish highlands can be traced to Scott's works. He also wrote novels set in the Middle Ages, such as *Ivanhoe* (1819), which greatly influenced the common picture of the period as an age of knightliness and chivalry.

A very different author from Scott, but one whom he admired, was Jane Austen (1775–1817), whose works were set in contemporary England and recounted not deeds of male courage but the sedate lives of English gentry from a female perspective. Often denigrated in her own time as a writer of light literature for amusement, Austen's critical star has steadily

risen in the twentieth century as her *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) has become a cultural touchstone, frequently adapted and presented in different media, as have her other works.

The Wars with France and the Growth of the British Empire in the eighteenth century

The eighteenth century is sometimes referred to as the Second Hundred Years' War due to the many conflicts between Britain and France. However, there were also long periods of peace, and Britain and France were in some ways culturally closer than they had been since the Middle Ages. Many British people knew French, the international language of European culture, and the French were even beginning to take an interest in English. Visits across the Channel were common, and the religious difference between Protestant Britain and Catholic France meant less than it had in the seventeenth century. However, none of these factors prevented a long and bloody series of wars. Conflicts between Britain and France included the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748), the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), and the War of the American Revolution (1775–1783). The first was basically a draw, the second a great British victory, the third a British defeat. The wars of the eighteenth century were world wars, with battles in Europe, the Americas, and India as well as across the world's oceans. British victories led to the exclusion of its European rivals from India and most of North America. Even though the thirteen colonies and Florida were lost in the American Revolution, Britain retained the vast lands of Canada, which it had won from France in the Seven Years' War, as well as its rich Caribbean slave colonies. By the end of the century, an entire continent – Australia – had been added to the diverse collection of territories that made up the greatest empire the world had ever known.

British assets in the wars with France included its geographical position, which meant that any French invasion would have to be seaborne; its navy's control of the seas; and its dynamic economy, which made it the paymaster of the anti-French coalitions. One reason for the British defeat in the War of the American Revolution was that despite the British government's best efforts, it could not find a European country willing to attack France on the Continent. Lack of continental engagement freed the French, for the only time in the eighteenth century, to concentrate their forces on Britain's colonial possessions by supporting the American rebels.

Britain in the Revolutionary Age

The triumphant Britain that emerged from the Seven Years' War was fundamentally challenged by the forces unleashed by the American and French revolutions. Not only was British military power stretched to the limit, but new ideologies and bases for opposition were being disseminated in Great Britain itself as well as its satellite kingdom of Ireland.

Despite the growing impact of industry, Britain's ruling class continued to derive its power from the land. Its political centre was the unreformed Parliament, both of whose houses, Lords and Commons, were dominated by landowners. Domestically, the British elite was challenged by radical movements for parliamentary reform; more frequent elections; and, in the most extreme formulations, manhood suffrage (the right of all male citizens to vote in elections). Radicals, often Protestant Dissenters, charged the British parliament with subservience to royal despotism and, more credibly, with corruption. Despite the popularity of many reformers, such as the notorious demagogue John Wilkes (1725–1797), and the embarrassing defeats Britain suffered at the hands of the American rebels and their French and Spanish allies in the American Revolution, Britain's rulers usually managed to contain dissent. The worst political disturbance in Britain itself during the war in America was the 1780 Gordon anti-Catholic riots in London. The riots, led by the erratic Scottish demagogue Lord George Gordon (1751–1793), lasted four days and resulted in extensive property destruction, although little loss of life. Newgate Prison was razed and the Prime Minister's house attacked. Troops were called in to disperse the rioters. Gordon himself later converted to Judaism.

Damaged by the defeat in America, by the loss of its richest North American colonies, and by civil unrest, Britain was often seen as being in irreversible decline, although the expansion of British power in India compensated for losses elsewhere. The nation's recovery began during the long prime ministership of William Pitt the Younger (1759–1806), from 1783 to his death, with one interruption from 1801 to 1804. Pitt emphasized economic and administrative reform while leaving irregular and undemocratic parliamentary franchises and the Church of England's privileged position untouched. He relied on his own great ability and the support of the king, George III (1738–1820; r. 1760–1820). Pitt's great rival, Charles James Fox (1749–1806), was forced to ally himself with the dissolute and irresponsible heir to the throne, George, Prince of Wales, the future George IV (1762–1830; r. 1820–1830). Fox briefly came within sight of power in the Regency Crisis of 1788, when George III's short fit of

insanity nearly led to the Prince of Wales being declared regent. Fox's shrinking body of followers kept the designation *Whig*, while Pitt's followers were first referred to by the revived term *Tory* and later as *Conservatives*.

The French Revolution of 1789 increased the polarization of British politics. Many British people greeted it with the hope that France would now adopt a parliamentary government on the British model, and those sympathetic to the Revolution made Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man* (1791–1792) a best seller, with more than 200,000 copies sold, far exceeding sales of the anti-revolutionary *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) by Edmund Burke. However, horror at French excesses accelerated the conservative reaction that had begun with Pitt's coming to power. Sympathy for exiled French Catholics and Catholic priests in Britain even muted British anti-Catholicism. On the political side, Pitt's government crushed the radicals by suspending habeas corpus and vigorously prosecuting them in Pitt's "reign of terror" in 1793–1794. The repression was particularly harsh and successful in Scotland, with its different legal structure that gave less protection to individual rights. Not all of the opposition to radicals was directed from above, however. British sympathizers with the French Revolution also inspired popular opposition, partly because they were revolutionary and partly because they were associated with France, the traditional enemy. Mobs, loyal to church and king, encouraged by local gentry and Church of England clergy, attacked Dissenting chapels, and individual French sympathizers.

On the religious side, the evangelical movement in the Church of England drew in many upper-class men and women. Evangelicals furnished much of the leadership for the popular movement for the abolition of slavery, but they abominated the French Revolution and were conservative on other issues.

The Industrial Revolution (1750s–1860s)

The British economy in the late eighteenth century was transformed by the so-called Industrial Revolution, although the term itself was not used at the time. England had several advantages in being the first country to industrialize. It was well supplied with coal and iron, and it was a rich society by premodern standards, with a surplus of capital available for investment and a developed system of capital markets, making it relatively easy to get capital to entrepreneurs through joint-stock companies and other financial arrangements. British domination of the seas was actually strengthened by the wars with France. British colonies were exploited both for cheap raw

materials and as captive markets. England also had mechanics and engineers who combined practical experience with some training in Newtonian physics. The enclosure movement, in which Parliament handed over common community land to private landowners, coupled with rapid growth in the English population, meant that a large surplus workforce, unable to sustain itself on the land, was available for industry.

Industrialism first emerged in the production and trade of textiles, particularly cotton – known as light industry. Economic expansion in textiles was initially based on a series of technical and organizational innovations in spinning and weaving, including the spinning mule, the spinning jenny, the power loom, and the steam engine with separate condenser. Cotton was not as absolutely central to the British Industrial Revolution as it is often presented, but there is no question that it was very important. The origin of the factory system is closely associated with the cotton industry, and factory organization did not spread to other industries until after 1830. The quantity of raw cotton imported into the British Isles went from 5 million kilograms in 1785 to 27 million kilograms in 1850, and the output of cloth went from 37 million to 1,852 million square kilometres. This was an export-oriented trade, and it was efficient to the degree that, notwithstanding attempts by the French ruler Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) to block British goods from the European continent, even the French army was clothing soldiers in English cotton cloth. British colonies in North America, India, and Africa were also British markets. After it won independence from Spain and Portugal in the early nineteenth century, Latin America became virtually an economic colony of Britain. Even the United States continued to be a major market for British manufactured goods after the American Revolution.

The Industrial Revolution led to powerful social changes, especially in the growth of urbanization and new forms of labour. English urban areas, particularly London and the cities of the industrial north, grew at an astounding rate, and by the mid-nineteenth century Britain was the first large nation to have a majority of its population living in cities. Thousands of people abandoned the daily and seasonal rhythms of agricultural work in favour of a life regulated by machinery and the clock and subject to the iron rule of factory owners. Owners forced workers to work long hours in harsh and dangerous conditions, paid the lowest wages they could get away with, and enlisted the state to prevent workers from organizing to better their conditions. Children were employed doing exhausting physical work from a very young age. The new cities were overcrowded, with shoddy, quickly

built housing for the working population and poor hygiene and waste disposal.

The Last Great Anglo-French War (1793–1805)

The outbreak of war with revolutionary France in 1793, precipitated by the French conquest of the Austrian Netherlands, caught the British militarily unprepared. The revolutionary and Napoleonic wars between France and its European neighbours would last until 1815, when Napoleon – who had become consul in 1799 and emperor in 1804 – was finally defeated at the battle of Waterloo. At the war's outbreak, the British army had fewer than 50,000 men, and the navy, while still the world's most powerful, had deteriorated since Britain's last major conflict, the war of the American Revolution. Both the creation and the maintenance of a large military force and the endless subsidies required by Britain's Continental allies strained the British treasury, forcing Parliament to adopt an income tax in 1799. However, revolutionary France faced the same disadvantages by sea that royal France had faced in its eighteenth-century wars and never successfully challenged British naval supremacy. A planned French invasion across the channel in 1797, for which Napoleon Bonaparte was appointed military commander, was abandoned as impractical due to Britain's naval power. The following year, however, saw a much more dangerous threat to British naval supremacy from a different quarter—its own sailors.

In April and May 1797, mutinies by sailors at Spithead and the Nore were precipitated less by sympathy with the French Revolution than by low pay, often in arrears, and poor food and working conditions. The government under Pitt resolved the mutiny with concessions to the sailors and punishment of the ringleaders of the Nore fleet, which had actually blockaded London and proclaimed its sympathy with the French.

The naval mutinies of 1797 and the French-aided Irish Rebellion of 1798 precipitated another wave of repressive legislation, including the Unlawful Oaths Act of 1797, which was aimed at secret societies; the 1798 Newspaper Act, establishing tight controls over the press; and the 1799 Corresponding Societies Act, suppressing political committees of correspondence that circulated radical writings. The Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800 were aimed at workers' organizations and combined the government's desire to repress popular organizations with employers' desire to crush workers' taking advantage of the war and its increased demand for labour to organize for improved wages and working conditions.

The need to control Ireland effectively, whose restiveness against British rule made it both a site of rebellion and a target of French invasion, led to the Act of Union of 1801, which joined Great Britain and Ireland into the United Kingdom. The incorporation of Ireland, with its enormous Catholic population, into the British polity led to the rise of Catholic emancipation as an issue in British politics. Pitt and much of the political elite, including the Whig opposition, supported the granting of political rights to Catholics as a *quid pro quo* for Irish Catholics' acceptance of the union, but they were firmly and effectively opposed by the king and most of the Protestant population.

The navy, recovering from the mutinies, won an important victory under the greatest admiral of the time, Horatio Nelson (1758–1805), at the Battle of the Nile in 1798, which forced Napoleon to abandon his Egyptian expedition. Napoleon organized another attempt at an invasion of England in 1805, this time with Spanish aid. Nelson's greatest victory, the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, cost the admiral his life but destroyed any possibility of a French invasion and established Britain's complete domination of the seas.

The situation with the land-based conflict was initially very different. At first British forces played only a minor role in the war in Europe. In the Caribbean, many soldiers were lost to both disease and the enemy in an unsuccessful intervention in Haiti. The army's relatively minor role only changed with the Peninsular War from 1808 to 1814, when Britain, led by Arthur Wellesley (later duke of Wellington), formed an alliance with Spain and Portugal, who were fighting against French occupation of their countries. Wellesley established his reputation as Britain's leading general despite inadequate support from the British government, but the British army was still small compared to those of the great Continental powers. Even Wellington's victory over Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, which ended the wars, was achieved with an allied force of which only a third were British.

The confrontation between Britain and France was economic as well as military. The importance of the export trade for the British economy was also a weakness. Although Napoleon could do nothing to prevent Britain from exporting outside Europe, he did attempt to close the European market to British exports with a decree issued in 1806 that ordered all Continental ports closed to British ships; this embargo was called the Continental System. The British also had difficulty exporting to the United States, which under President Thomas Jefferson (1801–1809) attempted to isolate itself from the European war (Shipping-related disputes between Britain and the United States would eventually lead to the War of 1812). Britain responded to the

Continental System with a series of Orders in Council, which essentially put all French-ruled Europe under a blockade, demanding that all exports from neutral countries to Europe pass through Britain first. The Orders in Council aroused fierce opposition from the British business community, however, and were abandoned along with the Continental System in 1812.

Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger died in 1806, leaving no one dominant figure in British politics. A coalition that included Pitt's great rival, Charles James Fox, and was known as the "Ministry of All the Talents" proved short-lived. The most successful prime ministers in the later period of the wars were Tories; Spencer Perceval (1762–1812) and Robert Banks Jenkinson (1770–1828), earl of Liverpool. (Perceval was the only Prime Minister to be assassinated). George III's descent into madness in 1810 brought his son into power as prince regent, but by that time the future George IV had lost most of his sympathy with the Whigs and his ascent had little impact on the war effort.

The wars cost Britain approximately £15 billion and 210,000 lives. Victory vastly expanded the empire. The British acquired many new territories, including the Dutch colonies in Ceylon and South Africa, the Spanish Caribbean colony of Trinidad, and the Mediterranean island of Malta. They also expanded their possessions in India. Britain's imperial predominance would not be seriously challenged until the late nineteenth century. The abolition of first the slave trade in 1807 and eventually slavery in the British dominions in 1833 provided Britain with an ideological justification for naval supremacy, as the Royal Navy took on the task of preventing slave trading, not always effectively. Caught up in consolidating their empire, the British in the post-Napoleonic period mostly refrained from active military and diplomatic involvement on the European continent while fighting many wars outside Europe.

Major Impacts of the Napoleonic Wars on the British Society

Domestically, the post-war period was marked by violent repression of dissent, most notably the massacre of Peterloo in 1819, when 11 peaceful demonstrators for parliamentary reform with a broader franchise were massacred by the yeomanry, a local militia under the command of magistrates at a reform meeting outside St. Peter's fields in Manchester. One of the fastest-growing communities in Britain, Manchester lacked parliamentary representation, so interest in parliamentary reform was particularly keen there. Parliament, which continued to be dominated on both the Whig and the Tory sides by landowners, passed a series of protective

tariffs, the Corn Laws, beginning in 1814, to maintain a high price for domestic grain. Resentment of the government's bondage to the aristocratic landed interest was high throughout the country on the part of both the poor and the middle class. George IV's accession to the throne on his father's death in 1820 also produced a vast popular campaign in support of his estranged wife Caroline, seen as a faithful and maligned woman who was a victim of the same evil forces that prevented parliamentary reform. In the end, however, the Caroline agitation came to little.

The development of the steam locomotive railroad caused major changes in the British environment and way of life. The country's first public railroad began service in 1825. The major milestone in the early history of the locomotive railway was the inauguration of the 30-mile run between the industrial centres of Manchester and Liverpool in 1830. The railway expanded dramatically over this period, with railway booms in 1835–1837 and 1844–1847 marked by speculative frenzies far in advance of actual profitability. The railway infrastructure itself grew from a few dozen miles of track in 1830 to more than 8,000 by 1850.

By the late 1820s, British government was becoming less reactionary. In 1828, a Tory government under the duke of Wellington repealed the Test and Corporation Acts, which had been in force since 1673; this opened many positions in national and local government to Protestant Dissenters. Despite vehement opposition from reactionary Tories, the so-called Ultras, Wellington also passed Catholic emancipation, granting political rights to Catholics in 1829. The law was passed mainly to appease the mass movement of Catholic Irish led by Daniel O'Connell (1775–1847), but it was applied throughout the British Isles and, together with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, dissolved the eighteenth-century Anglican "confessional state", in which members of the Church of England monopolized most offices.

Reformers wanted more, specifically the reworking of Britain's archaic parliamentary election system to more accurately represent the British people. This was a particularly sore issue in the industrial areas of the north, where vast urban agglomerations such as Manchester had tiny electorates and little representation. Scotland, too, had a very small electorate and disproportionately low representation in the House of Commons. The Tories, knowing that reform would alter the political landscape to their disadvantage, refused to budge, but the death of George IV in 1830 dissolved Parliament, and the Whigs won the election on a reform platform.

The passage of the Great Reform Bill of 1832 was difficult. The Whigs, led by Prime Minister Earl Grey (1764–1845) in an uneasy alliance with the radicals, got it through the House of Commons. Rejection of the bill by the Tory-dominated House of Lords touched off riots and attacks on the homes of antireform peers. In April 1832, after King William IV (1765–1837; r. 1830–1837) had made his support for the Lords passing reform clear (despite his own doubts on the measure), the lords gave way. The Reform Bill did not bring Britain democracy – nor was it meant to – but it increased the electorate and provided a more uniform set of qualifications based on property for the franchise. Scotland’s electorate shot up 14-fold, a stark contrast to that of England and Wales, which went up only by about a third. Subsequently, the Second Reform Bill in 1867 and the Third Reform Bill in 1884 further broadened the parliamentary franchise, although it remained restricted to males. Other Whig reforms in the 1830s included the abolition of slavery in the British dominions in 1833, the very unpopular New Poor Law establishing the workhouse system for poor relief in 1834, and reform of local government in Scotland and England. The Factory Act of 1833 limited the hours of child labour and set up a system of factory inspectors. Meanwhile, the Church of England was losing institutional and economic independence. Civil marriage was instituted in 1836, although divorce still required a specific act of Parliament dissolving the marriage, rendering it impossible for all but the very wealthy.

The Whigs in power continued to repress popular dissent. The 1830 Swing Riots of farm labourers in southern England, who sought to stop the introduction of the new threshing machines that threatened their livelihoods, were put down by force, as was the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union Movement in 1834. The Tolpuddle Martyrs, six workingmen sentenced to seven years in the penal colony in Australia for having administered illegal oaths to fellow union members, were brought back to England only after a massive petitioning campaign by workers forced the government to yield. Troops were sent to Wales to put down the Rebecca Riots, a movement of small farmers and workers principally aimed at the hated workhouses that lasted from 1839 to 1843. In England the focus of working-class political activity shifted from trade unionism to politics with the goal of securing working-class representation in Parliament. The six demands of the “People’s Charter”, published by a London group dominated by skilled artisans in 1838, included annual parliaments, universal male suffrage, equal electoral districts, the removal of property qualifications for

parliamentary membership, secret ballots, and payment of members of Parliament. “Chartism” dominated working-class politics thenceforth.

The other grave political issue was free trade. A bad harvest in 1836 roused opposition to the Corn Laws, and the Anti-Corn Law League was founded in 1839. The league’s base was in northern industrial communities, particularly Manchester. Its leaders claimed to represent the intelligent and hardworking middle class against the corrupt landed aristocracy. Many free-trade supporters were industrialists who believed cheaper grain would enable them to lower their workers’ wages, and there was little collaboration between the Anti-Corn Law League and the Chartists. The eventual victory of free trade was due to the conversion of the conservative Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel (1788–1850). Peel was the first Prime Minister from an industrial background. His support for the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 was prompted by the beginnings of the Irish potato blight, to which British response was delayed and inadequate, contributing to the loss of a million lives. Peel’s support for free trade cost him his office and divided the Conservatives into a Peelite faction and a larger but less distinguished Protectionist one.

Queen Victoria (1819–1901; r. 1837–1901), one of the longest-reigning monarchs in British history, inherited the throne in 1837. Her accession dissolved the personal union between Britain and Hanover, which unlike Britain followed the Salic law that barred female inheritance. Few Britons regretted the loss. The young queen certainly presented a better face for the monarchy than either of her two immediate predecessors.

Despite glaring internal divisions, the British ruling class easily weathered the storm of 1848 when revolutions rocked the European continent. There was a tense moment in April when the Chartists brought the last of their “monster petitions” to London. Ten thousand special constables were sworn in to deal with them, but the Chartists dispersed without violence, and the movement declined rapidly thereafter. In 1851 the Great Exhibition – the first world’s fair, initiated by Victoria’s husband, Prince Albert (1819–1861) – took place in London. Its hordes of peaceful visitors from all over the world bore witness to Britain’s triumph as the workshop of the world and a model of social and political stability.

Questions and Tasks

1. What country was the most powerful at the end of the seventeenth century? Give specific reasons or examples for your opinion.

2. Name and characterize the main opposing powers in the Nine Years' War (1688–1697).
3. What was John Churchill known for?
4. What important event happened in Britain in 1707?
5. Who was the last Stuart monarch?
6. What dynasty took the English throne after Stuarts? When did it happen?
7. What changes took place in the British Parliament in the eighteenth century?
8. What period is often referred to as the Whig ascendancy?
9. Describe the Jacobite movement and its activities.
10. What famous people lived and worked during the period of the Enlightenment in England?
11. Why do historians refer to the eighteenth century as the “Second Hundred Years’ War”?
12. In what international events was Britain involved in the eighteenth century?
13. Show how the period from the 1750s to the 1860s was really a revolutionary one in British history.
14. What were the reasons for and the results of the last Anglo-French War (1793–1805)?
15. When did Ireland join the United Kingdom?
16. Who was known as the “Ministry of All the Talents”?
17. Do you agree with the statement that the passage of the Great Reform Bill of 1832 was difficult?
18. When was slavery abolished in the British dominions?
19. What was the purpose of the Factory Act of 1833?
20. What caused the Swing Riots in 1830?
21. Where did the Rebecca Riots take place and what was their aim?
22. When was civil marriage instituted?
23. What was the aim of the Anti-Corn Law League? When was it founded?
24. Where and when did the Industrial Revolution take place? How did it change society?
25. How long did Queen Victoria reign?
26. What was the Great Exhibition and why was it important? Where did it take place?

VII. BRITAIN IN THE AGE OF EMPIRE (1851–1922)

The Zenith of the British Empire

The British Empire under Queen Victoria (r. 1837–1901) was at its zenith of power and prestige. The empire included the legacy of British victories in the wars against France in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century and the new conquests that had been made since then. It was also the product of Britain's world-leading industrial economy and unrivalled navy. The queen's assumption of the title Empress of India on January 1, 1877, was an assertion both of British splendour and of the centrality of India in the empire. Much British colonial activity, such as the acquisition of control over the Suez Canal in 1875, was driven by the need to secure India. Britons argued that it was only the possession of India that made their nation a first-rate power. The Indian rebellion of 1857, also known as the Indian Mutiny as it involved Indian troops in British service, briefly seemed to threaten the British position, but it was quickly and brutally suppressed.

Britain was also an avid participant in what was known as the "Scramble for Africa", the process from about 1880 to 1900 by which all of Africa, with the two exceptions of Ethiopia and Liberia, was divided among European colonial powers. Britain came out with more territory than any other power, including Nigeria, most of East Africa, and domination over Egypt.

The empire was neither acquired nor maintained peacefully, and Victorian Britain was constantly engaged in wars on the colonial frontiers. However, only one war was fought against a European power in this period: The Crimean War against Russia was waged from 1853 to 1856, with France and the Ottoman Empire as allies. Despite the blundering of British generals, which destroyed the reputation of some, and the appalling incompetence of much of the army, the war ended in victory. (However, it made the reputation of Florence Nightingale (1820–1910), who campaigned against the abysmally filthy and ill-run hospitals for wounded British soldiers. Nightingale went on to found the modern nursing profession). After the Crimean War, British governments carefully avoided the possibility of engagement in European wars. Adopting a policy of "splendid isolation" (a phrase originally coined by the Canadian politician George Eulas Foster in 1896 but one that caught on quickly in Britain itself), Britain shunned formal Continental alliances that might have drawn it into war with European great powers. This enabled it to maintain a small

army (although there was a large army based in India, paid for by the colony itself) and devote most of its military budget to the world's dominant navy. Although there were also tensions and clashes between Britain and the United States, again the British avoided war, increasingly deferring to the United States in affairs of the Western Hemisphere.

Britain's main worldwide colonial rival was France, possessor of the world's second-largest colonial empire, but the two powers only came close to war once, in the Fashoda Incident of 1898, when a small French military force coming north-eastward from central Africa met British troops coming south from Egypt near the Sudanese town of Fashoda. Viewing their colonial empire as decidedly secondary to their European concerns, the French backed down rather than risk conflict with Britain.

By the end of the century, many Britons viewed the principal foreign threat as Germany, only recently formed into a united nation in 1871. Germany was a rising power both economically and militarily, and its leaders, particularly Victoria's grandson, the bombastic kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1941; r. 1888–1918), occasionally made noises about challenging Britain for world leadership.

One of the empire's important roles in British culture was to provide a vehicle for British identity. Many Scots, Welsh, and Irish served in the colonial army or administration. The glory of the empire was presented as something that all Britons could be proud of, although this propaganda was more successful among the middle classes than among the workers. Imperialism also promoted racism, as the native inhabitants of various British colonies were presented as barbarous or comic figures, in need of British guidance.

Liberals and Conservatives, the Decline of the Gentry

The politics of the 1850s were highly factionalised. However, the factions settled down into a two-party system when the aristocratic Whigs, radicals, and ex-conservative Peelites – supporters of the late Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel, who had broken with the Conservatives over the party's opposition to free trade – coalesced into the Liberal Party. As the electorate grew, politicians cultivated more of a mass appeal. No longer was it sufficient to be a master maneuverer in the backrooms of Westminster: The politician who hoped to be leader of his party and Prime Minister had to cultivate a public image as well.

Often credited as the first politician to create an electorally powerful public image was Henry John Temple, third viscount Palmerston (1784–

1865), who sat in the House of Commons for more than 50 years (while peers of the United Kingdom were barred from the Commons, Lord Palmerston's title was an Irish one) and served twice as Prime Minister, from 1855 to 1858 and from 1859 to his death in 1865. Palmerston, Prime Minister during the Crimean War, was identified with an aggressive foreign policy and a strong, uncomplicated English patriotism. The earl of Shaftesbury, an ally of Palmerston's, was amazed at his celebrity, writing of the election of 1857 "P[almerston]'s popularity is wonderful – strange to say, the whole turns on his name. There seems to be no measure, no principle, no cry, to influence men's minds and determine elections; it is simply 'were you, or were you not? Are you, or are you not, for Palmerston?'" Palmerston was returned to office with a large majority.

Few British politicians have ever crafted such vivid public personalities as the leaders of the generation after Palmerston: Conservative Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881; Prime Minister, 1868, 1874–1880) and his Liberal rival, William Ewart Gladstone (1809–1898; Prime Minister, 1868–1874, 1880–1885, 1886, 1892–1894). Disraeli, nicknamed "Dizzy", a novelist of Jewish descent and without landowning roots, was an odd choice for leadership of the Conservative Party. Gladstone, the "Grand Old Man" or the "People's William", whose political career spanned most of the century, served as prime minister on four separate occasions and traced a political pilgrimage from the right wing of the Conservatives to the left wing of the Liberals. The rivalry of Gladstone and Disraeli, who personally despised each other, gave British politics in this period an unequalled sense of drama.

One trend that can be traced in this period was the steady diminishment of the Whig landowning element in the Liberal Party. Landowners, even from traditional Whig families such as the Cavendish dukes of Devonshire, drifted to the Conservative Party, which better represented their economic interests by its support of protection for British agriculture rather than the free trade/cheap bread policies of the Liberals and shared their concern over the fate of the large landowners of Ireland, increasingly under assault from Irish nationalists who were in some cases supported by the Liberals. The Conservative Party was eventually renamed the Conservative and Unionist Party to reflect its support for the union of Ireland with Britain.

The Liberals did win one final triumph in the years before World War I (1914–1918). This was the political marginalization of the House of Lords, a conservative stronghold where even Liberal majorities in the

Commons could be frustrated. The Parliament Act of 1911 forbade the Lords from rejecting a “money bill” sent up from the Commons, gave the Speaker of the Commons the right to decide which bills were money bills, and stated that bills passed in three consecutive sessions by the Commons would become law regardless of the Lords. The act also shortened the time the Commons could sit without an election from seven years to five. Despite resistance by the Lords, they eventually passed the act, fearing that if they continued to hold it up, the new king, George V (1865–1936; r. 1910–1936), would bow to Liberal pressure and create enough new peers to pack the Lords in its favour. Although the act did not completely marginalize the Lords, they were definitely off the main political stage. Shortly after World War I, a potential Conservative candidate for Prime Minister was rejected by the party leadership and the king because they considered it inadvisable for a Prime Minister to sit in the House of Lords.

The Conservative gain from the landowning element moving from the Liberal to the Conservative Party was mitigated by the fact that landowners were a less dominant element in British life due to the decline of English agriculture and the rise of the industrial economy and financial services. The landed aristocracy and gentry, although still a formidable group at the end of the nineteenth century, had clearly waned in power socially, economically, and politically. All of Queen Victoria’s prime ministers possessed or had acquired land during their political careers, but it was becoming less important in defining the ruling class. Instead they were increasingly defined by the possession of wealth, whatever form it took. Victoria’s son and heir, Edward VII (1841–1910; r. 1901–1910), was particularly notorious for his social preference for the nouveaux riches rather than the traditional landowning families. Among his best friends was Sir Thomas Lipton (1848–1931), the enormously wealthy self-made Scottish grocer who revolutionized the tea business by marketing cheap tea to the masses. Edward’s friends also included rich Jews, which shocked many traditional aristocrats. The growth of cities, where landowners could not hope to have the same influence they did over the rural population, greatly diminished gentry and aristocratic power, as did the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 and the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1885, which broadened the parliamentary franchise to include many more poor and working-class people, who were largely insulated from landowning influence. The agricultural depression of the late nineteenth century was also particularly hard on landowners.

The gentry's political weakening can be seen in the process by which, moving from its position as a powerful group in both major parties, it became increasingly concentrated in the Conservative Party, where it shared power with businesspeople and the lower middle class. By the end of the nineteenth century, the gentry formed a shrinking minority in the House of Commons and the prime minister's cabinet. Even the traditional gentry stronghold of local government was increasingly shared with rich businessmen.

Politically, the gentry was redefined from being a ruling class to one interest group among others. Although the ladies and gentlemen of the landed class maintained their separate cultural identity, they were no longer unquestioned leaders of society.

Irish Nationalism, Welsh Disestablishment and British Politics

One of the biggest issues in British politics was Ireland. The rise of Irish nationalism, dating to the eighteenth century, had produced a parliamentary political movement focused on dismantling the apparatus of British government in Ireland and replacing it with Irish self-government, or home rule. Some more radical nationalists wanted an independent Irish republic, although many would have settled for home rule under the British Crown, as an equal of Britain. Others, such as Charles Stuart Parnell (1846–1891), a Protestant and a landlord, were interested in pushing for home rule as a stage in the process for independence.

Many of the English ruling class hated the possibility of Irish home rule. Traditional anti-Catholicism; the fears of Irish landowners, many of whom were English aristocrats or connected with English aristocratic families, that their property would be lost in home-rule Ireland; and the belief that an independent Ireland would set a precedent for the dissolution of the British Empire all played a role in British resistance. Liberals were more sympathetic to home rule, and many of the aristocrats of the traditional Whig families left the Liberals for the Conservatives in order to defend English rule in Ireland. The greatest English supporter of home rule was Gladstone, but his strongest efforts resulted only in failure.

The Irish issue was complicated by divisions among the Irish themselves, principally on regional and sectarian lines. The majority of the Protestants of the north, many of them descended from Scottish settlers in the seventeenth century, abominated the cause of Irish independence, which they felt would put them under the authority of the hated Catholics – “Home Rule means Rome Rule” was a slogan they used effectively. Like

the Catholic “Home Rulers”, the Irish Protestants, or Orangemen, were represented in the Westminster parliaments, and they combined parliamentary activity with extra-parliamentary action and alliances with English unionists.

Welsh nationalism in the late nineteenth century was centered on religious issues, particularly the privileged position of the established church. The Church of England in Wales was the church of a small minority, dominated by the landowning gentry. The vast majority of the population followed Methodism or one of the other Protestant Dissenting churches, and they deeply resented the obligation to pay tithes to the Church of England. The Church of England, on the other hand, was powerful in Parliament, particularly in the Conservative Party, and wished neither to lose its Welsh tithes nor to set a precedent for disestablishment in England, an idea that was occasionally circulated. A Welsh Disestablishment Bill was finally passed in 1914, but its operation was delayed until 1920. David Lloyd George (1863–1945), the most important Welsh politician since the Welsh-descended Henry Tudor had founded the Tudor dynasty in the fifteenth century, began his career as a supporter of Welsh disestablishment, and never lost his Welsh identity or connection with his Welsh roots.

The Development of the Labour Movement in the Nineteenth Century

The working class was an extremely diverse occupational group. Even at the height of the Industrial Revolution, most working-class people were not factory labourers. In the census of 1851, the two largest groups of labourers were in the traditional sectors of agriculture and domestic service. Even manufacturing workers were not always factory workers. In practice, factory culture was limited to the north of England. The principal centre of population, London, remained much more oriented to small shops. Much of the leadership of the early working-class movement came not from factory workers but from skilled labourers and craftsmen in small manufacturing businesses, such as coach makers. This so-called labour aristocracy formed about 10 percent of the working-class population.

Trade unions gradually grew more powerful and more legitimate as institutions in the late nineteenth century. Unions spread from the original skilled elite to semiskilled and unskilled labour and women workers. The central organization of the British labour movement, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), was founded in 1868. Unions engaged in both industrial actions such as strikes and political lobbying, particularly for

liberalizations of the laws restricting strikes and other trade-union activities, and for extensions of the franchise to workers. A few workers were able to vote under the qualifications of the Reform Bill of 1832, but most continued to be barred from voting. Male workers' access to the franchise was improved by the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884.

The horrific living conditions of the early Industrial Revolution were somewhat alleviated in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although working-class life was still hard, workers received increases in wages and reductions in working hours. The Liberal Gladstone government in 1871 created bank holidays (public holidays in designated Mondays), offering workers a chance to head to the seashore and other places of amusement in throngs. Sanitary reform, although often unpopular due to its authoritarian implementation, helped make working-class districts more habitable with cleaner water and better sewage.

Increased prosperity and leisure contributed to the development of an autonomous working-class society and culture. Workers created friendly societies (credit unions) and building societies with mutual help for loans, home purchases, illnesses, and burials. A cheap working-class press emerged along with characteristic institutions such as the public house, or "pub"; the music hall (a kind of vaudeville); and association football, or soccer. Sport was generally booming in late Victorian Britain. There were divisions between the traditional footballing culture of amateurs and the new professional footballers, which eventually saw the formation of a league of professional teams. Rugby saw a split between the Rugby Union and the Rugby League, which actually developed different sets of rules. Gambling was also popular among male workers. These working-class cultural institutions were often opposed by religious and temperance movements.

Karl Marx (1818–1883), the century's most influential socialist theorist, spent several decades in London but had much less effect in Britain than he did in his native Germany or other Continental countries. The Labour Party stood out among the major European socialist parties for its complete lack of interest in Marxist theory or revolution. All but the most radical Britons accepted the parliamentary system and worked to reform rather than overthrow it. British Marxism was always dominated by intellectuals, and compared with Continental working-class movements, there was very little coordination between intellectuals and workers in British socialism.

One of the most intellectually important of the British socialist movements was the Fabian Society, an organization dedicated to advancing socialism through Fabian strategies, emphasizing patience, reformism, and opportunism rather than revolution. The society took its name from the ancient Roman general Quintus Fabius, known for his cautious tactics in warfare. The Fabians attracted a stunning array of intellectual leaders, including the playwright George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) and the novelist and founder of science fiction H. G. Wells (1866–1946). Its leaders, however, were a married couple: Sydney Webb (1859–1947) and Beatrice Webb (1858–1943), who issued a number of voluminous studies of English working-class society and history. The Fabian Society still exists today.

Nineteenth-century workers mostly supported the Liberals. Some Conservatives, notably Disraeli, dreamed of an alliance of the aristocracy and the workers against the middle classes, but their dreams were in vain. From 1874 to 1880, Disraeli's Conservative government passed several laws on factories, workers' dwellings, and pure food and drugs, but it was defeated in the next election as working-class voters supported the Liberals anyway. The real Conservative base in the lower classes was the white-collar lower-middle class of clerks, a growing segment of society.

The prophet of a labour party separate from the Liberals was Keir Hardie (1856–1915), an Ayrshire coal miner and member of Parliament (MP) who founded the Independent Labour Party (ILP) at Bradford in 1893. The ILP was a socialist party with the declared goal of collective ownership of the means of production, but not a revolutionary one. Its main areas of strength were industrial regions of northern England and Scotland. The ILP failed to find a mass base, and Hardie lost his seat in the general election of 1895.

The trade unions, both industrial and nonindustrial, were the key to a mass-based socialist party. The Labour Representation Committee (LRC), colloquially referred to as the Labour Party, was formed under trade-union auspices in 1900. Other participants in the Committee's creation were the Fabian Society; the Social Democratic Federation (SDF), a Marxist group; and the ILP. Despite the representation of socialists from the Fabians, the SDF, and ILP, the LRC was not a socialist body in its political platform and was more concerned with trade-union rights than reshaping the British economy and polity. British working-class politics would continue to be about getting a better deal for the workers in the capitalist system rather than overthrowing it. Until 1918, the Labour Party had no individual

membership of its own; individuals joined through membership in a union or one of the affiliated groups. As Britain had no salaries for MPs, Labour members were paid by the unions. The close alliance between the Labour Party and the unions, who assumed the principal responsibility for its funding and overall direction, became a central characteristic of British politics.

The LRC drew strength from the response to the Taff Vale judgment of 1901, which made unions financially liable for damages charged against its officials during strikes. Union leaders and officials who thought that organized labour and the right to strike were under renewed assault supported independent political mobilization. The LRC's membership more than doubled by 1903. That year, although it was acquiring a more independent identity, the LRC formed an electoral pact with the Liberal Party wherein the two parties agreed not to oppose each other in constituencies where a competition for votes might return a Conservative. The LRC put up 51 candidates in the general election of 1906 – the same year it formally adopted the name *Labour Party* – of whom 29 were elected, 24 in constituencies the Liberals did not contest. Labour reaped the rewards of its electoral alliance with the Liberals. In 1906 an act passed by a Liberal government, following LRC lobbying, granted trade unions immunity from being sued for damages related to a strike, a key union demand. After that achievement, the party suffered from the loss of the clear mission of union law reform and divisions between trade unionists and socialists as to what the purpose of a Labour Party was. It benefited from the admission of the Miners' Federation in 1909 and the institution of salaries for MPs in 1911, enabling those without an independent income to serve in the Commons, but continued to be a satellite of the Liberals until after World War I.

In the long run, the Liberals grew weaker. Much of the old Whig elite of Liberal aristocrats left for the Conservatives due to Gladstone's Irish policy, and now the Liberals faced a potential rival for the loyalties of the working class in the form of Labour. Most Liberal governments were dependent on Irish nationalist or Labour support, or both.

The working-class challenge was paralleled by another assault on Britain's rulers, from their own wives and daughters. Middle- and upper-class women in the nineteenth century laboured under many disadvantages. They could not be educated past the equivalent of high school, and they were educated to that level at a much lower rate than men. They could not participate in the recognized professions in law, medicine,

or the church. They could not participate in the institutions of electoral politics, although women did participate in political movements outside the government, such as abolitionism. Under the English common law, a married woman could not possess property in her own name; unless special arrangements were made, her property was considered that of her husband. If a woman was stuck in a bad marriage, divorce was very difficult. It was almost impossible for a woman to divorce and receive custody of her children if the husband wanted to keep them. It was much easier, although still difficult by contemporary standards, for a man to divorce a woman than the other way around. It was expected that the daughters in a middle-class family would sacrifice and go without an education in order to support the sons properly.

Middle-class women who did not marry also faced great problems in the early nineteenth century. Their main choices were to live off relatives as a “poor relation” or to be a governess, a woman charged with the education and disciplining of young children. The life of a governess was proverbially difficult and despised, with poor pay and garretlike living conditions; however, such a life was still better than being a maid. One aspect of the governess problem was the fact that members of the middle class had higher expectations than members of the working class. The situation began to improve with the expansion of the educational sector after the mid-nineteenth century, which offered more women the opportunity to be teachers, a relatively more respected profession, but options were still very limited.

A women’s movement, dominated by middle-class women and their concerns, emerged in mid-nineteenth-century Britain for several reasons. Literacy and education among women was increasing. The organization of women taking part in political and humanitarian campaigns and for charitable work increased women’s and men’s awareness of problems caused by lack of education, access to the professions, and the vote. The key to suffragist and women’s rights activities generally was the organizing of large numbers of mostly middle-class women.

By the last third of the nineteenth century, the new women’s movement was winning some victories. The Married Women’s Separate Property Acts of 1870 and 1882 gave married women with property or income some protection against greedy or irresponsible husbands, and women began receiving medical degrees. The first recorded biologically female Briton to receive a medical degree and practice as a surgeon was Dr. James Barry (d. 1865). Born Margaret Ann Bulkley, he spent his

educational and medical career living as a man for more than 50 years; Barry's biological sex was only revealed in an autopsy after his death. The next, Elizabeth Blackwell (1821–1910), obtained her medical degree in America, graduating in 1849 from the Geneva Medical School in New York. The first British woman to be qualified and to practice medicine in Britain itself was Elizabeth Garrett (1836–1917). A pioneer in opening the University of Edinburgh, Britain's leading medical school, to women was Sophia Jex-Blake (1840–1913). Partly through Jex-Blake's efforts, the London School of Medicine for Women was founded in 1874. Parliament gave medical examining bodies the right to certify women in 1876.

The two colleges of Cambridge University for women, Girton and Newnham, were founded in 1869 and 1871. Oxford followed suit a little later, with Lady Margaret Hall founded in 1878 and Somerville College in 1879. Entrance into higher education involved choices. At first, some advocated a separate curriculum for women in higher education with less study of classical languages, math, and science and more domestic skills, such as needlework. However, this curriculum would not enable women to enter universities. The movement for curricula closer to those of male students resulted in the founding of new institutions. The federal system of Oxford and Cambridge – known as the “ancient universities” – was well adapted to the addition of new colleges for women separate from the existing male colleges, but some advocated entry into existing male colleges. Even after the establishment of women's or coeducational institutions, females faced further institutional barriers and resistance from male students, who were generally misogynic and concerned that the entry of women into their institutions would lower their status. Institutions continued to drag their feet on issues such as whether women, once admitted, could take degrees or receive honours. Men still made up the vast majority of university population in the early twentieth century, but this began to change during and after World War I.

Arguments for women's suffrage were based on both the liberal model, in which women, like men, should have the right to participate in the making of the laws by which they are bound; and the separate-spheres model, as some advocates claimed that women's superior virtue would elevate politics by making it more domestic. The issue was complicated by the fact that not all men had the vote. Some men who proclaimed sympathy with the suffragist cause wanted to wait until all men had the vote before extending it to women. The suffrage struggle was therefore a long, tough fight in which much effort had to be spent just getting men to

take the idea seriously. When the idea of women's suffrage was brought before the English parliament of 1832, the one that passed the First Reform Bill, male politicians did not argue against it – they just laughed.

The first elections in which women were allowed to vote were local elections such as school boards and sanitary authorities. These electoral rights were put in the context of women's role of caring for homes and families. The franchise was also offered in colonial areas with a heavy male-to-female population ratio, such as New Zealand, as a way of attracting female settlers.

Antifeminist and antisuffragist arguments included those based on women's intellectual inferiority and poor emotional discipline, as well as religious arguments based on the divine origins of traditional gender roles. Some claimed that the vote would make women unfeminine and undomestic, and that a country that allowed women to vote would make men effeminate, unable to defeat the military forces of more manly nations. It was argued that even without the vote, women could participate indirectly in the polity by influencing the votes of their husbands or sons. Some women, usually supporters of the political right, opposed suffrage and even formed organizations such as the Women's Anti-suffrage League.

There were a variety of suffragist positions, ranging from moderate suffragists who believed in lobbying MPs and cabinet ministers to the more confrontational radical suffragists who, influenced by the Irish nationalist struggle, believed in disruptive tactics and the destruction of property. The largest radical suffrage organization was the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), founded in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst (1858–1928) and her daughters Christabel (1880–1958) and Sylvia (1882–1960). The founding of the WSPU was followed by a wave of militant suffrage activism.

The Boer War (1899–1902) and British Policy in the Early Twentieth Century

The British governing class faced external as well as internal challenges in the early twentieth century. The most draining colonial war Britain fought was against European-descended South African farmers, known as Afrikaners or by the derogatory nickname of “Boers”, who sought independence from the British Empire. Britain, on the other hand, considered the Afrikaner states, rich in gold and diamonds, a priceless possession and had long wished to integrate all of South Africa into one

British union. Britain could no more allow the upstart Afrikaners to win than it could anti-British subjects in any of its colonies.

The Boer War (also known as the South African War) from 1899 to 1902 not only brought home to Britain the limitations of its army; it also made clear to many how widely the country was disliked. The Afrikaners won the sympathy of virtually every other country, which admired the “plucky farmers” and their struggle against the world’s mightiest empire. Horror stories of the concentration camps (the first use of the term) in which the British held Afrikaners, including women and children, circulated throughout the world. Particularly sympathetic was Germany and its erratic kaiser, William II (Wilhelm), who had a love-hate relationship with Britain, the country of his grandmother, Queen Victoria. Such was British power, however, that all the sympathy the Afrikaners received translated into very little actual support.

In the aftermath of its victory in the Boer War, Britain abandoned its policy of “splendid isolation” and started to look for allies. The first fruit of this new policy was the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902. It was principally directed against Russia, and it probably benefited the Japanese more than the British. But the traditional view of Russia as Britain’s main potential enemy was giving way to fear of Germany, a fear that eventually led Britain to ally with its former rivals France and Russia. British strategic thinking was increasingly influenced by what is often described as history’s first arms race: the competition with Germany to build more effective armoured warships – the dreadnoughts. Britain also feared the German-financed Berlin-to-Baghdad railway, which, if completed, would have offered the Germans a way of getting an army to the Middle East and the borders of India.

In 1903 Edward VII, a well-known admirer of France and its culture, went to Paris, a visit often credited with smoothing the way for the Anglo-French (“Entente Cordiale”) Entente between France and Britain concluded the following year. Edward’s affability helped dissolve some of the French hostility to Britain engendered by the history of conflicts between the two states and ongoing colonial rivalries, but the real basis of the alliance was the desire for cooperation against Germany, whose kaiser posed perpetual diplomatic headaches for his government with his impulsiveness.

Alliance with Russia was a more difficult problem. Fears of Russian aggression against India persisted into the twentieth century. British army officer Francis Younghusband (1863–1942) led a bloody but ineffectual

expedition to Tibet in 1903 and 1904 based on rumours of Russian influence there. However, the defeat of Russia by Japan in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905 lessened British fear of Russian aggression against the empire. In 1907 Britain and Russia agreed on the Anglo-Russian Entente, which resolved various colonial questions by defining the two nation's relative zones of influence in Afghanistan, Iran, and Tibet. (The Afghans, Iranians, and Tibetans were not consulted). Along with the existing agreements between France and Russia and Britain and France, this agreement constituted the Triple Entente, implicitly directed against Germany.

Britain and World War I (1914–1918)

In 1914 the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary by a Serbian nationalist led to a war that lasted until 1918 and involved every major world power. Known at the time as the Great War, it is now known as World War I, and it had a deep effect on every European country. From the British point of view, the devastating conflict was the culmination of years of colonial and naval rivalry with the rising power of Germany.

The war's early days saw a great deal of enthusiasm. Most suffragettes, Irish Home Rulers, and trade-union leaders rallied behind the national banner. Masses of men volunteered, often with the hope that the war would be over quickly; in fact, it dragged on for four bloody years. The style of warfare practiced on the western front (as opposed to the eastern front, where the Germans were fighting the Russians) involved two parallel lines of trenches, one occupied by the Allied – British and French – forces and the other by the Germans. The use of machine guns, poison gas, and barbed wire ensured that casualties were appallingly high, and after the first few months of the war, the trenches moved very little. The British army had to change from a small force mainly designed and equipped to fight small colonial wars to a mass army like those of the Continental powers France and Germany.

In 1915 the British government attempted to break the stalemate on the western front and get supplies to its beleaguered ally, Russia, by an attack on Gallipoli in the Dardanelles, then in the possession of Germany's ally, the Ottoman Empire. Opening the straits between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea would allow the allies access to Russian ports. The first attempt, heavily backed by First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, was to force the straits by ships alone. The naval attack on March 15 failed

as British and French ships ran into Turkish mines – a failure that led to Churchill's being forced out of the cabinet. The Liberal Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith (1852–1928), abandoned his attempt to run the war from a one-party Liberal government in favour of a coalition government with the Conservative party. The second Gallipoli attack, launched on April 25 after the Turks and their German advisers had had time to fortify the straits, involved troops. British and French forces were joined by the Australia and New Zealand Corps (ANZAC). The attack proved a bloody and expensive failure, and Allied forces completed their evacuation from Gallipoli on January 8, 1916. Many New Zealanders and even more Australians resented what they saw as poor British leadership, which had resulted in the wasted deaths of the ANZAC troops.

The British economy also had to gear itself for the mass production of munitions and other supplies of war. David Lloyd George was successful as minister of munitions, and he used that success to climb to the position of Prime Minister in 1916, displacing the ineffectual Liberal leader Asquith. He formed a coalition government of Liberal, Conservative, and Labour party members. It was under the Lloyd George coalition that Britain and its allies (including the United States, which had joined the war in 1917, but not including Russia, which had left the war after the Russian Revolution the same year) forced the surrender of Germany and its allies in 1918.

Casualties were massive: between 750,000 and 800,000 Britons died in the war. Unlike World War II, these were overwhelmingly found among the military itself; there were relatively few civilian casualties. Scotland was particularly hard hit, as was the British aristocracy and gentry, which still made a disproportionate contribution to the officer corps. The western front accounted for most of the casualties.

The war had profound cultural and social effects. It accelerated the decline of the gentry as a ruling force and the decline of the social order headed by aristocratic ladies and gentlemen. The traditional aristocratic bastion in the army, the cavalry, was revealed as militarily obsolescent on the western front. The predominantly upper-class military leadership was discredited in the war by the failure of most of the offensives and the endless, futile slaughter of trench warfare. The traditional military values of individual courage and heroism proved useless or even suicidal in the trenches. British military heroes tended to be drawn from peripheral fronts. T. E. Lawrence (1888–1935), also known as Lawrence of Arabia, who fought in the British-supported Arab revolt against Germany's ally the

Ottoman Empire, was one such hero, despite the peripheral and minor contribution to Allied victory the revolt made. Other heroes were the “flying aces” of the air war. The top British ace was Edward Mannock (1887–1918), officially credited with 47 kills of enemy aircraft, although some have claimed a total as high as 73.

The war set off a vigorous yet fleeting cultural reaction against things German, of which the longest-lasting legacy was the renunciation of all German titles by the British royal family and their relatives. In addition, the royal house was renamed from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, after Queen Victoria’s German husband Albert, to Windsor, after the royal palace of Windsor.

The exaltation of democracy as the war’s ideological focus, although taken less seriously in Britain than in the United States, meant that what remained of the domination of the aristocracy and gentry no longer had any ideological justification. The United Kingdom was the last remaining “gentlemanly” power, but even in Britain the necessities of organizing the country for war had brought labour leaders, businessmen, and the middle classes generally to the fore. A famous description of the first post-war parliament, dominated by the Conservatives, is sometimes attributed to John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946), the great economist, and sometimes to the Conservative politician Stanley Baldwin (1867–1947): MPs were “hard-faced men who looked like they had done well out of the war”.

Despite victory for Britain, World War I ended the optimism of nineteenth-century British civilization. It was no longer possible to believe that the growth of internationalism, the creation of international institutions, and the intertwining of national economies would make war obsolete. The great liberal European democracies, Britain and France, both lost the faith that they represented the future, which seemed to be American, Soviet, or even fascist (the first fascist leader, Benito Mussolini, took power in Italy in 1923). Wartime direction of the economy further weakened nineteenth-century liberal faith in the free market. The pre-war period came to be viewed through a roseate haze of nostalgia, causing many who looked back on it as a golden age to grossly exaggerate the social harmony of the period.

Britain after World War I

The years following World War I wrought a sea change in politics that made Britain a fully democratic country for the first time. Much the immediate legislation passed in the war’s aftermath was a revival of

initiatives put on hold in 1914. In 1918 women above the age of 30 finally won the right to vote and run for Parliament. Many British politicians put this action in the context of gratitude for women's participation in the war effort. The Fourth Reform Act of 1918 also broadened the suffrage to all men over age 21 capable of proving six months' residence. Women were eventually granted suffrage on the same basis as men in 1928. Female suffrage did not have much immediate effect on politics: Women tended to vote the same way as men of their class, sect, and region, and very few entered parliamentary politics for the first few decades it was open to them. The first woman to serve in the Commons was an immigrant from America, Nancy Astor (1879–1964). She was elected as a Conservative for Plymouth Sutton in a by-election in 1919 (A by-election is held when a seat falls vacant during a Parliamentary session).

Welsh disestablishment went into effect in 1920. The Church of England in Wales became the Church in Wales. Its bishops lost their seats in the House of Lords and were severed from dependence on the archbishop of Canterbury, except insofar as they remained part of the worldwide Anglican communion of which Canterbury was the titular head.

Another problem whose solution had been put off until the end of the war was that of the relationship of Britain and Ireland. Unlike the suffrage and Welsh issues, it had actually become more difficult to solve during the war. In 1916 a Dublin rising, based on the hope of German assistance, had briefly proclaimed an Irish republic. British authorities had suppressed it with no difficulty, but execution of the leaders had made them martyrs for Ireland and alienated a majority of the Irish Catholic population. In 1922 British alienation of the Irish people and the terrorist activities of Sinn Féin, the Irish nationalist underground organization, forced the British to grant self-government to most of Ireland, while the Protestant-dominated north remained part of the United Kingdom with representation in Westminster. Although southern Ireland – Eire – had won de facto independence, it took more than a decade to transform it into de jure independence, and the Irish economy remained closely linked and essentially subordinated to the British one into the late twentieth century.

Britain entered the League of Nations, a pet project of the American president Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924; president, 1913–1921), with the purpose of putting an end to war through international cooperation. Since the United States did not join the league, and Soviet Russia and Germany were initially excluded, Britain was the league's dominant power along with France. The British Empire had gained huge new territories from its

victory in the war in the Middle East and Africa. The new territories, mostly taken from the old German colonial empire or the fallen Ottoman Empire, were held as League of Nations mandates with the proclaimed goal of ultimate independence rather than colonies, but in practice there was little difference between the old colonies and the new mandates. A particularly problematic area was Palestine, where Britain formally supported the establishment of a Jewish homeland, as advocated by Zionism, the Jewish nationalist movement that had emerged in the late nineteenth century as a solution to the poor living conditions and shaky political situations in which Jews in the Diaspora often found themselves. The alliance between Britain and the Zionist movement was formally proclaimed in the Balfour Declaration of 1917, named after Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour (1848–1930). This conflicted with the promises that Britain had made to Arab nationalists during the war in order to gain their support against the Ottoman Turks. It also conflicted with the Sykes-Picot agreement between Britain and France in 1916, which allowed for a nominally independent Arab state or Arab federation in the Middle East but in practice divided the region into British and French mandates. (The agreement is named after the British and French negotiators, Sir Mark Sykes and Georges Picot). The conflicting expectations of Britain, the Zionist movement, and Palestine's Arab population would bedevil the British until 1948.

The empire was under increasing strain in many places. The most important of all of Britain's colonies, India, had a rising nationalist movement with a charismatic leader, Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948). A series of nationalist demonstrations and riots and British responses at the Indian community of Amritsar led to the Amritsar massacre of April 13, 1919, in which more than 300 unarmed Indians were shot down by British troops. Many British people were shocked and horrified when news of the massacre and the other cruelties inflicted on the people of Amritsar reached Britain, but many others approved of the military's action.

The post-war imperial situation brought about the fall of David Lloyd George and with him Britain's last Liberal-led government. Britain's ally Greece was attempting to establish control over Constantinople and a section of Asia Minor and facing a powerful and resurgent Turkish national movement. When Turkish forces confronted British and French troops at the town of Chanak on the southern coast of the Dardanelles in September 1922, Lloyd George believed that Britain should involve itself directly against Turkey, while a war-weary populace

and the Conservative leadership favoured working out an arrangement with the Turks and abandoning the post-war occupation. Labour had left the coalition after the war, and many Liberals continued to stand outside it, so Lloyd George was dependent on the votes of the Conservative Party to stay in power. His rashness led the Conservatives to leave the coalition, resulting in the fall of the government and the end of Lloyd George's career as a national leader.

The Chanak affair was also a milestone in the British Empire's disintegration. While the so-called white dominions – Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa – had followed Britain into World War I without hesitation, they were much less willing to become involved in a prospective British war against Turkey. Prime Minister Mackenzie King of Canada refused to back Lloyd George, claiming that Canada had not been consulted. Australia and South Africa also refused to back Britain.

Questions and Tasks

1. What country was Britain's worldwide colonial rival in the nineteenth century?
2. Why did many of the gentry and landowners move from the Liberal to the Conservative Party?
3. Describe the religious diversity within English society at the end of the nineteenth century.
4. Show how the second half of the nineteenth century was a golden age for the novel in England.
5. Did the workers have right to vote in the nineteenth century? Provide a detailed answer.
6. What were the foundations of the Fabian Society?
7. Which political party did nineteenth-century workers support?
8. Describe the difficulties which middle-class women encountered in the nineteenth century.
9. What was the reason for the Boer War (1899–1902)?
10. What danger did Germany represent for Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century?
11. Describe the reasons for and the results of World War I (1914–1919).
12. Why did Britain enter the League of Nations?

VIII. AN AGE OF CRISES (1922–1945)

The General Strike of 1926

The fall of the Lloyd George coalition in 1922 was followed by a short spell of Conservative rule. However, the election of December 1923 led to the formation of Britain's first government headed by the Labour Party. The Labour Prime Minister was the Scottish socialist Ramsay MacDonald (1866–1937). MacDonald was the illegitimate son of a Scottish farm worker and a housemaid, a background that was a startling departure from that of previous prime ministers. The mere fact of a Labour government was considerably more dramatic than anything the government actually accomplished. In many aspects, including financial, MacDonald and his cabinet were more concerned with demonstrating that Labour could run the country responsibly than with advancing a socialist agenda. The first Labour government was short-lived, lasting less than a year, but it did establish a precedent for Labour as a party of government. The Liberal Party lost its place as the main party of opposition to the Conservatives and never again formed a government.

Despite Labour's success in forming a government, electoral politics were not the sole weapon of the workers' movement. From midnight on May 3 to May 12, 1926, Britain endured a general strike in which the members of many of the unions belonging to the Trades Union Congress (TUC) walked off their jobs. Although strikes were nothing new in the British labour movement, a general strike calling out workers in a broad array of industries was a new and untested weapon. The strike began as an expansion of one by the Miners Union, and then locked in a bitter struggle against coal-mine owners who wanted to reduce wages and increase working hours. The TUC's leaders hoped that the threat of a general strike would cause the government to intervene to break the deadlock between miners and mine owners.

Negotiations between the TUC and the Conservative government led by Stanley Baldwin came to nothing. The TUC leadership called out some of its members or ordered them to strike – including the transport workers, workers in heavy industry, printers, and workers in gas and electricity – while it held in reserve members of other industries. Solidarity was nearly total, as all workers ordered to leave their jobs, about 2.5 million, did so. However, the government had also had time to prepare and was able to continue essential services with extensive use of middle- and upper-class volunteers who did such things as drive milk trains and trucks with food

supplies. Volunteers also served as special constables to maintain order. Later, many volunteers would look back on the experience as an exciting adventure.

Although there was some violence, neither the TUC leadership nor the government (with the exception of the always pugnacious chancellor of the exchequer, Winston Churchill (1874–1965) wanted a violent confrontation. Troops were not called upon to maintain order except in the London docks, traditional areas of violent labour disputes. In some areas, police and strikers played football matches, although there were also battles in the street. About 4,000 workers were arrested during the strike, and about another 3,000 were charged with various offences afterward.

The strike ended when the government offered to sponsor an agreement between the miners and mine owners that required the owners to reorganize the mines and improve working conditions before wage reductions could be imposed on the miners. The TUC accepted and brought the strike to an end, much to the disappointment of many rank-and-file workers. The miners refused the settlement and held out for another six months. In the end they were forced to accept lower wages, longer hours, and no improvements in conditions.

The general strike was followed by a Conservative-led crackdown on unions that made striking harder and established the principle that there was no right to strike to exert pressure on the public at large.

The Great Depression (1929–1933)

Britain faced the greatest economic challenge of the post-war years beginning in 1929, as the world was racked by the economic slowdown known as the Great Depression. Although Britain suffered from the depression, it was less affected than were some other countries, notably Germany and the United States. British unemployment remained concentrated in the working class rather than spreading into the middle class. At the worst time during the early 1930s, the country had only about 3 million unemployed, and the fact that the British economy was already suffering before the crash meant that they had less far to fall. Those British who remained employed also benefited from falling prices, and Britain recovered from the depression relatively quickly.

The Great Depression, like the Great War, led people to further question the viability of the bourgeois order based on parliamentary democracy and traditional liberal economics based on free trade. Britain even passed a tariff law, breaking with its free-trade tradition, and, in a

move of great symbolic if not practical importance, went off the gold standard in 1931. The British economist John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946) put forth his new economic theories at this time. Keynes denounced the balanced-budget orthodoxy that treated government finance as household finance on a larger scale, claiming that in a recession or depression it was good for a government to go into deficit spending, in order to generate economic activity and pull the economy out of its doldrums.

It is testimony to the depression's limited effect on British society and the stability of British political culture that no successful charismatic leaders with the influence of America's Franklin Roosevelt or Germany's Adolph Hitler emerged in Britain. The dominant political figure of the 1930s in Britain was the Conservative Stanley Baldwin (1867–1947). A shrewd parliamentary politician, Baldwin was able to present himself as rooted in English tradition. The leaders of the Labour movement were also cautious and not inclined to break with the parliamentary tradition.

Despite the persistence of parliamentarianism in Britain, not all were content. In politics, many, such as the Conservative-turned-Labour-turned-independent aristocrat Sir Oswald Mosely (1896–1980), thought that parliamentary democracy, often stigmatised as a "talking-shop", was simply inadequate to solve the problems facing industrial society, and that more authoritarian or dynamic forms of rule were necessary. British intellectuals – such as the socialist Eric Blair, better known by his pen name of George Orwell (1903–1950), or the writer, painter, and fascist sympathizer Wyndham Lewis (1882–1957) – became more willing to embrace radical solutions of the left or right (although not to the extent that Continental ones were). In their estimate the fascist and communist countries seemed to be coping with the depression better, and this was often adduced as evidence of the superiority of authoritarian government and a planned economy. Some conservatives, even though rejecting a fascist or non-democratic solution for their own country, admired Germany's fascist Reich chancellor Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) and Italy's dictator Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) as dynamic men of action who were doing the best thing for their own countries. The maverick politician Winston Churchill could be counted among Mussolini's British admirers. He saw the Italian dictator as a man of action, a staunch anti-communist, and even a possible ally against Hitler's Germany. Given the success of Hitler's diplomacy in the 1930s, during which Germany recovered much of what it had lost in World War I, dictatorships seemed to be politically as well as economically more successful. The pessimism that gripped many

practitioners of traditional politics can be summed in the phrase used by Baldwin while Prime Minister in a speech before the House of Commons, that “a democracy is always two years behind the dictator”.

There were several British fascist movements, of which by far the most successful was Mosely’s British Union of Fascists (BUF), founded in 1932 as an amalgamation of several smaller fascist groups. Mosely, a former Conservative MP, Labour cabinet minister, and leader of the short-lived New Party, was frustrated by what he perceived as the inaction of parliamentary politics and attracted to the dynamism and authoritarianism of fascism. Following the model of Mussolini’s Italian fascists, the BUF wore black shirts and came to identify themselves as Blackshirts. As time went on, Mosely’s movement increasingly focused on anti-Semitism. The party had some success appealing to voters in the east end of London but abstained from running candidates in the parliamentary election of 1935 with the slogan “Fascism next time”. The next Parliamentary election would be 10 years later, by which time fascism was resoundingly unpopular.

Like fascism, communism never became a mass movement in Britain; however, it was moderately more successful. Communism managed to attract enough support from isolated pockets of workers to elect an occasional MP, something the fascists never managed. Communism also became more popular among some British intellectuals and scientists, including the crystallographer J. D. Bernal (1901–1971) and the poet W. H. Auden (1907–1973). This was not necessarily based on concern for the workers, although sometimes it was. The idea of a planned society and economy, promoted by Soviet sympathizers, was also particularly appealing to those frustrated with the “irrationality” of British life and politics and hoping for a more technocratic society run by “experts” rather than politicians or press lords. Many of the leaders of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) put as much faith in the growth of science as they did in the revolutionary actions of the working class. Not all left-wing intellectuals were sympathetic to the Soviet Union. Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), the great mathematician and philosopher, was one of the first Western leftists to turn strongly against the Soviets, whose authoritarianism and violence he detested. There was also a British community of Trotskyists, followers of the defeated and exiled Russian communist leader Leon Trotsky (1879–1940), who believed that the Soviet Union was not a true communist state.

Like all communist parties of the time, the CPGB followed the party line – the directives laid down by the Soviets through the Communist International, or Comintern, the international organization of communist parties. Since the Soviets were primarily concerned with Russian interests, they were often oblivious of the effects of their decrees on communist parties in other nations. As one of the smaller parties in the Comintern, the CPGB had little effect on its decisions.

An important moment for the British left was the Spanish civil war (1936–1939), in which the forces of the Second Spanish Republic, backed by communists, socialists, and anarchists, fought the conservative Falange led by Francisco Franco and backed by fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Although the British government retained a neutrality that was pro-Franco in practice, British communists, Trotskyists, and leftists volunteered for the cause of the Spanish Republic (and British fascists volunteered for the other side). Many British leftists came back disillusioned with the brutalities of the Republicans, and particularly the Stalinists. Franco's victory was seen as another triumph for fascism. The best-known British memoir expressing this disillusionment was George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* (1938).

The Statute of Westminster (1931)

The so-called white dominions – British colonies of settlement that included Canada, Newfoundland (then administratively separate from Canada), Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa – had been growing increasingly eager for self-determination within the British Empire. World War I, in which colonial troops had died for what were perceived as narrowly British interests, had further alienated some people in the colonies. Australians were particularly resentful at what they viewed as poor British leadership contributing to the slaughter of Australians and New Zealanders in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915.

The growing independence of Britain's white dominions was formalized in the Statute of Westminster in 1931. The statute established the dominions' legislative freedom, as well as that of the Irish Free State, and it continues today to be the framework in which those states that acknowledge the British monarch as their head of state operate – although both Ireland (1949) and South Africa (1961) eventually became republics, and Ireland severed all ties to Britain at the same time. By restricting the new status to colonies of white settlement, the statute emphasized the

racial nature of the British Empire. Britain and the dominions were joined in the “British Commonwealth”.

The Abdication Crisis

The reorganized British Empire faced a crisis at the very top of its leadership in 1936. The death of King George V, who had restored respectability and a middle-class lifestyle to the monarchy after the reign of his raffish father Edward VII, was the first great royal occasion broadcast on the radio, followed by millions. His son and successor, Edward VIII (1894–1972; r. 1936), was initially very popular, but he eventually provoked one of the greatest crises in the history of the British monarchy.

The unmarried Edward had fallen in love with a twice-divorced American woman, Wallis Warfield Simpson (1895–1986). Edward’s position was complicated by his role as supreme governor of the Church of England, which at the time did not allow divorced persons with living ex-spouses such as Simpson, to remarry. In addition, Edward was not only king of the United Kingdom but of the British Commonwealth. The Commonwealth prime ministers, representing societies more rural and socially conservative than England, were particularly resistant to the idea of Simpson becoming their queen. Various solutions were proposed, from Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin’s suggestion that Edward keep Simpson as a mistress (rejected by Edward) to Edward’s idea of marrying Simpson morganatically – that is, without her becoming queen.

The issue split British politics. Older members of the establishment – led by Baldwin; Edward’s mother, Queen Mary (1867–1953); and Archbishop of Canterbury Cosmo Gordon Lang (1864–1945) – took an uncompromising position, putting all the pressure they could on Edward to abdicate. Other politicians, mostly political outsiders such as the anti-Baldwin conservative Churchill and the Canadian immigrant and newspaper magnate Max Aitken, Lord Beaverbrook (1879–1964), supported Edward. The eventual, but controversial, solution was for Edward to abdicate in favour of his brother George, duke of York, who became George VI (1895–1952; r. 1936–1952). George was a solid, dull family man, a great contrast with his flamboyant brother. Edward departed Britain to marry Simpson, not to return for several decades. The couple received the title of Duke and Duchess of Windsor, although the royal family, with a touch of spite, denied the duchess the title of Royal Highness that she coveted.

The Formation of the BBC

The new technology of radio led to the formation of a state organization for broadcasting, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The BBC was chartered late in 1926 as the successor to the British Broadcasting Company. It was noted for its financing structure, in which owners of radios paid a license fee to support broadcasting. (This model would later be adapted to television when the BBC expanded into that field). Advertising, viewed as crass and commercial, was shunned.

The BBC, dominated by its director general, the stern Scottish Calvinist John Reith (1889–1971), was a culturally elitist organization. It broadcast much classical music and required its news readers and other broadcasters to have a southern English, upper-class accent that came to be known as “BBC English”. Regional dialects were to be used only by comedians. Politicians gradually came to employ radio for delivering speeches, adapting to it with greater or lesser degrees of success. The greatest of all British radio orations were Winston Churchill’s addresses when he was Prime Minister during World War II, but Stanley Baldwin was another adept radio speaker who quickly learned that an intimate style was more effective than speaking to a political crowd in public.

Great Britain before World War II (1939–1945)

World War II was a central event in both the politics and the culture of twentieth-century Britain, but the British were drawn into war only reluctantly. The Conservative government under Neville Chamberlain (1869–1940), Baldwin’s successor, made several attempts to prevent war between Britain and Nazi Germany. The Chamberlain government had been one of marked efficiency and centralization. Chamberlain was a top-down leader, more like an American president than a parliamentary leader like Baldwin, who worked by consensus. The Chamberlain government had made great strides on rearmament, but this was widely seen as a means of preventing another war rather than preparing to fight it. Chamberlain’s strategy of appeasement was aimed at giving Hitler the territorial and other concessions that he wanted, with the hope that he, like Chamberlain and the leaders of Britain’s main ally, France, ultimately wanted to avoid war. Some in Britain felt that the Treaty of Versailles (1919) following German defeat in World War I had been overly punitive, and that once Germany was restored to the dominant position in Eastern Europe that it had held before the war, it would settle down into the community of nations. Some also argued that the real enemy was the Soviet Union, and that a strong

Germany would be a bulwark against Bolshevism. These beliefs were more common on the Conservative side. Labour and the left generally, although strongly opposed to war, were not hostile to the Soviet Union and tended to believe in collective security and the League of Nations rather than appeasement. However, the league had lost authority in the face of German, Italian, and Japanese infringements of its tenets in the 1930s, and by the end of the decade it was basically a relic.

The most controversial act of appeasement diplomacy was the Munich agreement of 1938, which arranged for the secession of the German-inhabited areas of Czechoslovakia to Germany, essentially leaving the rest of Czechoslovakia defenceless in the face of further German aggression. Appeasement remains historically controversial, but it was ultimately based on a misreading of Hitler's nature and intentions as well as an intense desire not to become involved in another war like World War I.

The British were very aware of the weak position in which they had come out of the last world war, despite winning it. Many British leaders thought that another major war, win or lose, would mean the destruction of Great Britain and the British Empire. Their fear of another war was accentuated by fear of new military technology, particularly of the bomber. Many exaggerated the damage that bombers would do to cities in the event of war. The British were actually pioneers in the use of bombing in war, having bombed the civilian populations of Iraqi villages to put down a rebellion in 1922. The government anticipated more bombing deaths in the first night of the war than would actually happen during the entire war and estimated that 100,000 tons of bombs would be dropped in the first 14 days, a total not reached in the entire war. Many British people believed the deliberate German exaggerations of the power of the German air force – the Luftwaffe – and overestimated the German bomber resources that could or would be devoted to Britain.

Appeasement was generally supported by the British people. In the vast majority of cases, this was not because of sympathy for Hitler, a widely despised figure in Britain, but because of the desire to avoid war and a general lack of interest in foreign affairs. On his return from Munich, Chamberlain was met with wild cheering. Winston Churchill and the small band of politicians who also supported an increased military budget and a confrontational approach to Germany were politically marginalized. The key moment in moving Britain to a more confrontational posture was the period after the Munich agreement, when Germany annexed what

remained of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, thus violating the Munich understanding that Germany was not making further demands on Czechoslovakia. The pogrom against German Jews and their property on November 9–10, 1938 – known as *Kristallnacht* – also aroused horror and disgust in Britain, hardening anti-German attitudes. The British people began to believe that war was necessary and inevitable rather than something to be avoided at all cost. After the German takeover of Czechoslovakia, it was clear that Hitler's next target would be Poland. Britain and Poland drew closer together and finally signed the Common Defence Pact on August 25, two days after a Nazi-Soviet pact aimed at the partition of Poland. What actually precipitated the outbreak of the war was the German invasion of Poland on September 1. Britain's declaration of war on Germany followed on September 3.

Great Britain in World War II; Churchill's Government

The war's early stages were marked by widespread popular support. Even the British dominions, which had no vested interest in what happened in Eastern Europe, declared war immediately following the British declaration. Pacifists became and remained a marked minority in the war. The one exception to this pattern were communists who followed the Moscow line, which directed that any potential war between Britain and Germany was to be treated as an imperialist war and thus to be opposed. However, many British communists were appalled by the cynicism of the nonaggression agreement between Germany and the Soviet Union and left the movement over the issue.

Early optimism ended with the quick fall of Poland and increasingly successful German attacks in Western Europe. With Poland easily defeated in less than a month, the Germans in a strong position to invade France, the Soviet Union a partner of Germany in the division of Eastern Europe, and the United States neutral, the situation for Britain looked grim indeed. It looked even grimmer for the government of Neville Chamberlain, ill-prepared for war and embarrassed by the failure of appeasement. Winston Churchill, identified as the premier supporter of an aggressive policy that had been vindicated by events, was brought into the government in his old World War I position as first lord of the admiralty. With the failure of the campaign against the German occupation of Norway in May 1940, it became clear that the Chamberlain government was unwilling or unable to carry on the war seriously, and it was overturned in the House of

Commons as dissident Conservatives joined with Labour. (Chamberlain was very ill at this time and died shortly thereafter).

Britain was governed during the war by a coalition of all parties led by Churchill with a cabinet numerically dominated by Conservatives, including the new Prime Minister. Churchill's comeback was a stunning surprise, as he had been widely disliked in the Conservative Party for his association with the disastrous Gallipoli campaign during World War I. He was viewed as a brilliant but dangerous egomaniac, and Baldwin and Chamberlain had excluded him from Conservative governments during the 1930s. Labour also distrusted him due to his strong opposition to unions and nationalist movements in the British Empire. Churchill's strong support of rearmament and a confrontational policy with Germany had been perceived as another one of his eccentric crusades, like his support for Edward VIII during the abdication crisis. It took a threat to national existence to bring him back into power, and even then he was the second choice of the Conservative leadership, who would have preferred the ex-appeaser Edward Wood, viscount Halifax (1881–1959). However, in addition to the fact that Halifax suffered under what was now perceived as the handicap of a seat in the House of Lords rather than the Commons, Churchill was widely perceived as the one person with the vigour and leadership ability to carry on the war. Halifax quietly withdrew from consideration, and Churchill became Prime Minister on May 9, 1940. His government would be even more presidential than Chamberlain's, with unprecedented control over the military as well as the civilian branches of the war effort, and very different from the governmental arrangements of World War I.

After the formation of the Churchill government, the war was marked by electoral and parliamentary peace among all parties. General elections were suspended for the duration of the war, so there was no election for 10 years, from 1935 to 1945. In the coalition cabinet the Conservatives tended to focus on issues relating to war and diplomacy, while Labour concentrated on the home front. The Labour leader, Clement Atlee (1883–1967), was the deputy Prime Minister and chaired the Lord President's Committee, which ran the war's domestic side, while Churchill concentrated on the military and diplomatic side. The powerful union official Ernest Bevin (1881–1951) was particularly vital in the war cabinet as minister for labour and national service, with responsibility for the mobilization and allocation of labour. There was industrial peace for the duration of the war. The allocation of resources in both labour and matériel

required unprecedented state involvement and the mobilization of much of society, including women and youth.

Almost immediately, the new Churchill government faced another disaster: the fall of France. One of the most heavily mythologized actions of the war was the evacuation of Dunkirk from May 26 to June 4, 1940. About two weeks after Churchill came to power, the bulk of the British troops in France had their backs to the English Channel, surrounded by the Germans. Most of them (along with many French and other Allied soldiers) were successfully evacuated by the Royal Navy, with the help of many civilian sailors in small boats. The “Dunkirk spirit” became a byword for persistence in the face of disaster. However, despite giving British morale a badly needed shot in the arm, Dunkirk was a catastrophe from a purely military point of view, as the British Expeditionary Force had to abandon nearly all of its equipment to the Germans. Shortly thereafter, Churchill, who was prepared to continue the war regardless of what happened at Dunkirk, rejected a peace offer from Hitler without discussion and announced his war aim: total victory. Given the nearly uninterrupted stream of German victories that had made Hitler the master of the European continent, this seemed objectively insane.

The Battle of Britain (1940)

The next challenge was to Britain itself. The German plan for the invasion of Britain was code-named Operation Sea Lion, and its prospects for success remain a topic of controversy. In any event, invasion was never attempted, and the actual Battle of Britain was fought in the air.

The Battle of Britain, which lasted from July to October 1940, became another heavily mythologized wartime period. (The parts of World War II that resonate most loudly in the British memory were often from its early stages, before the British contribution was overshadowed by that of the United States and the Soviet Union). In the first major military campaign to be fought entirely from the air, heavily outnumbered British fighter pilots defeated the attempt of the German Luftwaffe to establish dominance of the skies. In large part this was a matter of poor German leadership as the Germans could not settle on a consistent strategy concentrating on airfields, aircraft production, or radar stations. Superior British technology, including radar and the control of fighters from the ground, was also an important factor.

Although the Germans initially focused their attacks on British military targets, by late August they were attacking British cities (as the

Royal Air Force [RAF] was attacking German cities). The attack on British cities, which intensified in December, is referred to as the Blitz. Although the Germans killed more than 20,000 British civilians and wounded more than 30,000, their bombing of cities did not bring them closer to the objective of destroying the RAF's capacity to fight, nor did it have the destructive effects on British morale that some German leaders, including Hitler, expected. By October, RAF air supremacy over British skies had been established, and the Germans had abandoned plans for an invasion. Despite being a defensive win, the Battle of Britain was the first victory of the war on the Allied side (although Britain at the time was actually without allies, other than the Commonwealth).

British victory did not end the air war, which continued for the remainder of the conflict, as both Germans and British dropped bombs on each other's cities, killing uncounted thousands of civilians in a way that made little contribution to ultimate victory. Dealing with air raids became an important part of the wartime experience, particularly for Londoners. The experience of the ordinary Londoner was shared by King George and his consort, Queen Elizabeth, who refused to leave the city.

Ordinary civilians were much less isolated from World War II than they had been from World War I, which had a relatively static front line and little in the way of attacks on the civilian population. With bombing, and also with the overwhelming presence of the state in allocating work and food, the ordinary British person felt the war as something in which he or she was personally involved. The extensive temporary relocation of children away from cities where they would have been the targets of bombers also contributed to class and regional mixing.

From a European War to a World War

Once it had become clear that Operation Sea Lion could not work due to German failure to establish air and sea dominance, it was a question of how long the British could hold out until the Americans or possibly the Soviet Union would enter the war against Germany. Even aided by its dominions, Britain lacked the military might to challenge the German grip on Europe, although British and British Commonwealth forces remained active in the Mediterranean. What brought about Germany's defeat was the entrance of the two other world powers into the war. Once the Germans invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the bulk of the German military effort was devoted to the massive war on the eastern front; the war with Britain became a secondary concern. By that time the United States

had unmatched economic power and a large population that could be mobilized, and German defeat became virtually certain from after Hitler's catastrophic decision to declare war on the United States on December 11, 1941, four days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour.

After the Battle of Britain, the principal area where British and Axis troops engaged was North Africa. The British fear was that the Germans and their Italian allies would be able to drive them out of Egypt, sever their communications with the Middle East and Asia through the Suez Canal, and eventually take over the oil fields of the Middle East. British and Commonwealth troops in North Africa faced one of Hitler's best generals, Erwin Rommel (1891–1944), nicknamed the Desert Fox. The campaign's decisive battle was El Alamein in the late summer of 1942, the first great Allied offensive victory of the war. The commanding Allied general at El Alamein, Bernard Law Montgomery (1882–1976), became the best-known British soldier of the war. After El Alamein, Montgomery led a masterly campaign that destroyed the German positions in North Africa.

The war put an enormous strain on the empire, particularly as Britain confronted Japan in Asia. As well as the American base at Pearl Harbour, Japan attacked the British in the Far East in 1941. Racism and Japanese remoteness had led the British to underestimate the Japanese threat, and Britain could spare little from its resources devoted to home defence to protect its empire from Japanese attack. The Japanese humiliated the British by taking their fortress at Singapore in the early days of the war, a loss that was felt particularly keenly in Britain, and they also conquered the British colonies of Hong Kong (1941), Burma (1942), and Malaya (1942). In their propaganda to Asian peoples, the Japanese emphasized the common struggle against European imperialism, although colonies occupied by Japan soon found that the new masters could be even harsher than the old.

Many Indians (and other colonial subjects) resented being dragged into another European war. The Quit India movement led by Mohandas Gandhi and the Congress Party leader Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) called upon the British, unsuccessfully, to leave India to preserve its neutrality. More militant Indian nationalists led by Subhas Chandra Bose (1897–1945) attempted to disrupt the British hold on India by forming the Indian National Army in alliance with the Japanese; and a smaller force, the Indian Legion, under German command, formed from Indian prisoners of war taken by Germany. British mismanagement and indifference, along with wartime inflation, contributed to the massive Bengal famine of 1943,

in which between 1.5 and 3 million Bengalis died. However, most of the Indian army stayed loyal to Britain and played a central role in the British land war effort against Japan, the so-called China-Burma-India theatre, or CBI. Many Indians, in and out of the army, assumed that after the war the situation would improve.

Following a strategy that had won some successes in World War I, Germany attempted to strangle the British economy through the use of submarine warfare, the famous U-boats. The war against Germany was always the first priority for the British feet, which meant it was unable to protect its dominions and colonies such as Australia, which turned to the United States for protection. The increased reliance of many parts of the empire, from the Pacific to the Caribbean, on American protection contributed to the dissolution of the British Empire as a functioning political unit.

British and Commonwealth forces participated in the invasions of Axis Europe in Italy, southern France, and Normandy, where Montgomery was the initial commander of Allied ground forces. British generals served under overall American command, although the American commander of the European theatre, Dwight D. Eisenhower, was diplomatic in his accommodation to British sensibilities and became very popular in Britain. The nation played a much smaller role in the war against Japan, but British, Indian, and imperial troops in the CBI theatre – under perhaps the finest British general of the war, William Slim (1891–1970) – tied down tens of thousands of Japanese troops and won a great victory at the Battle of Imphal from March until June 1944. Along with the United States and the Soviet Union, Britain remained one of the big three powers and participated in the wartime conferences. However, by then it was definitely the least of the big three.

The “Wizard War”

The British proved highly capable of applying their best minds to the problems presented by war. The invention of radar in 1935 proved absolutely vital in the Battle of Britain, giving British airmen advance warning of German air attacks. The pioneer of radar, the Scottish physicist Robert Watson-Watt (1892–1973), supervised the creation of radar stations along the British coasts. During the war itself, he served in the Air Ministry as director of communications. Fortunately, the Germans abandoned the tactic of bombing the radar stations after two nerve-racking weeks. Radar was better adapted for bombers by the

development of the cavity magnetron by John Randall (1905–1984) and Henry Boot (1917–1983) in 1940, which enabled night bombers to distinguish cities from the air. Another British technical triumph was in cryptography. Bletchley Park, the headquarters of the British cryptographic effort, has passed into legend in the history of computing. Ultra, the code name for the British breaking of the German military codes, was one of the best-kept secrets of the war. It was an enormously important contributor to the Allied victory. The British also conducted research into making atomic bombs.

British ingenuity by itself was not enough. Even before the American entry into the war after Pearl Harbour, the British sought to harness American productive and technical capacity. The Tizard Mission of 1940, led by the scientist and civil servant Henry Tizard (1885–1959), essentially turned over all British developments and patents to be further developed and mass-produced by the Americans. Once given out, the knowledge could never again become a British monopoly. Atomic research passed nearly entirely into the hands of the Americans, who would produce the world's first nuclear bomb in July 1945. The jet engine, pioneered by the RAF engineer Frank Whittle (1907–1996) in the 1930s, was also first installed in an operational plane by the Americans, two years before the British.

The British Home Front

The war was a transformative experience even for those British people who did not join the military or leave the island. Even more than World War I, World War II was a “total war” involving every person in the belligerent nations. Urban Britons continued to feel the might of German bombing. Toward the end of the war, German bombers were supplemented by the V2 rocket.

The war saw an unprecedented degree of economic centralization. The economy was completely organized for war, and the lifestyles of ordinary British people were severely cut back. Rationing was, in theory, universal; labour was also coordinated. The influx of men into the military left numerous jobs to be filled. Some of the need for labour was supplied by temporary immigrants from Ireland, and the Colonial Office worked to encourage temporary migration from the British Caribbean colonies. Another source of reserve labour in Britain, as in other countries, was women, who were required to register as workers in 1941. The Women's Land Army, a revival of a World War I program, supplied women

labourers for agriculture, informally known as Land Girls. A similar organization was the Women's Timber Corps, which did forestry work. The Air Transport Auxiliary, which ferried combat and transport aircraft, recruited pilots not qualified to fly in combat, including women, and it was the first British government organization to pay women and men the same wage.

The general public was mobilized for scrap drives, although these were often more symbolic than a useful way of supplying needed metal. Ornamental iron gates were melted down, unless there was a historical or artistic argument for their preservation. The retired Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, whom Churchill particularly loathed, strove in vain to preserve the iron gates of his country estate.

One of the keys to popular mobilization was propaganda, and in Britain, as in every other combatant country, the war led to the use of propaganda on an unprecedented scale, spread through radio, newsreels, posters, and numerous other media. In the interests of national unity, the BBC even abandoned its prohibition on the use of regional or lower-class accents by persons who were not comedians. Radio was a particularly important tool, as it made it possible to propagandise the other side as well as one's own. Rather than simply denouncing the Nazis, the British decided that since they had access to the Germans via radio, they would establish a reputation for trustworthy reporting so that what they said would be believed. German anti-British propaganda was much cruder, as in the work of William Joyce (1906–1946), a previously British fascist sympathizer (actually American by nationality) who became known as Lord Haw-Haw. Recognizing the BBC's power, the Nazis forbade anyone to listen to its German broadcasts (Joyce was executed as a traitor after the war).

Churchill was a master propagandist, particularly on the radio. His speeches during the war have become legendary, and he even won the respect of the German minister of propaganda Joseph Goebbels (1897–1945), who, when the war turned against Germany, recommended (in vain) that Hitler, when addressing the German people, adopt a realistic tone modelled on Churchill's during the darkest days for Britain.

Another transformative aspect of the war was the heavy presence of American and other foreign troops. After Dunkirk, Britain received many French and other Continental soldiers who had been evacuated along with the British. London became the base of numerous governments in exile and resistance military forces, most notably the Free French of Charles de

Gaulle (1890–1970), who caused his British hosts unending headaches. Britain also served as the ideal base for American and Canadian troops preparing for the invasions of North Africa and Europe. British men often resented Americans whose money and exotic glamour was appealing to British women. Numerous British “war brides” married American soldiers and moved to the United States after the war.

Britain emerged from the war with much of its infrastructure destroyed and with massive casualties, including about 450,000 deaths from Britain itself and hundreds of thousands more from Empire and Commonwealth countries. It was also heavily indebted to the United States, to the point of having lost its financial independence. The empire was increasingly unsustainable, British dominions were moving into the American orbit, and Britain itself faced a bleak future of rationing for years. Nonetheless, as Churchill had said in the grim days after the fall of France, “Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, this was their finest hour”. Few would deny that it was.

Questions and Tasks

1. What were the characteristic features of the General Strike of 1926?
2. In what way was the British economy affected by Great Depression?
3. What ideas of communism and fascism spread in Britain in the early 1930s?
4. What did the Statute of Westminster proclaim?
5. How did the change of royal power in 1936 happen?
6. When was the BBC founded?
7. What were the reasons of the WWII?
8. What event moved Britain from a general desire to avoid war to a more confrontational policy?
9. What was the influence of Winston Churchill’s activity on domestic and foreign policy?
10. When did the Battle of Britain take place? What were the results of it?
11. Name in chronological order the countries which became involved in WWII.
12. Explain the term “Ultra” in cryptography.

IX. THE AGE OF CONSENSUS: FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS (1945–1979)

Britain after World War II

Although the Allied victory had brought much rejoicing, Britain faced numerous problems after the war, both internally and externally. The war's expense was a major concern: Britain had used up all of its foreign reserves of currency and had to borrow immense sums of money from the United States. After the glow of victory wore off, life was drab, food rationing was still in force, and there seemed few economic opportunities. In the years following 1945, many Britons who could afford to do so emigrated to Australia, Canada, or the United States.

Many in Britain expected that the general election in 1945 – the first in 10 years, called after victory in Europe – would be a triumph for the Conservatives and for their leader, the great wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill (1874–1965). Instead it was a landslide victory for the Labour Party under Churchill's wartime deputy, Clement Atlee (1883–1967), who became the new Prime Minister. Labour won 394 seats to the Conservatives' 210, a nearly 2-to-1 majority that ensured Labour would govern with few political checks.

The reasons for the Labour victory were many. While Churchill remained personally popular, many continued to hold the Conservative Party responsible for the economic and diplomatic errors of the 1930s. In addition, Churchill's charge that Labour's economic policies would require more state control over business and could only be enforced by a "Gestapo", coming as it did after the hard-fought victory against the Nazis and the revelations of Nazi atrocities, alienated many British voters. Labour's dominance of the home-front administration during the war gave it credibility as a government for peacetime. The party's program of housing, full employment, and social insurance also appealed to many who hoped the war would be followed by a more socially just Britain.

The Atlee government (1945–1951) was the most important peacetime British government of the twentieth century, laying the foundation for the British welfare state whose pillars, if battered, remain to this day. The challenges the government faced were legion. One of the most basic was housing. Thousands of houses had been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable by the German bombing. In addition, much of Britain's housing stock was decrepit, poorly maintained, and in need of replacement. The government took the lead, building hundreds of

thousands of “council houses” but attracting resentment for severe restrictions it placed on the private market.

The Atlee government carried out a vigorous program of nationalization of basic services. Nationalization faced surprisingly little opposition, in large part because it was seen as a continuation of the policies of close cooperation between government and industry during wartime. In its first two years, the Atlee government nationalized the Bank of England, the telegraph and radio, civil aviation, coal and electrical power, roads, and railroads. To the disappointment of many socialists in and out of the Labour Party, nationalization did not establish workers’ control over their industries but instead created publicly appointed boards to replace private boards.

The Labour government did not see its mission merely as aiding Britain in its recovery from the war; it envisioned the creation of a new society, one that would provide for the welfare of all rather than letting each fend for him- or herself. Plans for a welfare state had been in the works for decades, but the most important, the 1943 Beveridge Report, dated to the war period. It was the work of the civil servant William Beveridge (1879–1963), who had been charged with planning for post-war social services in Britain. Beveridge was not a Labour man but a Liberal who firmly adjoined socialism. His report laid down plans for eliminating poverty and unemployment through a universal welfare state. The wartime government, an alliance of all parties, approved it, although Labour’s campaign for a stronger endorsement failed.

For many Labourites and other leftists, central planning was as important as social welfare. The war was widely held to have demonstrated the superiority of a centrally planned economy, whether Soviet-style communism or the combination of government coordination with a private sector characteristic of the British and U.S. wartime economies, over a purely capitalistic, free-market one. Although few wished to emulate the Soviet system, Soviet victory was also considered to be evidence of the superiority of a managed economy. Some believed that Britain could be the shining example of a “middle way” of democratic socialism.

One of the most remarkable and long-lasting programs launched by the new Labour government was the National Health Service (NHS), created in 1945. Few institutions have had more influence on British life. The NHS was particularly identified with one man, Aneurin Bevan (1897–1960), a Welsh socialist and the minister for health. Bevan had a well-

deserved reputation as a troublemaker that dated from the war, when he had been one of the few to oppose the collaboration of Labour with the Conservatives in the coalition government. The Welsh mining communities from which Bevan hailed were known for their uncompromising radicalism.

Bevan had his work cut out for him. He faced great resistance from the medical profession, which feared government control, and scepticism from the civil service. The National Health Service that emerged combined public provisions with the toleration of private practice. Although Britons have grumbled over NHS inefficiencies and delays for generations, its basic principle, that patients should not be forced to pay for medical services, remains widely popular.

Britain and the Cold War

The most important international conflict following World War II was the Cold War between two coalitions, one led by the United States and the other by the Soviet Union. Britain was a leading member of the U.S.-led coalition of the “free world”. It was Winston Churchill who, at an address given in Fulton, Missouri, in 1946, launched one of the dominant metaphors of the cold-war era when he spoke of an “iron curtain” that divided Eastern Europe, dominated by the Red Army and communist regimes, from Western Europe. One important aspect of the Cold War in Britain is that it meant the American military presence continued long after the end of World War II. The Cold War also saw the continuation of the British military presence in Germany. Britain became an important part of the premier, American-led cold-war military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The Cold War was a struggle against both the internal and the external communist threat. Britain never went as far in domestic anticommunism as did the United States in the McCarthy era.

Sometimes the Cold War became a Hot War. The two most notable occasions were the Korean War (1950–1953) and the Vietnam War (1959–1975), during which an American-led coalition faced the communist-supported states of North Korea and North Vietnam. Britain participated in the Korean War as a member of the United Nations, the international body set up for collective security at the end of World War II. Despite the U.S. government’s urging, British leaders avoided participation in the Vietnam War, which unlike the Korean War was not waged by the United Nations.

The Vietnam War was very unpopular in Britain and contributed to a growth in anti-Americanism.

One of the most controversial elements of the Cold War was nuclear weapons. However, the idea that the British should obtain their own nuclear arsenal was not widely opposed on the left at first. Even Aneurin Bevan, the most left-wing figure in national politics, supported an independent British nuclear deterrent. Like many leaders of both parties, Bevan did not fully trust the Americans. At the end of the war, the United States had promptly reneged on its treaty obligations to share the results of its nuclear research with Britain. The Labour government had launched its own nuclear research program in 1946. The military nature of the research was secret, but when it eventually became known it was not very controversial.

Opposition to nuclear weapons along with fear of a nuclear Armageddon grew in the 1950s. The movement of opposition to the British nuclear arsenal broadened into the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), a mass movement for the abolition of all nuclear weapons founded in 1958. Unlike many previous movements of the left, the CND was dominated by the middle class rather than workers. It attracted some of Britain's leading intellectuals, including the philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), whose vocal opposition to war went back to World War I. Women played a larger role in CND leadership than in most previous movements of the left. Aneurin Bevan's followers, the "Bevanites", also joined the campaign.

The most radical suggestion of the CND was that Britain should unilaterally renounce and destroy its nuclear arsenal, in the hope of setting an example for other powers. This suggestion was enormously controversial in the Labour Party. The Labour leadership and the trade unions, suspicious of the middle-class CND, rejected the call for unilateral disarmament.

The Beginnings of Decolonization

World War II placed immense strain on all the European colonial empires. The Japanese promoted anti-imperialism in the territories they conquered, such as Malaya and Singapore, although they behaved like imperialists themselves. The Japanese conquest means that in the far-eastern part of the empire, the British were faced not merely with the problem of maintaining colonial rule but actually reinstating it after the Japanese left the territory. Britain was also involved in the colonies of

other states. In the Middle East, where they had occupied the French colonies in Syria and Lebanon, they simply handed power over to the indigenous liberation movements. However, in the East the British supported the restoration of French imperial power in Indochina and Dutch power in Indonesia.

The future of the British Empire was one of the great questions hanging over post-war Britain. Impoverished by war, Britain, like other European imperial powers, was increasingly unable to pay the social and economic costs of running an empire as well as repressing nationalist movements in their dominions. Even though many, including the Labour government, believed that holding onto the colonies was necessary to preserve any pretence of great power status, it was also held to be impossible in the face of colonial resistance. Empires depended on the collaboration of a native elite that had become alienated from the imperial order. Although the Indian army had played a central role in British strategy for decades, fighting on battlefields across the world, it and other colonial armies, penetrated by nationalist ideologies, had become unreliable.

The global situation had also turned against empire. The two super-powers of the post-war world, the United States and the Soviet Union, both identified themselves as anti-imperialist. The United Nations became a force against maintaining colonial empires. The racial framework for imperialism, along with racist thought in general, had been declining for decades and had finally and irrevocably been discredited by Nazi atrocities. Racism survived and thrived as a prejudice in Britain, but it had lost its usefulness as a justification for colonial rule.

The abandonment of empire was supported at least ideologically by both British liberal and socialist political tendencies. War-weary Britons found the idea of more substantial sacrifices in blood and treasure to make an increasingly hollow claim to national greatness unappealing. Those wars that were fought to temporarily retain portions of the empire or shape the successor states, such as the successful war against communist insurgents in Malaya, received little publicity and did not rely on popular support.

The British were perhaps the most willing of all European imperialists to give up their overseas possessions. Britain's exit from India in 1947 – although it had disastrous consequences for the colonized, leading to extensive massacres with more than a million casualties as India was divided into the two states of India and Pakistan – was carried out

with little difficulty or lingering embarrassment for the British once the decision to abandon the colony had been made.

It was usually more difficult to withdraw from colonies that had seen extensive white settlement, especially when the number of settlers was too small to form a majority. Settlers both resisted decolonisation on the ground and built lobbies that influenced the British government's actions. British colonies of settlement where the indigenous population was outnumbered by a mostly British majority had been working toward gradual and peaceful independence since the nineteenth century, culminating in the 1931 Statute of Westminster, which had essentially given them self-government with the British monarch as head of state. These colonies included Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. South Africa, where British settlers coexisted with both a larger group of Dutch-descended white settlers, the Afrikaners, and an indigenous majority shared this dominion status. The worst postcolonial situations in the British sphere were in southern Africa and Israel/Palestine, both of which had settler populations out of the political or cultural control of a metropolitan power. Afrikaners and Zionist Jews had no road to a home elsewhere, while at the same time they were large, powerful, and organized enough to maintain a colonial form of rule without being a colony. Britain, faced by violent resistance from Jews and Arabs, left Palestine in 1948. In 1961 South Africa became a republic and severed its last ties with Britain. Elsewhere in southern Africa, the British-descended settlers of Southern Rhodesia, modern Zimbabwe, declared independence themselves in 1965, maintaining white rule outside the colonial framework for many years.

The most conspicuous institutional continuation of the British Empire was the Commonwealth of Nations, or British Commonwealth. This originated as a term for Britain and its dominions, countries recognizing the British monarch as their head of state. In 1949 the word *British* was dropped from the Commonwealth's name, and a procedure was established for states that became republics or monarchies with indigenous monarchs to remain Commonwealth members as long as they recognized the British monarch as its head.

Britain and the Commonwealth of Nations

The loosening or dissolving ties between Britain and its colonies were not replaced by closer ones with continental Europe. Outside of participation in NATO, the British were remote from the first movements

for European unity, which were dominated by Belgian, French, and German diplomats and politicians. The gradual process of unification began with the six-nation European Coal and Steel Community founded in 1951, which set the pattern for the European Economic Community, or Common Market, founded in 1957, also without British participation. Britain's aloofness was partly due to hopes that ties with its former colonies and dominions would provide markets for British goods and help keep the economy afloat. It was also influenced by British mistrust of Continental peoples, particularly after World War II, when many viewed the Continent as an abode of fascists and collaborators.

In 1960 Britain and other powers outside the Common Market – Denmark, Norway, Austria, Switzerland, and Portugal – formed the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), pledged to the mutual reduction of tariffs and the fostering of commerce between members. As the largest economic power within the EFTA, Britain benefited from being able to export to its markets, but the EFTA markets did not rival the larger markets of the European Common Market.

The distrust between Britain and continental Europe was mutual. When the British changed their minds and sought entry into the Common Market in 1961, the president of France, Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970), vetoed the idea. He feared that Britain was too close to the United States and that British admission would undermine the community's independence. Britain finally joined the Common Market in 1973, leaving the EFTA at the same time, but few Britons were enthusiastic about it. This persisted in some segments of the population, although sometimes with different motives, to the time of Britain's withdrawal from the European Union in 2016.

Britain's problematic relations with its empire and with Europe contributed to a revival of British identity as separate and apart. As the 1950s began, the nation enjoyed two national celebrations: the 1951 Festival of Britain and the 1953 coronation of a new queen, Elizabeth (b. 1926), following the death of her father, King George VI, the previous year.

The Festival of Britain, which marked the 100th anniversary of the London Great Exhibition, had a distinctively nationalist message. The uniqueness of British culture, not its connections to Europe or to the world, was what was being celebrated. The festival was also nostalgic, focusing on the greatness of the British past rather than its transformations in the future. A project of Labour deputy Prime Minister Herbert Morrison

(1888–1965), the festival was also designed to mark the country's recovery from the long post-war period of austerity. Most of it was based in south London, but there was also a branch in Glasgow dedicated to industry and numerous travelling exhibitions. The Festival of Britain attracted tens of thousands of visitors.

Many Britons remember the coronation on June 2, 1953, as the first time they watched television. Retailers pushed customers to buy televisions, and television owners invited their neighbours in to witness the great event. The young queen and her husband (and distant cousin), Prince Phillip, duke of Edinburgh (1921–2021), were presented as symbols of British continuity and icons of British patriotism.

Immigration and the Beginning of a Multiracial Britain

The fall of the British Empire was accompanied by the immigration of people from empire nations to Britain. In some cases these were British settlers, expelled or alienated from the newly independent countries they had settled and generally reassimilated into British life. However, in many other cases the immigrants were indigenous to the colonized areas, and their arrival in Britain posed profound cultural and political challenges.

Another immigrant population comprised those Eastern Europeans, particularly Poles, who were left in Britain by the end of World War II but could not or did not wish to return to their countries, now under communist regimes. Immigration from the Republic of Ireland also continued, particularly after the United States, the preferred destination of most Irish immigrants, changed to a more restrictive immigration policy in the 1950s.

However, it was the dark-skinned immigrants from the colonies and former colonies who attracted the most interest and resentment. The 1948 arrival of the *Empire Windrush*, a ship bringing hundreds of immigrants from Jamaica, is often treated as a founding date for multicultural Britain, although there were already small Caribbean immigrant communities. There were no restrictions on immigration within the empire until 1962, so migration was one solution to the poverty and political turmoil facing British colonies.

The new immigrants attracted hostility, both on purely racial grounds and on the fear that they would be a source of cheap labour, undercutting workers' wages. Sir Oswald Mosely, (1896–1980), the pre-war leader of the British Union of Fascists, made an abortive attempt at a political comeback by exploiting racial resentment, running for Parliament from

North Kensington in 1959 for the anti-immigrant British Movement; however, he received only 8 percent of the vote. More successful was the Conservative Peter Griffiths (1928–2013), who won a parliamentary seat on an openly racist platform in 1964. The National Front, an amalgamation of British racist and neo-Nazi groups, was founded in 1967.

The first mainstream British politician of eminence to capitalize on anti-immigrant resentment was the Conservative Enoch Powell (1912–1998). Powell was a somewhat eccentric figure, better educated and more intellectual than most British politicians but never very successful in politics. He had been heartbroken by the loss of India, which caused him to switch from being a zealous imperialist to becoming a zealous anti-imperialist. His “Rivers of Blood” speech, delivered in Birmingham on April 20, 1968, denounced antiracist legislation as an infringement on personal freedom and warned of a future Britain dominated by racial conflict, like the United States. Powell was removed from the Conservative hierarchy the next day and never served in the cabinet after the speech, but he became a popular figure to many working-class white Britons. His hostility to immigration helped attract many of them to the Conservative Party and made him particularly hated among immigrants and British communities of colour.

Under Harold Wilson, the British government started to establish agencies and laws to combat racism and integrate the immigrant communities into British life. The 1965 Race Relations Act forbade discrimination and racial incitement and set up a Race Relations Board; it was the first in a succession of acts bearing that name. Subsequent Race Relations Acts would become law in 1968 and 1976. The effect of these acts was limited, but they did establish the principle of non-discrimination.

Immigrants formed their own communities, with businesses, pubs, restaurants, and places of worship. Relations between the native Britons and the new immigrant communities were often distant, even when not hostile. Relations between immigrant communities and the virtually all-white police force were a particularly sore spot in many cities. Racially motivated street violence, often carried out by skinheads or football (soccer) fans, was also on the rise.

The Rise of Scottish and Welsh Separatism

Although some Scottish and Welsh people had always resented English domination of Great Britain, the rise of organized nationalist movements with a broad appeal was a phenomenon of the 1960s.

Previously, leading Welsh and Scottish politicians such as Aneurin Bevan had been more interested in acquiring power on a national level than creating separate institutions. Welsh and Scottish nationalists tended to finish at the bottom of the poll in parliamentary elections through the 1950s.

While the Scots could look back on Scotland's history as an independent kingdom that had only ended in 1707, Welsh history showed division between numerous principalities, only rarely united and never for long. Consequently, while the Scottish National Party (SNP) always had a political agenda focused on the restoration of Scottish independence, the Welsh nationalist party, Plaid Cymru, was more focused on the preservation of the Welsh language and the advancement of Welsh cultural institutions. Many Welsh were particularly offended by the flooding of the Tryweryn valley in 1957 and 1958 and the displacement of its Welsh community in order to provide a reservoir of water for the English city of Liverpool (although Liverpool had a large Welsh population).

A principal cause for Welsh nationalism was the disrespect shown the Welsh language by the English-speaking government and national media. This was especially menacing because fewer and fewer people were learning Welsh as a first language, and an increasing number of English people were settling in Wales. The vacation homes of English people in Wales were the frequent targets of arson. Other targets included post offices, Inland Revenue (tax) offices, and television broadcasting antennas. The English names of communities were removed or defaced from road signs. (This terrorism extended only to property damage).

Regardless of the dramatic actions and manifestos of these nationalist movements, they proved less able to gather long-term electoral support. Many nationalist firebrands were able to win election to local councils, but they proved unable to do the hard footslogging and constituency work of successful professional politicians. When referenda for devolution – the setting up of Welsh and Scottish assemblies with limited power – were put before the people on March 1, 1979, the Welsh referendum was defeated overwhelmingly while the Scottish one passed, but not by the large margin needed to go into effect.

The “Irish Question” in Britain

Following the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, Ireland had played a virtually negligible role in British politics. Northern Ireland, although part of the United Kingdom, had its own political system

dominated by its own parties and by sectarian issues that had little resonance in the United Kingdom as a whole. This began to change with “the Troubles”, starting in 1969.

The Catholic population of the north, inspired by the American Civil Rights movement, began to challenge peacefully the brutally repressive Protestant Northern Irish regime. The regime reacted harshly, eventually leading to a revival of militant Irish Catholic nationalism in the provisional Irish Republican Army, also known as the IRA or the Provos. The British government intervened violently; British troops killed 13 civil rights marchers on January 30, 1972 – a date known as “Bloody Sunday”. The British decision in 1972 to suspend the Northern Irish government and occupy the province militarily proved a disaster; in the ensuing violence, the police and army suffered three times more casualties than did the IRA.

The IRA, seeing the British government as the main enemy, launched a campaign of terror in England. (Because the Welsh and Scots were viewed as fellow oppressed Celts, the IRA avoided attacks on Scotland and Wales). Among the most horrifying terrorist acts were the 1974 pub bombings in Guildford, which killed five and injured even more. The attacked pubs had been targeted because they were off-duty hangouts for British military personnel. After the bombings, three men and one woman were arrested and charged with the crime. Known as the Guildford Four, they were convicted despite a lack of evidence of guilt aside from confessions made to the police, exacted under torture and fraudulently manipulated. Despite growing doubts about the verdict, the Guildford Four were not vindicated and released from prison until 1989. The IRA attacks led to growing hostility and suspicion of Irish and Irish-descended people in Britain.

Britain in the 1970s

By the 1970s the British could no longer deny the reality of economic decline. The prime ministers of the decade were the Conservative Edward Heath (1916–2005) and Labour’s James Callaghan (1912–2005). Heath, Prime Minister from 1970 to 1974, was a different kind of Conservative from his predecessors, the aristocrats Churchill, Eden, Macmillan, and Douglas-Home. The son of a carpenter and a maid, he had risen by sheer intellectual ability. His rise was widely believed to herald a more modern, meritocratic conservatism as opposed to the old conservatism based on hereditary class.

Despite Heath's great abilities and enormous capacity for hard work, his government proved unsuccessful. The most pressing problem was the economy. Britain's balance of payments remained unfavourable, inflation was becoming a serious problem, and unemployment was growing. The general sense that Britain was falling behind economically was often blamed on the trade unions, now generally seen not as warriors for a better life for the workers but as reactionaries defending an obsolescent economic order and going on strike at the drop of a hat. The government faced long and divisive strikes by the National Union of Miners in 1972 and 1974. Other problems included rising crime and a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the post-war settlement on both the left and the right.

Heath's government was responsible for two revolutionary changes in British life. In 1973 Britain finally entered the European Common Market. The move provoked little enthusiasm among Britons. Even less popular was the redrawing of the British administrative map, which for many of the counties meant the end of their thousand-year-long histories as administrative and political units when they were replaced by larger and more uniform units. Heath's government was voted out of power in 1974, and Harold Wilson returned to 10 Downing Street, the home of the Prime Minister. Shortly after the fall of his government, Heath was overthrown as Conservative leader by Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), who had been minister of education in Heath's government. Under Thatcher, the Conservatives would move, slowly at first, away from "one-nation" conservatism to a much more free-market and union-busting approach.

Wilson gave way as Prime Minister to James Callaghan in 1976, probably because of impaired health. Wilson and Callaghan faced many of the same problems as Heath, with different methods but little better success. Britain suffered keenly from the overall world economic slowdown of the late 1970s. In 1976 the government was forced to seek a loan from the International Monetary Fund, available only on humiliating terms involving large cuts in government expenditure. The ultimate expression of trade union power, and the great crisis for Callaghan's government, was the "winter of discontent" in 1979. Wave after wave of strikes from public- and private-sector employees greatly inconvenienced many people and led the British public to question whether the government or the trade unions were the real leaders of Britain. The election that year returned the Conservatives to power. But the Conservatives who assumed control of the government in 1979 were very different from the ones who had lost it in 1974.

Questions and Tasks

1. What economic and social problems did Britain face after World War II?
2. Do you agree with the statement that the Atlee government made Modern Britain?
3. When was the National Health Service (NHS) created?
4. What was the Cold War? What countries were involved in it?
5. Who introduced the metaphor of the 'iron curtain', which became one of the dominant ones of the cold-war era?
6. Did Britain participate in the Korean War as a member of the United Nations?
7. Why did British leaders avoid participation in the Vietnam War?
8. What was the aim of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND)?
9. Whose followers were the Bevanites?
10. What is decolonisation and why did it happen?
11. What is the significance of the 1931 Statute of Westminster?
12. What is the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)? What countries were members in it?
13. When was the Festival of Britain, which marked the 100th anniversary of the London Great Exhibition, held? How many visitors did it attract?
14. When was Elizabeth II crowned? Was the coronation broadcast?
15. What immigrants came to Great Britain?
16. When did multiculturalism start in Great Britain?
17. How did the British react to the immigration of people from various nations in its empire?
18. When and where did Enoch Powell deliver his "Rivers of Blood" speech? What was his message?
19. What Acts established the principle of non-discrimination?
20. Define the principal reason for Welsh nationalism.
21. What happened on "Bloody Sunday"?
22. What do you think a possible solution for the "Irish Question" in Britain is?
23. Was Britain one of the European leading countries in the 1970s? Why or why not?
24. When did Britain enter the European Common Market?
25. Why was the British government forced to seek a loan from the International Monetary Fund in 1976?
26. What does the expression "winter of discontent" mean?

X. TOWARDS AND AFTER THE MILLENNIUM (1979–2022)

Margaret Thatcher and Thatcherism

The parliamentary election of 1979, held in the shadow of disruptive strikes and economic slowdown, was a rejection of Prime Minister James Callaghan's Labour Party and a strong victory for the Conservatives. The new Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), was the first woman to lead a major British political party and the first woman Prime Minister. She was also the most ideological Prime Minister since Clement Atlee's post-war Labour government. Thatcherism was a conservatism willing to break with the post-war social compact using an aggressive, confrontational attitude to the unions, hostility to state ownership, and plans to make substantial cuts in the welfare state but not completely abolish it. As a movement, Thatcherism was bigger than Thatcher alone. Its intellectual leader was Sir Keith Joseph (1918–1994), Thatcher's close friend and ally who headed the Centre for Policy Studies, a think tank founded in 1974 to promote free-market policies. Thatcherism also had followers outside the United Kingdom, as part of a global turn to the right in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Thatcherism was precipitated by the global economic slowdown after 1973, which brought into question the benefits of the welfare state and the price of those benefits to society. National competitiveness, which Thatcher claimed to be able to restore, was a particularly important concern in Britain after decades of relative decline and serious difficulties with productivity. Thatcherites believed that the high taxes necessary to support the welfare state and the high wages demanded by British unions were making British businesses less competitive. Thatcherism can be seen as a movement toward making British society more "American" – competitive, meritocratic, and self-interested. Thatcher's famous statement that "There is no society, only individuals" was seen as an attack on the intellectual basis of the welfare state.

The electoral basis of Thatcherism was in the English lower-middle classes, small businesspeople (the class from which Thatcher herself came), and self-employed professionals. Thatcherism was often seen as a revolution within British conservatism, challenging the old elite, moderate conservatives often from the upper classes, and identified by Thatcher as "wets". The "wets" in Thatcher's first cabinet were largely legacies from the previous Conservative administration of Edward Heath. Throughout her tenure, Thatcher promoted a new breed of tougher, more ideological

conservatism. The Thatcherite victory was a mark of Britain's changing demographics. The traditional working class, Labour's electoral bastion, was a numerically declining sector. The trade unions, the financial and organizational backbone of Labour, had increasingly alienated members of the middle class and even the working class.

Despite Thatcher's successes, there were limits on what she could accomplish, due to the popularity of some welfare state functions and the continuing, though waning, strength of the trade unions. Even Thatcher was never able to suggest the abolition of the National Health Service (NHS) and its replacement by privatised medicine on the American model, although she cut NHS resources and moved toward privatisation as much as she could.

In addition to Thatcherite economics, Thatcherism also presented itself as having a moral and philosophical component. Thatcher emphasized traditional values, or, as she sometimes called them, Victorian values. These included: self-reliance, the power of hard work, and adherence to the traditional family. Although Thatcher herself was a Christian and a member of the Church of England, her calls to return to traditional values had little effect on British secularism. Thatcher's traditionalism also had the paradoxical result that Britain's first woman Prime Minister did little or nothing to advance either feminist causes or women within the Conservative Party or the government.

In foreign policy Thatcherism was strongly anti-communist and emphasized the "special relationship" with the United States. When Ronald Reagan became the U.S. president in 1981, the personal connection between the U.S. president and the British Prime Minister was stronger than it had been at any time since the days of Harold Macmillan and Dwight Eisenhower in the 1950s. Like Reagan, Thatcher won admiration from Russian and Eastern European dissidents, but given Britain's weaker position internationally, anticommunism was much less ideologically and politically central to Thatcherism than it was to Reaganism. One of Thatcher's most important international contributions was the role she played in the warming of Soviet-Western relations in the late 1980s under Soviet general secretary Mikhail Gorbachev. Her description of Gorbachev as "a man we can do business with" helped win Gorbachev some credibility on the European and American right.

The Falklands War and the General Election of 1983

The most dramatic event of Margaret Thatcher's first term was the Falklands War. The Falklands are a chain of islands in the South Atlantic off the coast of Argentina. Argentina, which refers to the islands as the Malvinas, has claimed them, but they are a British colony whose population is of British descent and loyal to Britain. In March 1982, Argentine forces attacked and occupied the islands. The Argentine military dictator, General Leopoldo Galtieri (1926–2003), apparently thought that Britain would not respond, and a quick diplomatic and military triumph over a waning empire would bolster his faltering regime. Despite warnings from British naval personnel, the attack took the Thatcher government by surprise.

Taking the islands back presented many difficulties. The Argentines were fighting far closer to home and, lacking Britain's continuing global defence commitments, could commit a larger portion of their forces. The islands themselves were inhospitable, with few roads or developed harbours. American support was at first uncertain, as some of the neo-conservatives around Reagan believed it was more important to support Galtieri to bolster anticommunist forces in South America than to uphold the British Empire. However, the United States eventually came to support Britain in the conflict.

Britain began preparations for war shortly after news of the Argentine occupation reached London. After diplomatic efforts to remove the Argentine forces failed, the Falklands War began on April 2, 1982. The idea that Britain was once again resisting an aggressive dictator, as in World War II, helped make the conflict popular. Britain won, driving Argentine forces off the islands and declaring hostilities over on June 20. Victory was not without controversy, however. A British submarine sank an Argentine cruiser, the *Belgrano*, with the loss of 323 lives, about half of the total Argentine casualties in the war. Although the attack was on a legitimate military target, some claimed that since the *Belgrano* was outside the "exclusion zone" proclaimed by the Royal Navy and was heading away from the Falklands, it should not have been attacked. The war resulted in the fall of the Galtieri government and eventually the reestablishment of Argentine democracy. Argentina continues to claim the islands, although it has renounced the use of force in settling the dispute.

The British triumph is widely credited with bolstering support for Thatcher, helping her win an overwhelming victory in the 1983 parliamentary election. Part of the credit for Thatcher's victory, however,

must go to the weakness of the opposition. The Labour Party was torn by a struggle between leftists led by Tony Benn (1925–2014), who believed that the party had lost power because it had failed to carry out a socialist agenda, and Labour rightists who believed that the party was in danger of becoming too radical for the electorate. Many also feared that local branches of the Labour Party were being taken over by far-left radicals. Labour's manifesto was uncompromising in its support for nuclear disarmament, moving toward socialism, and higher taxes. Gerald Kaufman (1930–2017), a leader of the party's right wing, referred to it as "the longest suicide note in history".

The leader of the Labour Party, Michael Foot (1913–2010), was an old leftist and intellectual, a follower and admirer of the Welsh Labour radical Aneurin Bevan (1897–1960), whose biography he had written. The aged Foot, who had first become active in politics when he denounced appeasement before World War II, seemed like a figure from another time. Labour was also weakened by the secession of four of its leaders: Roy Jenkins (1920–2003), Shirley Williams (1930–2021), David Owen (b. 1938), and William Rodgers (b. 1928). Disturbed by what they viewed as Labour's turn to the left, the "Gang of Four" formed the Social Democratic Party (SDP), with the declared goal of promoting policies similar to those of the social democratic parties of the European continent. The SDP was always more popular among the media than among the British people, but for a time there was talk of its replacing a Labour Party many viewed as discredited by leftism and failure in office. (The Social Democrats allied and eventually merged with the Liberals to form the Liberal Democrats).

Thatcher and the Miners' Union

A great challenge to Thatcherism was the coal miners' strike in 1984 and 1985. The National Union of Miners (NUM) was one of the strongest and most radical of British unions, but mining was becoming increasingly marginal and obsolescent. The issue in the strike was pit closures – the closing of mines the government viewed as unprofitable – which devastated entire communities that were essentially left without an economy.

The strike was widely portrayed as a personal duel between Thatcher and the NUM president, Arthur Scargill (b. 1938). Scargill was a hard leftist who shared Thatcher's love of confrontation. The miners' strike initially drew support from miners and their families across the country,

and for a while it looked as if Thatcher might have to back down. However, the government's careful preparation, the stockpiling of fuel, and a mild winter kept the strike from turning into a national crisis. The government also employed harsh and well-organized police tactics against mass picketers. Scargill's leadership was both a source of energy for the strikers and a handicap. He had taken the miners into the strike without a strike vote and made it difficult to cooperate with other unions. The Labour Party, which after the 1983 election had selected the Welshman Neil Kinnock (b. 1942) as its leader, was also ambivalent. Kinnock, the son of a coal miner and widely regarded as on the left of the Labour Party before his elevation, supported the strike's aims but was bitterly critical of its timing and tactics. He did not hide his contempt for what he regarded as the poor planning of the NUM leadership, who had not even rallied all miners in support. Miners in some parts of the country, such as Nottinghamshire, kept working throughout the strike. Eventually the miners backed down, and over the next few years many more pits would be closed, devastating large areas of England and Wales. The once-fearsome miners' unions were finished as a force in British politics, and so was militant trade unionism.

Northern Ireland and Irish Terrorism

The stalemate in Northern Ireland and the Provisional IRA's campaign of terror in England continued throughout the Thatcher years. Irish nationalist terrorism had already come close to Thatcher personally. The Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), an offshoot of the IRA, had killed one of her closest advisers, Airey Neave (1916–1979), with a car bomb. On October 12, 1984, the IRA got even closer, bombing a hotel in Brighton where Thatcher, her husband, and many leading Conservative politicians were staying for the annual Conservative Party conference. Thatcher and her husband were uninjured, but five people were killed and many more permanently injured. The conference continued as scheduled, and Thatcher's speech the next morning was widely covered. Her popularity soared in the aftermath of the attack, while the IRA hinted at further attacks.

Thatcher began to move toward formalizing cooperation against terrorism with the government of largely Catholic Ireland. The Hillsborough Agreement of 1985 between the United Kingdom and Ireland provided for regular consultation on security matters. The agreement itself was fairly innocuous, but by providing a role for the

Dublin government in Northern Irish affairs, it set off a firestorm among the Protestant Ulster Unionists, 15 of whose MPs resigned their seats. It also made Thatcher look like a more conciliatory leader on Irish affairs, important in Britain's relations with the United States.

Thatcherism and Territorial Politics

The Conservative Party has traditionally been the party of England, especially rural southern England. However, the Thatcher period saw this characteristic reach an extreme. The Conservatives virtually disappeared as a political force in Scotland and Wales, and throughout much of northern England as well. The politics of Scotland and Wales were essentially divided among Labour; the Liberals; and the nationalist parties, Scotland's Scottish National Party and Wales's Plaid Cymru. Scots were particularly concerned with the decline of Scottish industry and the Conservative government's refusal to help the unemployed Scottish population, while the closing of coal pits devastated huge areas of Wales.

Many parts of northern England shared Scotland's industrial decline and its political alienation from the Conservative government, but the northerners' English identity remained strong, and northern discontent was not expressed in separatist politics. Occasional calls for a "northern assembly" attracted little interest, while the gap between the deindustrializing north and the prosperous Thatcherite heartland of southern and eastern England grew. Conservative support was often identified with a nouveau-riche figure from the southern English county of Essex called Essex Man.

The great exception to Conservative dominance in southern England was London, where Thatcher faced some of her most vociferous opposition. The leading London politician of the 1980s was Ken Livingstone (b. 1945), an ardent leftist known as Red Ken. In 1981 Livingstone was elected leader of the Greater London Council, the local government authority for London and its surrounding area. An unusual combination of radical, hardball politician, and effective city manager, the irrepressible Livingstone had become one of Britain's most controversial politicians. His most stunning act was to extend an official welcome to London to the leaders of Sinn Féin, the political wing of the Provisional IRA. The meeting did not come off in London, as the Sinn Féin leaders were forbidden from entering Britain, but Livingstone went to Northern Ireland to meet them, attracting condemnation from a wide spectrum of British opinion.

Despite efforts by Conservatives and his numerous enemies in the Labour Party, Livingstone's position in London proved unassailable through conventional means. In 1986 the exasperated Conservative government forced through a dissolution of the Greater London Council (along with other municipal councils), effectively depriving London of central government and eliminating Livingstone's job. The government of London fell back on the individual boroughs. Livingstone was back the next year as a Labour MP, but he was much less influential as one of many backbench Labour MPs than he had been as the ruler of London.

Livingstone was the most spectacular example of the takeover of many metropolitan governments by the left, stigmatised in the Conservative popular press as the "loony left". Another controversial figure was Derek Hatton (b. 1948), the militant deputy leader of Liverpool City Council. Hatton was expelled from the Labour Party in 1986 for belonging to Militant Tendency, an activist group that had infiltrated many local Labour Party organizations. Opposition to Militant Tendency and the "loony left" was the key element of Neil Kinnock's tenure as leader of the party (1983–1992).

The Fall of Thatcher

Although Thatcher was widely disliked in her last few years in office, it was increasing hostility among the leaders of the Conservative Party that proved her ultimate downfall. One fatal issue was the imposition of a new tax, to be levelled without regard for the ability to pay. The government called it the community charge, but it was widely referred to as a poll tax and compared to the poll tax that had ignited the Peasants' Revolt in the fourteenth century. The tax was imposed in Scotland in 1989 and in England and Wales in 1990, and in all areas it led to mass protests. The Scots, already strongly anti-Thatcher, were particularly unenthusiastic about being used as the guinea pigs for the new tax. The Thatcher government also went after the "third rail" of British politics, the National Health Service, proposing to allow hospitals to opt out of it, a suggestion that failed. The European Union (formerly the Common Market) was also looming larger, with the single market planned to debut in 1992, and Thatcher had never been very skilful in European politics. With the economy in doldrums and Thatcher's friend and ally Reagan retiring from the U.S. presidency in 1989, Thatcherism seemed more radical and less successful.

Conservative leaders saw that Thatcher's increasing unpopularity posed a threat to Conservative continuation in office. Consequently, she faced challenges in leadership elections at the annual meetings of the Conservative Party. In 1989 an obscure backbencher, Sir Anthony Meyer (1920–2004), won 33 votes running against Thatcher as an advocate of closer ties to Europe; this was nowhere close to victory but a large number in an election against a sitting Prime Minister. The following year saw a stronger, better-organized challenge, as increasing inflation, higher interest rates, and an economic down-turn seemed to threaten the survival of Conservative government. Thatcher's opponent, Michael Heseltine (b. 1933), won 152 votes to Thatcher's 202, leaving Thatcher just short of the majority and losing the confidence of the Conservative elite. On November 22, 1990, she announced her decision to withdraw from the election. The Thatcher era had ended, though hers had been the longest prime ministership in the twentieth century.

Globalisation and British Society in the 1980s and 1990s

Britain in the 1980s and 1990s continued to become a more diverse society, particularly in the big cities. Immigrants tended to cluster in those areas where the demand for labour was high. Although certain neighbourhoods attracted a high proportion of immigrants, few British cities displayed the high degree of racial segregation characteristic of American cities. Chinese restaurants and Indian and Pakistani take-aways became ubiquitous in England, extending beyond the large cities into smaller communities, similar to the more formal Indian restaurants.

Asian and other immigrant communities continued to expand, and eventually each developed into distinctively British subcultures. Generational conflicts between conservative first-immigration immigrants and their Briticized children emerged as a common theme in literature and film. New, hybrid identities evolved: The Black British – black people whose ancestors came from the Caribbean or Africa – now defined themselves as a British community, albeit a marginalized and oppressed one. Successful Black British writers and intellectuals who emerged in the 1980s and 1990s include the academic theorist Paul Gilroy (b. 1956) and the novelist Zadie Smith (b. 1975). The Notting Hill Carnival, taking place over two days in August and dedicated to the cultures of London's Caribbean immigrants, became Britain's largest carnival and one of the largest in the world, attracting more than a million visitors in some years.

Despite many immigrant successes, people of colour continued to face discrimination in many areas of British life. Although there were efforts to recruit members of ethnic minorities for the police, relations with law enforcement remained a sore point. Tension between Afro-Caribbeans and the police contributed to a number of riots such as those in the largely black London neighbourhood of Brixton in 1981, 1985, and 1995.

Although immigration from countries of the former British Empire received the most publicity, there was also substantial immigration to the United Kingdom from continental Europe. The creation of the European Union eliminated barriers to immigration among the European countries, and many poor Eastern Europeans migrated to the West. Poles were particularly well represented among European immigrants. The Republic of Ireland was also a continuing source of immigrants to Britain.

The role of immigrants in Britain continues to be controversial to this day and has led to both official multiculturalism and political racism. Immigrants have organized into political pressure groups, usually allied with the Labour Party, that have elected members of minorities to Parliament and local office. Official multiculturalism is expressed in the passage of laws against racial discrimination and incitement to racial hatred. However, despite their official endorsements of racial equality and diversity, racism plays a role in the big parties. Political racism is not exclusively associated with the right, and not with all the right: Prime Minister Thatcher liked to present herself as the defender of the hardworking immigrant family against confiscatory taxes. Both parties have on occasion taken stands against further immigration and asylum seekers.

The most important racist party is the British National Party (BNP), a slicker successor to the old National Front. The BNP's platform includes the repatriation of non-white immigrants and their descendants. They have elected some local counsellors and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) but never an MP. The BNP and other extreme right-wing political movements are allied with movements of street thugs, often skinheads. Sometimes lethal skinhead and other street violence has been directed against minorities – immigrants, Jews, gays, and lesbians – and each other. Violence is often connected with soccer supporters, some of whom cultivate a reputation as thugs and engage in violent rumbles with supporters of other clubs. There has been an increasing willingness in the third millennium for skinhead gangs to use explicitly Nazi motifs such as swastikas.

Besides immigrants, another ubiquitous cultural presence in modern Britain is the United States. Britain is the European state most closely tied to America by language, culture, and politics, and British political leaders present themselves as Americanophiles much more often than do Continental politicians. Rightists admire the United States' free-market culture of support for business, while leftists, though sceptical of American foreign policy, sometimes invoke it as a more egalitarian society, free of Britain's class distinctions. (Research has shown that the actual social mobility of Britain and the United States is about the same, and even less than that of many continental European countries). American corporations have dominated the British market, and American media companies have dominated film and been strongly influential in television, literature, and music. American popular-music movements such as hip-hop have attracted legions of British followers and practitioners. Britain has had some reciprocal influence on America, of course, most spectacularly demonstrated by the Harry Potter novels of J. K. Rowling (b. 1965).

Immigrants have added to Britain's religious diversity. The most obvious examples are those religions historically not practiced in Britain, such as Hinduism and Islam, which have become increasingly prominent features on the physical landscape with the construction of large temples and mosques. However, immigrants have also brought new and different strands of Christianity. The introduction of Pentecostal Christianity to Britain was mostly the work of Caribbean immigrants.

By the start of the twenty-first 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 (b. 1947), an immigrant from India, wrote a novel called *The Satanic Verses* (1988), which many Muslims viewed as blaspheming Islam. Furious authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a fatwa, or decree, calling for Rushdie's death. (This led to the breaking of diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and Iran). Many British Muslims

attacked Rushdie verbally, called for a ban on the book, and burned copies of it. A Muslim terrorist, Mustafa Mamoud Maza, died in London in 1989 when a bomb he was preparing, allegedly to kill Rushdie, went off. Riots and demonstrations played out in public as a confrontation between Muslim immigrant communities and the British secular elite, right and left, with intellectuals from Muslim communities caught in the middle. Much of the emergence of the Muslim community as an organized community and interest group in British politics, as opposed to merely a religious and cultural grouping, was associated with the Rushdie affair. Subsequent events continued to bring Rushdie and *The Satanic Verses* back into the headlines. The Iranian fatwa has never been withdrawn, although the Iranian government eventually stated that it would neither help nor hinder attempts to kill Rushdie. In 2007 the author received a knighthood, setting off a fresh round of protests throughout the Islamic world.

While immigrants were bringing in new religions or new varieties of Christianity, there was a seemingly unstoppable rise of secularism among the indigenous British population. Today Britons have a very low rate of religious belief and church attendance. Many Church of England services are attended by a tiny number of aging Christians, and the Protestant Dissenting churches as a group are doing even worse. By the first years of the new century, militant atheists such as Oxford's Professor Richard Dawkins (b. 1941) had become more conspicuous with their vociferous attacks on religion.

Britain participated in the rise of green politics in the 1980s. Self-identified "Greens" reject the damage done to the environment by industrialism and support the preservation of what little open space remains in Britain. Greens also strongly oppose nuclear power and support renewable energy. Unlike Germany and some other European countries, Britain has not seen an effective Green political party. It is difficult to found a national party in Britain, due to the large number of parliamentary districts or constituencies from which the House of Commons is elected and Britain's majority-takes-all electoral system. Some activists have tried to get Britain to switch to a system of proportional representation, used in many other democratic countries, in which people vote for a party rather than a candidate and votes are counted nationwide. Countries with proportional representation tend to have more parties and to make it easier to start a party; in some, such as Germany, Green activists have been elected to national legislatures.

The 1980s were a time when fear of nuclear war ran high, and much British radical protest focused on nuclear weapons. The Greenham Common Women's Peace Group set up a camp next to the RAF base at Greenham Common in the county of Berkshire to protest the basing of nuclear-armed cruise missiles and prevent access to the base. There was an unsuccessful attempt to evict the Greenham Common women in 1984, but the camp remained until 2000, although the missiles had actually been removed in 1991. The Faslane Peace Camp in Faslane, Scotland, open to all sexes, was set up in 1982 to protest the basing of Trident missiles at the Faslane Naval Base, and it is still in existence.

John Major's Government

Margaret Thatcher's successor as Conservative Party leader and Prime Minister, John Major (b. 1943), was a little-known figure when he was entrusted with the highest position in British politics. His background was truly obscure: he neither came from the traditional Conservative gentry nor did he have the meritocratic academic career of politicians such as Edward Heath and Margaret Thatcher. A commonly told story early in his prime ministership related how he had once applied for a job as a bus driver and been turned down. Major was also one of the few Londoners to become Prime Minister. A less ideological and confrontational politician than Thatcher, Major offered a kind of "Thatcherism lite".

The new Prime Minister faced an immediate challenge with Britain's participation in the American-led coalition against Iraq in the Gulf War of 1991. British forces played a greater role than those of any other American ally, but despite British military success there was no Falklands factor, in which a British victory boosted the Prime Minister's popularity. However, Major did overcome many people's expectations in winning a narrow majority in his own right in his first election as Prime Minister. Some attributed this to his own hard campaigning, while others pointed to the continuing weakness of the Labour Party. Only a few months later, the government bungled a currency crisis. In 1990 Britain had joined the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM), an agreement between European countries to keep their currencies fluctuating within a narrow range against each other rather than floating freely. The value of the pound, however, was sinking rapidly, and on September 16, 1992, Black Wednesday, the Treasury's increasingly desperate attempts to shore up the value of the pound collapsed. Later estimates showed that Britain had lost more than £3 billion, and it was forced to withdraw from the ERM.

Although sterling recovered its value over the next few years, the crisis was followed by a huge drop in the Conservatives' popularity, which took the party more than a decade to make up.

The first tentative moves to a peace settlement in Northern Ireland also began under Major with secret talks between the British and Sinn Féin, as well as the “Downing Street Declaration” of December 15, 1993. Major and Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds (1932–2014) jointly declared that the people of Ireland had the right to self-determination based on consensus. Britain acknowledged that a united Ireland was possible if all Irish people wanted it, while the Irish Republic acknowledged the right of the Northern Irish Unionists to a voice in the process.

Although decolonisation had been completed throughout almost the entire old British Empire by 1979, there were a few areas left during the Major era. Belize, formerly British Honduras – the last British possession on the American mainland – gained its independence in 1981. Far more economically and politically important was Hong Kong, a British colony on the south China coast. Hong Kong was a major economic centre for East Asia. Some of the land had been ceded to Britain by China in the Opium Wars of the mid-nineteenth century, but some had been leased in 1898 for a period of 99 years.

The handover of all of Hong Kong, not just the leased territories, to China on the expiration of the lease in 1997 provoked great controversy. Although there were numerous restrictions on the political rights of Hong Kong residents as British colonial subjects, the situation would worsen considerably upon Hong Kong's absorption by China's Communist regime. Given the realities of the power situation, there was little Britain could compel China to do to respect the rights of Hong Kong citizens. The British were also reluctant to accept a flood of Hong Kong refugees. The last British governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten (b. 1944), was a Conservative politician who had lost his seat in Parliament in the general election of 1992; most previous governors of Hong Kong had been civil servants. Patten won some popularity in Hong Kong, and received violent condemnation from the Chinese government and its political allies, by democratising the Hong Kong legislative assembly. The eventual transfer of Hong Kong saw it retain an identity separate from the Chinese mainland, although hopes of retaining democracy there were disappointed.

In May 1997 Major faced a new Labour leader, Tony Blair (b. 1943), in the general election. Major led the Conservative Party to one of the

worst defeats in British history. The Conservatives lost 178 seats to finish at 165. Labour gained 146 seats to finish at 418, plus the Speaker, who presides over the House of Commons but does not vote. Although the stumbles and failures of Major's government and Blair's charm and dynamism played roles in the disaster, the country was also simply tired of 18 years of Conservative rule. A new generation had grown up since the last Labour government in 1979, and Labour looked like a fresh alternative.

Tony Blair and New Labour

On becoming leader of the Labour Party in 1995, Tony Blair presented himself as a break with the past. The phrase most identified with Blair and his allies was New Labour, which they used obsessively in place of Labour Party. Among Blair's principal concerns was severing the link between the Labour Party and a socialist agenda. He and his allies wanted to present Labour as a business-friendly party. The trade unions had been weakened by Thatcherism and the decline of the British industrial economy, and they were no longer the force in the Labour Party that they had been. One of Blair's first steps upon becoming leader of the party was to take on the elimination of clause 4 in the Labour Party constitution, which called for "the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange". Blair argued that the clause represented an outmoded socialism and emphasis on nationalization. The clause was replaced with a far more vague and general statement of the party's mission.

Blair, the youngest British Prime Minister in the twentieth century, also aimed to project the image of youth both for the Labour Party and for Britain itself. Social liberalism and multiculturalism were an important part of the New Labour program, although the antigay clause 28 was not repealed until 2003. The Blair image of a dynamic, modern Britain was frequently described as *Cool Britannia*. Critics charged that Blair was a convictionless politician more concerned with image than substance. *Cool Britannia*, some claimed, was only a mask for a heartless *Cruel Britannia* – the title of a book by left-wing London journalist Nick Cohen published in 2000.

The Death of Princess Diana

The most dramatic event of the early years of Tony Blair's premiership was the death of Princess Diana, the ex-wife of the heir to the throne Prince Charles (b. 1948), in a car accident in Paris on August 31, 1997. Although Diana had been an increasingly marginalized figure in the years before her death, the accident was followed by a massive outpouring of national grief. Only a few conspiracy theorists blamed Diana's death on the British government or the royal family, but many were incensed at the queen and the royal family, then on holiday, for refusing to return to London immediately or engage in public displays of grief.

The death of Diana came to be seen as an important cultural moment. The flagrant emotional displays associated with mourning the princess were seen as a renunciation of the idea of the "stiff upper lip" – that is, the typically British emotional restraint. Some argued that the Diana moment would lead to the downfall of the unpopular monarchy, although Diana's children, William (b. 1982) and Henry (b. 1984), have been fairly popular and the monarchy seems about as strong as ever. The real loser in terms of publicity was probably Prince Charles. However, despite the predictions made at the time that Charles would now never be able to wed his lover, Camilla Parker-Bowles (b. 1947), the two were married in 2005. Camilla uses the title Duchess of Cornwall (Duchess of Rothesay in Scotland), rather than Princess of Wales, to avoid conflict over Diana's use of the title.

Constitutional Changes: Devolution and the House of Lords

The most radical part of Blair's program was constitutional reform. This included the creation of regional assemblies for Scotland and Wales and the abolition of the hereditary element in the House of Lords. Removing the right of hereditary peers to vote in the House of Lords was part of Labour's campaign platform in 1997. (Until the late 1980s, the Labour position had been not to reform the House of Lords but to abolish it). The Labour government's animosity to the upper chamber was fuelled by the Lords' voting down many government measures. Although the Lords could not permanently block a government measure, with support in the Commons they could delay it, irritating the government and leading to calls for abolition of the unelected upper chamber. The House of Lords Act of 1999 was a compromise with those in the Lords who feared the massive discontinuity that would result from removing all of the hereditary peers, some of whom were highly skilled legislators. Ninety-two peers,

elected by those with the hereditary right to sit in the House, remained among the life peers who comprised the rest of the reformed Lords. This was considered a transitional measure. Hereditary peers who did not sit in the Lords gained the right to run for seats in the House of Commons, ending the necessity for peers to resign their peerages in order to sit in the Commons. Although the bill was seen as the first stage in a process of fully reforming (and possibly renaming) the Lords, the problems of the composition of a new upper chamber have proved thorny, and little has changed since the 1999 bill.

The creation of assemblies for Scotland and Wales also resulted from long campaigns. The Scottish parliament, established in 1998 after a Scottish referendum the previous year approved the idea, has 129 members elected by a mixture of single-constituency, winner-take-all elections and proportional representation in the Scottish regions. The parliament meets in the Holyrood district of Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, as an independent nation. It has powers not covering those specifically reserved to the United Kingdom parliament – the “reserved powers”. The Scottish parliament has some power to vary taxation rates, although not to establish or abolish taxes. Some have argued that the establishment of the Scottish parliament is a “slippery slope” to full Scottish independence, while others believe that it is a way of satisfying Scottish demands for autonomy short of full independence and will take the energy out of the nationalist cause. The Labour Party has dominated elections to the Scottish parliament, with the Scottish Nationalists the main opposition party.

The Welsh national assembly (*Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru*) was established to take the place of the secretary of state for Wales and the Welsh Office, central government institutions for Welsh administration. A referendum in 1998 produced a narrow majority of Welsh voters in favour of the creation of an assembly made up of 60 members, 40 elected for constituencies and 20 elected by proportional representation. The assembly’s headquarters are in Cardiff Bay. The Welsh national assembly has fewer powers than the Scottish parliament. Legislative competence is limited to matters specifically named in the Government of Wales Act or devolved from the United Kingdom parliament, and it does not include the power to tax. Labour has comprised the plurality of members, with Plaid Cymru, the Welsh nationalist party, coming in second. Labour has governed in coalitions with Plaid Cymru. With the creation of the devolved assemblies, England became the only component of the United Kingdom without its own representative body. While most English people

seem content with their representation in the UK House of Commons, some have argued that only an English assembly can represent specifically English interests as the interests of Scotland and Wales are represented by their assemblies.

Ken Livingstone proved to be nearly as big a thorn in the side of Tony Blair as he had been for Margaret Thatcher, since Livingstone's unreconstructed leftism was far from the image of New Labour. London had been without an overall governing authority since the abolition of the Greater London Council. Labour wanted to remedy this and passed a bill to establish the Greater London Authority, headed for the first time in London's history by a popularly elected mayor. (This position is distinct from that of Lord Mayor of London, a mostly ceremonial position dealing only with the ancient City of London, a small district in central London). Livingstone defeated the official Labour candidate, Frank Dobson (1940–2019), who had had Blair's strong support. Livingstone had been expelled from the party in 2000 but was readmitted for the 2004 election, as the Labour leadership feared another humiliating defeat for a party candidate running against him. Now the official Labour candidate, Livingstone easily won re-election.

As mayor, Livingstone worked to modernize London's aging transit infrastructure and introduced congestion charges to cut down car traffic in London's central areas. The strongly pro-gay Livingstone also set up the United Kingdom's first registry for same-sex couples, a step toward Parliament's Civil Partnership Act of 2004 that provided a status for same-sex couples with many of the benefits of marriage. The mayor frequently appeared in tabloid headlines for his freewheeling denunciations of many world leaders and governments, most definitely including the United Kingdom's. In 2008 Livingstone was defeated for re-election by the Conservative Boris Johnson (b. 1964).

The Irish Peace Agreement

One of the Blair government's most important achievements was building on the efforts of John Major to establish peace in Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement, or Belfast Agreement, of 1998 was the product of years of negotiating. It established a devolved assembly for Northern Ireland with a power-sharing agreement for a Northern Irish government. The Republic of Ireland abandoned its constitutional territorial claim on the North, and all parties agreed that any change in Northern Ireland's political status would have to be arrived at peacefully. The Protestant and

Catholic paramilitaries agreed to disarm. The agreement also partially reversed the separation of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom by establishing all-Ireland and all-British Isles institutions.

Some condemned the agreement and the peace process generally as giving in to terrorism. The British government, as part of its conciliation of Irish nationalists in the North, released numerous Irish terrorists with blood on their hands from British prisons. One of the most controversial was Patrick Magee (b. 1951), who had planted the Brighton Hotel bomb. Magee had previously been sentenced to life in prison but was released in 1999 after 14 years. Despite the opposition to these early releases, overall reaction to the agreement, which led to the end of Northern Ireland–related terrorism in Britain, was very positive, and the agreement was viewed as a political triumph for Blair.

The War on Terror and the Iraq War

Like many other countries around the world, Britain was quick to express its support for the United States following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. British troops, as part of NATO, supported the U.S. attack on the Taliban regime of Afghanistan, an ally of the terrorist group al-Qaeda.

What proved to be the greatest political challenge of Tony Blair's career was the U.S. war on Iraq. Iraq had not been involved with the 9/11 attacks, and its dictator, Saddam Hussein (1937–2006), was not ideologically sympathetic to the Islamic fundamentalists of al-Qaeda. The American decision to go to war with Iraq in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks was viewed with puzzlement in Europe, and in many cases it was met with outright opposition. Europeans, including Britons, feared that the American claim that Saddam Hussein was developing dangerous weapons of mass destruction (WMDs – nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons) was a cover for the desire to control Middle Eastern oil. Blair earned a reputation as U.S. President George W. Bush's most important ally in Europe, or indeed anywhere.

Blair's support for Bush's war in Iraq proved an enormous political liability. The relatively quick triumph over the armies of the Iraqi state was followed by a grinding insurgency. Even more problematic was the fact that no evidence of weapons of mass destruction or active programs to create them was ever produced. British pre-war intelligence was revealed as inaccurate or even fraudulent. Blair's association with Bush, a highly unpopular figure in Britain, was also a liability. Blair was portrayed in the

British press as Bush's "poodle", sacrificing British interests and the lives of British soldiers to American folly.

On July 7, 2005, Britain reeled from terrorist attacks in London. A coordinated series of four suicide bombings rocked the London Underground and a transit bus, killing 52 passengers. The bombings were the work of Islamic terrorists, prompted in part by the British role in the Iraq war. A second wave of bombings was planned for July 21, but the bombs did not go off and no one was harmed. The second bombings did, however, further depress many British people, as it looked as if bombings were not an aberration but would be a common feature of everyday life. Unlike the 9/11 bombings, which were perpetrated by foreigners, not citizens or long-term residents, the 7/7 bombings were carried out principally by British Muslim residents. They were followed by increased suspicion and monitoring of British Muslim communities, as well as demands that British Muslims publicly repudiate terrorism. Right-wing extremist movements such as the BNP have increasingly targeted the British Muslim population, with a corresponding de-emphasis on anti-Semitism. More moderate conservatives have called for greater controls on Muslim immigration and British Muslim institutions and preachers. British Muslims themselves have reacted in many ways, some harshly denouncing terrorism as un-Islamic, others becoming more alienated from mainstream British society.

The Fall of Tony Blair

By the middle of the first decade of the new century, Britons were increasingly weary of Tony Blair. Although he won the last of his general-election victories in 2005 (becoming the only leader in Labour history to lead his party to three victories), Labour lost seats, and its share of the popular vote dropped by 5.4 percent. Opposition to the war motivated a great deal of Blair's unpopularity, but there were other factors as well. The Millennium Dome, a structure built on London's dockland to commemorate the coming of the new millennium, was widely viewed as an expensive failure and failed to attract the predicted crowds. A scandal over the possibility that large loans to the Labour Party had been made as a quid pro quo for appointments to the House of Lords as "life peers" gave Labour an aura of sleaze, even though no prosecutions were made. As Blair's poll numbers continued to drop, the Labour Party leadership pressed him to resign. Although Blair had vowed to serve a full term if elected in 2005, he resigned as Prime Minister on June 27, 2007, handing

over the position to Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown (b. 1951), who had long coveted the office.

Brown was not seen to be a successful Prime Minister. Britain faced numerous economic problems, in part associated with the global economic decline beginning in 2008. He also presided over a steep decline in the popularity of the Labour Party, which had consequences in the next election in 2010. The party did poorly in by-elections and local elections, although Brown managed for a time to overcome challenges to his leadership within the Labour Party itself. He managed to maintain a greater distance from U.S. president George Bush, whose unpopularity in Britain continued throughout his term, than did Tony Blair. British anti-Americanism, however, decreased after the election of Barack Obama, a popular figure in Britain as throughout Europe, to the U.S. presidency in November 2008.

The Conservatives had a difficult time recovering from their 1997 defeat. After John Major resigned as leader shortly after the election, the party selected William Hague (b. 1961), the youngest Conservative leader since William Pitt the Younger in the eighteenth century, hoping to compete with Blair's youthful New Labour. Although a brilliant debater in the Commons, Hague proved a failure as leader, taking the Conservatives into another rout in the general election of 2001. Hague's successor, Iain Duncan Smith (b. 1954), was a complete fop, receiving a vote of no confidence from the party in 2003. The veteran Michael Howard (b. 1941) succeeded as a caretaker leader and did a creditable job in the 2005 general election, although Labour maintained a comfortable majority. Howard retired from the leadership position that December and was succeeded by David Cameron (b. 1966). Some Thatcherites attacked him as a superficial and trendy leader without much substance, even comparing him to Tony Blair. Although Cameron remained a controversial figure within the party and the nation, under his leadership the Conservatives made gains in their popularity.

United Kingdom Coalition Government (2010–2015)

In April 2010, Brown asked the Queen to dissolve Parliament and call new elections. This was followed by an election campaign which included the first televised leadership debates in British history. This election was held on Thursday 6 May. None of the parties obtained the 326 seats needed for an outright majority. The Conservative Party, led by David Cameron, won the largest number of votes and seats but still fell

twenty seats short. This resulted in a hung parliament where no party was able to command a majority in the House of Commons. This was only the second general election since World War II to return a hung parliament, the first being the February 1974 election. Unlike in 1974, the potential for a hung parliament had this time been widely considered and predicted and both the country and politicians were better prepared for the constitutional process that might follow such a result. The coalition government that was subsequently formed was the first coalition in British history to eventuate directly from an election outcome.

Coalition talks began immediately between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats and lasted for five days. There was an aborted attempt to put together a Labour/Liberal Democrat coalition (although other smaller parties would have been required to make up the ten seats they lacked for a majority). To facilitate this Gordon Brown announced on the evening of Monday 10 May that he would resign as Labour Party leader (He was succeeded by Ed Miliband (b. 1969)). Realizing that a deal with the Tories was within reach, the next day (May 11), Brown announced his resignation as Prime Minister, marking the end of 13 years of Labour government. This was accepted by Queen Elizabeth II, who then invited David Cameron to form a government in her name and become Prime Minister. At age 43, Cameron became the youngest British Prime Minister since Lord Liverpool, who had been appointed in 1812. Just after midnight on 12 May, the Liberal Democrats emerged from a meeting of their Parliamentary party and Federal Executive to announce that the coalition deal had been “approved overwhelmingly”, sealing a coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

Scottish Independence Referendum

On September 18, 2014, a referendum was held in Scotland on independence from the United Kingdom. The referendum, which had been agreed to by Cameron in 2012, asked a single simple question: “Should Scotland be an independent country?” Vigorous campaigns had been conducted on both sides of the question, with former Prime Minister Brown playing a prominent role in opposition to the referendum and proposing a plan that called for codification of the purpose of the United Kingdom, for recognition of the Scottish Parliament as permanent and indissoluble, and for increased income taxing powers for the Scottish government. Although opinion polls had long indicated that a solid majority of Scots opposed independence, as the day of voting approached,

the “yes” side had gained tremendous momentum, and polling indicated that the outcome was very much in question, with the “no” side holding a slight edge. With the vote just days off, David Cameron, Nick Clegg (b. 1967), and Labour Party leader Ed Miliband had jointly published in the newspaper Daily Record a “vow” to increase powers for Scotland’s government if the referendum was rejected. On the day of the vote, some 85 percent of registered voters went to the polls and convincingly defeated the referendum, with about 55 percent voting “no” and about 45 percent voting “yes.” Following the result, Cameron promised to move swiftly to redeem his promise to devolve more powers to Scotland. He appointed an all-party commission, led by Lord Smith of Kelvin, to consider the details.

Economic Recovery and British General Election of 2015

The UK’s economy grew by about 3 percent in 2014. By the end of the year, it had reversed the decline that it suffered during the recession that started in 2008. Unemployment, which had peaked at 8.5 percent in 2011, fell to 6 percent in the second half of 2014. However, wages continued to rise more slowly than inflation. The combination of low pay raises and the expansion of low-wage jobs meant that tax revenues during the year were lower than expected. That shortfall contributed to a rise in the government’s net deficit, which toward the end of 2014 was running about 10 percent higher than during the same period a year earlier.

Opinion polling right up to the day before voting indicated that the May 2015 UK general election might be the closest in recent memory, as a single percentage point separated the Conservative and Labour parties in most polls. Immigration, the government’s austerity policies, the future of the National Health Service, and Britain’s continued membership in the EU were among the key issues in the campaign. Attempting to address Euroskeptics in his own party and the challenge of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), Cameron promised to renegotiate the terms of British participation in the EU and to put continued EU membership to a national referendum by the end of 2017 if he were re-elected. The Conservatives also intimated that if Labour were to win with less than a majority, it would likely form a coalition with the Scottish National Party (SNP) that would drive the government’s agenda with its desire for independence.

When the votes were counted, Cameron and the Conservatives defied the pollsters by capturing 331 seats, enough to form a majority government without the participation of the Liberal Democrats.

The “Brexit” Referendum

On December 2, 2015, in the wake of the attacks by Islamist terrorists in Paris on November 13, the House of Commons authorized air strikes by the British military on ISIL targets in Syria. The vote on the measure came after some 10 hours of debate. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn (b. 1949) freed members of his party to vote their conscience, and dozens of them broke ranks to join the Conservatives and others in voting for authorization, which passed 397–223.

At a summit meeting of the leaders of the member countries of the EU in Brussels in February 2016, the European Council announced agreement on reforms to British membership that had been requested by Cameron in an attempt to forestall British withdrawal (“Brexit”) from the EU. Although Cameron did not get everything that he had asked for in the proposal that he submitted to Donald Tusk, the president of the European Council, in November 2015, he won enough concessions to move forward on his promise of a referendum on continued British membership. In the face of considerable support within his own party for Brexit, Cameron nevertheless announced that he would campaign for remaining in the EU and scheduled the referendum for June 23, 2016.

Cameron was joined in the “Remain” effort by Corbyn. The “Leave” campaign was headed by former London mayor Boris Johnson, whom many saw as a rival for Cameron’s leadership of the Conservative Party, and Michael Gove (b. 1967), Lord Chancellor and secretary of state for justice in Cameron’s cabinet. Opinion polling indicated that the two sides were fairly evenly divided as the referendum approached, but in the event 52 percent of voters opted to leave the EU, making the United Kingdom the first country to ever do so. Cameron announced his intention to resign as Prime Minister by the time of the Conservative Party conference in October 2016 to allow his successor to negotiate the UK withdrawal under the terms of Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, which, when triggered, would open a two-year window for the exit process.

The Premiership of Theresa May (2016–2019)

Only days after the Brexit vote, the political drama surrounding Johnson’s pursuit of the Conservative leadership assumed what many observers identified as Shakespearean proportions as Gove removed his prominent support for Johnson’s candidacy, saying that Johnson was “not capable of leading the party and the country in the way that I would have hoped.” In rapid fashion, a wounded Johnson removed himself from

consideration. Gove then threw his hat into the small ring of leadership candidates that was then winnowed by successive votes by parliamentary Conservatives in early July to Home Secretary Theresa May (b. 1956) and Energy Minister Andrea Leadsom (b. 1963), whose names were put to a vote by all party members with results due in September. Almost before that process started, Leadsom unexpectedly withdrew her name from consideration, and on July 11 the Conservative Party's 1922 Committee, which had been steering the leadership contest, declared May the new party leader "with immediate effect." On July 13 Cameron formally resigned, and May became the second woman in British history to serve as Prime Minister.

May, who had opposed Brexit but came into office promising to see it to completion, led her government in cautious movement toward triggering Article 50. Her efforts experienced a setback in January 2017, however, when the Supreme Court upheld a November 2016 High Court ruling that prevented the Prime Minister from triggering Article 50 without first having gained approval from Parliament to do so. In February 2017 the House of Commons granted May that approval by a 498–114 vote, but the House of Lords created another roadblock in early March by adding a pair of amendments to the bill authorizing May to invoke Article 50. One guaranteed that EU passport holders residing in Britain would be permitted to remain, and the other sought a greater role for Parliament in the negotiations. Both amendments were overturned by the House of Commons later in March, and, before the end of the month, May formally submitted a letter to European Council Pres. Donald Tusk requesting the opening of the two-year window for talks on the details of British separation from the EU.

Against this backdrop, the Scottish Assembly backed First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's call for a new referendum on independence for Scotland to be held before spring 2019 (the majority of Scottish voters had opposed leaving the EU in the Brexit referendum).

In mid-April 2017 May called for a snap parliamentary election, saying that its results would provide stability and certainty for Britain during its Brexit negotiations and transition out of the EU. To hold an election ahead of the 2020 date mandated by the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011, May needed to win two-thirds majority approval in the House of Commons. Corbyn welcomed a return to the polls, despite opinion polling that predicted big gains for the Conservatives, and, by a vote of 522 to

13 (with SNP members abstaining), the House of Commons approved a snap election for June 8.

The election campaign was temporarily suspended after 22 people were killed and dozens injured in a terrorist attack on the night of May 22 at a 21,000-capacity arena in Manchester following a concert by U.S. singer Ariana Grande. The attacker who detonated the homemade bomb that wrought the destruction also was killed in the blast. ISIL claimed responsibility for the attack, in which many of those who perished or were injured were children – teenaged and younger fans of the American pop star. It was the deadliest terrorist attack in Britain since the London bombings of 2005, in which more than 50 people were killed, and it followed an attack on Westminster Bridge in London on March 22 in which an attacker mowed down pedestrians with a car and then continued his assault on foot with a knife, taking five lives and injuring some 50 people before he was killed outside the Houses of Parliament by a security officer.

On June 3, five days before voters were to go to the polls, yet another terrorist attack unfolded in London. This time it occurred on London Bridge, where three attackers ran down victims with a vehicle before leaving it to menace others in nearby Borough Market with knives. Eight people were killed before police arrived, only eight minutes after the start of the incident, and shot and killed the attackers.

In addition to using the campaign to sell her version of “hard Brexit,” May sought to frame the election as a choice between her “strong and stable” leadership and that of Corbyn, who was characterized as an unreliable out-of-touch leftist extremist. However, Corbyn, once thought by many observers to be unelectable, proved to be an inspiring campaigner whose message of hope, compassion, and inclusiveness energized a new generation of Labour voters. May, on the other hand, often appeared uncomfortable, stiff, and uncertain on the campaign trail. One element of her manifesto – a proposal to pay for in-home social care of the elderly with government sales of their homes after their deaths, a plan loudly condemned by many as a “dementia tax” – brought widespread outrage that prompted her to quickly alter the proposal. Rather than appearing “strong and stable,” May, in the eyes of some observers, looked to be “weak and wobbly.”

When voters had their say on June 8, 2017, they handed the Conservatives a major setback. Rather than securing a mandate, May watched her party’s legislative majority disappear as it lost at least 12 seats

in the House of Commons to fall to 318 seats while Labour gained at least 29 seats to surpass 260 seats in total. Both parties garnered more than 40 per cent of the popular vote each in an election that witnessed a return to dominance by the two major parties. Led by Tim Farron (b. 1970), the Liberal Democrats, who had fared badly in the 2015 election, sought to reverse their fortunes by advocating another referendum on Brexit, and, while this proposal did not resonate for many voters, the party still gained four seats to reach a total of 12. Support for UKIP largely evaporated. Having nearly realized the goal of Brexit, many of those who had supported UKIP in previous elections were expected to vote for the Conservatives, but, in the event, it appeared that they instead were swayed by Corbyn's vision. The Conservatives did, however, make big gains in Scotland, where the Scottish National Party fell from 56 seats to 35, in what was widely interpreted as a rebuke to Sturgeon and the SNP's call for another referendum on Scottish independence.

Arguably the election's biggest winner was Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). Having increased its representation in the House of Commons from 8 to 10 seats, it found itself in the role of kingmaker when May enlisted its support to cling to power by forming a minority government (rather than seeking a formal coalition arrangement). With the support of the DUP on key votes, the Conservatives would be able to just barely surpass the 326-vote bar for a legislative majority.

The central task for May's government remained arriving at a cohesive approach for its Brexit negotiations with the EU. That task was a daunting one, however, because wide disagreement persisted even within the Conservative Party, not just on a myriad of details related to the British proposal for separation but also on the broader issues involved.

In June 2017 Brexit was pushed off the front pages by one of the worst disasters in recent British history: a fire in a multi-storey public housing residence (Grenfell Tower) in London claimed the lives of 72 individuals, many of whom were recent immigrants. The incident prompted a period of national soul-searching after it was revealed that months before the fire the building's low-income residents had raised concerns about fire safety and complained that they were being treated like second-class citizens.

In March 2018 British national outrage was focused on Russia when a former Russian intelligence officer, who had acted as double agent for Britain, and his daughter were found unconscious in Salisbury, England. It was determined that the pair had been victims of a "novichok," a complex

nerve agent that had been developed by the Soviets. Although the Russian government denied having any involvement with the attack and British investigators were unable to prove that the nerve agent originated in Russia, the May government responded by expelling some two dozen Russian intelligence operatives who had been working in Britain under diplomatic cover.

In April Britain joined France and the United States in launching air strikes against targets in Syria after it was revealed that the regime of Syrian Pres. Bashar al-Assad had again used chemical weapons on its own people. Corbyn was critical of May for having ordered the strike without first consulting Parliament, but she countered that the action had to be undertaken without seeking parliamentary approval in order to protect the operation's integrity. May also said that the strike was intended to prevent further suffering, and she characterized the decision as both right and legal.

EU Agreement and Parliamentary Opposition to May's Brexit Plan

On November 25 the leaders of the EU's 27 other member countries formally agreed to the terms of a withdrawal deal that May claimed "delivered for the British people" and set the United Kingdom "on course for a prosperous future." Under the plan Britain was to pay some \$50 billion to the EU to satisfy its long-term financial obligations. Britain's departure from the EU was to come in March 2019, but, according to the agreement, the UK would continue to abide by EU rules and regulations until at least December 2020 while negotiations continued on the details of the long-term relationship between the EU and the UK.

The agreement, which was set to be debated and voted upon by the House of Commons in December, still faced strong opposition in Parliament, not only from Labour, the Liberal Democrats, the SNP, Plaid Cymru, and the DUP but also from dozens of Conservatives. At the same time, the call for holding another referendum on Brexit was growing louder, though May remained adamant that the will of the British people had already been expressed. A major sticking point for many of those who opposed the agreement was the so-called Northern Ireland backstop plan. Formulated to help maintain an open border between Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland after Brexit, the "backstop" stipulated that a legally binding customs arrangement between the EU and Northern Ireland would go into effect if the UK and the EU could not reach a long-term agreement

by December 2020. Opponents of the backstop argued that it set up the potential for regulatory barriers between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, effectively establishing a customs border down the Irish Sea.

The issue grew more heated in the first week of December after the government was forced to publish in full Attorney General Geoffrey Cox's legal advice for the government on the Brexit agreement, which had initially been reported to Parliament in overview only. According to Geoffrey Cox (b. 1960), without agreement between Britain and the EU, the terms of the backstop plan could endure "indefinitely," with the UK legally blocked from terminating the agreement without EU approval. This contentious issue was front and centre as the House of Commons began five days of debate leading up to a vote on the Brexit agreement that was scheduled for December 11. Facing the likelihood of a humiliating rejection of the agreement by the House of Commons, May dramatically interrupted the debate after three days, on December 10, and postponed the vote, pledging to seek new assurances from the EU regarding the backstop. The opposition responded by threatening to hold a vote of confidence and to call for an early election.

A challenge to May's leadership was quickly mounted within the Conservative Party, and, after more than the required 15 percent of the parliamentary party (48 of 317 MPs) requested a vote on her leadership of the party, a secret ballot vote was held on December 12, 2018. May received the votes of 200 MPs, more than the 159 votes she needed to survive as leader. Although, according to Conservative Party rules, she could not be challenged as leader for another year, it remained to be seen whether May would still face pressure to relinquish power.

Responding to May in a joint letter, European Council Pres. Donald Tusk and European Commission Pres. Jean-Claude Juncker indicated that, if the backstop had to be invoked, they would strive to limit its application to the "shortest possible period." However, this pledge satisfied few of the agreement's critics. When debate on the agreement resumed on January 9, Corbyn argued not only for rejection of the agreement but also for an early general election. On January 15 the agreement was overwhelmingly rejected by a vote of 432–202 (the worst defeat for a government initiative in modern British parliamentary history), and Corbyn tabled a vote of confidence in the government, which May survived the next day, 325–306, having held onto the support of the DUP and many Conservatives who had deserted her in the agreement vote.

The longer the issue of Brexit remained unsettled, the more it became the fulcrum on which British politics turned. Political pundits began to note that opinions on May's proposed version of Brexit and Brexit in general cut across ideological lines. Both Labour and the Conservative Party were riven by internecine conflict over Brexit. In February eight MPs withdrew from the Labour Party, citing their disappointment in Corbyn's leadership on the issue as well as concerns over alleged anti-Semitism within the party, a criticism that was at least partly tied to Corbyn's sympathy for Palestinian concerns. Only days after their departure, three moderate Tories left the Conservative Party, protesting that it had been hijacked by the European Research Group, a faction of right-wing hard-line Brexiters whom the departing MPs accused of acting as a party within the party. Joining together as the Independent Group, these breakaway MPs from both parties began taking steps toward formally constituting a new political party. Meanwhile, in early March, Tom Watson (b. 1967), the deputy leader of the Labour Party, convened a meeting of Labour MPs and members of the House of Lords – many of whom felt that Corbyn had taken the party too far leftward – to consider an alternative vision for the party.

Against this backdrop, May continued negotiations with European leaders in an effort to win concessions that would garner wider support within Parliament than the terms of her earlier, shunned Brexit plan did. On the eve of a scheduled meaningful vote in the House of Commons on her revised plan, May secured new promises of cooperation on the backstop plan from EU leaders. A “joint legally binding instrument” was agreed to under which Britain could initiate a “formal dispute” with the EU if the EU were to attempt to keep Britain bound to the backstop plan indefinitely. A “joint statement” was also issued that committed the UK and the EU to arriving at a replacement for the backstop plan by December 2020. Finally, the UK put forth a “unilateral declaration” stressing that there was nothing to prevent Britain from abandoning the backstop if negotiations on an alternative arrangement with the EU were to collapse without the prospect of resolution.

In advance of the vote in Parliament, Attorney General Cox issued his opinion that while the new assurances reduced the risk of the UK's being indefinitely confined by the backstop agreement; they did not fundamentally change the agreement's legal status. In the vote on March 12, the House of Commons once again rejected May's plan, though by a smaller margin than its earlier defeat, 391–242. The next day the House of

Commons voted 312–308 against leaving the EU without a deal in place. On March 14, by just two votes, May survived a vote that would have taken control of Brexit away from her and handed it to Parliament. In a letter to EU leaders on March 20, she requested that the date of Britain’s departure from the EU be delayed until June 30. In response the EU announced its willingness to extend the Brexit deadline until May 22 but only if Parliament had accepted May’s withdrawal plan by the week of March 24.

Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of London on March 23 to demand that another referendum on Brexit be held. On March 25 the House of Commons voted 329–302 to usurp control of Parliament’s agenda from the government in order to hold “indicative votes” on alternative proposals to May’s plan. Eight of those proposals were put to a vote on March 27, but none was able to gain the support of the majority, though a plan to seek to create a “permanent and comprehensive UK-wide customs union with the EU” came close, falling short by just six votes.

Also, on March 27, May pledged to resign as party leader and Prime Minister if the House of Commons were to approve her plan, a gambit that won support from some “hard Brexit” opponents of the plan. On March 29, owing to an antique procedural rule invoked by Speaker of the House John Bercow (b. 1963), only the withdrawal agreement portion of May’s plan was voted upon by the House of Commons (excluded was the “political declaration” that addressed what the UK and EU expected of their long-term relationship). Although the vote was closer than the previous two (286 in support, 344 in opposition), the plan once again went down in defeat. The UK now had until April 12 to decide whether it would leave the EU without an agreement on that day or request a longer delay that would require it to participate in elections for the European Parliament. May asked the EU to push back the deadline for Brexit until June 30, and on April 11 the European Council announced that it was granting the UK a “flexible extension” until October 31.

Shortly thereafter, in response to the Conservative Party’s seeming inability to position the country to leave the EU, Nigel Farage (b. 1964) launched the Brexit Party. It proved to be a big winner in the elections for the European Parliament in May, capturing about 31 percent of the vote. The next closest finisher was the Liberal Democrats, with about 20 percent of the vote, while Labour claimed some 14 percent and the Conservatives only about 9 percent.

Having failed to garner sufficient support from Conservatives for her exit plan, May entered discussions with Labour leaders on a possible compromise, but these too proved fruitless. When May responded to that disappointment by proposing a new version of the plan, that included a temporary customs relationship with the EU and a pledge to hold a parliamentary vote on whether to stage another referendum on Brexit, her cabinet revolted. Isolated as never before, the Prime Minister announced on May 24 that she would step down as leader of the Conservative Party on June 7 but would remain as caretaker premier until her party had chosen her successor.

Boris Johnson's Government (2019–2022)

After a series of votes by the parliamentary Conservative Party winnowed a list of 10 candidates to 2, Boris Johnson and Jeremy Hunt (b. 1966) stood in an election in which all of the party's roughly 160,000 members were eligible to vote. Johnson took some 66 percent of that vote to assume the leadership. He officially replaced May as Prime Minister on July 24, 2019. Although he had promised to take the United Kingdom out of the EU without an exit agreement if the deal May had negotiated was not changed to his liking, Johnson faced widespread opposition (even within his own party) to his advocacy of no-deal Brexit. Political manoeuvring by the new Prime Minister (including proroguing Parliament just weeks before October 31, the revised departure deadline) was met with forceful legislative countermeasures by those opposed to leaving the EU without an agreement in place. A vote of the House of Commons in early September forced Johnson to request a delay of the British withdrawal from the EU until January 31, 2020, even though on October 22 the House approved, in principle, the agreement that Johnson had negotiated, replacing the backstop with a plan to keep Northern Ireland aligned with the EU for at least four years from the end of the transition period.

Johnson repeatedly tried and failed to call a snap election that he hoped would secure a mandate for his vision of Brexit. Because the election would fall outside the five-year term stipulated by the Fixed Terms of Parliament Act, it required approval by two-thirds of the House of Commons to be held, meaning that it needed support from the opposition, which was denied. After no-deal Brexit was blocked, however, Corbyn was willing to let voters once again decide the fate of Brexit, and an election was scheduled for December 12, 2019. Preelection opinion

polling indicated a likely win for the Conservatives, but when the results were in, Johnson's party had recorded its most decisive victory since 1987, adding 48 seats to secure a solid Parliamentary majority of 365 seats. The stage was set for the realization of Johnson's version of Brexit, which was to take place at 11:00 PM London time on January 31, when the United Kingdom formally would withdraw from the European Union.

In April 2020 Sir Keir Starmer (b. 1962), the shadow Brexit secretary and a former director of public prosecutions, replaced Corbyn as Labour leader. At the end of October Corbyn was suspended from the party in response to his somewhat dismissive reaction to the release of the greatly anticipated report on anti-Semitism within the Labour Party by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. His suspension immediately disrupted the Labour Party, prompting denunciations of that action by Corbyn's leftist supporters.

Although Britain's formal withdrawal from the EU had been accomplished, final details relating to a new trade deal between the UK and the EU remained to be resolved, and the December 31, 2020, deadline for that resolution was only barely met on December 24. The resultant 2,000-page agreement clarified that there would be no limits or taxes on goods sold between U.K. and EU parties; however, an extensive regimen of paperwork for such transactions and transport of goods was put in place. The freedom to work and live between the UK and the EU became a thing of the past.

As it was in most of the rest of the world, life in the UK was turned upside down in 2020 by the onset of the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 global pandemic, which had originated in China, where the first cases were reported in December 2019. Because the Johnson government's key scientific advisers had embraced the controversial theory that the best way to limit the long-term effects of the pandemic was to allow the virus to spread naturally and thus generate "herd immunity," Britain initially did not adopt the kind of aggressive measures to combat the pandemic that had been undertaken in much of the rest of the world. By mid-March 2020, however, the government had radically shifted gears as COVID-19, the potentially deadly disease caused by the virus, began spreading rapidly in Britain. Social-distancing and mask-wearing requirements were imposed, as was a lockdown that included the closing of schools, pubs, restaurants, and other businesses.

In late March Prime Minister Johnson contracted the virus and had to be hospitalized, spending three nights in an intensive care unit when his

life was in jeopardy. While he was incapacitated, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab (b. 1974) performed Johnson's duties. Over the coming year, Johnson would initiate and rescind stay-at-home orders that varied by region as the spread of the disease came in waves. Although the government's initial response to the pandemic had been slow and unsteady, British scientists, aided by government funding, made historically rapid advances in developing an effective vaccine. Having become the first country to approve and deploy the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, Britain began rolling out a national immunization program in December 2020. Nevertheless, by March 2021 the UK had suffered about 126,000 COVID-related deaths, more than all but four other countries – the United States, Brazil, Mexico, and India. The British predicament had been complicated by the emergence in the UK of a new, more easily transmissible variant of the disease (B.1.1.7) in September 2020.

In late November 2021 it began to be reported that members of Johnson's cabinet and staff, as well as the Prime Minister himself, had attended parties earlier in the pandemic that violated prohibitions on social gatherings established by the government. The resulting "Partygate" scandal involved both the alleged violations and Johnson's initial insistence that the government's pandemic-related guidelines had been "followed at all times." After reports came to light of an increasing number of illegal social gatherings at Downing Street during the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, Johnson apologized for having attended one such party at which drinks were served. In addition to the alleged violations of pandemic-related rules, a picture of excessive workplace drinking in the Prime Minister's orbit began to take shape. Moreover, it appeared that Johnson had misled Parliament with his claim that no pandemic-related rules had been broken. Historically, deceiving Parliament was an offense that called for resignation.

A report on the affair by senior civil servant Sue Gray was delivered to Parliament in late January 2022. Although it was truncated and heavily redacted to avoid compromising the investigation that had been undertaken by the London Metropolitan Police into a number of gatherings, the report said that "there were failures of leadership and judgment by different parts of No. 10 and the Cabinet Office at different times" and that "some of the events should not have been allowed to take place" whereas "other events should not have been allowed to develop as they did." Despite a renewed apology to Parliament by Johnson, some Conservatives joined members of the opposition in calling for his resignation. Johnson's grip on power

would remain precarious – especially after the police investigation led to him being fined in April for his transgressions of pandemic-related rules. However, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on February 24 served to forestall efforts to remove Johnson from office. Many in Britain appeared to believe that the moment of existential crisis for Europe brought on by Russia’s aggression was not the time for a change of leadership.

Nevertheless, by early June a sufficient number of Conservative MPs had written to the party’s 1922 Committee requesting the Prime Minister’s resignation that a vote of confidence in his leadership of the party was forced. To retain his position, Johnson needed to have his leadership affirmed by at least 180 of the party’s 359 members of the House of Commons. When the secret ballots were counted, 211 MPs had voted in support of Johnson, but the 148 MPs who had voted against him represented a larger percentage of the party’s presence in the House of Commons than did the 133 MPs who had rejected Theresa May’s leadership in the 2018 vote of confidence that preceded her eventual resignation.

Only weeks later Johnson’s uncanny ability to survive scandal finally deserted him when his apparent prevarication regarding his awareness of allegations of sexual misconduct against a senior Conservative Party official shattered his support within the party and forced him to step down. Johnson tendered his immediate resignation as party leader on July 7, 2022. He announced that he would remain as Prime Minister until the Conservatives had chosen a new leader.

The premiership of Mary Elizabeth (Liz) Truss

After Boris Johnson’s resignation Liz Truss won the Conservative leadership election against the former Chancellor, Rishi Sunak. She took office on Tuesday 6th September 2022 as Queen Elizabeth II’s fifteenth Prime Minister and Britain’s third woman PM. In a break with tradition, Truss received her official appointment from Elizabeth II at Balmoral Castle rather than at Buckingham Palace out of concern for the queen’s increasingly frail health, which had limited Elizabeth’s participation in June in the Platinum Jubilee, a four-day celebration of her 70-year reign.

On September 8 Britain and the world were shocked by the news of the queen’s death. Truss called Elizabeth “the rock on which modern Britain was built.” Following the death of Her Majesty the Queen two days later on Thursday 8th September 2022, Liz Truss also became the new monarch King Charles III’s first Prime Minister. Ms Truss had come into

office believing that she had a mandate to carry out a “low taxes, high growth” economic plan. However, the financial markets panicked at the prospect of the budget deficit likely to result from Truss’s proposed combination of unfunded £45 billion (\$50 billion) tax cuts and a two-year cap on energy prices (in response to high energy costs facing Britons as a result of sanctions imposed on natural gas supplier Russia). The Bank of England was forced to intervene to stabilize the markets after the value of the pound nose-dived, mortgage rates rose, and the cost of U. K. government borrowing climbed. Responding to the furor that followed, on October 14 Truss sacked Chancellor of the Exchequer Kwasi Kwarteng, among her closest political allies, and replaced him with former foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt. Almost immediately Hunt began undoing Truss’s signature economic plan, reducing the period for the energy price cap to six months and revoking the tax cuts. Truss apologized for the “mistakes” she had made, but a growing number of Conservative MPs called for her to resign, and, amid withering support for her, on October 20 Truss announced that she was stepping down as party leader but would remain prime minister until the Conservatives will have chosen her successor.

The premiership of Rishi Sunak

Rishi Sunak became leader of the Conservative Party on 24 October 2022. Having lost the previous contest for party leader against Ms Truss just a few weeks earlier, this time he won the leadership after Boris Johnson decided not to run and Penny Mordaunt, Leader of the House, could not get the 100 MP votes needed to progress to the next stage of the contest.

Sunak was appointed Prime Minister of the United Kingdom by King Charles III on 25 October 2022, making him the first British Asian prime minister and the first Hindu to hold the office. In his first speech as prime minister, Sunak promised “integrity, professionalism and accountability,” and said that “we will create a future worthy of the sacrifices so many have made and fill tomorrow, and everyday thereafter with hope.”

As prime minister, Sunak has authorized foreign aid and weapons shipments to Ukraine in response to the Russian invasion of the country. He and Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt have continued the levelling up policy introduced during the premiership of Boris Johnson.

Questions

1. Who was the most ideological Prime Minister since Clement Atlee's post-war Labour government?
2. When did Margaret Thatcher become Prime Minister?
3. Why do historians use the term "Thatcherism"? What are its characteristic features?
4. What was Mrs Thatcher's foreign policy?
5. When did the Falklands conflict between Britain and Argentina take place?
6. What was the reason for the coal miners' strike in 1984–1985?
7. Do you agree with the statement that the Hillsborough Agreement of 1985 was the most important development in Anglo-Irish relations since the 1920s?
8. What led to the downfall of Thatcher?
9. How was British social, cultural and religious life changed by the arrival of immigrants?
10. What book triggered a furor that pitted much of the Islamic world against the West over issues of blasphemy and freedom of expression?
11. What influence did Princess Diana's charity activities have on the British?
12. Who set up the United Kingdom's first registry for same-sex couples, a step toward Parliament's Civil Partnership Act of 2004?
13. What were the basic items of the constitutional reform which was initiated by Tony Blair?
14. What were the achievements of Blair's government in its Irish policy?
15. What role did Britain play in the war on terror and in Iraq?
16. What led to the end of Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Britain?
17. Who and why was portrayed in the British press as Bush's "poodle"?
18. What new form did the British government take after the elections of 2010?
19. What was the result of the 2014 Scottish referendum?
20. What is Brexit?
21. Who had the difficult task to negotiate UK withdrawal from the EU?
22. What was Boris Johnson's position on Brexit?
23. Who is the shortest serving Prime Minister in British history?
24. Who was elected Leader of the Conservative Party on 24 October 2022 and was appointed prime minister the following day?

XI. BRITISH HISTORY IN CULTURE

The United Kingdom is actually composed of four “nations” – Wales, Scotland, England and Northern Ireland – each with its own distinct culture. Each of these nations can be broken down further into regions within which there may be marked variations in landscape, language and lifestyle. These variations naturally are linked with the dense historical “jigsaw”, because each corner of Britain has its story. It would be difficult to find another country of such limited proportions with such strong regional distinctions, so rich in cultural diversity, so attached to its past and yet so determinedly modern.

The Cultural Monuments of Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Roman Britain

The main cultural monuments of the Stone Age and the Bronze Age which have survived in Great Britain are the Glastonbury Tor, Stonehenge, Avebury, West Kennet Long Barrow and Silbury Hill, and the pictures on the chalk hills.

In the centre of the Salisbury plain one can see **the Glastonbury Tor**, a hill at Glastonbury in the English county of Somerset, topped by the roofless St. Michael’s Tower. Rising to an elevation of 158 metres, it is considered to be a sacred hill. According to Celtic mythology there was an entrance there to the Apple Island, where the legendary king Arthur was waiting to be awakened. Christian legends tell that St. Joseph founded the first Christian church, in which he hid the sacred bowl of the Holy Grail from which Jesus Christ drank during the Clandestine Vespers. However, the church was later destroyed by the earthquake.

Ancient people worshiped that place and began constructing a new monument 13 km north of Salisbury which is called **Stonehenge**. The name of the place comes from the Saxon word *Stanhengist*, or “hanging stones”. Stonehenge is fifteen hundred years older than the Egyptian pyramids. Archaeologists believe it was constructed between 3000 B.C. and 2000 B.C. It is not known with certainty why that huge double circle was built, or how primitive people managed to move such heavy stones. Some researchers think that it was built by the ancient druids who performed their rites in Stonehenge. Contrary to this popular belief, there was no original connection between Stonehenge and the druids: the latter appeared much later. Construction began with earthworks, followed by the placing of wooden posts. By the mid-third millennium, vast stones were

being placed in a circular design. Some researchers believe that it was built by sun-worshippers who came to this distant land from the Mediterranean when the Channel was a dry valley on the Continent.

Stonehenge may have performed the function of an enormous calendar. Its shifting shadows probably indicated the cycle of the seasons and told the people when it was time to sow their crops. There are likewise some legends connected with Stonehenge; some say that it was constructed by the famous wizard Merlin, who brought up King Arthur. According to another legend, Stonehenge was built by the devil in a single night during which he flew backwards and forwards between Ireland and Salisbury, carrying the stones one by one and setting them in place. It is said that as he worked, he laughed to himself. "That will make people think. They'll never know how the stones came here!", but a monk was hiding nearby and surprised the devil, who then threw his stone at the monk, hitting him on the heel. This "heel stone" supposedly can still be seen by the side of the road. On a more realistic level, however, geologists have shown that the stones came from South Wales (not from Ireland). The thirty vertical stones are 40 meters high and every component part of the structure weighs more than 40 tons.

The ruins of Stonehenge continue to impress in their quiet majesty. The inner ring of blue stones from Wales may have been connected to beliefs that the blue stones had healing properties, and some archaeologists have theorized that Stonehenge in the later periods of its use may have been a healing centre that even drew visitors from the European continent.

Another relic of the past on Salisbury Plain is **Avebury**; it is the site with the greatest expanse, although Stonehenge is the best known. Avebury is a Neolithic henge monument made up of three stone circles, around the village of Avebury in Wiltshire, in southwest England. One of the best-known prehistoric sites in Britain, its stone circle is the largest in Europe. It is both a tourist attraction and a place of religious importance to present-day pagans. Constructed over the course of several hundred years during the third millennium B.C., during the Neolithic, or New Stone Age, the monument comprises a large henge (a bank and a ditch) with a large outer stone circle and two separate smaller stone circles situated inside the centre of the monument. Its original purpose is unknown, although archaeologists believe that it was most likely used for some form of ritual or ceremony.

Avebury is actually larger than Stonehenge, but due to its greater erosion and the destruction of many of its stones in the medieval period, it

is less impressive. The efforts of modern archaeologists have revealed many other Neolithic constructions, both in stone and earthworks, in various parts of Britain and Ireland. More than 900 Stone Age circles, or henges, are known in the British Isles, and there were probably many more of which no trace survives. There are also surviving remnants of old wooden buildings, including some at Stonehenge, although these have all vanished from casual view. Some of the ancient structures, such as Stonehenge, were vast constructions requiring more than a million man-hours of labour – a remarkable commitment of resources given the general harshness of life in Stone Age society. Since most adults in the Neolithic period died in their thirties, this labour had to extend over generations.

The Avebury monument was a part of a larger prehistoric landscape which included several older monuments nearby, including the West Kennet Long Barrow and Silbury Hill. The **West Kennet Long Barrow** is a Neolithic tomb or barrow, situated on a prominent chalk ridge near Silbury Hill, two kilometres south of Avebury in Wiltshire, England. Archaeologists classify it as a chambered long barrow and one of the Severn-Cotswold tombs. It has two pairs of opposing chambers and a single terminal chamber used for burial. Its construction commenced about 3600 B.C., which was some 400 years before the first stage of Stonehenge, and it was in use until around 2500 B.C. The mound has been damaged by indiscriminate digging, but archaeological excavations in 1859 and 1955–56 revealed at least 46 burials, ranging from babies to elderly persons. It is thought that this tomb was in use for as long as 1,000 years and at the end of this period the passage and chamber were filled to the roof by the Beaker people with earth and stones, among which were found pieces of Grooved ware, Peterborough ware and Beaker pottery, charcoal, bone tools, and beads.

Silbury Hill is a prehistoric artificial chalk mound near Avebury in the English county of Wiltshire. It is part of the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites UNESCO World Heritage Site. At 30 metres high, it is the tallest prehistoric man-made mound in Europe and one of the largest in the world, similar in size to some of the smaller Egyptian pyramids of the Giza Necropolis. Its original purpose is still a subject of debate. It covers about 2 hectares. The hill was constructed in several stages between ca. 2400–2300 B.C. and displays immense technical skill and prolonged control over labour and resources. The base of the hill is circular and is 167 metres in diameter; the summit is flat-topped and 30 metres in diameter. There are indications that the top originally had a rounded

profile, but this was flattened in the medieval period to provide a base for a building, perhaps with a defensive purpose. The step surrounding the summit dates from this phase of construction, either as a precaution against slippage, or as the remnant of a spiral path ascending from the base, used during construction to raise materials and later as a processional route.

Also numbered among the wonders of ancient British culture are **the pictures on the chalky hills**, the origin of which remains unclear. Hill figures cut in grass and filled with chalk are a phenomenon especially seen in England, where examples include the Cerne Abbas Giant (a huge naked man, about 55 metres high and 51 metres wide, in the small village of Cerne Abbas in Dorset county), the Uffington White Horse (110 m long, in the county of Oxfordshire, 2.5 km south of Uffington, 1000–700 B.C., the oldest of the white horse figures in Britain, and is of an entirely different design from the others, a masterpiece of minimalist art), the Long Man of Wilmington (72 m tall, near Wilmington, East Sussex, holding two staves and designed to look in proportion when viewed from below), as well as “lost” carvings at Cambridge, Oxford and Plymouth Hoe. From the eighteenth century onwards, many further ones were added. Many figures long thought to be ancient have been found to be relatively recent. Only the Uffington White Horse appears to retain a prehistoric shape, while the Cerne Abbas Giant may be prehistoric, Romano-British, or Early Modern. Nevertheless, these figures have been iconic in the conception that English people have of their past. Though they are simple they make us think about the legends of the giants of prehistoric times.

Among the monuments of **Roman Britain** which have survived are **Hadrian’s Wall**, as well as **various roads, amphitheatres, baths, mosaics, and villas**. One of the greatest achievements of the Roman Empire was its system of roads, in Britain no less than elsewhere. When the legions arrived in Britain in the first century A.D., their first task was to build a system of roads. Stone bridges were built across rivers. Roman roads were made of stones, lime and gravel; their characteristic feature was that they were straight and had milestones, stones with the distance indicated on them. There are still some remnants of Roman roads and Roman baths in some parts of England. The Romans found hot mineral springs in the southwest of England, and then built baths there and brought in water through lead pipes. There is still a famous spa resort at Bath.

The Romans were unable to conquer the Scottish Highlands, or Caledonia as they called it. During the reign of the Emperor Hadrian in 122 A.D. a high wall was built to defend the province from the raids of the

Picts and the Scots. This wall, known as **Hadrian's Wall**, stretches 118 km (80 Roman miles) from the eastern to the western coast of the island. It formed the northwest boundary of the Roman empire for nearly 300 years. It began from Wallsend on the River Tyne in the east and ended at Bowness-on-Solway in the west. With its forts built a mile apart one from another, the wall served as a stronghold. At the same time, when the northern Britons were not at war with the Romans, the wall turned into an improvised marketplace for either party.

Unlike the Celts, who lived in villages, the Romans were city-dwellers. The Roman army built legionary fortresses, forts, and roads, and assisted with the construction of buildings in towns. The Romans built most towns to a standardized pattern of straight, parallel main streets that intersected each other at right angles. The *forum* (market square) formed the centre of each town. Shops and such public buildings as the basilica, baths, law-courts, and temple surrounded the forum. The paved streets had drainage systems, and fresh water was piped to many buildings. Houses were built of wood or narrow bricks and had tiled roofs. The chief towns were Colchester, Gloucester, York, Lincoln, Dover, Bath and **London** (or Londinium). London is known to have been founded by the Romans on the site of an earlier settlement. It became the chief administrative centre. From it, roads spread out to all parts of the province. Some of those roads exist up to this day, such as **Watling Street**, which extended from Dover to London, then to Chester and into the mountains of Wales.

By the end of the sixth century Britain had become Christian due to the energy of the Christian missionaries from Ireland and the efforts of Pope Gregory, who decided to spread his influence throughout England. The Roman mission headed by the monk Augustine ('St. Augustine's mission') landed in Kent in 597 and founded the first church in the capital town of **Canterbury**. The Romans rebuilt the city, with new streets in a grid pattern, a theatre, a temple, a forum, and public baths. Canterbury was chosen by Augustine as the centre for his episcopal see in Kent, and an abbey and cathedral were built. Augustine thus became the first Archbishop of Canterbury in 601. Ever since that time, Canterbury has been a religious centre of major importance in Britain.

St. Augustine also made Canterbury a centre of education. After getting their education there, monks went to other parts of Britain, converted people to Christianity and opened monasteries. The town's new importance led to its revival, and trades developed in pottery, textiles, and leather. By 630, gold coins were being struck at the Canterbury mint. In

672, the Synod of Hertford gave the see of Canterbury authority over the entire English Church.

The seventh and eighth centuries were the time when **manuscript illumination** began to develop. The monks illustrated many books, decorating the **Gospels** with particular care. The most famous of them are the Book of Durrow and the Book of Kells, now housed in Iona Abbey in Scotland. The artists usually decorated the initial letter of the first page of the manuscript. This letter occupied half of the page and had a simple geometric form but with a very complicated ornamentation that contained plant or animal characteristics.

Literary evidence suggests that Britons adopted Latinized names and that the elite spoke and wrote Latin. The spread of Christianity was connected with the largest introduction of Latin words into the English of that time, including words such as *abbot*, *altar*, *angel*, *creed*, *hymn*, *idol*, *organ*, *nun*, *pope*, and *temple*. Traces of Latin are still found in modern English: *street* from *strata via*, *wall* from *vallum*, *wine* from *vinum*, *cheese* from *caseus*, and *mill* from *molinum*.

Despite the growth of towns and all the other elements of civilization that came with the Roman conquest, the standard of living changed little. Britain was an agricultural province, dependent on small farms. Peasants still built round Celtic huts and worked in the fields in the same way as they had before. Despite the 400 years of Roman influence, Britain was still largely a Celtic society.

The Celts were the source of the name Albion, the oldest known name of the island of Great Britain. Today, this name is still sometimes used poetically to refer to the island. It is derived from a Celtic word for *white*; one legend suggests that this was uttered in amazement by someone first glimpsing the white cliffs of Dover. However, Celtic linguist Xavier Delamarre argued that it originally meant “the world above, the visible world”, as opposed to “the world below” (the underworld). Rome chose the name *Britannia*, which may also have Celtic origins, possibly deriving from *pretani*, a Celtic word for *painted*, referring to their taste for blue woad-based war paint. The Romans stuck the female figure of Britannia on their coinage.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- UK's most famous tourist attractions, Stonehenge was believed to be created in around 3000 BCE, meaning it's older than Egypt's pyramids.
- According to some genetic tests, it is believed that the gene for red hair might have actually stemmed from the Ancient Celtic populations of the Iron Age.
- The Celts actually had a pre-Roman network of wooden roads that connected the settlements of various Celtic tribes so that they could engage in trade.
- The Celts were headhunters. They believed that the greatest prize in battle was their enemy's head.
- The Celts were immensely rich. We now know that Julius Caesar's main reason to conquer Gaul was to lay hands on Celtic gold. Over 400 Celtic gold mines were found in France alone.
- It took about 20 years of formation to become a Druid. Like the Christian clergy in the Middle Ages, Druids were usually from noble extraction, and trained from boyhood.
- Bath, the famous resort, was founded by the Romans.
- The Romans used central heating systems.
- The first English non-runic texts written in Latin letters were *glosses*, or translations of Latin religious texts written between the lines in Gospels.
- The first Christian church in Britain was built in Canterbury.
- As many as 4,300 words in modern English are derived from Old English, 1,000 from Old Norse and 10,000 from Norman French.



Questions

1. What are the main cultural monuments of the Stone Age and the Bronze Age?
2. Are some prehistoric sites included among UNESCO World Heritage Sites?
3. What do you associate with the Clandestine Vespers?
4. What do you remember about Stonehenge?
5. Where is the largest stone circle in Europe situated?
6. What do you know about the famous pictures on the chalky hills?
7. What monuments of Roman Britain have been preserved?
8. What was the purpose of Hadrian's Wall?
9. Did Britons adopt Latinised names?
10. What is the origin of the words *Albion* and *Britannia*?

The Culture of the Celts, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings

We possess some knowledge about **the Celts** because of the existence of the *Travelling Notes* by Pytheus, a traveller from Massilia (now Marseilles). He visited the British Isles in the fourth century B.C. Later, Herodotus wrote that even in the fifth century B.C. Phoenicians came to the British Isles for tin, which was used for making bronze. The British Isles were then called the Tin Islands. Another person who recorded reminiscences about early Britain is **Gaius Julius Caesar**. In 55 B.C. his troops first landed in Britain. In his “Commentaries on the Gallic War”, he stated that the Celts, against whom he fought, were tall and blue-eyed people; their men had long moustaches (but no beards) and wore shirts, knee-length trousers and striped or checked cloaks which they fastened with a pin. (Later, their Scottish descendants developed that into a tartan). Both men and women were obsessed with the idea of cleanliness and neatness: the Romans said that “neither man nor woman, however poor, was seen either ragged or dirty”. The Celts knew the use of copper, tin, and iron, and they kept large herds of cattle and sheep which formed their chief wealth. They had trading relationships both inside and beyond Britain. The settlement on the Thames which existed before the emergence of London was a major trade outpost eastwards to Europe.

The Celts were a tribal society made up of clans and tribes. These tribes were ruled by chiefs. The military leaders of the largest tribes were sometimes called kings. In wartime the Celts wore skins and painted their faces blue to make themselves look more fierce. They were armed with swords and spears and used war chariots in fighting. Women seem to have had extensive rights and independence and shared responsibility in defending their tribesmen. In fact, when the Romans invaded Britain, two of the largest tribes were ruled by women.

The Celts were pagans and their priests, the Druids, who were important members of the ruling class, preserved the tribal laws, religious teachings, history, medicine and other knowledge necessary in Celtic society. The Druids were a class of men who seem to have had certain exemptions from taxation and military service. They worshipped in sacred places (on hills, by rivers, or in groves of trees) and their rites sometimes included human sacrifice.

Some classical Greek and Roman writers claimed that Druidism originated in Britain and that Druids from Gaul received training in Britain. Being a Druid required skill and training. Druids memorized an extensive orally-transmitted poetic literature and had knowledge of herbs,

medicinal plants, divining techniques, and religious ritual. The Druids, many of whom inherited their profession from their ancestors, were political and intellectual leaders. They settled disputes between British communities or, alternatively, participated in battle by calling down curses on the enemy. Druids employed circles in their rituals and did use Stonehenge and other ancient stone constructions as ritual centres, but they preferred natural settings in the woods or at wells.

The cultural monuments of that period are the **dolmens**, which may be seen in many parts of England, consisting of two huge vertical stones and a horizontal one placed on top of them. Some of these dolmens are from the same period as Stonehenge. Archaeologists still do not know why they were erected. They are generally regarded as tombs or burial chambers, despite the absence of clear evidence for this.

Sometimes these dolmens bear patterns of **runic signs**: the runes were letters in the ancient Germanic alphabet, carved on wood, bone or stone with vertical or slanted lines. The number of runes in different Old Germanic languages varied from 16 or 24 runes on the Continent to 28 or 33 runes in Britain. Runes were never used in everyday writing. The word 'rune' itself originally meant 'secret, mystery': the main function of runes was to make short inscriptions on objects, which was thought to give them some magic power. There are about forty of these objects with runic inscriptions in Old English in existence, including amulets, coins, weapons, rings, tombstones, and fragments of crosses. The two best-preserved records of Old English runic writing are the text on the Ruthwell Cross in the village of Ruthwell in Scotland, and Franks Casket, a whalebone box found in France, which was given as a gift to the British Museum by a British archaeologist named August Wollaston Franks (1826–1897).

Celtic society was composed of castes. A special caste was the caste of bards, folk singers who played the harp. These **bards** can be divided into the following groups: those of the first class, living in monasteries, who sang about the acts of God; those of the second class, who sang about the deeds of national heroes in battle; and the lowest class, which sang about the wealth and the bravery of the king. The Celtic bards were considered inviolable. The Romans tried to get rid of both them and the Druids. In the fifth century bards became popular again, but the first class of bards did not reappear. A national festival of poets and musicians still take place in Wales, and is a prototype of the festivals of bards.

The early monuments of Celtic art were **decorative ornaments** – pictures of spirals, circles and fantastical lines engraved on stone, wood and metal objects. This art was very unique, having been made by people separated from the continent.

After the conversion of some Celtic people to Christianity the tradition of making **Celtic crosses** emerged. These were stone crosses with engravings. The Celts continued their tradition of creating decorative ornaments of spirals and fantastic lines on the crosses. It was basically a Christian cross with a ring surrounding the intersection, and belongs to the wider category of crosses with a nimbus. The Celtic Christians combined the Christian cross with the nimbus to create high crosses – free-standing crosses made of stone which was often richly decorated.

When the **Anglo-Saxons** invaded Britain, it was a time of destruction: the Celtic historian Gildas described it as “the ruin of Britain”. The invaders lived in villages and soon destroyed or neglected the Roman roads, villas, baths and towns. London, which had been the main trading centre, saw a decline. The invaders killed or enslaved Britons, most of the British Christians were put to death, and others took refuge in the distant parts of the country where they lived as hermits or in groups of brethren.

Anglo-Saxon culture is inseparable from the development of Christianity in England. With the arrival of St. Augustine and his forty monks, England resumed direct contact with the life and thought of the Continent, especially its Mediterranean part. Benedict Biscop, founder of Jarrow monastery (Northumbria), on several occasions brought manuscripts from Rome, and his pupil, the **Venerable Bede** (673–735), had access to all the sources of knowledge brought from continental Europe. Bede was a prominent religious and public figure of the period, who contributed to the development of English history and law. He is considered to be the first English historian. He is the author of *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (Ecclesiastical History of the English People) dated 731, which was the only book on Anglo-Saxon history of the time. It is the source of almost all the information we possess regarding the history of England before 731.

During the time of Pope Gregory a new form of plainsong appeared which came from Europe and was called **Gregorian chant**. Gregorian chant remained the main musical form from the sixth to the ninth centuries. Scholars are still debating how plainchant developed during that period, as information from this period is scarce. Around 410, St. Augustine described the responsorial singing of a Gradual psalm at

Mass. In ca. 520, Benedict of Nursia established what is called the rule of St. Benedict, in which the protocol of the Divine Office for monastic use was laid down.

The monasteries of Northumbria possessed rich collections of **manuscript books** which were brightly illuminated, bound in gold and ornamented with precious stones. One of the best known manuscripts of the period is St. Luke's Gospel, the third and longest of the four canonical Gospels, that tells of the origins, birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. It was made at the Northumbrian island of Lindisfarne in about 698.

The first Anglo-Saxon writers and poets imitated Latin books about the early Christians. Although it was customary to write in Latin, a poet appeared in the seventh century who used English in his writing: **Caedmon**, a shepherd from Whitby, a famous abbey in Yorkshire, composed in English basically due to a lack of education. One of the few recorded pieces of Caedmon's poetry is a nine-line hymn, an English fragment in Bede's History. It may be considered as the first fragment of Christian literature which has survived from Anglo-Saxon England. According to the Venerable Bede, the hymn was especially notable because it was divinely inspired.

Much of Old English poetry was intended to be chanted or sung by scops, or bards. One night when each of the guests at a feast was asked to sing a song, Caedmon quietly stole out and lay down in the cow-shed, ashamed that he had no gift for singing. In his sleep he heard a voice telling him to stand up and sing *the Song of Creation*. Caedmon obeyed the mysterious voice and sang verses he had never heard before. When he woke up, he returned to the guests and sang the song to them. That made him so famous that Caedmon was invited to the abbey, where he spent the rest of his life composing religious poetry. Almost all this poetry was composed without rhyme, in a characteristic line of four stressed syllables alternating with a number of unstressed ones.

Old English poetry was mainly restricted to three subjects: religious, heroic and lyrical. One of the greatest pieces of literature is the Anglo-Saxon epos "**Beowulf**", an epic poem written down in the tenth century but dating back to the seventh or eighth centuries. The poem consists of several songs arranged in three chapters and numbers over 3,000 lines. It is based on the legends of Germanic tribes and describes the adventures and battles of legendary heroes who had lived long before the Anglo-Saxons came to Britain. The scene is set among the Jutes and the Danes. The poem

describes the struggle of a Scandinavian hero, Beowulf, who destroyed the monster Grendel, Grendel's evil mother and a fire-breathing dragon.

The extraordinary artistry with which fragments of other Scandinavian sagas are incorporated in the poem and with which the plot is made symmetrical has only recently been fully recognised. We should keep in mind here that although some of the kings mentioned in the poem actually lived in the period from the fourth to the sixth centuries, Beowulf seemingly does not have a historical prototype, and is a generalized image. This poem has the features characteristic of the Germanic mythological epos. From this, we understand that the Beowulf epic is basically fictitious. However, it is very valuable both from the linguistic and the artistic point of view. It is the oldest poem in Germanic literature. Although it is essentially a warrior's story, it serves as a source of information about the customs and ways of the ancient Jutes, their society and their feasts and amusements.

The Germanic tribes were pagans who worshipped the sun, the moon and a whole group of gods. Their principal gods were those of later **Norse mythology** – Tiw, Woden, and Thor. They are remembered in the day-names Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, as well as a number of place-names (Tuesley, Wednesbury, Thursley) which were presumably cult centres. Even when converted to Christianity, the Saxons named one of the main church festivals, Easter, after their old dawn-goddess Eostre. From the end of the eighth and then during the ninth and the tenth centuries Western Europe faced a new wave of barbarian attacks. The barbarians came from the North – Norway and Denmark – and were called Northmen. In various countries they were also known as the Vikings, the Normans or the Danes.

The struggle of England against the Danish attacks lasted over 300 years. At certain times during that period over half of England was occupied by the invaders and then regained by the English again. The Danish raids were successful because the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had neither a regular army nor a fleet of ships in the North Sea to resist the invaders. In 878 King Alfred, known in history as **Alfred the Great** (871–899), managed to win a decisive victory over the Danes. Four years later he introduced a permanent militia and army. Alfred was the first English king to establish a regular army: all noblemen and free peasants were trained to fight. The only way of combating raids from the sea was to build ships. Alfred is said to have founded the English navy. He built ships which were bigger than those of the Vikings, with 60 oars or more.

King Alfred devoted the last ten years of his life to reviving literacy and learning in the country. He carried out a programme of education by means of court intellectuals and priests who were all obliged to know Latin. Alfred's own contribution to this programme was one of his greatest achievements. He was the only English king before the time of Henry VIII who wrote and translated books. He drew up a code of Anglo-Saxon laws and translated the Bible and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* into English. To him the English owe the famous **Anglo-Saxon Chronicle**, which may be called the first prose in English literature. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is a collection of annals in Old English which recounted the history of the Anglo-Saxons.

The original manuscript of the Chronicle was created late in the ninth century, probably in Wessex, during the reign of Alfred the Great. Multiple copies were made from that one original and then distributed to monasteries across England, where they were independently updated. In one case, the Chronicle was still being actively updated in 1154. Nine manuscripts survive in whole or in part, though not all are of equal historical value and none of them is the original version. The oldest seems to have been started towards the end of Alfred's reign, while the most recent was written at Peterborough Abbey after a fire at that monastery in 1116.

Almost all of the material in the Chronicle is in the form of annals, by year. The Chronicle is the single most important historical source for the period in England between the departure of the Romans and the decades following the Norman Conquest. Much of the information given in it is not recorded anywhere else. In addition, the manuscripts are important sources for the history of the English language. Seven of the nine surviving manuscripts and fragments now reside in the British Library. The other two are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and the Parker Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

At more than one point in this book, details have been given relating to the Danish invasion of England. However, it is also worth considering the influence of the Danes on the development of the culture and **the language** of the inhabitants of Great Britain. The invasion set in motion a process of considerable change in the language, in particular. The language of the Danes actually had the same Germanic origins as that of the Anglo-Saxons themselves, and they came from the same part of the Continent. However, as these languages with similar roots began to undergo a process of mutual assimilation, case endings were dropped and new grammatical

forms developed for showing the relationships between words. The dropping of endings meant that the stress was changed, and the sound and rhythm of the language became different.

The passing of time thus brought an ongoing blending of these two groups, the Danes and the Anglo-Saxons, with their related languages, customs and traditions. As we have noted above, the eleventh century brought an invasion of Britain by the Normans, who likewise had Scandinavian origins. However, an entirely new element was introduced when the Normans appeared on the scene, as they had undergone major changes from what they had been at the time of their Teutonic forefathers. They had invaded and occupied regions of present-day Normandy, eventually interacting and intermarrying with the local Frankish population which had by this time accepted a form of the Latin language of their Roman conquerors which ultimately evolved into French, in the Romance language group. The Normans were influenced by this population group and within just a few generations had adopted their culture and a certain dialect of the French language.

In view of these developments, when England was conquered by the Normans under William of Normandy following the invasion of 1066, it not only came under the influence of a new royal family: it was under a new ruling class, a new culture and a new language. The victory at Hastings was only the beginning of the conquest. Despite the surrender of London and Winchester it took William and his barons over five years to subdue the whole of England.

Twenty years after his victory at Hastings, William the Conqueror decided to make inquiries about the ownership of every parcel of land in his British domain, and how much it was worth. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says: “In 1086 William the Conqueror sent his men all over England, into every shire, to find out what property every inhabitant of England possessed in land, or in cattle, and how much money this was worth”. He needed this information to know how much was produced and what taxes he could levy. The result of this investigation was the **Domesday Book** – the first registration and complete economic survey of England. Each manor was described in terms of its value and resources. Every man who owned or rented land was interrogated, and was threatened with punishment on doomsday if he did not answer the questions of the king’s agents as to how much land there was; who owned it; how much it was worth; how many families, ploughs and sheep there were, etc.

As a result of the registration, the majority of the people were registered as unfree peasants, or serfs. They made up 79 percent of the total population of England. This Domesday project was one of the greatest administrative achievements of the Middle Ages. It facilitated the royal exploitation of crown lands and feudal rights, and provided the new nobility with a formal record and confirmation of their lands, thus placing a final seal on the Norman occupation. The original copy of the multi-volume Domesday Book still exists, and provides an extraordinary amount of information about England at that period of time.

With respect to the English language, the form of the language that was spoken during the Norman period, from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, is known as **Middle English**. It can be said that the Conquest was not only a historical event – it was also the most crucial single event in the history of the English language. One of the most significant consequences of the Norman domination was the use of the French language in many spheres of English political, social and cultural life. However, even though Norman-French was spoken in the court and by the barons spoke, and the clergy spoke and wrote Latin, the invasion of these two Romance languages was not able to overpower the popular tongue spoken by peasants and townsfolk all over England.

The two main languages, French and English, became more and more intertwined and by the end of the fourteenth century had fused into one language which was used both in speech and in writing. English was bound to survive and to win this linguistic battle, as it was the living language of the people in their native land, and part of their culture. At the same time, Norman-French was cut off from its roots and had to eventually yield, although it greatly influenced English.

Ties with the Vikings remain stronger in the far north of Scotland than elsewhere in Britain. Shetland, after all, is as close to Bergen as it is to Edinburgh, let alone London. Orkney and the Western Isles were under Norse control for centuries, and Shetland was ruled from Bergen as recently as the fifteenth century, four hundred years after the Vikings had left most of Britain. The language there still has a bouncing Scandinavian rhythm and festivals like *Up Helly Aa*, the annual longboat burning in Lerwick, are a reminder of those connections.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- Celtic bards played the harp.
- Hardly anything is left of the Celtic language in English, except for the names of some rivers – the Thames, Mersey, Severn and Avon – and some large cities, such as London and Leeds.
- The Anglo Saxons had four main gods: Wodin, the chief of the gods, Tiw, a sky god, Thunor, a god of Thunder, Frig, Odin's wife and Ing.
- It took 100 years for the Anglo Saxons to fully convert to Christianity, building churches and monasteries, as well as creating and copying out beautiful bibles full of artwork.
- Anglo Saxons drank mead, an alcoholic drink like beer or wine, made by fermenting honey.
- “Beowulf” is a poem about the adventures of a Scandinavian hero.
- The Danes introduced the use of chairs, benches and beds into England.
- The game of chess was brought to England by the Danes.
- The *Bayeux Tapestry* (1067–1077), an embroidered wall-hanging in coloured wool on linen, narrating the events leading up to the invasion of England by William the Conqueror and the Battle of Hastings in 1066, is believed to have been made by William’s wife Matilda and her ladies in waiting.



Questions and Tasks

1. What are the main Celtic cultural monuments?
2. What do you know about runic signs?
3. Describe the appearance of the Celtic cross.
4. What class of people are referred to as bards?
5. How did the Celtic historian Gildas describe the Anglo-Saxon invasion?
6. When was the only book on Anglo-Saxon history written?
7. Who is the author of the Ecclesiastical History of the English People?
8. What was the main form of music from the sixth to the ninth centuries?
9. What is the subject of the epic poem “Beowulf”?
10. When was the famous Anglo-Saxon Chronicle written?
11. What influence did the Danes have on the development of the English language?
12. What do you know about the Domesday Book?
13. How did the Norman period influence the English language?

The History of British Architecture

Britain has a rich architectural heritage. The Saxon churches, Gothic cathedrals, Tudor palaces, Georgian squares and Victorian stations all have had a part in establishing Britain's reputation in this sphere. Even in the modern era, there are some examples of architectural brilliance which are breath-taking.

Dolmens, piles of earth and lineal standing stones characterise Britain's prehistoric landscape, dating from around 3,000 B.C. The earliest recognisable dwellings date from the same era. **Skara Brae**, Orkney's squat beachside village, is by far the best-preserved Neolithic settlement in Europe. It is located on the Bay of Skail on the west coast of Mainland, the largest island in the Orkney archipelago of Scotland. It consists of eight clustered houses, and was occupied from roughly 3180 B.C. to 2500 B.C. It has received UNESCO World Heritage Site status as one of four sites making up "The Heart of Neolithic Orkney".

Older than either Stonehenge or the great pyramids of Egypt, it has been called the "Scottish Pompeii" because of its excellent state of preservation. The dwellings contain a number of pieces of furniture made of stone, including cupboards, seats, and storage boxes. Each dwelling was entered through a low doorway that had a stone slab door. A sophisticated drainage system was incorporated into the village's design. It included a primitive form of toilet in each dwelling. On average, the houses measure 40 square metres in size with a large square room containing a stone hearth used for heating and cooking. Given the number of homes, it seems likely that no more than fifty people lived in Skara Brae at any given time. Beds, dressers and even the watertight tanks where inhabitants stored fishing bait were all made of the local rock. The main source of their meagre wood supply was actually the ocean, which brought driftwood from North America.

Seven of the houses have similar furniture, with the beds and dressers in the same positions in each house. Each dresser stands against the wall facing the door, and would have been the first thing seen by anyone entering the dwelling. Each of these houses had a larger bed on the right side of the doorway and a smaller one on the left. One house, called House 8, has no storage boxes or dresser. It has been divided into something resembling small cubicles. When this house was excavated, fragments of stone, bone and antler were found. It is possible that this building was used as a house to make simple tools such as bone needles or flint axes. This theory is supported by the presence of heat-damaged volcanic rocks and

what appears to be a flue. House 8 is distinctive in other ways as well. It is a stand-alone structure not surrounded by a midden; instead, it is above ground and has walls over 2 metres thick. It has kind of a porch protecting the entrance.

The Romans brought their style of architecture to the countryside in the form of villas. Some very large early villas are known to have existed in Kent and in Sussex. The remnants of these villas show that they were beautiful houses with heated floors often made of mosaics. These houses were built of white stone in Italian style. The fragments of mosaics found in Gloucester give evidence of an acquaintance with classical literature and philosophy. Both public buildings and private dwellings were decorated in imitation of the Roman style. Sculpture and wall painting were both novelties in Roman Britain. Statues or busts in bronze or marble were imported from Mediterranean workshops, but British sculptors soon learned this art and began to produce attractive works of their own. The mosaic floors found in towns and villas were at first laid by imported craftsmen, but there is evidence that by the middle of the second century a local firm was at work at Colchester and Verulamium, and in the fourth century a lot of local mosaic workshops can be recognized by their styles.

Among the examples of Roman architecture left in Britain, reference must be made to the impressive floor mosaics such as those in **Fishbourne Roman palace**, in the Chichester District of West Sussex, a structure that was once similar in scale to Buckingham Palace. On that site remnants have been found that date to around the time of the Roman conquest of Britain in A.D. 43. One theory is that this was the site of one of the landings by the Romans designed to reinforce the “friendly” tribe of the Atrebates, whose King Verica had fled to the Romans for protection from his enemies. Subsequently, the wooden buildings were replaced by one of the greatest Roman palaces in the Roman world. However, this palace was damaged by fire at the end of the third century and was never rebuilt.

The Roman Bath complex is a site of historical interest in the English city of Bath. The house is a well-preserved Roman site for public bathing. The Roman Baths themselves are below the modern street level, and comprise four main parts: the Sacred Spring, the Roman Temple, the Roman Bath House and the Museum which houses other finds from Roman-era Bath. The buildings which are above street level date from the nineteenth century. The temple was constructed between 60 and 70 A.D., and the bathing complex was gradually built up over the next 300 years. During the Roman occupation of Britain, and possibly on the instructions

of Emperor Claudius, engineers drove oak piles into the mud to provide a stable foundation and surrounded the spring with an irregular stone chamber lined with lead. In the second century it was enclosed within a wooden barrel-vaulted building, and included the caldarium (hot bath), tepidarium (warm bath), and frigidarium (cold bath).

After the Roman withdrawal from Britain, these fell into disrepair and were eventually lost due to silting up and flooding. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle suggests that the original Roman baths were destroyed in the sixth century. The baths have been modified on several occasions, including in the twelfth century, when John of Tours built a curative bath over the King's Spring reservoir and the sixteenth century when the city corporation built a new bath (Queen's Bath) to the south of the Spring. The spring is now housed in eighteenth-century buildings designed by architects John Wood the Elder and John Wood the Younger, father and son. The museum houses artefacts from the Roman period, including objects which were thrown into the Sacred Spring, presumably as offerings to the goddess. These include more than 12,000 Roman coins, the largest collective votive deposit known in Britain. A gilt bronze head of the goddess Sulis Minerva, which was discovered nearby in 1727, is on display.

Other visible remnants of structures from the Roman occupation (besides the hot and cold water tubs which can be viewed at Bath) are of several different types. In the Roman town of **Silchester** in Berkshire (first occupied by the Romans in about 45 A.D.) there are some broken walls, including one that is considered the best-preserved Roman wall in Great Britain. In **Chester**, it is possible to view the ruins of the large stone **amphitheatre**, similar to those found in Continental Europe, dating from the first century; this indicates that Chester would have become the capital of Roman Britain if the Romans had been successful in occupying Ireland. The most spectacular monument from the Roman era in Britain comprises the surviving sections of **Hadrian's Wall** in northern England, as described earlier; it dates back to 120 A.D. The largest single surviving piece of freestanding Roman architecture in Britain is in **Viroconium**, a ruined Roman town that thrived in Shropshire, estimated to have been the fourth-largest Roman settlement in Britain. The ruins there include a wall with a hole in it which was once part of the cold pool in a system of baths. From the time the Romans left England, it was to be about 600 years before anything approaching the symmetry and orderliness of their architecture would be seen in Britain again.

In **Anglo-Saxon architecture**, a new style in church building developed. Almost 85 % of the Saxon architecture which can be seen today dates from the period after 950; many earlier churches had been devastated by Viking raids and were rebuilt in more peaceful times. One of the most completely preserved Saxon churches in England is **St. Laurence in Bradford-on-Avon**, probably built at some point between the seventh and tenth centuries. With its thick walls, narrow rounded arches and small windows it represents typical Anglo-Saxon church architecture.

The **Church of St. Peter-on-the-Wall**, Bradwell-on-Sea, Essex, is a simple stone house built in 654 A.D. A windswept perch overlooking the North Sea gives it a stirring atmosphere. **The Church of St. Andrew** in the small village of Greensted-juxta-Ongar in Essex is the oldest wooden church in the world, and probably the oldest wooden building in Europe still standing, albeit only in part, since few sections of its original wooden structure remain. It represents a traditional Saxon type of building. The architecture of that period was characterized by the churches with the turrets cut by small windows, indicating the poverty of that era. Anglo-Saxon architecture was of a very plain ascetic style. Because of the Saxon tradition of building tall churches, it was possible to divide the building horizontally.

In the newly Christianised kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon Britain, the first native ecclesiastical architecture emerged. The taste which they had for churches made of roughly-hewn stone lives on in over 50 extant buildings in modern-day England. William the Conqueror wanted to eliminate traces of Saxon civilization: churches and abbeys were mostly replaced or reshaped with a **Norman** variant of Romanesque, the solid style of rounded arches, stout walls and barrelled vaults that were popular on the Continent. The Normans erected majestic cathedrals with massive columns, thick walls, timber or stone vaults. A wave of building in the eleventh and twelfth centuries produced monumental cathedrals. They weren't simple expressions of faith – these buildings reflected the political power of the bishops and abbots and of the new Norman overlords. Chevrons, waves and animal heads, all carved in stone, were common design motifs. In the twelfth century the Norman style spread west to Ireland and north to Scotland, although its finest hour came just short of the border, at Durham.

Perched on a sizeable rock, alongside a Norman castle, **Durham Cathedral** is the most spectacular one in England with its patterned piers and soaring ribbed ceiling. It is situated in the city of Durham, England,

and is the seat of the Anglican Bishop of Durham. The cathedral's construction began in 1093. It is built in a Romanesque style. Its central tower is 66 metres high, with western towers of 44 metres, giving views of Durham and the surrounding area. The cathedral is regarded as one of the finest examples of Norman architecture and has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site along with nearby Durham Castle, which faces it across Palace Green. The treasures of Durham Cathedral include relics of St. Cuthbert, the head of St. Oswald of Northumbria and the remains of the Venerable Bede. In addition, its library contains one of the most complete sets of early printed books in England, the pre-Dissolution monastic accounts, and three copies of the Magna Carta.

The first Norman stone castles were the **Tower of London**, and the **castle of Durham** and **Newcastle** on the river Tyne. Some castles, such as **Windsor Castle**, are still used as residences. **Newcastle** is a medieval fortification in Newcastle upon Tyne, England, built on the site of the fortress which gave the city of Newcastle its name. The most prominent remaining structures on the site are the Castle Keep, the castle's main fortified stone tower, and the Black Gate, its fortified gatehouse. Use of the site for defensive purposes dates from Roman times, when it housed a fort and settlement called *Pons Aelius*, guarding a bridge over the River Tyne. In 1080, a wooden motte and bailey style castle was built on the site of the Roman fort, which was the "New Castle upon Tyne". It was built by Robert Curthose, eldest son of William the Conqueror, after his return to the south from a campaign against Malcolm III of Scotland. The stone Castle Keep was built between 1172 and 1177 by Henry II on the site of Curthose's castle. The Black Gate was added between 1247 and 1250 by Henry III. The site is in the centre of Newcastle, and lies to the east of Newcastle Central Station. The 23-metre gap between the Keep and the Gatehouse is almost entirely filled by a railway viaduct, carrying the East Coast Main Line from Newcastle to Scotland. The Keep is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It was reopened on March 21, 2015 as Newcastle Castle. In addition to improved accessibility, new additions include an education centre, a reception/gift shop and a museum room in the Black Gate and audio-visual installations in the Castle Keep, telling the story of the site and the people who have lived there over the years.

The **Gothic style** is connected with the architecture of the Middle Ages. It had its origin in northern France and came from the name of one Germanic tribe, the Goths. It is characterized by pointed arches, bay windows, soaring lines, and the overall height that dominates each

structure. The novel feature of these buildings was a new construction method with flying buttresses for supporting the vaulted roof without massive walls; this made it possible to install many stained-glass windows showing scenes of a religious or historical character. This style was dominant in Europe in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Most of the Gothic buildings were churches or cathedrals. They had a very spacious interior and could accommodate the whole population of the town. The lightness of the building was stressed with tracery, high towers, and portals. Cathedrals were richly decorated with sculpture, carvings, and tapestries.

English Gothic architecture can be divided into three main periods:

1. **Early Gothic style:** the most complete examples of this period are Canterbury Cathedral and Salisbury Cathedral. **Canterbury Cathedral** in Canterbury, Kent, is one of the oldest and most famous Christian structures in England and forms part of a World Heritage Site. It is the cathedral of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Begun in 597, the cathedral was completely rebuilt between 1070 and 1077. The east end was greatly enlarged at the beginning of the twelfth century, and largely rebuilt in the Gothic style following a fire in 1174, with significant eastward extensions to accommodate the flow of pilgrims visiting the shrine of Thomas Becket, the archbishop who was murdered in the cathedral in 1170.

The Norman nave and transepts survived until the late fourteenth century, when they were demolished to make way for the present structures. The cathedral has a total of twenty-one bells in the three towers, the oldest one bearing the name Bell Harry, which hangs in a cage atop the central tower named after the bell. **Salisbury Cathedral**, formally known as the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is an Anglican cathedral in Salisbury, England, and one of the leading examples of early English architecture. The main body of the cathedral was completed within only 38 years, from 1220 to 1258. The cathedral has the tallest church spire in the United Kingdom (123 m). Visitors can take the “Tower Tour” where the interior of the hollow spire with its ancient wood scaffolding can be viewed. The cathedral also has the largest cloister and the largest cathedral close in Britain (32 hectares). It contains the world’s oldest working clock (from 1386 A.D.) and has the best-preserved of the four original copies of the Magna Carta (all of which are in England). In 2008, the cathedral celebrated the 750th anniversary of its consecration. The cathedral is the mother church of the Diocese of Salisbury and seat of the Bishop of Salisbury.

2. The **decorated style** appeared in the thirteenth century and was characterized by new decorated furniture and complex forms of columns. Broad pointed windows were located in the upper part of the window and decorated with tracery of a new form: segments of circles appeared. **Exeter Cathedral** is connected with this period. It is formally known as the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter at Exeter, and is an Anglican cathedral and the seat of the Bishop of Exeter, in the city of Exeter, Devon, in south-western England. The present building, which was completed by about 1400, has several notable features, including an early set of misericords, an astronomical clock and the longest uninterrupted vaulted ceiling in England. The 18-metre-high bishop's throne in the choir was made from Devon oak between 1312 and 1316; the nearby choir stalls were made by George Gilbert Scott in the 1870s. The east window contains a lot of fourteenth-century glass, and there are over 400 ceiling bosses, one of which depicts the murder of Thomas Becket. The bosses can be seen at the peak of the vaulted ceiling, where the ribs meet. Because there is no centre tower, the Cathedral has the longest uninterrupted medieval vaulted ceiling in the world, at about 96 m.

3. The **perpendicular style**, which was widespread in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is characterized by large windows with vertical lines of tracery. Examples of this style are **the Chapel of King's College in Cambridge** and **St. George Chapel in Windsor Castle**. The Chapel of King's College is the most beautiful building in Cambridge with lace-like stonework; it is one of the greatest Gothic buildings in Europe. Its construction began in 1446 under Henry VI (1421–1471) and took over a century to complete. It has the largest fan vault in the world and some of the finest medieval stained glass. It is the venue for the Christmas Eve service, "A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols", which is broadcast to millions around the world. The chapel's many treasures include rare early sixteenth-century windows, exquisite fan vaulting, a Renaissance wooden screen, and a painting by Rubens.

Another construction is the **Chapel of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey**. It is separated from the rest of the abbey by brass gates and a flight of stairs. The structure of the chapel is a three-aisled nave composed of four bays. The apse of the chapel contains the altar, and behind that, the tombs of Henry VII and his wife as well as that of James I. There are five apsidal chapels. The tracery on the walls and the many arches (41) containing statues of saints have the effect of disguising the weight of the massive walls. The chapel is noted for its pendant fan vault ceiling. The

chapel's architect is unknown, but it is believed that Robert Janyns the Younger was responsible for the design of much of the structure. It contains numerous monuments and floor stones dedicated to various nobles. Above the stalls, at the triforium level, are many sculptures. Interspersed between the sculptures are the heraldic banners of the knights of the Order of Bath.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century the Tudors had established peace throughout the country and it was no longer necessary to build fortresses. The Tudor architectural style is marked by wide windows, and the buildings ceased to have the appearance of a castle. Some new features were added to the existing Gothic style and came to be known as **the neo-gothic style**. As Henry VIII cut England's ties with Catholic Rome and ordered the destruction of many churches, the religious theme came to be excluded from architecture.

The Renaissance increased the interest of artists in individuals. Henry VIII admired the Italian style and did all he could to attract many Italian artists who acted both as teachers of new art and as producers of it. However, England soon turned away from Catholic Italy, in the direction of Protestant Germany. The artists of that country sought to renew the old Gothic style. One new feature was the replacement of large areas of stone wall by windows. The principles of Renaissance symmetry were eclectically mixed with Gothic and Renaissance features. The traditional English country house came to have a different shape: a convenient central hall and a gallery around it were characteristic features of the new houses, which were generally constructed using local building stone.

Inigo Jones (1573–1652) was the most prominent architect of that period. He studied Italian architecture and most of all the ideas of Andrea Palladio. He visited Italy and the years spent there contributed much not only to his ideas but also to his attempts to use materials available locally in England. He sought to maintain harmony and restraint in his structures. When he constructed **the Queen house** he made it a perfectly square building with no projecting turrets. Horizontal lines were more predominant than vertical ones. Windows decorated the walls but did not replace them. Chimney pots were grouped in one place and were not scattered around the roof as before. In 1615 he was nominated the Surveyor General for the construction work of the court.

His second building was the **Banqueting House in White Hall Palace**, the chief royal house during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Jones designed the Banqueting House using new technologies,

but the House was not fully completed. Only four buildings were ultimately erected, but the original plan was for it to occupy more space than that of the Louvre in Paris. Jones was also very interested in theatrical interiors and considered the scenery, the stage and the actors' costumes as a complete entity which should be made in a single style. He was the first to introduce the Italian type of stage into an English theatre, with a proscenium to separate the audience from the actors. He was a very unique type of individual and enjoyed giving parodies of prominent people. He occupied a very high position during the reigns of the Tudors but lost it when the Stuarts became the monarchs.

The baroque style is characterized by its elegance. The term Baroque was first used to indicate a departure from classic form. In England, this style is associated with the name of **Christopher Wren** (1632–1723), who was initially a professor of astronomy and mathematics in Oxford. After the Great Fire in 1666 he worked out a massive plan for reconstructing the city. He reconstructed about 50 churches. The characteristic features of his style are those of Baroque type: flat ceilings, huge domes, and groin vaults. Wren worked out a new method of constructing ceilings, which he used in designing his masterpiece, **St. Paul's Cathedral** in London. He began his design work in 1675 to replace the old Norman church of St. Paul's that had burnt down in the Great Fire, and the construction of the Cathedral continued for 65 years. The Duke of Wellington, Lord Nelson and other great men of England are buried there.

One of the largest bells in the world, Great Paul, hangs in St. Paul's. It is the second-highest cathedral in London, its dome soaring to a height of 111 meters and weighing about 66,000 tons. On top of the dome is a large lantern weighing 850 tons. A stairway consisting of 560 gives visitors access along three galleries all the way to the top of the dome. The first gallery, the Whispering Gallery, just inside the dome, is renowned for its acoustics. The second gallery, the Stone Gallery, is situated at a height of 53 metres on the outside of the dome, right above the colonnade. On top of the dome, at a height of 85 metres, is the narrow Golden Gallery, which encircles the lantern's base. From there one can get a magnificent view of the City.

Rococo, a substyle of Baroque, got its name from *rocaille*, the stonework in grottoes. It sprang into existence in France at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. It is characterized by refined interior decoration, including complex asymmetric

ornamentation of carving, plasterwork and painting. Many panels and mirrors were used. Rococo represented the introduction of secular features as opposed to religious ones. The highest degree of development this style was achieved in the sphere of applied arts, in furniture and porcelain. This style left unchanged the facades of buildings and concentrated on interior décor, giving attention particularly to the comfort of the people who lived there. Small halls became cosy, and armchairs were made to sit in, rather than having to climb into them. This coordination between the functional and decorative ideas was new and progressive.

A specific national type of Rococo in the area of furniture was demonstrated by the cabinetmaker **Thomas Chippendale** (1718–1779), who gained Europe-wide fame in the eighteenth century. In his work he combined Rococo, Gothic and Chinese features. The main assets of his furniture were solidity, practicality and elegance. His style was characterized by flowing lines and extensive carved workmanship. In the middle of the eighteenth century, Rococo forms found expression in new designs for silver dishes and porcelain, with porcelain sets of Chelsea gaining particular popularity, including bright figures used as perfume bottles and statuettes. Derby porcelain was produced at a factory in that city, and was marked with a crown and the monogramme (D). Doulton pottery has been produced in London since 1815 and marked with the words “Royal Doulton”.

The emergence of **classicism** was connected with the idea of elevating British art to the level of the classical patterns of Italians and Greeks. Its goal was rationalism, which was a reaction to the extravagance of Baroque. English architects who termed themselves Palladians constructed houses mainly of three storeys. They considered the first floor the main one. Baroque buildings with their large windows were not practical in England because of the climate. To the end of the century practical Englishmen refused to use that type of construction, and only administrative buildings and banks were designed in that style.

The main principles in the architecture of the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries were advanced by **Lord Burlington** (1694–1753), who preferred Greek and Italian traditions in house construction. He was called “the Apollo of the Arts” and “the architect earl”. He is remembered for bringing Palladian architecture to Britain and Ireland. His major projects included Burlington House (Piccadilly, London, the venue for the Royal Academy’s temporary art exhibitions), Westminster School (Westminster, London, a British public school), Chiswick House (the finest remaining

example of Neo-Palladian architecture in London) and Northwick Park (in northwest London).

The **neoclassical style** also became popular. Examples of this style are **Trafalgar Square, Regent's Park, St. James Park, and Hyde Park**. The planning of parks and gardens was guided by neoclassical ideas of order and beauty. English parks had been known for their strict planning, with shaped bushes and trees were lining straight paths, but from this time onward these ordinary parks were changed into landscape parks that took into account the character of the local scenery. The main creator of these parks was a landscape architect of the early eighteenth century, **William Kent** (1685–1748), who introduced statues, artificial ruins, exotic and tropic plants into the interior of the parks. The famous architects of that period were brothers **Robert Adams** (1728–1792) and **James Adams** (1732–1794), and **John Nash** (1752–1835).

The period which took in most of the nineteenth century termed the **Victorian Period**, after Queen Victoria. The Victorians maintained a fondness for things of the past but reacted against the formality of neoclassicism with neogothic churches. They built roads, working hard to ensure that Britain's rapidly expanding industrial towns were kept in check with religious instruction of all denominations. A few cathedrals were erected: in Truro, Cornwall, the darkly Gothic structure was the first Anglican cathedral to be built since Wren's St. Paul's. **Augustus Pugin** (1812–1852) was the prime church architect of the Victorian age. He did the most to reinvigorate the medieval spirit of Gothic church building with soaring spires and pointed windows, although he is more famous today as the co-designer of the Palace of Westminster, along with Charles Barry.

A great variety of different styles were blended together during that period. Architects went back to medieval Gothic ideas, but the classical style did not disappear. Romantic traditions in art found their reflection in the construction of **the Bank of England** in Roman style.

The British Museum was built in classical style. There was also some debate about the use of iron and steel, regarding whether these new materials should be visible, as in new bridges and railway stations, or hidden, as in **the Natural History Museum**, where the metal frame was covered with coloured brick and stonework. The best aesthetic expression of new technological decisions is associated with **Joseph Paxton** (1803–1865) and his **Crystal Palace**. It had pillars which formed separate sections with a glass roof for unique exotic plants. Inside it there was a cascade of fountains illuminated with coloured lights. People called it the eighth wonder of the

world. The first international exhibition in the world was held there in 1851, but the government had no money to preserve the building, so it was torn down. Chatsworth House, Mentmore Towers, Lismore Castle, Great Stove Chatsworth are other buildings connected with Paxton.

The architecture of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has been marked by a simplification of geometrical forms. Multi-storey buildings have been designed in a modern style. Along with a change in attitudes towards this style, new materials became available. With steel and new types of glass it was possible to escape from traditional forms. Among the constructions of this type it is necessary to note **the Festival Hall**, which is situated near Waterloo railway station. It has such a perfect soundproofing system that during classical music concerts people hear no sound from the passing trains, though they can see them through the glass walls. In Britain, with its gloomy climate, architects tend to favour high buildings with mirror walls of glass which increase the amount of sunlight by reflecting it. Staircases with glass lifts are also popular. The most popular designer of this period is **Richard Rogers** (1933–2021). He is best known for designing the **Lloyd's Building**. Although it houses a very conservative insurance business and is situated in the oldest part of London it is an extraordinary piece of modern architecture. The flats overlooking the Thames in West End were also designed by him.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- The UK has more than 50,000 listed buildings and more than 20,000 monuments.
- There are 28 world heritage sites in the UK and four in London: the Westminster Palace, the Tower of London, Maritime Greenwich, Kew Botanical Gardens.
- The Thames has over 200 bridges and tunnels along its course.
- Big Ben does not refer to the famous clock, but actually to the bell.
- The Shard stands at 310 metres, the tallest in the UK and among the ten tallest Western European countries. It also offers fantastic views of the UK skyline.
- The Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square is given every year by the people of Oslo as a gift in gratitude for London's assistance during World War II.
- Built in 1842, the Hamilton Mausoleum in South Lanarkshire has the longest-lasting echo of any man-made structure in the world – a full 15 seconds.

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Questions

1. What is called the “Scottish Pompeii” because of its excellent state of preservation?
2. Is Skara Brae older than Stonehenge?
3. What do the dwellings in Skara Brae contain?
4. Was a drainage system incorporated into the village’s design?
5. What are the best-preserved Roman sites in Britain?
6. What Roman structure was similar in scale to Buckingham Palace?
7. Where is the Roman Bath complex situated?
8. What was the fourth-largest Roman settlement in Britain?
9. What are the characteristic features of Anglo-Saxon architecture?
10. Which are the best-preserved Anglo-Saxon churches?
11. How can you describe the architectural style of Norman churches, abbeys and cathedrals?
12. What Norman stone churches can you name?
13. Where is the Church of St. Andrew situated?
14. What cathedral is the seat of the Anglican Bishop of Durham?
15. What do you know about Newcastle?
16. When was the stone Castle Keep built?
17. What style of architecture was dominant in Europe from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries?
18. What periods can English Gothic architecture be divided into?
19. What do you know about early Gothic style?
20. Is it correct to describe the Baroque style as being elegant?
21. What substyles of Baroque do you know?
22. What famous British architects are you aware of?
23. Can you enumerate some famous British cathedrals, churches, and parks?
24. What architectural styles do they belong to?
25. How can you describe St. Paul’s Cathedral?
26. What is the largest bell in St. Paul’s Cathedral?
27. What idea is the emergence of classicism in Britain connected with?
28. Who advanced the main principles in architecture of the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries in Great Britain?
29. Who was called “the Apollo of the Arts” and “the architect earl”?
30. How can you characterise British architecture of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries?

Famous Castles and Palaces of Great Britain

Castles and palaces. These words conjure up images of kings and queens, and knights of the Round Table. These enduring structures, mostly built of stone, are often shrouded in legends and myths as elusive as the mists that rise from their moats. During the Middle Ages, castles served as fortresses; later, during the Renaissance and the Reformation, they housed aristocrats and painters, artisans and playwrights. Today, castles serve as a testimony to centuries past, offering visitors a glimpse into what life must have been like for the lords and ladies of the manor.

The Tower of London, officially Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress of the Tower of London, is a historic castle located on the north bank of the River Thames in central London. It was built towards the end of 1066 as part of the Norman conquest of England. The White Tower, from which the castle received its name, was built by William the Conqueror in 1078, and was a resented symbol of oppression, forced upon London by the new ruling elite. The White Tower has been described as "the most complete eleventh-century palace in Europe". The castle was used as a prison from 1100 until 1952, although that was not its primary purpose. A grand palace early in its history, it served as a royal residence. As a whole, the Tower is a complex of several buildings set within two concentric rings of defensive walls and a moat.

The Tower of London has played a prominent role in English history. It was besieged several times and at certain points, having control of it was significant in terms of having control over the country as a whole. Since then, the Tower has served variously as an armoury, a treasury, a menagerie, the home of the Royal Mint, a public records office, and the home of the Crown Jewels of England. Currently it is a museum of armoury and the place where the Crown Jewels are kept. Every night the Ceremony of the Keys takes place there. At least six ravens are kept at the Tower at all times, in accordance with the belief that if they are absent, the kingdom will fall. They are under the care of the Yeomen Warders.

Warwick Castle is a medieval castle in Warwick, the county seat of Warwickshire, England. It sits on a cliff overlooking a bend in the River Avon. Warwick Castle was built by William the Conqueror in 1068 within or adjacent to the Anglo-Saxon burgh of Warwick. It was used as a fortress until the early seventeenth century, when Sir Fulke Greville converted it to a country house. It was owned by the Greville family, who became earls of Warwick in 1759, until 1978. From 1088, the castle traditionally belonged to the Earl of Warwick, and it served as a symbol of his power. The castle

was taken in 1153 by Henry of Anjou, later Henry II. It was used to hold prisoners, including some from the Battle of Poitiers in the fourteenth century. Under the ownership of Richard Neville – also known as “Warwick the Kingmaker” – Warwick Castle was used in the fifteenth century as a place of imprisonment for the English king Edward IV.

Warwick Castle has been compared with Windsor Castle in terms of its scale, cost, and status. Since its construction in the eleventh century, the castle has undergone structural changes with the addition of towers and redesigned residential buildings. Originally a wooden mote-and-bailey, it was rebuilt in stone in the twelfth century. During the Hundred Years War, the facade facing the town was refortified, resulting in one of the most recognisable examples of fourteenth-century military architecture. In the seventeenth century the grounds were turned into a garden. Warwick Castle was purchased by the Tussauds Group in 1978 and opened as a tourist attraction. It is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Grade I listed building.

Durham Castle is a Norman castle in the city of Durham, England, which has been wholly occupied since 1840 by University College, Durham. It is open to the general public to visit, but only through guided tours, since it is in use as a working building and is home to over 100 students. The castle stands on top of a hill above the River Wear on Durham’s peninsula, opposite Durham Cathedral. The castle was originally built in the eleventh century. It is 14 metres high and over 30 metres long. It was the palace of the bishops of Durham until they made Auckland Castle their primary residence, at which time the castle was converted into a college. The college makes extensive use of the castle’s two chapels: the Norman Chapel, built around 1078, and Tunstall’s Chapel, built in 1540.

Dover Castle is situated at Dover, Kent. It was built in the eleventh century and has been described as the “Key to England” due to its defensive significance throughout history. The castle, secret tunnels and surrounding land are now owned by English Heritage and the site is a major tourist attraction. The Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports is officially head of the castle, in his conjoint position of Constable of Dover Castle, and the Deputy Constable has his residence in Constable’s Gate. It is the largest castle in England.

Lincoln Castle is a major castle which was constructed in Lincoln, England during the late eleventh century by William the Conqueror on the site of a pre-existing Roman fortress. It remained in use as a prison and

law court into modern times, and is one of the better-preserved castles in England; the Crown Courts continue to be used up to the present. It is open to the public as a museum. This castle is one of the most impressive Norman castles in the United Kingdom. It is still possible to walk around the immense twelfth-century walls with its ramparts providing a magnificent view of the Castle complex, together with panoramic views of the Cathedral, the City of Lincoln and the surrounding countryside.

Another attraction is the opportunity to see one of the four surviving originals of the Magna Carta, sealed by King John after his meeting with the barons at Runnymede in 1215. The document is now housed within this castle. There is also an accompanying exhibition, explaining the origin of the Magna Carta and its far-reaching effects. Parts of the prison are also open as a museum, including the nineteenth-century chapel, which is the only original chapel designed for the 'Separate System' (every seat is enclosed) left in the world today. The women's wing of the prison opened to visitors in 2005.

Rochester Castle stands on the east bank of the River Medway, in Rochester, Kent. It is one of the best-preserved castles of its kind in the UK. There has been a fortification on this site since Roman times (ca. 43 A.D.), though it is the keep of 1127 and the Norman castle which can be seen today. With the invention of gunpowder other types of defence became more appropriate, and the military centre of the Medway Towns moved to Chatham. The castle is now maintained by English Heritage and is open to the public. The wooden flooring in the centre of the keep is gone, but many of the passageways and spiral staircases within the thickness of the walls are still usable. Decorative chevrons ornament the archways and the water well in the cross-wall is clearly visible. Visitors with a head for heights can climb 34 m to the battlements and enjoy a commanding view of the river and surrounding area. Since Victorian times, Rochester Castle Gardens have been an important leisure area for Rochester. They were a popular promenade, they have hosted a bandstand, and have become a centre point for festivals and summer concerts.

Skipton Castle is situated within the town of Skipton, North Yorkshire, England. This castle, built in 1090 as a mote and bailey structure by Robert de Romille, a Norman baron, has stood for 900 years. The castle was soon replaced with a stone keep as the original structure was not secure enough to withstand the attacks from the Scots to the north. In 1310, Edward II granted the property of the castle to Robert Clifford, who was designated Lord Clifford of Skipton and Guardian of Craven. Clifford subsequently

ordered many improvements to the fortifications of the castle but died in the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314 when the improvements were barely complete. During the English Civil War it was the last remaining royalist stronghold in the north of England until December 1645. After a three-year siege, a surrender was negotiated in 1645 between Oliver Cromwell and the Royalists. Cromwell ordered the removal of the castle roofs.

Skipton remained the Cliffords' principal seat until 1676. Lady Anne Clifford (1590–1676) was the last Clifford to own Skipton castle. She organized repairs and as a commemoration she planted a yew tree in the central courtyard to mark the Castle's reconstruction in the aftermath of the English Civil War. Today it stands as one of the best-preserved medieval castles in England and is both a tourist attraction and a private residence.

Windsor Castle is an irregular construction consisting of several buildings, towers, narrow passages and small yards. They were erected in different years and do not form an architecturally unified whole. The walls and towers tend to be in the style of those found in fortresses. The castle came to have its contemporary appearance during the reign of Edward III (1327–1377), who was born in Windsor. The south-west tower is called "the Diabol tower". This is simply a corruption of the French name "Duval" who was later imprisoned there. The castle was later reconstructed twice during the reign of Charles II (1820s).

The castle now consists of two separate square constructions between which there is an artificial hill with a high 45-metre tower. It is famous for the meetings of Round Table knights which occurred there during the reign of Edward II. In the east upper yard is the dormitory of Queen Elizabeth II, and in the northern part there are halls for official receptions. There we can see the military armour of Henry VIII and the bullet with which admiral Nelson was fatally wounded. Not far from these halls there is the house of a famous doll that was given as a present to Queen Mary in 1924. Altogether there are 40 rooms. The knights of the Order of the Garter gather here in the St. George chapel. They are dressed in dark blue velvet jackets and helmets with plumage. The Queen and her family take part in this procession.

Alnwick Castle is a castle and stately home in Alnwick, Northumberland, England and the residence of the Duke of Northumberland, built immediately following the Norman conquest, and renovated and remodelled a number of times since then. It is a Grade I listed building. Since World War II, parts of the castle have been used by various educational establishments: the first was the Newcastle Church High School for Girls, and then from 1945 to 1975, it was a teacher training college; since 1981 it

has been used by St. Cloud State University as a branch campus forming part of their International Study Programme. The castle is used as the setting for the exterior and interior of Hogwarts in the Harry Potter film (though the wide angle images are computer generated). It had previously been a location used in productions of Becket, Blackadder; Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves and many others.

Bodiam Castle is a quadrangular castle located near Robertsbridge in East Sussex, England. It is said to be a perfect example of a late medieval moated castle. While not large enough to garrison many soldiers, the castle was ideally suited for defence against a militant rural populace after the English Peasants' Revolt and for the entertainment of foreign merchants or dignitaries. It was built in 1385 by Sir Edward Dalyngrigge, a former knight of Edward III, supposedly at the request of Richard II in order to defend the surrounding area from French invasion. By 1434 Sir Edward Dalyngrigge's nephew Richard was living in the castle. Recent research suggests that the castle was built more for show than as an effective defence. There is evidence supporting that research, as the walls of Bodiam Castle are only a couple of feet thick.

Hampton Court Castle was built in the sixteenth century. It is a red brick building the melon contours of which are made of white stones. It is the biggest royal palace in Britain. On the ground floor there is a large picture gallery where thousands of works of famous painters are displayed. One of the yards of the palace is called the Clock Yard as its tower has a big clock that was made in 1540. The main building of this yard is the White Hall and it is considered to be the most beautiful in Europe. The Fountain Yard is a big square yard with fountains covered with grass and surrounded by terraces, and above them there are rows of high windows crowned with the frontons. This part of Hampton Court was reconstructed by Christopher Wren in the seventeenth century. A large garden adjacent to the palace contains a labyrinth of high shaped bushes; it is 800 metres long. No visitor can get through it without a guide or a plan.

One other historical monument which belonged to Duke Buckingham, a son of the prominent Duke who was considered a favourite of Anna Avstriaskaya, is **Cliveden** on the north side of the river Thames. It was originally constructed in 1666 but was twice destroyed by fire, and then was rebuilt several times. It acquired its final form based on a design by the architect Sir Charles Barry (1851). The story is told that the original duke fell in love with Anna-Maria, the wife of the eleventh earl of Shrewsbury, who then challenged the duke to a duel. They say that Lady Shrewsbury, dressed

as a boy page, held Buckingham's horse during the duel in the course of which her husband was fatally wounded. The guilty couple was supposedly sent to Cliveden by the queen, where they lived happily for 20 years.

A fine example of eighteenth-century classical architecture is **Castle Howard** in North Yorkshire, England, 24 km north of York. It is a private residence, the home of the Carlisle branch of the Howard family for more than 300 years. The construction of Castle Howard began in 1699 and took over 100 years to complete, based on a design by Sir John Vanbrugh for the 3rd Earl of Carlisle. The house is surrounded by a large estate which, at the time of the seventh Earl of Carlisle, covered over 5,300 hectares and included the villages of Welburn, Bulmer, Slingsby, Terrington and Coneysthorpe. The estate was served by its own railway station, Castle Howard, from 1845 to the 1950s.

Westminster Palace is built in neogothic style to maintain the general style of the architecture of that district. It is referred to simply as 'Parliament'. It is situated in the central part of London and is one of the biggest buildings in the world, containing 500 rooms, 11 halls and 18 separate residential apartments. It stands on the River Thames and its pointed turrets are reflected very beautifully in the water. When it is foggy the indistinct form of the spires of Parliament can be seen through the mist. It was built in the nineteenth century by the architect Barry. The two main towers of the palace are Victoria Tower and Big Ben.

Buckingham Palace was a country palace of the Duke of Buckingham in the eighteenth century. In 1762 George III bought it and made it a residence of his Queen Charlotte. In 1825 the palace was reconstructed for King George IV. Queen Victoria made the palace a real symbol of her kingdom. Now there is a spacious round square before the palace. In the middle of it we can see a monument to the queen. The facade of the building is not notable for any architectural beauty but inside there are richly decorated halls. In the magnificent dinner hall there is a long table of red wood large enough for 600 guests. A private royal garden is adjacent to the palace, and includes a little lake with many tiny islands.

Kensington Palace has been a home used by the royal family for over 300 years and was where Diana Princess of Wales resided. Today it is the official residence of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke and Duchess of Kent and Prince and Princess Michael of Kent. Kensington Palace holds a wealth of history with many royals having called it home over the years. It has all the glamour and grandeur you would expect of a palace. The King's Apartment has an amazing collection of old masters including

Tintoretto and Van Dyck and the staircase walls are painted with William Kent's life-size portrayal of George I's court. The magnificent State apartments are open to the public and include an exhibition of Diana's dresses and Princess Margaret's love of fashion.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- Windsor Castle is the largest royal home in the world.
- The Tower of London is home to the Queen of England's jewels. Among the 25,578 gems is the 530-carat Cullinan diamond on the top of the Royal Sceptre, the largest part of what was (until 1985) the largest diamond ever found.
- Nazi officer Rudolf Hess was the last prisoner held in the Tower of London, for four days in 1941.
- London's smallest house, 3 feet wide (0.9 m) at its narrowest point, is located at 10 Hyde Place, now part of Tyburn Convent.
- Westminster Palace is owned by the monarch in the right of the Crown and is used for ceremonial purposes.
- The British monarch is not allowed past the Throne in the House of Lords in Buckingham Palace.

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Questions

1. Can you enumerate the most famous British castles and palaces?
2. When was the Tower of London built?
3. What was the Tower of London used for?
4. What is called the "Key to England"?
5. When was Warwick Castle built?
6. What castle was used in the fifteenth century for the imprisonment of King Edward IV?
7. Where is "the Diabol tower" situated?
8. What castle is one of the best-preserved medieval castles in England?
9. What was Lincoln Castle used for?
10. Where is the biggest royal palace in Britain?
11. What castle is a perfect example of a late medieval moated castle?
12. What palace in London is one of the biggest buildings in the world?
13. What palace did Diana Princess of Wales reside in?

British Art and Artists

Celtic ornaments and stone carvings may be considered to be some of the earliest examples of graphic arts in England; painting as a demonstration of fine art appeared much later, in the fifteenth century. It is said that it is sometimes possible to see the national character in the work of its painters, but as a matter of fact, the visual language of art travels easily, and artists are influenced by things they see in various parts of the world. Painters often travel extensively themselves as well; in fact, one of the first important periods of English painting was started by a German artist. **Hans Holbein the Younger** (1497–1543) lived in London from 1527 to 1543 and painted wonderful portraits of rich and famous people in the court of King Henry VIII, thus demonstrating the international character of the art world. Among his paintings are *Portrait of a Son*, and *Jane Seymour*. Besides supplying portraits of prospective brides for Henry, Holbein created the thick-necked image of the king which has endured to modern times, although his portrait of the stubbly, bob-haired chancellor Thomas More (1527) is perhaps better known.

Holbein was lauded for his detailed, muted rendering of personality, greatly influencing the first great native-born English painter of the Renaissance, **Nicholas Hilliard** (1547–1619), as seen in the miniatures *An Unknown Youth Leaning Against a Tree Among Roses* and *An Unknown Man Against a Background of Flames*. He was an English goldsmith and limner best known for his portrait miniatures of members of the courts of Elizabeth I and James I of England. In his *Treatise on the Arte of Limning* (ca. 1600) he gives an account of his method and many sidelights on his own mercurial and engaging temperament. Hilliard's pupil, **Isaac Oliver** (1556–1617) maintained the fine English miniature tradition into the early seventeenth century.

Portraiture remained the art of choice under the Stuarts, but was shaken up by Flemish artist **Anthony van Dyck** (1599–1641). His portraits were expressive, suggestive of personality even when their mood seemed slightly glum. His work shimmers in a manner not dissimilar to that of his great teacher, Peter Paul Rubens. Van Dyck became court painter to Charles I in 1632 and his style, so flattering to royalty, inevitably lost favour when Cromwell came to power. Sir Peter Lely, a Dutchman, maintained van Dyck's legacy after the Restoration, developing the master's style with a rich texture as court painter to Charles II. Lely's series of listless ladies, the Windsor Beauties (early to mid 1660s), were typical examples of this. Van Dyck had founded a school of aristocratic

portrait painting, and then, inspired by Holbein and Van Dyck, a school of portrait painters developed in England.

As was the case with painting, **sculpture** in Britain relied on foreigners for most of its significant development before the eighteenth century. Anonymous British artists had been sculpting tombs since the Middle Ages, but their work demonstrated very little creativity. **Florentine Pietro Torrigiano** (1472–1528) was the first major foreign name, although his rich golden sarcophagus for Henry VII (1512), still visible in Westminster Abbey, failed to extend any influence from its Renaissance style on the rest of British art. **Grinling Gibbons** (1648–1721), an exceptionally gifted woodcarver employed by Sir Christopher Wren to work on St. Paul’s Cathedral in the seventeenth century, had an English father but was actually Dutch. By the eighteenth century, a Frenchman, **Louis Francois Roubiliac** (1695–1762), was showing dramatic Baroque busts that turned up in various English churches, not least Westminster Abbey.

In the eighteenth century British art began to experience a development in its own right. Collectors had been used to paying for works by foreign artists of the day, but in the mid-eighteenth century they began to buy British art, which it was much cheaper, encouraged by the appearance of homegrown art in public spaces and the founding of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768, which finally gave artists a classical training of the sort available in France and Italy. This trend accelerated, initially in portraiture and later in the new favourite genre, landscape.

The first great English-born artist to attract admiration abroad was **William Hogarth** (1697–1764). He was an English engraver who was original in his character and thinking. He launched a satiric trend in painting. His interest in the character of individuals, and his desire to capture the lives and manners of contemporary society led Hogarth to paint a number of family portraits. The crowded canvas of *Southwark Fair* captures the noisy and exuberant vigour of a popular festival and shows Hogarth feeling his way toward a completely new kind of narrative art based on a vivid appreciation of contemporary life. Being a native of London slums, a natural cockney, he declared war on aristocratic tastes in art, and against foreign artists in general. A set of satirical pictures under the general title “*The Rake’s Progress*” was a success. Hogarth was the first artist to create a story and then illustrate it himself. He also painted more standard portraits and family scenes, filling his works with colour

and character; however, identified primarily as an engraver in the public mind, he failed to earn the respect of his peers.

Sir **Joshua Reynolds** (1723–1792) was not only a painter but was also the founder of the principles of the “British School”. He was the most outstanding portraitist of the eighteenth century. He created a gallery of portraits of the most famous of his contemporaries. Before Reynolds, portraiture art was based on a formula in which the sitter was posed in the centre with some kind of a background behind, such as curtains, a chair, or a landscape. Then the face was painted by a master and the remainder by a pupil. However, Reynolds portrayed characters who no longer seemed static, but rather as if caught in a specific moment of action: he was genuinely creating characters, rather than just painting portraits. When **the Royal Academy of the Arts** was founded in 1768, it was obvious that Reynolds was the only possible choice to be its President.

From 1769 to 1790 he gave lectures every year at prize-awarding ceremonies. In these lectures Reynolds recommended the borrowing of ideas from old masters. He suggested that the proportions of a sitter’s figure should be established in accordance with the ideal, and fixed principles of proportion were applied to the height of a face, the length of the hand, and even the size of the big toe. Thus, if British ladies in portraits seem too tall, this can be ascribed to Sir Joshua’s theories rather than to the physical peculiarities of the ladies. One of his pictures, *Lady Elizabeth Delme with her Children* is in the category of a family group portrait, and illustrates his rules, in that it depicts Lady Delme with an air of informality on the terrace before her country house. Reynolds was able to depict the age, character and social status of his sitters. Lady Delme is shown in drapery. Her five-year-old son is presented as if he is very responsible. Her other son, who is three years old, is shown in skirts, as boys of his age were dressed at that time. As he is younger, he does not have the same air of responsibility as his brother.

The portrait of Mrs Siddons, the famous tragic actress is considered to be his masterpiece. Two of the most enchanting are *Master Crewe as Henry VIII* (1775–1776) and *Lady Caroline Scott as “Winter”* (1778). His most ambitious portrait commission was *the Family of the Duke of Marlborough* (1777). Reynolds’s *Discourses Delivered at the Royal Academy* (1769–1791) is among the most important art criticism of the time. In it he outlined the essence of grandeur in art and suggested methods for achieving it through rigorous academic training and study of the old masters of art.

Thomas Gainsborough (1727–1788) was born in Suffolk. He did not receive any systematic education but his passion for drawing was so great and his pictures were so promising that his father sent him to the capital to study painting. According to one story, he made such a good portrait of a thief whom he had seen robbing the garden that the thief was caught. Gainsborough was first introduced to Hogarth and then at the age of 18 he opened his own studio. His wife was a natural daughter of Duke De Bophor. Gainsborough painted in grey-purl and light blue colours. His favourite genre was the portrait.

Perhaps one of the best-known portraits still today is *Blue Boy*. He also made a portrait of *S. Siddons* and *Mrs Sheridan*. Some scholars indicate that his most outstanding canvas is his portrait of the Duchess de Bophor or *Lady in Blue*. We see a beautiful woman of high society with sensitive fingers, an oval face and slim features which suggest nobility. Her eyes are dark; a brown ribbon with a cross at the end emphasizes her long slender neck. Gainsborough loved the countryside of his childhood and often said that it was the Suffolk countryside which made him a painter. One of the most famous of his landscapes is *The Market Cart*, painted two years before his death. At that time, landscapes were not in fashion, and as a result there were more than forty unsold landscapes in his studio when he died.

Allan Ramsay (1713–1784), who predated Reynolds and Gainsborough by a decade, was one of a number of talented artists of the Scottish Enlightenment. He too travelled to Italy and painted with similarly grand solidity. Ramsay painted numerous portraits in a style that anticipated the style of Reynolds, but his reputation rests on his less formal and more intimate studies. His portraits of women are especially notable for the warmth, tenderness, and bloom of their presentation, as well as for the technical facility with which lace and ruffles are reproduced. The influence of French Rococo portraiture is clear in the lightness and unpretentious elegance of these works. He was appointed Royal Painter by George III in 1761. Most of this work, intended for government buildings, was done by assistants. Ramsay gave up painting for writing in 1773 after he fell off a ladder and hurt his right arm.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century English art was developing under the influence of **romanticism**. Very often it reflected a protest against the contemporary world. Its content was the cult of passion and feelings, showing unusual and striking subjects. The Industrial Revolution greatly influenced art as a whole, and painting in particular.

Movements such as realistic landscape and portraiture schools expressed the contradictions of English life. A Welshman, **Richard Wilson** (1714–1782), one of the earliest major British landscape painters, created works that combined a mood of classical serenity with picturesque effects. Wilson's exact and tranquil recording of clear or suffused air, distance, and varied lighting predominates, as in his famed *Snowdon from Llyn Nantlle*. He had great influence on the two artists that would dominate the period. Both, variously, have been called the most important painters in British history: William Turner and John Constable.

William Turner (1775–1851) was born in London and received his education there. He travelled a great deal and refined his artistic tastes, learning the best forms of producing painting in Italy. He is a representative of the romantic movement in English painting. He was mostly interested in landscapes. Turner became a professor at the Academy of Arts. He collected pictures, drawings and engravings to donate them to the National Gallery. His earliest works were watercolours. His first oils were dark but later he changed to lighter hues. His colours became more and more highly contrasted: bright colours and yellow, blue and green are mixed together, making a fantastic landscape. His extreme sunsets and multicoloured sea make us think of disorder in colour.

His theory of colour was new and original. In his best landscapes he managed to capture some turning points in weather and changes in nature. He achieved a direct expressiveness of the destructiveness of nature, especially that of the sea, wind and water. His pictures *The Shipwreck*, *Snowstorm*, *Rain*, *Steam and Speed*, *Fire at Sea* are original and brilliant. Turner's realistic and romantic, dreamy and true-to-life paintings are popular all over the world. Later, hounded by scathing critics, Turner invented an alter ego, an identity into which he could escape in life and paint. His concocted conjoined twin, Admiral Puggy Booth, was free to work as outlandishly as his name might demand. Turner spent his final years as Booth, living incognito in Chelsea.

John Constable (1776–1837) was a son of a rich miller. His family did not approve of his passion to become a painter. His life in the countryside made him a keen observer of a nature, so it was natural for him to choose the landscape as his favourite genre. He is best known for his paintings of the English countryside, particularly those showing the valley of the River Stour in Suffolk where he grew up – an area that came to be known as “Constable country”. He enrolled in the Royal Academy School in London, and eventually his oil paintings began to people's

attention. He liked the work of Reynolds and Gainsborough but did not regard contemporary painting favourably.

His own paintings were actually appreciated in France more than they were in England, and he came to be regarded there as the father of the French school of landscape painting. He was interested in the study of colour and its theoretical aspects; he also became a professional meteorologist. His first famous picture was *The Hay Wain*, which won a gold medal from the Academy. Constable liked to draw modest country scenes and ones which illustrated the labour of the peasants. He was the first painter to make sketches before going on to make a painting. Constable created many works that became well-known, such as *The Cottage in the Cornfield*, *The Lock*, and *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows*. The realism of Constable had no further adherents towards the end of the nineteenth century, when contemporary trends were towards idealism and further formalism.

William Blake (1757–1827) was the great visionary of the Romantic world. He didn't paint from life, relying instead on his imagination in an era when artists did not gain recognition simply for self-expression. Tigers, angels and dragons all poured out onto his canvas, and Blake claimed that they were the product of visions which he had regularly. He had been seeing unusual things since his boyhood, when he told of encountering a tree filled with angels on Peckham Rye. Blake used the strong lines of medieval art but also borrowed from the Renaissance, exaggerating mystical figures with the mannerism of Michelangelo. He was anti-authoritarian, experimental and solitary in his work and was widely criticized as a result. The world wasn't ready for Blake – many called him mad – and his professional output was limited to book engraving. Many of his illustrations were created to accompany his own poetry. He was working on a series of plates to illustrate Dante's *Divine Comedy* when he died in 1827. His reputation only began to gather momentum fifty years later, and today Blake is considered a pivotal contributor to British art.

In the second part of the nineteenth century some well-known painters including **Dante Rossetti** (1828–1882) formed a brotherhood called the **Pre-Raphaelites** that expressed their great admiration for the masters of early Renaissance art and the medieval period who preceded Raphael, a great Italian artist of the sixteenth century. They aligned themselves with the Victorian nostalgia for the pre-industrial age and the Aesthetic Movement, which felt that beauty alone was an adequate motivation for art. In technique, artists like Rossetti, John Everett Millais

and William Holman Hunt aimed for a crisp realism, but in their subject matter they drew on religious, Arthurian and medieval themes, often inspired by some work of literature. However, their efforts to resurrect the pre-Raphael world and to 'manufacture' innocence, haven't withstood modern criticism, and the art of the Brotherhood has often been dismissed as sentimental and artificial. In its own era, the Pre-Raphaelite taste for somnolent scenes of women and nature left no room for anything more radical in British art for the rest of the nineteenth century.

Late nineteenth century art consisted of portraits, landscapes in photographic detail, parade portraits and pictures of flowers and horses. At the end of the nineteenth century a small group of British artists embraced a new movement: inspired by the French impressionists and reacting against the conservatism of the Royal Academy, they formed **the New English Art Club** in 1886. The Americans John Singer Sargent and James McNeill Whistler were both involved, but the most radical painters were English. **Walter Sickert** (1860–1940) and **Wilson Steer** (1860–1942) came closest to mirroring the loose style of Impressionism. Unfortunately, the Club very soon broke into separate factions and lost momentum, although their annual exhibitions continue right up to the present. One dissident faction, the so-called **Glasgow Boys**, flourished, bringing a touch of social realism to rural Scottish scenes throughout the 1890s. **James Guthrie** (1859–1930) and **John Lavery** (1856–1941) were among the leaders of this group. Portraitist Lavery, son of a failed Belfast publican, was perhaps the first nationally significant artist to emerge from the north of Ireland. He became a respected pillar in the Royal Academy and was knighted in 1918.

In the early twentieth century, Post-Impressionism flourished in France. Of the more significant art groups, **the Camden Town Group** received the most attention. Led by Walter Sickert, the founder of the New English Art Club, it was a group of English Post-Impressionist artists who met on a weekly basis in the studio of Sickert in Camden Town (an area of London) and exhibited their mix of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and Cubist work in the three years before the outbreak of World War I. **The Bloomsbury Group**, featuring Scottish painter **Duncan Grant** (1885–1978) and textile artist Vanessa Bell, also influenced the avant-garde of the Post-Impressionists, and Matisse in particular, and they assimilated the influence of Paul Cézanne and the Fauves. Among the best-known works of Duncan Grant are portraits of his Bloomsbury associates, such as a 1911 portrait of Virginia Woolf.

Similarly, the prosaic landscapes of Northern Irish painter **Paul Henry** (1876–1958) were forward-thinking in their veracity. However, they were moving contrary to the general current of British art in the Edwardian period. Moving to London, Paul Henry was commissioned as an illustrator for journals and worked as a book jacket designer. In 1910 he first exhibited in Dublin and from the next year onwards he made regular trips to Achill Island, settling there in 1912, and then moving to Dublin in 1920. His early paintings of the west of Ireland typically included figures, although as his work matured the artist focused increasingly on capturing scenes of billowing cloud formations, monumental hillsides and the glimmering lakes of Connemara and Wicklow.

One small group of British artists generated something genuinely avant-garde in the years before the World War I. **The Vorticists**, formed in London in 1914, were assembled by **Wyndham Lewis** (1882–1957), a painter, writer and all-round agitator. He printed a magazine-cum-manifesto, *Blast*, which strongly criticized the mannered tastes of early twentieth-century British art, and an exhibition of artwork followed. In World War I Lewis served at the front as an artillery officer and then, commissioned as a war artist, he produced some memorable paintings and drawings of battle scenes. An example is *A Battery Shelled* (1919), which is representational yet retains a Vorticist angularity. Vorticist paintings took the angular lines of Cubism (developing in France) and used them to frame modern, mechanised Britain. Parallels also existed with the Italian Futurist movement although Lewis claimed originality for his art group. Vorticism was radical and exciting but it didn't last. The First World War soon called the main protagonists away, and once the fighting was over, few wanted to linger over the machine age which had been celebrated in Vorticist paintings. Some have suggested the brief movement was as close as Britain got to the avant-garde in the twentieth century.

The Scottish Colourists took their inspiration from Paris, from the Post-Impressionists and in particular the Fauvist style of Matisse, imitating his vibrant colours. Four painters were involved: **Samuel Peploe** (1881–1935), **John Duncan Fergusson** (1874–1961), **Leslie Hunter** (1877–1931) and **Francis Cadell** (1883–1937). This quartet produced still life and landscape paintings, charmed in particular by the western isle of Iona. The Scottish Colourists went almost unnoticed when they gave exhibitions in the 1920s and 30s but in more recent times their importance in the history of British art is often noted, in that they provided an initial British approach to Modernism.

British artists seemed timid after World War I, worried perhaps by a sense of triviality in the wake of such a conflict. While Modernism surged once more on the Continent, Britain remained hesitant. Significant innovators did emerge over the subsequent four decades but they tended to work in isolation. For many, the human figure, however distorted, provided an ongoing obsession. Picasso's abstract expressionism found English patronage in **the Unit One** group of artists in St. Ives, Cornwall, while painters like **Stanley Spencer**, **Augustus John** and **Lucien Freud** gently twisted the conventions of figurative art. **Stanley Spencer** (1891–1959) set biblical episodes amid the cosy village life of his own interwar Britain, shocking contemporary audiences. In World War II he painted industrial toil in shipyards on the Clyde, while his later work grew increasingly erotic. Whatever the subject, his figurative style was dependably accurate.

Augustus John (1878–1961), a Welsh painter who was an accomplished portraitist, muralist, and draughtsman. He painted portraits of many of the leading European personalities – politicians, society ladies, and literary figures – in a slick and somewhat superficial style, occasionally recapturing his former boldness and integrity of form. His most significant portraits include those of novelist James Joyce, playwright George Bernard Shaw, cellist Guilhermina Suggia, and poets Dylan Thomas and William Butler Yeats.

Lucian Freud (1922–2011), grandson of Sigmund, migrated to Britain from Nazi Germany as a boy. Taking much from the style of Stanley Spencer, he developed a realist, prosaic approach to the human figure, daubed with thick strokes. The older he got, the more human his figures became, their imperfections presented unsympathetically. They sat, impassive, usually naked, in increasingly grubby, unglamorous rooms. Widely acknowledged as a highly accomplished artist, Freud continued to paint in the twenty-first century. In 2008 his portrait of a sleeping, naked Jobcentre supervisor became the most expensive piece of art by a living painter, selling at auction for £17.2 million.

Francis Bacon (who will be discussed below) did the most towards corrupting tradition with his grotesque portraits. War artist **Paul Nash** (1889–1946) later gave a British landscapist's perspective on surrealism, while a neo-Romantic style emerged with **John Piper** (1903–1992), an artist, playing with drama and colour in landscape, who focused on the British landscape, especially churches and monuments, and included

tapestry designs, book jackets, screen-prints, photography, fabrics and ceramics.

Francis Bacon (1909–1992) was the most important British painter of the twentieth century. He had no formal art training but toured the galleries of Paris, Berlin and London in early adulthood, inspired particularly by Picasso. In 1945, aged 36, he submitted *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* (1944), an unnerving meld of human and animal forms, for display in London. It brought him fame overnight. He was a figurative painter but his portraits are disturbing with their visceral, torn shapes, their figures ‘deformed and then reformed’ as Bacon once said. Some paintings perverted the classics, notably his screaming rendition of Velazquez’ unbending Pope Innocent X. Open, wailing mouths were a recurring theme. Bacon was also in the habit of painting faces near lumps of meat, hinting at the physiological similarities.

Henry Moore (1898–1986) was the pre-eminent British sculptor, whose organically shaped, abstract, bronze and stone figures constitute the major twentieth-century manifestation of the humanist tradition in sculpture. Much of his work is monumental, and he was particularly well-known for a series of reclining nudes. After exploring early South American art in the 1920s, Yorkshireman Moore turned to abstraction in the following decade. Picasso gave him a starting point and he progressed from indeterminate shapes to bulging, smooth female forms that characterized his work right into the 1980s. His huge reclining forms were, he said, born of nature and they duly felt at home placed in the landscape.

Moore’s friend **Barbara Hepworth** (1889–1946) also was attracted by abstract modes, but used them to express landscapes more than figures. Working in metal, wood and stone, she made smooth, tactile sculptures. Hepworth’s shapes came to distinguish themselves by their use of holes, or what she called ‘abstract negative spaces’, carved smoothly into the sculpture. Her best-known work is probably *Single Form* (1963), located at the United Nations building in New York.

With respect to the twentieth century, it is necessary to mention **Graham Sutherland** (1903–1980), an English painter who was best known for his surrealistic landscapes. He was influenced at different times by William Blake, Paul Nash, Henry Moore, and Pablo Picasso. His early work was characterized by an exacting representationalism that evolved into surrealism. He turned primarily to painting in 1935 and was represented in the 1936 International Surrealist Exhibition in London. From 1940 to 1945 he was an official war artist, and his paintings from

that period provide a factual and evocative record of the destruction caused by the German military during World War II. Sutherland's "thorn period" began with *the Crucifixion* (1946) for St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, considered to be one of the most important religious paintings of the twentieth century. In his late work he incorporated anthropomorphic insect and plant forms, particularly thorns, which he transformed into powerful and frightening totemic images. The hard, spiky shapes of fossils provided the theme of his large *Origins of the Land* (1951).

Britain to some degree turned to pop art in the 1960s, its artists rebelling against the inaccessibility of abstract expressionism with something more resonant of reality. **Richard Hamilton** (1922–2011) was an English painter and collage artist who was actually the first pop artist anywhere; his photo collage *Just What Is It That Makes Today's Home So Different, So Appealing?* (1956), with its body-builder and stripper ensconced in their consumerist living room, was typical of the humour and everyday references that pop art would strive for. His 1955 exhibition *Man, Machine and Motion* (Hatton Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne), produced for the *This Is Tomorrow* exhibition of the Independent Group in London, are considered by critics and historians to be among the earliest works of pop art. A major retrospective of his work was at Tate Modern until May 2014.

Peter Blake (b. 1932) was another who placed consumer products in his art, mixing them with celebrity images, stripes and target shapes. He's best known for the cover of The Beatles' *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967). Pop artists are characterized by their portrayal of any and all aspects of popular culture that had a powerful impact on contemporary life. In the early 1960s a second generation emerged from the Royal College of Art in London, many of whom had been tutored by Peter Blake, an artist who helped design one of the iconic images of British pop art. Scotsman **Eduardo Paolozzi** (1924–2005) was a significant sculptor of pop art, although he went on to create abstract and then more figurative work. He made sculptures and collages that combined surrealism with pop culture and modern machinery that led him to be credited as the inventor of pop art.

With the twenty-first century impressionism, cubism, abstractionism entered English painting, though many gifted artists followed a realistic trend. One of the members of the 60s pop art movement was **David Hockney** (b. 1937). Now he is one of the favourite modern English painters. He fitted perfectly into the new and fashionable London scene. He came from a working-class background and for rich people he was a breath of fresh air. Like many great artists, Hockney had passed through a number of

periods in which he changed his style. In 1980s he did montages using photographs. He took pictures of details of a person, an object or a scene, and then placed all the photos in a free way, so that a broken-up form of the scene was displayed. However, his medium is generally painting, often mixing graphic design with realism, and always with a modern sense of colour. His works can be seen on posters, postcards, calendars, and T-shirts as well as in art books, museums and galleries.

In 1963 he was profoundly influenced by a visit to California and began producing more realist work; the images of serene swimming pools and bronzed figures were reminiscent of snapshot photos. By the 1970s his paintings had grown in their naturalism. *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy* (1970–1971), a rather stilted domestic scene of a married couple and a cat, was typical and popular. More recently he has turned to landscapes, producing an enormous painting of *Yorkshire, Bigger Trees Near Warter* (2008), for the Tate Britain gallery.

The rise of the **Young British Artists** (YBAs) in the 1990s did much to raise the profile of contemporary art. Often referred to as Britart, theirs wasn't a specific school; instead they shared exhibition spaces, an interest in conceptual art and a talent for self-publicity. **Damien Hirst** (b. 1965) is the most prominent member of the group known as the Young British Artists, who dominated the art scene in the UK during the 1990s. Death is a central theme in Hirst's works. He became famous for a series of artworks in which dead animals (including a shark, a sheep and a cow) are preserved – sometimes having been dissected – in formaldehyde, such as *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* (1991) or “that dead shark in a tank of formaldehyde” as most people called it. By 1997 the Royal Academy was displaying their work. Not everyone loved it. Critics, tabloids and the public often took issue, convinced they were being conned by the likes of **Tracey Emin's** *My Bed* (1999) installation (the exhibit was Emin's unmade bed). In 1999, Stuckism evolved in reaction to the YBAs, placing the emphasis back on figurative art. In 2003 they displayed an exhibit entitled *A Dead Shark isn't Art* at their Shoreditch gallery. Whatever the reaction, it's hard to deny that the YBAs have given modern British art an energy that it maintains today.

Beyond the conceptual art of the YBAs, the most popular British artist of recent years has been **Jack Vettriano** (b. 1951), a miner's son from Fife dismissed by critics but popular with the public for paintings with a thick, noir-like feel. Vettriano's *Singing Butler* (1992) print sells more postcards and posters than any other work by a British artist; it became a best-selling

image in Britain. Vetriciano is a self-taught artist in drawing and perspective who manipulates paint in veiled glazes and meaningful shadows, an image maker whose work is a fascinating part of cultural history. In many of his paintings there is a hidden narrative, in enigmatic compositions, a starting point for dozens of short stories.

Now young British artists seem to have given up the traditional forms of painting and drawing. They exhibit photos, videos, and constructions with light and sound. Art prizes often reward originality rather than old-fashioned taste and skill. **Helen Chadwick** (1953–1996) pioneered the use of body parts and organic material. Many artists contemplate and document life experience, bodily rhythms, or flesh, and their work is often composed using a variety of art forms. Feminist painters such as Eileen Cooper, Amanda Faulkner and Gwen Hardie have taken the rhythms and life of their bodies as their subjects.

Some call **Banksy** (b. 1974?) the most exciting contemporary painter in Britain. A graffiti artist, he sprays subversive wit on public and private walls, using a distinctive stencilled style. He's the master of the visual one liner: here two policemen enjoying a snog, there the Mona Lisa pointing a bazooka or children saluting a Tesco bag up a flagpole. A key to Banksy's success has been his anonymity. The continued mystery over his identity (despite the best efforts of the tabloids) has generated a sizeable Banksy myth. He made his name in London and his home city, Bristol, but in recent years Banksy has gone international. He went to Venice Beach, Los Angeles, and wrote 'Fat Lane' on the sidewalk, and painted windows in Israel's West Bank barrier. He's even had a gallery show and released a coffee table book, somehow maintaining anonymity.

Most of the famous British paintings may be seen in museums and galleries in London. If you stand with your back to Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square, you'll see a long historical building made in classical style. Since 1838 **the National Gallery** has been the holder of the best national collection of world painting. The collection was begun with 36 canvases of old masters donated by the collector Sir George Bomont. The gallery exhibits the works of all European schools. Access to the gallery is free of charge, as is the case with other museums and galleries in the country.

Just behind the National Gallery is **the National Portrait Gallery**, where visitors can see portraits of British ministers and monarchs from Richard II to contemporary statesmen. There are also many portraits of artists and writers, such as Shakespeare. The National Gallery of British Art is more known as **the Tate Gallery**, based on the name of its founder, the sugar

manufacturer Sir Henry Tate. The Gallery faces the Thames, not far from the Houses of Parliament. The Gallery was opened in 1897 for modern British paintings but later modern pictures of foreign artists appeared there as well, so that Russian, Italian and Dutch canvases can be seen there now, in addition to a very complete representation of English painters.

The Wallace Collection in **Heartford House**, assembled by Lord Heartford and his stepbrother Sir Richard Wallace, was later donated to the nation by Sir Richard's widow. In addition to paintings, it includes a collection of weapons and armour, pottery, sculpture and limning works.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- George Stubbs (1724–1806) occupies his own niche in British art history, renowned as the artist who painted horses.
- *The Hay Wain* (1821) won John Constable the Gold Medal when it was shown at the 1824 Paris Salon.
- During his lifetime John Constable sold only 20 paintings in Britain.
- William Turner's *The Fighting Temeraire* (1839) was voted the Greatest Painting in Britain in a 2005 public poll by BBC Radio 4 and the National Gallery.
- William Turner had a passion for travelling. He visited Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, etc. Turner carried his sketchbooks, canvases, and paints with him almost every day and he painted what he would see all the time.
- William Hogarth had a pet pug called Trump which he included in his self-portrait aptly named, *The Painter and his Pug*.
- Joshua Reynolds was knighted in 1769 by King George III. He was only the second artist in England's history to be given the title Sir.
- Thomas Gainsborough's wife was the illegitimate daughter of Henry Scudamore, 3rd Duke of Beaufort. Because of this, she received a £200 annuity which allowed the artist to fully focus on his painting.
- Damien Hirst's dead shark constituted his first presentation as a member of the Young British Artists.
- Banksy's identity has never been revealed and is his biggest mystery. However he has compiled in a book called "Wall and Piece", his works, but also his thoughts and ideas.

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Questions

1. How did the first important period of English painting begin?
2. Who was the first great native-born English painter?
3. Who founded a school of aristocratic portrait painting?
4. What was the state of development of sculpture in Britain before the eighteenth century?
5. When was the Royal Academy of Arts founded?
6. How can we characterise William Hogarth's portraits?
7. Who is the founder of the principles of the "British school"?
8. How can we characterise Thomas Gainsborough's pictures?
9. Which artists are considered the most important painters in British history?
10. What was the state of development of English art at the beginning of the nineteenth century?
11. When was the New English Art Club founded?
12. What do you know about the Bloomsbury Group and the Vorticists?
13. Who was the most important British painter of the twentieth century?
14. How can we characterise Lucian Freud's pictures?
15. What is the state of development of English art in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries?
16. What English painter is best known for his surrealistic landscapes in the twentieth century?
17. Why did Britain to some degree turn to pop art in the 1960s?
18. How can we characterise David Hockney's pictures?
19. What do you know about the Young British Artists?
20. Who was the most prominent member of the Young British Artists?
21. What do you think caused the rise of the Young British Artists in the 1990s?
22. Who pioneered the use of body parts and organic material in paintings?
23. Who is considered to be the most exciting contemporary painter in Britain?
24. What is the key to Banksy's success?
25. What are the most famous British galleries?

Main Tendencies of Literature and Philosophy Development

Of all the arts, none has contributed more to Britain's cultural identity than literature. The last 200 years have been particularly bounteous. The novel, still relatively young as a literary form, became the medium of creativity for numerous great British writers. The roots of British literature lie much further back, in a poetic tradition that reaches back to Chaucer and embodies language and styles shaped by different eras. These days, verse has a limited audience, even while a number of excellent poets continue to publish. Consistently, British literature has drawn on wide, exotic influences, from the Scandinavian lore of the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf* to the Caribbean thread of **V. S. Naipaul's** twentieth-century novels.

The Norman barons were followed to England by the churchmen, scribes, minstrels, merchants and artisans. Each rank of society had its own literature. Monks wrote historical chronicles in Latin. Scholars in universities wrote about their experiments, also in Latin. Even religious satires were written in Latin. Members of the aristocracy wrote their poetry in Norman-French; but the peasants and townspeople made up their songs and ballads in Anglo-Saxon. The literary forms of the eleventh and twelfth centuries were the **romance**, the **ballad**, the **fable** and the **fabliau**. The fable and the fabliau were typical literary forms of the townsfolk. Animal characters in fables mocked at human evils and conveyed a moral. Fabliaux were short funny stories about cunning crooks and unfaithful wives, written as metrical tales. The influence of continental literature was marked by the increasing popularity of French chivalric romances – a form already popular in France and Germany, which revolved around the love of a knight for a lady, with definite religious undertones. In southern France the lyric poets of the Middle Ages called “troubadours” wrote dancing-songs called “**ballads**” (stemming from the same root as “ballet”).

The most famous poet of the reign of Henry II was the Norman poet **Wace** (1110–1174). An educated person who had studied theology at Paris University, he was a clergyman, a secretary, a teacher, a writer and a poet. His chief works were two rhyming chronicles written in the form of a romance: *Brut, or the Acts of the Britts* and *Rollo, or the Acts of the Normans*. Of great importance was the introduction into English of the Arthurian legend, first in 1140 by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his *Historia Regum Britanniae (History of the Britons)* and then by Wace, who translated the *History of the Britons* into French. Geoffrey of Monmouth

had been brought up in Wales and lived close to the myth of King Arthur, the legendary Celtic chief.

Later, in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there appeared a series of legends about King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table. The best-known legends are “Arthur and Merlin”, “Lancelot of the Lake”, “Percival of Wales”, and “Sir Tristram”. In the fifteenth century **Thomas Malory** (1415–1471) collected Arthurian stories and arranged them in twenty books.

Soon another powerful myth gained popularity, that of **Robin Hood** and his merry men, outlaws who would not accept Norman rule but lived free in Sherwood Forest. Ballads describe Robin Hood, the famous legendary outlaw of the period as a strong, brave and skilful archer. He was presumably a Saxon nobleman who had been ruined by the Normans. Together with his merry men they fought against Norman nobles and clergy and would appear wherever the poor were in need of help. Ballads about Robin Hood were composed and sung throughout the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries. Robin is supposed to have lived in the reign of King Henry II and his son Richard the Lion Heart. All through the ballads the theme of Robin waiting for Richard the Lion Heart to return is in the background. Then he would lay his bow at the king’s feet and submit to the lawful king, whose wicked brother John had taken his place while Richard went crusading.

One of the most famous priests was **William Langland** (1332–1386) who is remembered for his poem *William’s Vision of Piers Ploughman*, a dream allegory popular in the Middle Ages. The poem deals with the vision of a peasant, *Piers Ploughman*, who describes the hard life of the common people. He explains that it is the peasant who works to keep the lord and the monks in comfort. The author stresses the idea that every person is obliged to work, be it a peasant, a lord or a priest. The written text of the poem is dated 1362. Before and during the revolt of 1381 the text of the poem was used in proclamations which easily spread among the peasants and townspeople.

The greatest English writer of the fourteenth century was **Geoffrey Chaucer** (1343–1400). Whereas his predecessor, Langland, expressed the thoughts of the peasants and Wycliffe a protest against the church, Chaucer was the writer of the new class, the bourgeoisie. He wrote about the things he saw, and described the people he met. Chaucer was the first to break away from medieval forms, paving the way to realism in literature. Chaucer’s greatest work, *The Canterbury Tales*, is a series of

stories told by a number of pilgrims on their way to Canterbury. In many modern manuals dealing with the history of the English language and English literature, Chaucer is described as the founder of the English literary language. Chaucer's literary language based on the mixed dialect of London is known as classical Middle English. Chaucer's poems were copied so many times that over 60 manuscripts of *The Canterbury Tales* have survived up to this day.

The fifteenth century saw an event of outstanding cultural significance in Europe. In 1438 Johannes Gutenberg printed his first book, the Gutenberg Bible, in Germany. The technique of printing quickly spread throughout Europe. The first English printer was **William Caxton** (1422–1491). Caxton made a great contribution to standardizing the English language. The concept of the norm had not existed before, it only appeared and was accepted as printed books spread all over England. The development of the printing technique promoted the spread of literacy and the literary norm.

The most prominent figure of the time was **Thomas More** (1478–1535), the first English humanist of the Renaissance. The son of a prominent judge, he was educated at Oxford and could write beautiful Latin and Greek. His English writings include discussions and political subjects, biographies and poetry. The work by which he is remembered today is *Utopia*, which was written in Latin in 1516. It has now been translated into all the European languages. *Utopia*, which in Greek means 'nowhere', is the name of a non-existent island. The author gives a profound and truthful picture of the people's sufferings, points out the social evils existing in England and presents his idea of what a future society should be like. It was highly esteemed by all the humanists of Europe in More's time and grew popular again in the nineteenth century.

English poetry and prose burst into sudden glory in the late 1570s. The greatest literature created during the Elizabethan period was in the categories of poetry and drama. Elizabethan drama was greatly influenced by Roman authors, whose works had been translated from Latin into English. Lawyers at the Inns of Court translated the works of Seneca and in their spare time tried to imitate the Roman philosopher. University students translated Roman plays into English and tried to write plays of their own in imitation of the Roman patterns. Individuals in the nobility took pleasure in translating Latin poetry.

Comedy was developed in the Royal Court itself, in the entertainments given by the boys of St. Paul's and other choir schools

before the Queen. These children acted in plays written by the first so-called ‘polite’ comic dramatist of the period, **John Lyly** (1554–1606). He wrote *Euphues, The Anatomy of English Wit* (1578) a florid romantic treatise-cum-novel that gave England its first exposure to the expression “euphemism”. Elizabeth I was a patron of drama and encouraged its development by frequently attending performances, whether in the Inns of Court, University, or at the royal levels.

The most famous pre-Shakespearean writers of drama were in the area of comedies – **George Peele** (1556–1596) and **Robert Greene** (1558–1592), and tragedies – **Thomas Kyd** (1558–1594) and **Christopher Marlowe** (1564–1593). They belonged to the group known as **the University Wits**. As the name suggests, the University Wits were graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, men with learning and talent but no money. Unlike the church clerks of the Middle Ages, they could not make a career in the Church, as the monasteries had been dissolved by Henry VIII. The great poetic geniuses of Elizabethan times were **Marlowe, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Donne**.

Christopher Marlowe was one of the first dramatists of the time. He was born into the family of a shoemaker and was able to begin attending Canterbury Grammar School when he was 14. Upon graduating a few years later, he won a scholarship which enabled him to go to Cambridge University. He was a great poet and dramatist, and might have become as great as Shakespeare had he not been killed so early in life. He began his career as an actor at *The Curtain*, but after breaking a leg during a performance, he had to give up acting and took to writing plays. He was the first in England to approach history from a political point of view. Marlowe’s reputation as a dramatist rests on four plays: *Doctor Faustus*, *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta* and *Edward II*. The University Wits paved the way for Shakespeare, the greatest of all humanists and the one who marks the highest point of English Renaissance drama.

Edmund Spenser (1552–1599) was the most prominent poet of the pre-Shakespearean period. He was born in London in 1552 into the family of a free journeyman for a merchant’s company. Spenser began his literary activity at the age of 17. Once, a fellow-student introduced him to the famous Sir Philip Sydney, who encouraged him to write. Sydney himself was the author of an allegorical romance in prose called “Arcadia” which had become very popular as light reading at court. At the age of 23, Spenser obtained his Master’s degree and wrote his first poem, *The Shepherd’s Calendar*. The publication of the poem made Spenser the first

poet of the day. His poetry was so musical and colourful that he was called a poet-painter. He was brought to the notice of the Queen where he was given royal favour and appointed secretary to the new Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. It was in Ireland that Spenser wrote *The Faerie Queen*, an epic poem describing a 12-day feast honouring the Queen of Fairyland. The poem is a combination of the medieval allegory and the Italian romantic epic, of Christian belief and the mythology of King Arthur.

John Donne (1572–1631) started as “Jack Donne”, a soldier, lover, drinker, writer of passionate amorous verses. He ended as Doctor John Donne, bishop, Dean of St. Paul’s, great preacher and one of the most respected men in the country. And yet these two extremes coexisted in him all his life. It is from his poem *For Whom the Bell Tolls* that Ernest Hemingway borrowed the title for his novel.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) was an English poet, playwright, and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world’s pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England’s national poet, and the “Bard of Avon”. His extant works, including collaborations, consist of approximately 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and a few other verses, some of uncertain authorship. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright. With the exception of *Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare’s first plays were mostly histories written in the early 1590s. *Richard II*, *Henry VI* (parts 1, 2 and 3) and *Henry V* dramatize the destructive results of weak or corrupt rulers, and have been interpreted by drama historians as Shakespeare’s way of justifying the origins of the Tudor Dynasty.

Shakespeare also wrote several comedies during his early period: the witty romance *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, the romantic *Merchant of Venice*, the wit and wordplay of *Much Ado About Nothing*, the charming *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. It was in a later period, after 1600, that he wrote the tragedies *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Othello* and *Macbeth*. In these, Shakespeare’s characters present vivid impressions of human temperament that are timeless and universal. Possibly the best known of these plays is *Hamlet*, which explores betrayal, retribution, incest and moral failure. In his final period, he wrote several tragicomedies. Among these are *Cymbeline*, *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*. Though graver in tone than the comedies, they are not the dark tragedies of *King Lear* or *Macbeth* because they end with reconciliation and forgiveness.

England's Renaissance closed with the greatest poet of them all, **John Milton** (1608–1674). An unconventional Puritan, he wrote pamphlets criticizing the high clergy during the Commonwealth years and, most famously, *Areopagitica* (1644), an attack on censorship. His poetry carried the humanist touch of an extensive classical education. *Paradise Lost* (1667), all 12 books of it, was his masterpiece. *Paradise Regained* (1671) and *Samson Agonistes* (1671) were written in blank verse. Milton's poetry was hugely influential, particularly among early nineteenth-century Romantics.

The problem of vital importance for the eighteenth century **philosophers** and writers was the study of man and the origin of his good and evil qualities. Human nature, they claimed, was virtuous and any deviation from virtue was due to the influence of a vicious society. Formulated in this way, the problem acquired social importance. The remnants of feudalism, on the one hand, and the evils of the new system of production, on the other hand, were to be seen everywhere. Progressive writers explained that vice was caused by ignorance and the way out was to enlighten the people. For this reason, eighteenth-century English writers started a public movement of **Enlightenment**. They hoped to improve the world by teaching and bringing the light of knowledge to the population. The enlighteners rejected Church dogmas and class distinctions. The Scottish Enlightenment carries its own distinct identity. It was more about philosophy than literature, but a few notable tomes emerged, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1768–1771) among them.

The movement of the Enlightenment appeared in England, and then spread to the Continent. In England, the period saw the transition from the poetic age of Shakespeare to the prosaic age of essayists. The style of prose became clear, graceful and polished. Writers accepted such literary forms as were intelligible to all. Satire gained popularity. The period also saw the rise of the political pamphlet. Most of the authors of the time wrote political pamphlets, but the best came from the pens of **Daniel Defoe** (1660–1731) (the author of *Robinson Crusoe*) and **Jonathan Swift** (1667–1745) (the author of *Gulliver's Travels*). Among the best known essayists were **Steele** (1672–1729) and **Addison** (1672–1719). Periodical newspapers had been published since the Civil War, and in 1702 the first daily newspaper was established. Much of the drama was written in prose, and the leading form of literature was the novel. The hero of the novel was no longer a prince, but a representative of the middle class. That had never

happened before – ordinary people had usually been represented only as comical characters.

Towards the middle of the century a new literary trend appeared, called **sentimentalism**. The first writer of the sentimental school in Europe was **Samuel Richardson** (1689–1761). His novels *Pamela*, *Clarissa* and *History of Sir Charles Grandison* were works that showed the inner being of the characters. Richardson appealed to the hearts of the readers and made them sympathize with his unfortunate heroes. The novels were a tremendous success in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries all over Europe. We can say that the English writers of the Enlightenment formed two groups. Those who hoped to better the world merely by teaching were **Joseph Addison** (1672–1719) (who wrote essays), **Richard Steele** (1672–1729) (who wrote essays and comedies), **Daniel Defoe** (1660–1731), **Alexander Pope** (1688–1744) (the author of *The Rape of the Lock*), and **Samuel Richardson** (1689–1761) (the author of *Pamela*). The other group included writers who openly protested against the vicious social order, including **Jonathan Swift** (1667–1745), **Henry Fielding** (1707–1754) (writer of *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*), **Oliver Goldsmith** (1728–1774) (the author of *The Vicar of Wakefield*), **Richard Sheridan** (1751–1816) (the author of *The School for Scandal*), **Tobias Smollett** (1721–1771) (the author of *Peregrine Pickle*), **Robert Burns** (1759–1796) (who wrote *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*).

The poetry of the eighteenth century was didactic and satirical. It was the poetry of the town and its fashionable life as well as the poetry of worldly wisdom. The leading poet of the century was Pope, one of the first English classicists, as noted above. He was not really accessible to the average reader because in order to read and enjoy Pope one had to be familiar with the works of Horace, Virgil and the Greek poet Theocritus. In 1715 Pope published his translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by Homer, which made him famous. He had a delicate sense of style, which he polished to a high degree. His poems, such as *The Rape of the Lock*, are notable for their elegant style. Pope organized a society of literary men who called themselves the **Martin Scriblerus' Club**. Martin Scriblerus was an imaginary personage: anyone who wished to publish a satire in a magazine was allowed to use the name of Martin Scriblerus as a pseudonym.

In English literature the Romantic age was characterized by the subordination of reason to intuition and passion, as well as the cult of nature (much as the word is understood now). Individual will was

considered superior to social norms of behaviour, and immediate experience was more important than generalized and typical experience. The first Romantics were the poets **William Wordsworth** (1770–1850) and **Samuel Taylor Coleridge** (1772–1834). Wordsworth adored and idealized the countryside and nature. Another Romantic poet and novelist was **Sir Walter Scott** (1771–1832). At the beginning of his literary career he wrote poetry. After the publication of the poem *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), Scott became the most famous poet of the day. Later, though, he turned to novels. He is known as the founder of the historical novel in English literature. Scott was a faithful son of Scotland and studied the past of his native land through documents, history and legends. His most famous novels are *Ivanhoe*, *Rob Roy* and *Quentin Durward*. When his business partner died leaving Scott to pay the debts, the writer had to start working day and night. That explains why Scott's later novels are less elaborately worked out than the earlier ones.

Unlike Coleridge, Wordsworth and Scott, the next generation of Romantic poets were full of revolutionary spirit. **George Gordon Byron** (1788–1824) exemplifies a personality in tragic revolt against society. Byron was born to an aristocratic family and educated at Harrow College. The boy was not very tall and in addition to that, he was lame. For that reason he devoted a lot of time to sports, in order to compensate for his physical deficiency. He also travelled a lot, both in England and on the Continent. When his first book of poems, *Hours of Idleness*, was published in 1807, he was bitterly criticized in the press, but that didn't stop him. He retorted with an epigram and continued writing.

The most sensuous of the Romantic poets was **John Keats** (1795–1821) who wrote long narrative verse, rich with imagery. He used the perceived romance of medieval and classical times to explore love and beauty. Keats' odes portrayed transience and contrasts, how love emerges from pain, life from death and sadness from joy. *Ode to a Nightingale* (1819) and *Hyperion* (1819) were among the highlights of his tragically short career.

The Victorian age gave rise to a new trend in literature, **critical realism**. The best-known poets of the period were **Alfred, Lord Tennyson** (1809–1892), **Robert Browning** (1812–1889) and **Robert Louis Stevenson** (1850–1894). Tennyson made his mark very early with *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (1830) and *Poems* (1832). In his early work he brought an exquisite lyrical gift to late-Romantic subject matter, but in the major poems of his middle period Tennyson combined the larger scale

required by his new ambitions with his original gift or the brief lyric by building long poems out of short ones.

However, the dominant form of literature during the Victorian period was the novel. Early Victorian literature includes some of the greatest and most popular novels ever written. Political novels, religious novels, historical novels, sporting novels, Irish novels, crime novels, and comic novels all flourished in this era. Most novelists of the period wrote long works populated with many characters.

Charles Dickens (1812–1870), the greatest master of the century, exhibited an astonishing ability to create living characters. His novels *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, *Great Expectations* and others gave him a place among the best writers in the literature of the world. His exposure of social evils and his powers of caricature and humour won him a vast readership. Even during his lifetime Dickens became the national symbol of the country. He invented the theatre for one author, and gave public readings from his novels.

Another master of characterization, **William Makepeace Thackeray** (1811–1863), the author of *Vanity Fair*, was a popular writer, working for the expanded reading public of his day, and especially for serial publication. Both authors were humourists, sentimentalists and social satirists, but instead of writing about the lower classes and social injustice, Thackeray satirized romantic sentimentality and the snobbishness of upper-class life.

The nineteenth century saw a surprisingly large number of women writers who not only wrote for pleasure, but left a substantial trace in English literature. One of them was **Jane Austen** (1775–1817), the author of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Emma*. She had a witty mind and wrote about right judgement, right behaviour and the formation of character. **Elizabeth Gaskell** (1810–1865) remains best-known for the novel *Mary Barton*, in which she describes with realism and sympathy the lives of industrial and agricultural workers in the wake of the Chartist movement.

George Eliot (1819–1880) was the pen-name of Mary Ann Evans. Her best-known novels are *The Mill on the Floss* and *Silas Marner*. Eliot was the first English novelist to develop an interest in factors that contribute to making people what they are, the first to analyse these factors and to show them at work. The idea is manifested in *Silas Marner*, which is a wonderful study of English provincial life, rural speech and character.

The famous **Brontë sisters**, **Charlotte** (1816–1855) and **Emily** (1818–1848), brought up in poor surroundings, wrote books which rank among the most popular novels of the century. Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* describes the life of a poor and plain-looking girl who has a strong character and gains happiness. Emily Brontë was the author of one of the greatest English novels, *Wuthering Heights*. Some critics of the time were of the opinion that no woman could have written it! The novel has been compared to Shakespeare's *King Lear*, chiefly because of the immense and uncontrollable passions it contains.

The Irish-born intellectual **Oscar Wilde** (1854–1900) was a poet, a writer and a dramatist. He led an eccentric life that fuelled his witty satires and epigrams on Victorian society. As a member of the aesthetic movement in literature, Wilde advocated the idea of art for art's sake. His works include two collections of fairy stories, one novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, a few poems and four comedies – *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *A Woman of No Importance*, *An Ideal Husband*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The plays sparkle with clever paradoxes and witty dialogues.

Victorian verse was a motley affair. Much of it fed off Romanticism, still pursuing that emotive, highly subjective worldview, but there was social conscience within it too, its lugubrious voice seeking out the real world more directly than the Romantics ever did. Other Victorian poets, notably **Edward Lear** (1812–1888) and **Lewis Carroll** (1832–1898), wrote nonsensical compositions which received great acclaim. Many of the era's prose authors got involved in poetry, including Emily Brontë and Robert Louis Stevenson.

Five Victorian poets whose names should be remembered in particular:

1. **Alfred Lord Tennyson** (already mentioned above). Sometimes referred to as a “titan of Victorian poetry”, Tennyson played with the rhythm and sounds of words, creating dreamy, smooth verse. He borrowed the Romantics' imagery in long mournful monologues dealing with classical mythology and Arthurian legend, as in *the Idylls of the King* (1859–1885). Tennyson's reputation diminished considerably after his death, although all agreed on the beauty of *In Memoriam A.H.H.* (1849), a haunting elegy to a friend who had died.

2. **Robert Browning** (also mentioned above). Browning took Tennyson's dramatic monologue to new intellectual heights. Using a range of characters (or ‘masks’), Browning explored the darker side of human

nature and society. *My Last Duchess* (1842), about a diplomat who murdered his wife, was received enthusiastically by the public. Browning's style was deliberately less elegant than the smooth intonation of Tennyson.

3. **Elizabeth Barrett Browning** (1806–1861). Regarded more favourably by Victorians than her husband Robert, Elizabeth poeticised the issues of the day and, particularly how they affected women, but, like Robert Browning, she used characters indirectly to convey her own ideas. Her poems were often very long; *Aurora Leigh* (1857), about a female author, is of epic proportions, divided into nine books. *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850) chronicled her love for Robert.

4. **Matthew Arnold** (1822–1888). The poetry of Arnold has been seen as a bridge between Romanticism and Modernism. He took the disillusionment of the later Victorian age to new depths, notably in the beguiling *Dover Beach* (1867), a harsh reflection on the state of modern life, relieved only by his hope for love. Part of it was written on his honeymoon.

5. **Algernon Swinburne** (1837–1909). Caught up in the Aesthetic movement and learning from the French Symbolists, Swinburne gave late Victorian poetry a sensuality and verve that embraced sadomasochism, death and atheism, all expressed in eloquent rhyme. The critics were negative in their response. *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865) was his first big success.

Writers in the early 1900s responded to the changing world. The old certainties of the universe seemed to have disappeared: **Darwin's** *On the Origin of Species* (1859) expressed doubt about the Old Testament, the layers of society which had been fixed for many generations suddenly appeared to be changing, and Freud was exploring the subconscious aspect of the human mind. It all contributed to the growth of Modernism and, in literature, to unending innovation. British literature continued to flourish but most writers followed their own individual path, rarely owing a debt to any wider movement. Increasingly they turned inward, losing that confident, structured sense of the external world and dealing instead with the more personal experiences and emotions of the individual.

Five early twentieth-century novelists that should be remembered:

1. **Rudyard Kipling** (1865–1936). An Englishman born in Bombay, Kipling set his books in the period of the Raj, when India was governed directly by the British Crown. Some have condemned his accounts of India under British rule as racist; others suggest he was being satirical. Most,

however, are agreed on Kipling's gift for narrative. *The Jungle Books* (1894 and 95) and *Kim* (1901) were his best novels.

2. **E. M. Forster** (1879–1970). Forster's fluid prose brought to light England's failure to create colonial utopia in *A Passage to India* (1924). His earlier novels, *A Room with a View* (1908) and *Howards End* (1910), presented clashes of a different kind, between protocol and abandon, materialism and spirituality.

3. **Joseph Conrad** (1857–1924). A Pole who obtained British citizenship, Conrad brought his experiences of travel to the novel, exploring how the individual copes (or doesn't) with pressure. *Nostromo* (1904) and the novella, *Heart of Darkness* (1902), its dark jungle mirroring the soul, were thoroughly Modernist.

4. **D. H. Lawrence** (1885–1930). Tired of modern life and its materialism, Lawrence, like Forster, sought out the elemental. Human relationships that went against the existing traditions of class and gender, filled his best novels: *The Rainbow* (1915), *Women in Love* (1921) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928).

5. **Virginia Woolf** (1882–1941). Woolf focused on the realm of the individual instead of on events and settings. She developed the avant-garde stream of consciousness technique: characters poured out inner thoughts (sometimes random, sometimes progressive) and generated a storyline of multiple parts. Sublime imagery added strength to novels like *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927).

The First World War was sharply chronicled in poetry. It began well enough, with **Rupert Brooke's** (1887–1915) *The Soldier* (1915) patriotically calling men to arms, but the mood turned darker when **Siegfried Sassoon** (1886–1967), **Robert Graves** (1895–1985), **Isaac Rosenberg** (1890–1918) and **Wilfred Owen** (1893–1918) began writing about life in the trenches. Sassoon satirised the officers blithely sending thousands over the top in *The General* (1917), before Owen, writing under Sassoon's tutelage in hospital, considered the wider futility of war in *Dulce et decorum est* (1917). Owen died in battle a week before the war's end.

American-turned-Englishman **T. S. Eliot** (1888–1965) dominated Modernism in early twentieth-century poetry. He expressed distaste for the industrialised world in *The Wasteland* (1922), using the symbolism of mythology in a hugely influential 'fragmented' poem that leapt wildly between settings and timeframes. A new generation of poets took Eliot's disenchantment forward in the 1930s, even if they didn't adopt his radical

styling. The Great Depression and the rise of fascism gave them plenty to write about.

Four individuals (who as a group were given the nickname “*MacSpaunda*”) stood out:

1. **W. H. Auden** (1907–1973). He asked his audience to contemplate the times in which they lived; *Spain* (1937) pointed them in the direction of the Spanish Civil War, its implications and deeper questions of good and evil. In later life Auden took American citizenship and his elegant, fluid poetry dealt with religion instead of politics.

2. **Stephen Spender** (1909–1995). Spender drew attention to the labour movement during the fiscal meltdown of the 1930s. In *Vienna* (1934) he directed attention to a socialist uprising; in *The Pylons* (1933) he tries to comprehend the march of electricity across the landscape.

3. **Cecil Day-Lewis** (1904–1972). Lewis, a Communist through parts of the 1930s (as recorded by the British secret service), began with calls for greater social conscience before turning to more traditional themes. He wrote crime novels under the pseudonym of 'Nicholas Blake' to finance his poetry. Much later, in 1968, he was made Poet Laureate.

4. **Louis MacNeice** (1907–1963). Socially aware yet the least politically defined of the 1930s poets, MacNeice was born and raised in Northern Ireland. His poetry was witty, his gift lying in the way he mixed childhood images with a sense of foreboding. The short but lyrical *Snow* (1935) was his most popular poem. He also wrote radio plays for the BBC.

Modernism never held a truly firm grip on the British novel. Instead, the mid-twentieth century (and the decades since) have been a time of many different styles and themes. Some authors tackled political and social concerns, most plainly the rise of authoritarianism. Others, however, escaped to fantastical new worlds, like J. R. R. Tolkien in his long trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* (1955).

Belfast-born **C. S. Lewis** (1898–1963) spent most of his time writing books on theology (he was an Oxford don), but found fame with a science-fiction trilogy based around the travels of an English linguist to Mars and Venus. Lewis confirmed his renown with *the Chronicles of Narnia* (1950–1956), a series of seven fantasy books, ostensibly telling stories for children but containing a strong element of Christian allegory (which Lewis always claimed was secondary to the entertainment factor).

Other writers followed the Victorian tradition and simply tried to keep people eagerly reading their books; *Whisky Galore* (1947) by Scottish author **Compton Mackenzie** was a high point for popular literature.

Daphne du Maurier (*Rebecca*, 1938), **L. P. Hartley** (1895–1972) (*The Go-Between*, 1953) and **P. G. Wodehouse** (1881–1975) (the *Jeeves* series, 1919–1974) are all still widely read.

The three most influential novelists of the mid-twentieth century:

1. **Evelyn Waugh** (1903–1966). Waugh was deeply influenced by his conversion to Catholicism in 1930. Prior to that he ridiculed high society and public school life expertly in *Decline and Fall* (1928); afterwards the posh, decadent *Catholics of Brideshead Revisited* (1945) were endearingly human and redemptive. In both periods his work contained a strong element of satire. Waugh also wrote war novels like *Men at Arms* (1952), inspired by his World War II commando days.

2. **George Orwell** (1903–1950). No author communicated post-war paranoia better than this man, who was born in India with the name Eric Blair. The allegorical *Animal Farm* (1946) pondered the pitfalls of Stalinism using a clique of power-hungry pigs, while *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) commented more overtly on totalitarianism with its expertly coloured story of life with Big Brother and Newspeak.

3. **Graham Greene** (1904–1991). A Catholic like Waugh, Greene filled his novels with ethical paradoxes. His anti-heroes often seem close to salvation despite their weak moral standards; the first, Pinkie, central to Greene's formative novel, *Brighton Rock* (1938), was absolutely evil. Greene followed up with a series of thinking man's thrillers, each one placed in an anxious, seedy setting and each having a stressed, morally lightweight protagonist. *The Power and the Glory* (1940) and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) were amongst the best.

British poetry in recent decades is not the force it once was. In fact verse, the original voice of literature, has been steadily declining in popularity for the last century. Various elements have been blamed for this, including the inaccessibility of Modernist poetry in the early part of the century and the unstoppable rise of the novel. However, a small number of post-war poets have achieved greatness:

Dylan Thomas (1914–1953) was the first. After the experimenting of T. S. Eliot and the politicised attitude of Auden, Welshman Thomas expressed the joy and sorrow of life and the natural world with flamboyant metaphor. Lost innocence was often a theme, his inspiration drawn from childhood. Sometimes complex, almost surreal, but often pleasingly simple, his verse struck a chord. *Do not go gentle into that good night* (1951), written as his father lay dying, was among his finest poems.

Philip Larkin (1922–1985), part of **The Movement**, a poetic collective bored with highbrow literature, reacted against Dylan and was dubbed anti-Romantic. Heavy with irony, his verse offered a down-to-earth appraisal of modern life in colloquial language but also tackled the big issues of life, in particular love. *The Less Deceived* (1955), Larkin's second collection of verse, cemented his reputation. **John Betjeman** (1906–1984), who was at work from the 1930s to the 80s, was almost as popular as Larkin. Like Larkin he brought wit as well as an innate sorrow to nostalgic, accessible poetry about the everyday aspects of life.

Ted Hughes (1930–1998), who succeeded Betjeman as Poet Laureate in 1985, was less cosy. Collections like *Hawk in the Rain* (1957) were about wild, unsentimental nature, selfish in its savagery. Later work, particularly the *Birthday Letters* (1988) that addressed his relationship with wife Sylvia Plath, whose suicide in 1963 many had blamed on Hughes, reached a wide audience.

Seamus Heaney (1939–2013), was the most prestigious poet of recent years in the British Isles (though born in Northern Ireland, he became an Irish citizen in 1972). He began with rural Irish life in the collection *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) but moved on to write about the Troubles (the deadly conflict between Irish terrorists and the British authorities), although it also contained an element of the mystical, *Gaelic heritage, in the likes of North* (1975). More recently, Heaney's translation of *Beowulf* (1999) was a bestseller. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995.

Diversity is the term that could be applied to **post-war British novels**. Amongst the deluge of fiction published over the last 60 years much, of course, has been connected with the concerns of its era. *So, Money: A Suicide Note* (1984) by **Martin Amis** (b. 1949) speaks of 1980s greed and Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* of the 1990s drug culture. However varied it may be, any proper summary of later twentieth-century British fiction should include the following **ten writers**:

1. **Kingsley Amis** (1922–1995). Amis was associated with what could be called a movement, as in *The Angry Young Men* that criticised post-war society. His 'campus novel' (a genre set in universities) *Lucky Jim* (1954) revealed his caustic talent for satire. Later, his treatment of a pension-age group of South Wales drinkers, *The Old Devils* (1986), won the Booker Prize.

2. **William Golding** (1911–1993). For Golding human nature was the central theme of everything. Marooned kids in *Lord of the Flies* (1954)

provided a searing allegory of man's darker traits. He also won the Booker Prize for *Close Quarters* (1980), but then also received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1983.

3. **Muriel Spark** (1918–2006). Spark spent 50 years picking at society, and darkly, wittily exploring good and evil. *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1953), about an eccentric Scottish schoolmistress, was disturbing and hugely popular.

4. **Doris Lessing** (1919–2013). She broke through with *The Golden Notebook* (1962), innovatively structured and hailed a feminist classic, and later wrote science fiction, a move that produced *the Canopus in Argos series* (1979–83). She received a Nobel Prize in 2007.

5. **Iris Murdoch** (1919–1999). Murdoch, a philosophy lecturer, brought rigorous intellect to novels exploring love, morality and tragedy in the midst of everyday life. *Under the Net* (1952), about a struggling author, was her first; *The Sea, the Sea* (1978) won the Booker.

6. **John Le Carré** (1931–2020). Britain's leading spy writer (whose real name was David Cornwell) has intrigued readers with complex, flawed characters since his first big success, *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* (1963). *The Constant Gardener* (2001), a thriller, confirmed he still had his essential creative skill four decades later.

7. **Beryl Bainbridge** (1932–2010). Early on she mixed morbidity with humour in *The Bottle Factory Outing* (1974), based on her own early adulthood, and later turned to historical fiction with *The Birthday Boys* (1991), based on Scott's trip to Antarctica.

8. **Anthony Burgess** (1917–1993). Burgess entered a period of enormous creativity when he reached the age of 40, with an output that ranged from literary criticism to symphonies. *Earthly Powers* (1980), which sounds like a review of the twentieth century, may have been his best novel but *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) became more famous after Kubrick made a film based on it.

9. **V. S. Naipaul** (1932–2018). Born in Trinidad of Indian origin and resident in Britain since the early 1950s, Naipaul is noted for technically brilliant outspoken novels on colonialism. *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961), about an anglicised Indian in the West Indies is considered his best. He has been knighted, and has received the Booker and Nobel Prizes.

10. **Martin Amis** (b. 1949). Kingsley's son, and heir to his brutal mocking style, is loved and loathed in roughly equal measure. Martin broke through with *The Rachel Papers* (1973); *London Fields* (1989), set

in a London faced with nuclear annihilation, also received a good reception.

British **fiction** has maintained its variety into the twenty-first century. Drug culture, ethnicity, science fiction, fantasy, religion, crime, history – whatever your preference, you will find someone who is writing in your preferred genre, and doing it well. For the sheer number of books that have been sold, no one has approached the success of **J. K. Rowling** (b. 1965), author of the *Harry Potter* series that held children and adults alike rapt until their conclusion in 2007 with *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Other publishing success stories have progressed more gradually, such as **Louis de Bernieres**' (b. 1954) *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (1993), which showed how 'literature' could still find a wide, popular audience.

Any list of great contemporary British writers will also feature **Ian McEwan** (b. 1948). He describes shocking life-changing incidents before analysing the consequences in eloquent prose. Scottish author **Iain Banks** (1954–2013) has carved out a similarly unrivalled niche with imaginative, satirical anti-heroes, while his countryman **Irvine Welsh** (b. 1958) has waded through Scottish social murk in the likes of *Trainspotting* (1993). **Zadie Smith** (b. 1975) (*White Teeth*, 2000) and **Monica Ali** (b. 1967) (*Brick Lane*, 2003) both explored multicultural London with brilliant, human stories. Others have looked back though history for their humanity: **Pat Barker** (b. 1943) (*Regeneration Trilogy* (1991–1995)) and **Sebastian Faulks** (1837–1909) (*Birdsong*, 1993) used World War I, while **Sarah Waters** (b. 1966) plundered a seamy Victorian London for the crime novel *Fingersmith* (2002), connecting with a huge readership.

As the twenty-first century got underway, history remained the outstanding concern of English literature. Although contemporary issues such as global warming and international conflicts received attention, writers were still more disposed to look back (e. g. **Bennett**'s play *The History Boys*, 2004). Women's writing in particular has continued to grow and diversify. The influence of magical realism provided a fresh stimulus, and both male and female authors began to incorporate elements of fantasy into their works (e. g. **Iain Banks** (1954–2013) (*The Quarry*, 2013)). Romance, astrology, health and alternative medicine are among the most popular types of writing, in which the contribution of women authors is consistently greater than that of men. Biography has grown in popularity too (e. g. **Andrew Gimson** (b. 1958) (*Boris: The Adventures of Boris Johnson*, 2012)). Many public figures have written about themselves or employed a 'ghost writer' to assist them. A related area or sub-genre is the

‘confessional’ biography, in which intimate details are revealed about the subject’s private life (e. g. **Helen Fielding**’s *Bridget Jones’ Diary* (1997). As levels of crime increased sharply in the 1980s and 1990s, so did interest in crime and detective novels. The tradition is continued by **P. D. James** (1920–2014) (*Dalgliesh*, 2021), **Ruth Rendell** (1930–2015) (*The New Girlfriend*, 2014), **Colin Dexter** (1930–2017) (*Lewis*, 2006–2015) and many of their stories have been adapted for television series.

Technological advances, space exploration and fantastic military capabilities have all increased worries about the present and led to dark speculation about the future. The freedom of ‘scifi’ to create time, place and plot exposes some of the limitations of the more conventional novels, e.g., **J. G. Ballard** (1930–2009) (*The Complete Stories*, 2009), **Michael Moorcock** (1954–2013) (*The Coming of the Terraphiles*, 2010), and others. So, the strength and vitality of novel writing has produced an increasing number of genres and sub-genres of literature in the UK.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- Charles Darwin is among the most recognised UK naturalists. One interesting fact about him was that he waited 20 years before publishing his well-known theory of evolution.
- Charles Dickens used a number of nicknames, including ‘The Sparkler of Albion’, ‘The Inimitable’, and ‘Revolver’.
- One of Geoffrey Chaucer’s earliest poems was an acrostic which he wrote for people to use when praying.
- George Eliot was actually a woman. Mary Ann Evans wrote under this pen name because women authors were not as highly regarded as men.
- Famous Scottish novelist Sir Walter Scott wrote most of his epic poem *Marmion* while on horseback. Scott was a member of the Light Horse Volunteers, which were preparing for a possible French invasion of the British Isles.
- Lewis Carroll was terrible at finances. Although he paid his debts on time, he would often overdraft upwards of £7,500. This is all the more ironic considering Carroll was a mathematics scholar at Oxford.
- Agatha Christie disliked her creation Hercule Poirot, calling him “a detestable, bombastic, tiresome, egocentric little creep”.
- Virginia Woolf was a granddaughter of novelist William Makepeace Thackeray.

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Questions and tasks

1. What are some examples of British literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries?
2. What the literary forms were in Great Britain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries?
3. Did continental literature influence the development of the literary forms in Great Britain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries?
4. What do you know about the Norman poet Wace?
5. What are some examples of British literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries?
6. What legends and myths gained popularity in the twelfth – fifteenth centuries
7. Who was the greatest writer of the fourteenth century?
8. Who was the greatest writer of the fifteenth century?
9. Who was the first English humanist of the Renaissance?
10. Who are some of the writers of the Enlightenment period in literature?
11. Describe the development of English poetry and prose in the late 1570s.
12. Who were the most famous pre-Shakesperean writers of drama?
13. Why was William Shakespeare called England's national poet, and the "Bard of Avon"?
14. What was the problem of vital importance for the eighteenth century philosophers and writers?
15. How can you characterise the poetry of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?
16. When did a new literary trend called sentimentalism appear?
17. What women writers of the twentieth century are you aware of?
18. Who were the greatest Victorian poets?
19. Who were the most famous twentieth-century novelists?
20. How can you characterise Modernist poetry in Great Britain?
21. What is characteristic of post-war British novels?
22. What do twenty-first-century novelists write about?
23. Who are the great contemporary British writers?
24. What genres are popular in contemporary British literature?
25. Who is your favourite British novelist?

The History of British Theatre

Film and TV drama have their roots in the theatre, and theatre has long been important in British cultural life. Drama was introduced to England by the Romans. As in other European countries, the theatre in Britain initially was of a religious nature, and the plays were enactments of events recorded in the Old and New Testaments; the religious performances were called “**mysterics**”. Later, the performances became more secular, and included domestic and comic themes. In the fifteenth century groups of actors groups travelled to various towns and gave performances. The idea of arranging the religious plays into cycles was connected with the performance of the celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi which occurred each year on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday. The betrayal, death and resurrection of Christ formed the central events of the cycle. Different towns in England had their own mystery play ‘cycles’: the versions from York (comprising 48 pageants), Chester and Wakefield survive almost intact. Guilds of craftsmen acted out the different parts, the parable often relating to their trade – so, for example, the shipwrights would take charge of Noah and the Flood. Productions of the mystery cycles died out in the middle of the sixteenth century.

British **drama** developed in the sixteenth century, rapidly evolving from the didactic morality/mystery mode of old into the secular, professional and greatly creative aspect of British culture that reached its peak with Shakespeare. The impetus for staging drama moved from the Church to the nobility, a transition spearheaded by Henry VII with his small troupe of court actors. Wealthy lords followed his lead, retaining their own players or employing the troupes-for-hire that travelled the country. Outside noble circles, drama moved into innyards (courtyards attached to inns). The first regular playhouse in London appeared on the premises of the former Blackfriars Monastery where miracles had been performed even before the Reformation. That playhouse was built in 1576 by the actor James Burbage, who called it **The Theatre**.

The Theatre was an Elizabethan playhouse located in Shoreditch, just outside the City of London. The Theatre is considered to have been the first playhouse built in London for the sole purpose of theatrical productions. The Theatre’s history includes a number of important acting troupes including the Lord Chamberlain’s Men which employed Shakespeare as an actor and playwright. After a dispute with the landlord, the theatre was dismantled and the timbers were used in the construction of the Globe Theatre on Bankside. The design of The Theatre was possibly

adapted from the inn-yards that had served as playing spaces for actors. The building was an almost round wooden building with three galleries that surrounded an open yard. The Theatre is said to have cost £700 to construct; that was a considerable sum for the age.

Later, there appeared other playhouses – *The Rose*, *The Curtain*, *The Swan*, *The Globe*. There was a time when there were nine playhouses in London alone. The playhouses did not belong to any specific company of actors – the actors travelled from place to place and hired a playhouse wherever they were performing. They usually wore expensive clothes which they had received as gifts or had bought at a low price from their patrons. Every playhouse had a flag, and if a performance was expected, the flag was hoisted above the theatre. By the end of the sixteenth century, entrance fees were already being charged.

With the stage set, drama progressed to fit the new venues. Classical themes from the Renaissance still had a limited influence, and the medieval format of *interludes* and *folk plays* fed a new secular style. At the same time, the mystery cycles slowly declined, their demise hastened by their association with Catholicism at the time of the Reformation. Professional playwrights emerged, writing for similarly professional companies of actors.

The earliest memorable play (that survives) was a comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister* (ca. 1553), written by **Nicholas Udall** (1504–1556) in the style of Roman playwright Terence and performed by his pupils at Eton College. The first tragedy came soon after: *Gorboduc* (1562) was written by **Thomas Sackville** (1536–1608) and **Thomas Norton** (1532–1584), and its story about strife connected with the royal probably didn't make a favourable impression on the young Elizabeth I, for whom it was first performed. *Gorboduc* was also the first British play in blank verse, a novelty that freed actors from the constraints of rhyming couplets. These, the first true British plays, were visibly lacking of sophistication, by comparison with the next stage of development – **the golden age of British theatre**, or British Renaissance theatre as it's sometimes called.

English drama underwent enormous development during the Shakespearean period. In 1576 the first theatre house was opened in London, and soon several more theatres were constructed, one of them being the Globe, in which William Shakespeare was a shareholder and an actor. Those were open-air theatres where spectators stood throughout the play. There were no curtains or scenery. All the parts were played by men: female roles were performed by young boys.

During the reign of Elizabeth I the most famous playwright was **William Shakespeare**, as we have seen. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, and each year the anniversary of his birth is still celebrated there. People go to the church and place flowers on his grave. In the evening there is a performance of some specific “birthday play” in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. On the opposite bank of the Avon a great pavilion has the exhibition of items illustrating Shakespeare’s life and career. Various types of plays were popular at that time, including histories, comedies, and tragedies. Most writers specialized in only one type, but Shakespeare produced all three types. His 38 plays include tragedies such as *Othello* and *Hamlet*; comedies such as *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, and historical plays such as *Henry IV*.

Shakespeare’s supreme talent was for psychology, for shaping believable characters with strengths and flaws, with the love, hate and ambition that we recognise as immutably human traits. Such was their universality that Lady Macbeth’s guilt and Hamlet’s complex melancholy still resonate clearly today. Shakespeare brought these emotions to life with his use of language, manipulating the blank verse or spinning out the metaphor to enhance a character or situation. The complex plots, made understandable due to the presence of strong, distinct protagonists, and Shakespeare’s talent for both comedy and deep tragedy, provided the basis for his enduring popularity. It was a century after his death before his reputation came to rise significantly above that of his contemporaries, but today there is no higher deity in the pantheon of British culture. No one has been quoted more or performed more on stage, the inspiration for composers, artists and writers; a direct influence on everyone from Charles Dickens to Giuseppe Verdi and Sigmund Freud.

This resounding success helps to make clear why British theatre flourished to such a degree in the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. Inn yards and the new purpose-built theatres, capable of holding as many as 3,000 people, were packed with audiences drawn from all sectors of society. The enormous public appetite for drama was satisfied by a multitude of playwrights (all of them poorly paid for their work) who worked alongside Shakespeare. Two writers among the many are to be remembered are Christopher Marlowe, who has already been referred to above at some length, and **Ben Jonson**. Marlowe was born in the same year as Shakespeare but seemingly began to write at an earlier time. Educated at Cambridge, Marlowe was a tragedian, the author of emotional, often bombastic plays, who pioneered the use of blank verse as an expressive

tool of drama. Passionate, amoral heroes, doomed to fail because of being excessively ambitious, were central figures in all six of his plays. *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (ca. 1590) was his best work, while *Edward II* (ca. 1591) was a big influence on Shakespeare's history plays. Marlowe died fighting over a bill in a Deptford tavern when he was only 29.

Ben Jonson (1572–1637) was born a decade after Shakespeare, and was both his friend and a rival. Jonson is remembered best as the author of darkly satirical drama. *Volpone* (1606), a story of greed and misogyny in Venice, cemented his reputation as a comedic writer but *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) is of as much interest today with its amusing snapshot of Jacobean London. Beyond his writing for commercial theatre, Jonson created witty masques (a masked mix of poetry, music and dance) for James I's court. Unlike Marlowe and Shakespeare he stuck quite firmly to the classical precepts of playwriting.

English Renaissance theatre didn't simply fade out in the generation after Shakespeare and Jonson. **John Webster** (1580–1634), a late contemporary, fed the Jacobean taste for tragedy with his talent for bloody revenge drama. His disturbing masterpiece *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614), in which an aristocratic Italian widow is murdered by her own brothers, is still regularly performed today. **John Ford** (1586–1639) was an English dramatist of the Caroline period, whose revenge tragedies are characterized by certain scenes of austere beauty, insight into human passions, and poetic diction of a high order. His plays deal with conflicts between individual passion and conscience and the laws and morals of society at large; Ford had a strong interest in abnormal psychology that is expressed through his dramas. His best-known play was no doubt *Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1633), another violent story set in Italy, with incest being the sin at the centre of the plot. Ford's work marked the end of British theatre's golden age. The Puritans began denouncing the immorality of drama and when Civil War broke out, the theatres were closed and remained so for almost 20 years.

Charles II lifted the Commonwealth ban on the theatre in 1660. Companies initially drew from the Renaissance repertoire but new work soon appeared, generating **the Restoration drama** that would stretch beyond Charles' reign into the early eighteenth century. It began with tragedy, the restrained classical variant inspired by French dramatist Corneille, at its most effective in British hands with **Thomas Otway** (1652–1685), who brought a powerful pathos to an often stiff genre with

The *Orphan* (1680) and *Venice Preserv'd* (1682) before dying tragically and in poverty at the age of 33. **John Dryden** (1586–1639), considered the primary representative of the Augustan Age, is better remembered than Otway, and gained fame for Restoration tragedies like *All for Love* (1678). However, Dryden was no doubt better known for his poetry.

Restoration drama found its true form in **comedy**. It too was inspired by Continental theatre, notably the French playwright Molière, but added an element of wry British humour. The comedy of manners, as the prevailing genre was called, played up to theatre's new, predominantly prosperous audience with intricate plots woven around some social or sexual scandal among the genteel set. The outlandish characters and witty, frequently crude dialogue were often as important to the comedy of manners as the layering of plot and subplot. The depiction of fashionable high society, its sexual mores recently liberated from Puritan control, would have struck a chord with the late seventeenth century smart set.

Several **Restoration comedy** playwrights should be mentioned as the best-known representatives of their period: **George Etherege** (1636–1692) first gained a reputation with *She Would if She Could* (1664), the first Restoration comedy, and then confirmed it with *The Man of the Mode* (1676), based on real London characters like the rake John Wilmot; **William Congreve** (1670–1729), Restoration theatre's best playwright, wrote *Love for Love* (1695) and *The Way of the World* (1700) before giving up, aged 30, when tastes turned against licentious comedy; **William Wycherley** (1641–1716) was the sharpest of the Restoration comedy satirists; and **George Farquhar** (1677–1707) was an Irish playwright of real comic power. He stood out from his contemporaries for originality of dialogue and a stage sense that doubtless stemmed from his experience as an actor; his move into writing produced plays that sparkled with verbal dexterity and humour. *The Recruiting Officer* (1706) and *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1708) were his best.

When theatre revived in 1660, it lost the broad audience of the Shakespearean era. Theatre-goers were drawn almost solely from the upper classes, who used the new proscenium-style theatre (with its protruding stage, pit, gallery and boxes) for illicit liaisons and parading as much as watching drama. The scarcity of venues precluded most people from attending, with the dozen or so pre-Civil War London theatres replaced by only two.

During the period of Restoration theatrical groups were organized as the company of the king and the company of the Duke, later transformed

into two theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden. British theatre finally allowed women on stage. Former orange-seller, **Nell Gwyn** (1650–1687), was the most famous. A long-time mistress of King Charles II of England and Scotland, called “pretty, witty Nell” by Samuel Pepys, she has been regarded as a living embodiment of the spirit of Restoration England and has come to be considered a folk heroine, with a story echoing the rags-to-royalty tale of Cinderella. She was the most famous Restoration actress and possessed a prodigious comic talent.

Elizabeth Barry (1658–1713) worked in big, prestigious London theatre companies throughout her successful career. Her stage career began 15 years after the first-ever professional actresses had replaced Shakespeare’s boy heroines on the London stage. Barry achieved remarkable public approval and business success for a single woman in London in the late seventeenth century, especially considering that she was generally known to have a daughter by Rochester and another by the playwright George Etherege.

Women also began to emerge as playwrights. The most eminent female dramatist of the Restoration period was **Aphra Behn** (1640–1689), lauded for *The Rover* (1677), a comedy of manners. As a dramatist, fiction writer, and poet, she was the first Englishwoman known to earn her living by writing.

When the ribald laughs of Restoration Comedy slipped from fashion in the early 1700s (hastened by moralising pamphleteers), British theatre entered a subdued century. Some advances were made: London theatres increased in number and playhouses in towns like Lancaster, Bristol and Ipswich pushed drama out to the provinces; and in **David Garrick** (1717–1779), Britain found its most famous star (apparently the first person to whom that word was applied) of the stage, the first actor to pursue naturalism over-elaborate declamation. Garrick showed his skills in an excellent way when he played the roles of Richard III and Hamlet. He sometimes wrote plays himself, with reasonable success, and he was instrumental in bringing realistic scenery, lighting and costume to British theatre. His legacy remains grounded in a talent for intensity, naturalism and timing on stage.

The Garrick Theatre in London’s West End bears his name. An actor, a playwright, a theatre manager and producer, he influenced nearly all aspects of theatrical practice throughout the eighteenth century. Audiences were as likely to watch Italian opera as they were a British play. Indeed Italian **opera** helped generate one of the period’s favourite genres, the

‘ballad opera’ of popular songs and satire that reached its peak with **John Gay’s** (1685–1732) *The Beggar’s Opera* (1728), a work distinguished by good-humoured satire and technical assurance.

Scotland produced a rare, notable playwright in **John Home** (1722–1808), whose *Douglas* (1756) was a popular tragedy with a big success in both Scotland and England for decades, attracting many notable actors of the period; however, the finest drama on British stages in the later eighteenth century belonged to a couple of Irishmen. **Oliver Goldsmith** (1728–1774) and **Richard Brinsley Sheridan** (1751–1816) reacted to the so-called “sentimental” comedy of the mid- eighteenth century and revived the comedy of manners, although without the Restoration rude plays. Goldsmith’s *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773), still in repertoire today, is a farce based on a clash between classes, the action of which takes place during the course of a single day. Sheridan, perhaps the one with the greater skills as a playwright, is also still performed regularly. He immersed himself in London’s West End, becoming part owner of the Drury Lane Theatre where, at the age of 23, he produced his memorable comedy of manners, *The Rivals* (1775). Even though Sheridan's drama had such sophistication, it was less important than pantomime and farce in increasing the attendance of the general public.

In a more general sense, it could be said that the eighteenth century was the century of theatre, literature and painting. In the years of Enlightenment when the classical trend became the dominating one, the principle of the unity of action, place and time became the main one. It was during that period that scenery and a realistic method of acting first appeared on the stage. In the nineteenth century a brilliant actress by the name of **Sarah Siddons** (1755–1831) played her best roles. The eldest of twelve Kemble children, celebrated as a great acting dynasty, this prime British actress of the eighteenth century was the best-known tragedienne; she never played comedy. Siddons perfected her acting skills on the Yorkshire theatre circuit before moving to Drury Lane and astonishing audiences with the way she “became” a character. They were particularly impressed by the way she played Lady Macbeth.

As theatre audiences broadened in the nineteenth century, serious drama struggled for attention. Instead, the crowds that poured into new ‘illegitimate’ theatres (not sanctioned by the state) opted for **melodrama**, derivative of gothic tragedy and the stormy moods of Romanticism. With dramatic music, elaborate scenery and the new marvel of gas lighting (even though it was dangerous and had an unpleasant smell), it was quite a

show. Melodrama dominated the nineteenth-century stage with its standard cast of two-dimensional characters – heroes, villains, old crones and comedy figures – caught up in some violent excitement, whether it was a shipwreck or a killing spree. A *Tale of Mystery* (1802) by **Thomas Holcroft** (1745–1809), adapted from a French play, was among the first and most famous, but an Irishman, **Dion Boucicault** (1820–1890), produced the best (and least overwrought) efforts for the British stage. He was famous for his melodramas and became known on both sides of the Atlantic as one of the most successful actor-playwright-managers then in the English-language theatre.

The high drama drew attention to the contribution of actors and theatre managers as much as the playwrights, and **Edmund Kean** (1787–1833) was a star who performed in London, Belfast, New York, Quebec, and Paris among other places. He was remembered for frightening audiences with his performance of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. Farce, showing some connection with the histrionics of melodrama, had been part of British drama for centuries but reached a peak in late Victorian theatre with *Charley's Aunt* (1892), an English actor, playwright and song writer **Brandon Thomas'** (1848–1914) ludicrous story of Oxford undergraduates, mistaken identities and gentle transvestism.

A handful of writers ruined the nineteenth-century trend for melodrama and farce. Scottish playwright **Joanna Baillie** (1762–1851) wrote intimate, psychological drama that worked against the taste for grand spectacle, while others tended to the realist style which was popular on the Continent. **Thomas Robertson** (1829–1871) was the trailblazer, writing and producing social comedies with prosaic conversational dialogue and everyday characters. So much attention was given to detail and naturalism in plays like *Society* (1865) and *Caste* (1867) that Robertson's heirs talked of “cup and saucer” drama. Followers included **Arthur Wing Pinero** (1855–1934), with “problem plays” like *The Second Mrs Tanqueray* (1893), a work sympathetic to the situation of Victorian women.

Pinero and other dramatists are rarely revisited today but they paved the way for **George Bernard Shaw** (1856–1950), the Irishman who mixed comedy with campaigning on the British stage, shedding light on issues like prostitution (*Mrs Warren's Profession* (1893)) and religious hypocrisy (*Major Barbara* (1905)). He had trouble avoiding interference from the censors but he played a crucial part in pulling British theatre away from more frothy Victorian fare. *Pygmalion* (1913), about a London flower girl

plucked from the gutter, became Shaw's best-known work, thanks in part to a 1950s Broadway (and later, Hollywood) revamp as *My Fair Lady*. He is a Nobel Prize and Oscar-winning Irish playwright, critic and socialist; he had a great influence on Western theatre, culture and politics. He successfully introduced a new **realism** into English-language drama. He wrote more than 60 plays, among them *Man and Superman*, *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *Saint Joan*, and *Caesar and Cleopatra*, as well as the two just mentioned. With his range of his work from biting contemporary satire to historical allegory, Shaw became the leading comedy dramatist of his generation and one of the most important playwrights in the English language since the seventeenth century.

Another Irishman, **Oscar Wilde** (1854–1900), shared Shaw's talent for humour in plays like *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), a briskly witty satire on late Victorian society which is still performed regularly in Britain today. He was a playwright, novelist, essayist, and poet. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. He employed his paradoxical, epigrammatic wit to create a form of comedy new to the nineteenth-century English theatre. His first success, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, demonstrated that this wit could revitalize the rusty machinery of French drama. In the same year, rehearsals of his macabre play *Salomé*, written in French and designed, as he said, to make his audience shudder by its depiction of unnatural passion, were halted by the censor because it contained biblical characters. It was published in 1893, and an English translation appeared in 1894 with Aubrey Beardsley's celebrated illustrations. A second society comedy, *A Woman of No Importance* (1893), convinced the critic William Archer that Wilde's plays "must be taken on the very highest plane of modern English drama". In rapid succession, Wilde's final plays, *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, were produced early in 1895. In the latter, his greatest achievement, the conventional elements of farce are transformed into satiric epigrams – seemingly trivial but mercilessly exposing Victorian hypocrisies.

The classical performance style began to be replaced by a more **romantic** style. In that period English drama was greatly influenced by Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde. One of the great theatre actresses was **Stella (Mrs Patrick) Campbell** (1865–1940). She was thin, tall, and beautiful, with dark hair and eyes. She first played in armature theatres, and then made her debut in Liverpool. After that she was invited to

London, and came to be known by the public as “Mrs Pat”. Shaw invited her to perform the role of Cleopatra in his play *Caesar and Cleopatra*. The play was a great success and set the stage for an ongoing correspondence between Shaw and Campbell.

The period was characterised by the development of the **music hall**, representing a slight move from ballad opera, burlesque and melodrama to a genre that combined song, comedy and novelty acts. The music halls themselves, found predominantly in London, evolved from pubs with sideshows into purposely-built venues. London got its first, The Canterbury, in 1852. Each show featured a dozen or more acts, from **Jules Leotard** (1838–1870), a French acrobatic performer, swinging around on a trapeze in his stretchy all-in-one, to **Harry Champion** (1865–1942), an English music hall composer, singer and Cockney comedian, singing *Boiled Beef and Carrots; or Kaufmann’s Cycle Beauties*, a group of swimsuited lovelies performing formation bike riding. The music hall was wildly popular for half a century but declined after the World War I, replaced by the revue, a more refined cabaret-style show.

Opera, ballad opera and the tradition of the ‘extravaganza’ (elaborately-staged fairy tales popularised by the prolific playwright James Planché) all contributed to the Victorian **operetta**, which reached its peak in the works of librettist **W. S. Gilbert** (1836–1911), and composer **Arthur Sullivan** (1842–1900). Separately, their work was fairly ordinary, but together they wrote 14 immensely popular comic operettas between 1871 and 1896. Around half are still performed regularly even though the political and social issues that Gilbert satirised are often foreign to modern audiences. It is almost certain that on any given evening, an audience somewhere in Britain will be watching a G&S operetta; *The Pirates of Penzance* (1879), *HMS Pinafore* (1878) and *The Mikado* (1885) are the ones most likely to be presented.

Naturalism began to develop in Britain, following a pattern that was spreading throughout European theatre in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Audiences found the plays of Henrik Ibsen and Anton Chekhov difficult to grasp, and despite the best efforts of Pinero and Shaw, theatre-goers gravitated towards light comedy and farce. After World War I, composer, actor and writer **Noel Coward** (1899–1973) revived the comedy of manners with a dose of moral decadence. Conceived one sleepless night and written within four days, *Private Lives* (1930) was perhaps his finest comedy; its tale of a divorced couple reunited inadvertently on respective honeymoons was enriched by Coward’s droll

dialogue. He wrote musicals, plays, screenplays, songs, and skits, but in addition to that he also acted, sang, directed and danced on the stage and screen.

Novelist **Somerset Maugham** (1899–1973) also had success with the comedy of manners. As a playwright, novelist and short story writer, he was among the most popular writers of his era and reputedly the highest-paid one during the period of the 1930s. Based on a story first published in his collection *The Casuarina Tree* (1924), Maugham's play *The Letter* had its premiere in London in 1927. Later, he asked Katharine Cornell to play the lead in the 1927 Broadway version. The play was adapted as a film with the same name in 1929 and again in 1940, for which Bette Davis received an Oscar nomination. In 1951, Cornell was a great success when she played the lead in his comedy, *The Constant Wife*.

Ben Travers (1886–1980) was an English writer whose output included more than twenty plays, thirty screenplays, five novels, and three volumes of memoirs. He is best remembered for his long-running series of farces first staged in the 1920s and 30s at the Aldwych Theatre. Many of these were made into films and later into television productions, these humorous, skilfully arranged plays bearing the name of the theatre in which they had debuted. Of the few writers that produced something more serious,

J. B. Priestley (1894–1984) stood out, playing with time frames in *Dangerous Corner* (1932) and *Time and the Conways* (1937). *Dangerous Corner* was the first of a series of plays that enthralled West End theatre audiences. His best-known play was *An Inspector Calls* (1945). His plays are more varied in tone than the novels, and several were influenced by J. W. Dunne's theory of time.

In the twentieth century actors such as **Laurence Olivier** (1907–1989) and **Vivien Leigh** (1913–1967) were popular. Olivier relied greatly on rhythm, including a change of speed, a change of expression, and a change of pace crossing the stage. He followed the advice given by Foedor Shaliapin to an actor – never do what the audience expects you to do. Olivier created many unforgettable characters: Hamlet, Macbeth, Richard III, Julius Caesar. He was invited to Hollywood but work there did not give him satisfaction, so he returned to Britain. He played many Shakespearean roles with Vivien Leigh, and they later married. He got an Oscar for his role in the film *Henry V*. Olivier was nominated for the position of director of the British National Theatre. Vivien Leigh was the British actress who achieved film immortality by playing two of American

literature's most celebrated southern belles, Scarlett O'Hara and Blanche DuBois.

Public funding helped establish **the National Theatre** after World War II and also strengthened the provision of playhouses and companies outside London, exploiting a deep pool of native writing and acting talent. The first playwrights to break with convention were dubbed *the Angry Young Men*. In 1956, **John Osborne** (1929–1994) wrote *Look Back in Anger*, and its protagonist Jimmy Porter became the first in a line of disillusioned working-class figures in British theatre, the alienated heroes of what was given the name 'kitchen-sink' drama.

Playwrights like **Bernard Kops** (b. 1926), **Arnold Wesker** (1932–2016) and **Shelagh Delaney** (1938–2011), with the intense *A Taste of Honey* (1958), joined Osborne in criticising the establishment and the social inequalities inherent in British society. The kitchen-sink writers were a varied group, most of whom rejected the label "Angry Young Man" (or "Woman", in the case of Delaney). While they were working, more traditional theatre continued, perhaps with less vitality, in the writing of **Terrence Rattigan** (1911–1977), whose *The Deep Blue Sea* (1952), written in the 'well made' style that conformed to strict technical principles, was a genuine highlight of post-war theatre. The Angry Young Men didn't leave an abundance of great plays but they did open the door to something new. Activism, improvisation, feminism, surrealism: each had its time on the British stage in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, a period when an interest in experimentation and combined with considerable financial support to produce a renaissance in British theatre.

Drama finally became less completely centred around London as the new Arts Council began to subsidize regional repertory companies, built new theatres or resurrected old playhouses. Scotland, for so long marginalised when it came to drama, also found a voice; the crucial play was **John McGrath's** (1935–2001) *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil* (1973), which, although written by an English playwright, told the story of an exploited Scotland, from the Highland Clearances to the closure of Clyde shipyards.

The big three playwrights of post-war British theatre were **Harold Pinter** (1930–2008), **Tom Stoppard** (b. 1937) and **Alan Ayckbourn** (b. 1939). **Pinter** was influenced by Absurdist Irish playwright Samuel Beckett. His plays were preoccupied with memory, shocking audiences with their portrayal of lost idylls and their use of prosaic settings. Typically, a Pinter play has an undercurrent of menace; this and the subtle,

plausible use of language – with pauses and gaps conveying more than dialogue itself – have generated their own genre, “Pinteresque”. *The Caretaker* (1960), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *Betrayal* (1978) were among his best. Pinter also worked as an actor and director. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2005.

Stoppard, the intelligent but accessible talent of modern British playwriting touches on metaphysical and ethical themes without ever growing stodgy. His breakthrough play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1967), established a mixture of humour, surrealism, humanity and philosophy: its leading duo buffoon their way through life, stumbling periodically on some existential truth, while the Shakespeare play from which they were drawn, *Hamlet*, unravels in the background. For Stoppard, the characters typically come to life amid the disorder of colliding worlds. His later work became more politicised, concerned particularly with human rights in the old Eastern Bloc, although *The Real Thing* (1982), one of his best, deals with love, art and life in general. Stoppard also works on screenplays, notably *Shakespeare in Love* (1998) and *The Bourne Ultimatum* (2007).

Ayckbourn, the most prolific and consistently popular writer of modern British theatre, has been presenting a critical view of 'Middle England' since the 1960s. A “serious humour” lies at the heart of these plays, which are built around the failure of human relationships and, in particular, on the foibles and miserable black humour of life in the suburbs. Some of it could be described as farce, although Ayckbourn’s work appears to be getting darker as he ages. His first big success came with *Relatively Speaking* (1967), establishing the blueprint of mistaken identities, extramarital treachery and comedy. He has written over 70 plays, many of which had their opening night in his Scarborough theatre, moved on to the West End (and Broadway) and then toured the country in perpetuity.

Directors are considered to be as important to modern British theatre as writers and actors. They gather the components of a play – lighting, costumes, the approach to the script, cast, direction and so on – but are seen as creators as much as co-ordinators. **Peter Brook** (1925–2022) led the post-World War Two charge, directing the Royal Opera House by the time he was 22, and was followed by the likes of **Joan Littlewood** (1914–2002), renowned for left-wing theatre in the 1950s and 60s, and **Peter Hall** (1930–2017), the most influential figure of recent years. Hall founded the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1960 and went on to direct the National

Theatre. Younger directors of note include **Sam Mendes** (b. 1965) and **Nicholas Hytner** (b. 1956). Fluctuations in funding – cut in the 1980s but boosted in the 1990s – may have dimmed the good times somewhat, but British theatre remains in comparatively good form. Indeed, when compared with the situation in much of the world, British theatre is thriving. London’s West End claims a place as a global hub for drama old and new (nowhere else do as many new shows debut each year), regional audiences are growing and British stage actors, from **Ian McKellen** (b. 1939) to **Judi Dench** (b. 1934), **Maggie Smith** (b. 1934) and **Ewan McGregor** (b. 1971), still provide the benchmark of thespian quality. Only the occasional negative voice suggests that West End theatre relies too heavily on such stars to draw the punters. Beyond the West End, generous funding has boosted regional theatre over the last decade.

Three contemporary playwrights who deserve attention are **Patrick Marber** (b. 1964), **Georgia Fitch** (b. 1968) and **Roy Williams** (b. 1950). **Marber** found fame initially as a comedian but shines today as a playwright, notably as the author of *Closer* (1997), a modern tragedy of intimacy and betrayal. He also won plaudits for the screen adaptation in 2004. **Fitch** was acclaimed upon her appearance in *Adrenalin ... heart* (2002) and then more recently received praise for *I Like Mine with a Kiss* (2007), the witty story of two friends who both become pregnant when they are nearly 40. In the case of **Williams**, it could be said that slang, urban patois and familiar situations bring a fresh reality to his gritty drama. The brilliant *Sing Yer Heart Out for the Lads* (2002), found xenophobia and racism in a London pub on the day of an England-Germany football match.

Composer **Ivor Novello** (1893–1951) succeeded Gilbert and Sullivan in the early twentieth century, leading a golden age of West End operettas and musicals with shows like *The Dancing Years* (1939), in which he also starred; this was at a time before Rodgers and Hammerstein, Bernstein and others drew everyone’s attention away to Broadway. But the West End struck back in the 1970s and 80s, led by the big-budget musicals of **Andrew Lloyd Webber** (b. 1948). It began with *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* (1968) and has continued with *Cats* (1981), *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986) and others.

Critics suggest that Lloyd Webber represents a regression in musical theatre, making catchy tunes more important than characterisation and plot. His productions have also been disdainfully criticized as being too global to be identifiable as ‘British’ theatre. The final judgment may

depend on the degree of success – no doubt the statistics for *The Phantom of the Opera*, having played in 25 countries to over 100 million people and with box office takings of nearly £2 billion, will be success enough for Lloyd Webber.

In London at the present time there are over 100 theatres, which is more than in any other city in the world. Of course, the audiences are not all Londoners – the majority are foreign tourists, but the British are still theatre-minded, and there are 17,000 amateur theatre groups in the country. Drama has a place in every school. There is a certain kind of a relationship between the theatre and the cinema, with many actors, directors and writers doing both. Sir Anthony Hopkins, for example, had a career on the stage before going into films.

The most famous British theatres now are the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, the Aldwych Theatre, the Old Vic, the National Theatre Company, and the Royal Opera House. Two magazines devoted to theatrical problems are published in the country: “The Drama” (since 1919) and “Plays and Players” (since 1954). The biggest institution for theatrical education is The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, where young people can study dramatic art and articulation.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- The Globe Theatre was reconstructed in London in 1997 approximately 230 metres from the site of the original theatre.
- Flags could be seen hanging outside the Globe to let people know what type of play was being performed. A white flag meant it was a comedy, a red flag was a history and a black flag signified a tragedy.
- William Shakespeare once had to play Lady Macbeth when Hal Berridge, the boy playing her, suddenly died.
- Two seats are permanently bolted open at the Palace Theatre for the theatre ghosts to sit in.
- Prior to becoming Pope, Pope John Paul II wrote a play called “The Jeweller’s Shop” which was performed in the Westminster Theatre in 1982.
- The Palace Theatre in London long kept two seats permanently empty to make room for their resident ghosts. One was believed to be Ivor Novello. The other was said to be an unknown ballerina. However, once *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* became such a resounding success, they began selling the tickets for those seats once again.

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Questions and Tasks

1. What were religious performances of the fifteenth century called?
2. When did British drama start to develop?
3. When and how was the first British theatre built?
4. What is the title of the earliest memorable play?
5. What was the golden age of British theatre?
6. Name the most famous actors and playwrights of the golden age of British theatre.
7. What do you know about Shakespeare and his plays?
8. What is your favourite play by William Shakespeare?
9. Who are the representatives of English Renaissance theatre?
10. What do you know about the development of English Renaissance theatre?
11. How did Restoration drama develop?
12. Who were the main Restoration comedy playwrights?
13. Who were the main Restoration comedy actors?
14. Who is connected with British theatre in the seventeenth century?
Name some famous actors and playwrights.
15. When was the Garrick Theatre in London founded?
16. Who is connected with British theatre in the eighteenth century?
Name some famous actors and playwrights.
17. Who are the most famous actors and playwrights of British theatre in the nineteenth century?
18. Who are the most famous actors and playwrights of British theatre in the twentieth century?
19. What are the main directions of British theatre development from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries?
20. What are the most famous plays by Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde?
21. What do you know about Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde?
22. Who introduced a new realism into English-language drama?
23. Who were the most important playwrights of post-war British theatre?
24. Who are the most famous plays and actors in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries?
25. Who are the most influential contemporary playwrights?

British Cinema and Photography

English-language cinema is dominated by the star-driven industry in Hollywood, and Britain's ensembles struggle to compete with America's cultural and economic might. However, films like *Nil by Mouth*, *The Full Monty* and *Atonement* have played a crucial role in shaping the cultural landscape of modern Britain. They present a diverse cinematic tradition that, while distinctly "British", has no overriding style. From Mike Leigh's realism to the escapism of Bond, the suspense of *The Third Man* or the culture-clash gay romance of *My Beautiful Laundrette*, British cinema is nothing if not eclectic.

In retrospect, it can be said that English cinematography has a rich history. It began in 1896 and by 1908 it was among the foremost in Europe. The first films were silent, and were black and white. The expansion of French and American film then contributed to the decline of English cinematography. Britain began building its own studios in the Edwardian era, led by an influx of American technicians and actors. **Will Barker** (1868–1951) and **Cecil Hepworth** (1874–1953) were the first major British-born directors. From his Ealing studio, Barker made silent historical epics; and they were epics – *Jane Shore* (1916) used 5,000 extras.

By contrast Hepworth's films were modest. One of his earliest filmic projects recorded Queen Victoria's funeral in 1901, but he really made his mark with *Rescued by Rover* (1905). It cost £7/13/6 to make (the cheapest British film ever according to *The Guinness Book of Records*), involved various members of Hepworth's family and featured a child being rescued by the star, Rover, a collie. The use of cinematic narrative by Hepworth and co-director Lewin Fitzhamon, conveying drama through edited shots rather than a procession of staged acts, proved revolutionary. The public received it eagerly and Rover returned for a sequel. Hepworth made films into the 1920s, by which time his radical style had become rather familiar and stale.

One name that must be mentioned is that of **Sir Charles Spencer "Charlie" Chaplin** (1889–1977), an English comic actor, filmmaker, and composer who rose to fame in the silent era. He left school at 10 and worked as a mime at the circus. It was his poverty that later inspired him to create the image of a tramp in his famous costume. He was a master of pantomime – skilled in acrobatics and dancing, which he had learned in the London music hall. His gift led him to America at 19. He was screened in *The Kid*, *The Gold Rush*, and *The Circus*. Chaplin founded his own

company, *United Artists*, in order to produce his own films, and was awarded an Oscar twice. He died in Switzerland. He was loved and appreciated by the critics. In 1972, in the context of a renewed appreciation for his work, Chaplin received an Honorary Academy Award for “the incalculable effect he has had in making motion pictures the art form of this century”. His work continues to be held in high regard, with *The Gold Rush*, *City Lights*, *Modern Times*, and *The Great Dictator* often ranked on industry lists of the greatest films of all time.

Britain’s early film industry struggled through the 1920s, stifled by the economic and creative dominance of Hollywood. In 1927, Parliament passed the Cinematograph Films Act, demanding that cinemas show a set quota of British films. Initially it was 7.5 percent of output, but raised to 20 per cent by the mid-1930s. However, instead of fostering an industry of self-sufficient Hollywood-style studios, the act created a glut of ‘quota quickies’, uninspiring films produced to make up the numbers. Against the odds, two highly celebrated directors emerged in the 1930s, Alfred Hitchcock and Alexander Korda.

Alfred Hitchcock (1899–1980) delivered the first British talking movie, *Blackmail* (1929), a crime thriller with the provocative mix of fear, violence and blond heroines that would recur throughout his long directorial career. Another Hitchcock effort, *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1935), developed the motifs brilliantly with the story of an innocent man on the run in Scotland. Hitchcock left for Hollywood in 1939 although he would periodically return to Britain, using it as a backdrop for his American films.

Alexander Korda (1893–1956), a Hungarian emigre, was initially signed by Paramount to produce quota quickies but did much more, establishing his own London Film Productions to produce and direct *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933). The elegantly-made film was a global success and its star, **Charles Laughton** (1899–1962), received an Oscar for his performance. A string of Korda hits followed, admired as much for production quality as narrative, and he put the likes of Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh on screen. Despite the best efforts of Hitchcock, Korda and others, the British film industry was dogged by financial mistakes and poor production standards in the 1930s. The American studios moved in and began running things, producing ‘British’ classics like *Goodbye Mr Chips!* (1939) with its kindly retired teacher in the mood for a flashback.

British cinema took an unexpected turn during World War II: it improved significantly. The ‘make-do’ mantra of the war years put the end

to the extravagance of the 1930s, but while manpower and facilities were reduced, quality improved as a more realist style of film-making developed. It originated in documentary, a mode developed in the 1930s by **John Grierson**, (1898–1972) famous for his work on *Night Mail* (1936), in which a chugging score by composer Benjamin Britten and W. H Auden’s monotone verse enlivened the journey of a Royal Mail train from London to Scotland. When documentary passed realism onto film, the wartime current inevitably created gentle propaganda. Some of it was highly watchable; in *Went the Day Well?* (1942), a British village was overrun by German troops, but eventually repelled by fierce housewives.

Other realist films had more humdrum content. *This Happy Breed* (1944), adapted from a Noel Coward play and directed by **David Lean** (1908–1991), studied the “ordinary” interwar lives of a squabbling family in Clapham. The war years also saw the first pairing of **Michael Powell** (1905–1990) and **Emeric Pressburger** (1902–1988), known collectively as “*The Archers*”. Theirs would become a director/writer partnership responsible for 19 British films. One of the earliest, *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943), established their ‘difference’. Its unflattering appraisal of the British character – romantic but stunted – was set in contrast with a likeable German officer. Winston Churchill decided the film was unpatriotic and tried to halt production.

To sum up, here is a list of the five **early British films** that stand out from all the others: *The Lodger: A Story of the London Fog* (1926) by Alfred Hitchcock; *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933) by *Alexander Korda*; *Nell Gwyn* (1934) by Herbert Wilcox (leading pre-war actress Anna Neagle starred as the Cockney girl with the ear of the King); *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1935) by Alfred Hitchcock; *Pygmalion* (1938) by Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard.

British cinema actually saw its finest hour during and after World War II. Numerous short documentary films were especially successful. Cinema programs in Britain included not only a film but a short documental or a cartoon. There was an interval before the main film. Of course, this system later disappeared, with one full-length film being shown, usually followed by a short documental film or a cartoon. Film’s wartime maturation initiated a **golden age of British cinema** that lasted into the 1950s. Eclecticism ruled with a roll call of historical, contemporary and comedic movies. **David Lean** (1908–1991) was the shining directorial force. *His Brief Encounter* (1945), written by Noel

Coward and starring Trevor Howard (1913–1988), is a classic, even while the clipped accents and stiff upper lips raise a smile today.

Another Lean effort, *Great Expectations* (1946), starring John Mills (1908–2005), is arguably the best film adaptation of Dickens yet. **Carol Reed** (1906–1976) challenged Lean's supremacy with *The Third Man* (1949), a slice of British noir from the pen of Graham Greene that saw Orson Welles skulking around war-torn Vienna. If the polls are to be believed then *The Third Man* stands out as the golden age film most appreciated by modern audiences.

Michael Powell and **Emeric Pressburger** were prolific in their own enjoyably experimental field. The dark psychology of *Black Narcissus* (1946), set in a remote Himalayan convent (but filmed in London), produced something that few other golden age flicks managed, eroticism. In the early 1950s the fresh memories of war were mined for material, producing a series of epic movies like *The Cruel Sea* (1953) and *The Dam Busters* (1955).

An overview of three great British actors of the golden age: **Laurence Olivier** (1907–1989) – brought his Shakespearean stage talents to the screen in *Henry V* and *Hamlet* (1948), for which he won best actor, director and picture gongs at the Oscars; **Deborah Kerr** (1921–2007) – this Scottish actress starred in *Black Narcissus* before moving on to conquer Hollywood, writhing memorably on the beach with a damp Burt Lancaster in *From Here to Eternity* (1953); **Alec Guinness** (1914–2000) – the versatile giant of the Ealing comedies won his Best Actor Oscar for a role in *Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957). However, he would become best known, to his clear disappointment, as Obi-Wan Kenobi in *Star Wars* in the 1970s.

An overview of the best films of the golden age: *Henry V* (1944) by Laurence Olivier (with Olivier as star, producer and director); *Brief Encounter* (1945) by David Lean (starring Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard); *Great Expectations* (1946) by David Lean (a young John Mills plays Pip in Lean's magnificently murky mix of Gothic mansions and graveyards); *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946) by Powell and Pressburger (RAF pilot David Niven hovers between life/earth and death/heaven after bailing out); *Brighton Rock* (1947) by John Boulting (an ominous adaptation of Graham Greene's crime thriller that cast Richard Attenborough as edgy gang leader Pinkie); *Black Narcissus* (1947) by Powell and Pressburger (Anglican nuns set up shop on a remote Himalayan hilltop and grapple with repressed desire and madness); *Whisky*

Galore (1949) by Alexander Mackendrick (Hebridean islanders battle to stash a cache of shipwrecked whisky in an early Ealing comedy); *The Third Man* (1949) by Carol Reed (an American writer played by Orson Welles searches for a fixer in Vienna, encountering a famous twangy musical motif every time he finds him); *The Cruel Sea* (1952) by Charles Frend (the Royal Navy fight back German U-boats in a classic British war movie, filmed documentary style); *The Ladykillers* (1955) by Alexander Mackendrick (a little old lady unwittingly outmanoeuvres Alec Guinness' blackly funny criminal gang).

The series of comedies produced by Ealing Studios in the decade after World War II were peculiarly native affairs; a blend of self-mockery, cynicism, black humour and blokes in frocks. *Passport to Pimlico* (1949), about a London street that declares independence, was one of the first, typical in its gentle subversion, followed rapidly by the likes of *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949), in which one man sets about murdering an entire, disparate family to acquire a dukedom. *The Ladykillers* (1955) was a final triumph, its gang of ruthless criminals brilliantly incongruous in the confines of a small English lodging house. Its star, Alec Guinness (already referred to), became the leading Ealing comedy light. In *Kind Hearts and Coronets* he played all eight members of the ill-fated d'Ascoyne family, and later took on the impossibly nice, utterly British bank robber of *The Lavender Hill Mob* (1951).

As the big studios struggled in the mid-1950s, a new, independent strain of film-making gathered pace. A group of young documentary makers established **Free Cinema**, a movement that held six programmes between 1956 and 1959. Like *the Angry Young Men* writing for theatre, the figures of Free Cinema were irreverent toward the Establishment and bored with the old social and sexual mores. **Lindsay Anderson** (1923–1994) and **Karel Reisz** (1926–2002) were the key film-makers, but Free Cinema also showed work by the likes of Roman Polanski and French New Wavers Francois Truffaut and Claude Chabrol. In common, their work documented the stuff of everyday life, free (they felt) from the orthodoxies of traditional film-making. Shooting on location using hand-held 16mm cameras, they made documentaries like *We are the Lambeth Boys* (1957), a Karel Reisz film that followed a group of south London teens. Reisz was a Czech-born British filmmaker who was active in post-World War II Britain, and one of the pioneers of the new realist strain in 1950s and 1960s British cinema.

Free Cinema led directly to **the New Wave of British film** in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It took the social realism of those documentaries and made drama from it, cutting into the marrow of working-class life. The ‘warts and all’ subject matter saw the genre christened ‘kitchen sink’. *Anderson* and *Reisz* both went across from Free Cinema to New Wave, joined by another director, **Tony Richardson** (1928–1991), graduate of the playwright’s school, who had a hand in more New Wave films than most. There was a continuity of technicians too, notably with cameraman Walter Lassally. *Room at the Top* (1958), directed by **Jack Clayton** (1921–1995), lifted the veil first when working-class Joe was torn between clawing his way up the social ladder and cosyng up to the French woman he falls in love with. Its popularity paved the way for a rash of kitchen sink dramas dealing with ‘real’ issues like abortion (*Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960) and delinquency (*The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner* (1962)). New Wave had fizzled by 1964 but the trend for liberalism was set and social realism would reappear over the coming decades, as would the likes of **Albert Finney**, **Alan Bates** and **Rita Tushingham**, the new breed of British actors that got their break in the kitchen sink.

New Wave’s progressive spirit lingered through the 1960s but tended as much toward sexual as social freedom. *Alfie* (1966) was popular but very much of its time; its woman-chasing wideboy, played with aplomb by Michael Caine, soon felt a feminist backlash. The permissive mood found its way into period pieces too, notably in **Ken Russell’s** (1927–2011) *Women in Love* (1969), starring Alan Bates and Oliver Reed.

Kitchen sink grit returned toward the end of the decade, realised in the directorial work of **Ken Loach** (b. 1936) whose *Kes* (1969) dealt brilliantly with the struggles of a working-class Barnsley boy. Britain also cultivated cinematic genres in the 1960s that were destined to run for years. The *James Bond* leviathan took its first step with *Dr No* (1960) and broke into a run with *Goldfinger* (1964), **Sean Connery** (1930–2020) taking charge of the outrageous villains and trite one-liners.

A subtler spy genre adapted the novels of Len Deighton, with **Michael Caine** (b. 1933) starring in *The Ipcress File* (1965). Hammer Films maintained a prolific series of mannered horror flicks, begun in the late 1950s and strung out into the 60s with sequels that invariably starred **Peter Cushing** (1913–1994) (as Baron Frankenstein) or **Christopher Lee** (1922–2015) (as Dracula). And then there were the *Carry On!* films, ribald low-budget comedies with little in the way of narrative but a continuity of actors and lowbrow jokes. They stretched to a run of 29 films between

1958 and 1978. Critics grimaced but the public were enthusiastic; *Carry on Camping* was the top earning film in Britain in 1969.

British cinema endured some lean years in the 1970s. A Hollywood recession spread across the Atlantic, coinciding with cuts in government funding, which stifled the industry. The rare good films that did surface were dogged by notoriety. **Nicholas Roeg's** (1928–2018) *Performance* (1971) blurred thriller and psychedelia with Mick Jagger in the lead role. It offended some viewers but has been acknowledged more recently as complex and brilliant. Violence and misogyny were the main factors producing negative reactions to *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and *Get Carter* (1971).

In Scotland **Bill Douglas** (1934–1991) worked persistently on a trilogy of absorbing, socially real films based on his own life in the coal-mining town of Newcraighall; *My Childhood* (1972) was the first. The Monty Python crew began making films with *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), a work that survived longer than some comedies of the era, notably the *Confessions* series that brought fame to actor **Robin Askwith** (b. 1950).

The cinematic drought lingered through the 1980s. TV had stolen much of cinema's audience, as well as most of its studios. A low point was 1981, when only 24 British films were made, fewer than in any year since 1914. Despite the gloom, the decade produced a few gems from time to time. **Richard Attenborough** (1923–2014) directed his way to an Oscar with the saint-in-sandals epic, *Gandhi* (1983), and the Academy also threw plaudits at *Chariots of Fire* (1981), the stirring Olympic period piece that today, with its interminable solo, feels a bit daft. While it wasn't a golden era the 1980s did nurture a stock of interesting directors, names that would hang around for the next 20 years. **Stephen Frears** (b. 1941) impressed with *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985) with its race, sexuality and class issues. For **Bill Forsyth** (b. 1946), the big break came with amusing adolescent angst in *Gregory's Girl* (1981); for the offbeat **Derek Jarman** (1942–1994) it was with a deft biopic of *Caravaggio* (1986) complete with typewriters and calculators in the artist's seventeenth century world.

Peter Greenaway (b. 1942) aroused interest with a succession of image conscious films, notably the flesh and food fest *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (1989). Other British directors made more of a mark in Hollywood. **Ridley Scott's** (b. 1937) *Blade Runner* (1982) and **Alan Parker's** (1944–2020) *Mississippi Burning* (1988) were two of the more memorable Brit-directed American affairs; both directors had

started out making adverts for television. While funding crises, TV tussles and the temptation of Hollywood weakened British film in the 70s and 80s, one genre weathered the storm: James Bond continued to perform at the box office, even when the title role passed to *Roger Moore* and the mood drifted toward self-parody.

The sporadic triumphs of British cinema grew in number in the 1990s. Period pieces performed well at the box office led by *Merchant Ivory Productions* (American James Ivory directed and Indian Ismail Merchant produced) with the likes of *Howards End* (1992) and *The Remains of the Day* (1993). Jane Austen's middle-class machinations also transferred well to screen, with *Ang Lee's Sense and Sensibility* (1995) making a sizeable profit worldwide. But for financial success nothing beat *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994), with famous English director and producer **Mike Newell** (b. 1942) directing Hugh Grant's bumbling Englishman: it cost \$5 million to make and recouped about \$245 million. A mini wave of self-deprecatory comedies followed, with engaging if predictable films like *Brassed Off* (1996) and *The Full Monty* (1997) underscoring their colloquial humour with a sense of social desperation.

Director **Danny Boyle** (b. 1956) painted his own plucky underclass in the likes of *Trainspotting* (1996), a stand-out, funny and occasionally surreal adaptation of Irvine Welsh's novel about Edinburgh junkies. And then there were the culture clash gems of Bhaji on the *Beach* (1993) and *East is East* (1999), both exploring second generation migrant lives with poignant humour.

Films like *Trainspotting* and *The Full Monty* represent the popular, palatable fringe of the social realism that still gnaws at British cinema. The genre lay dormant for a decade or so after the successes of New Wave, reliant on television to keep it alive, before returning to the big screen in the 1980s under the direction of **Mike Leigh** (b. 1943). Leigh's character-led films chart moral and social decline, heavy with the discord of post-war Britain. His working methods – incorporating improvisation and the actors' own life experiences – heighten the realism and emotional depth when they come off. *Secrets and Lies* (1996), in which a woman goes in search of her birth mother and finds a dysfunctional familial mess, and *Vera Drake* (2004), about a 1950s back street abortionist, are among Leigh's best.

Ken Loach (b. 1936) has returned periodically to social realism after the success of *Kes* in the 1960s, notably in *Riff Raff* (1990) and *Sweet Sixteen* (2002). Like Leigh, he rarely presents an actor with a completed

script, hoping to heighten the spontaneity with genuine surprise. **Gary Oldman** (b. 1958), better known as a Hollywood actor, but being an English actor, filmmaker, musician and author, wrote and directed *Nil By Mouth* (1997) based on his own childhood in a south London council house, while an English film director, screenwriter and occasional actor **Shane Meadows** (b. 1972) has developed the everyday story tradition in more recent years, impressing with *This is England* (2006), about a boy struggling for identity after his father dies in the Falklands War.

Today, British film is enjoying one of its periodic booms, thanks in part to increased funding (not least from the National Lottery) and generous tax breaks on production costs. Many ostensibly British productions, the *Harry Potter* series among them, are actually joint efforts, incorporating foreign funding but using British talent in front of and behind the camera. The current variety of work is impressive, and the reliance on romcoms, costume dramas and geezer gangster flicks seems to have passed. Stand-out films like *The Constant Gardener* (2005), a joint effort with the US, Germany and Canada that adapted John le Carre's novel about an ethically suspect pharmaceutical company at work in Africa, and *Atonement* (2007), have won recognition from the movie evaluators in Hollywood. Audiences were in great suspense in *Touching the Void* (2003), a Bafta-winning documentary about two men's mountaineering disaster. Its director, **Kevin Macdonald** (b. 1967), then turned to feature films and excited with *The Last King of Scotland* (2006), featuring a characterisation of Idi Amin that was, by turns, charming and raging.

All films are submitted to **the British Board of Film Classification**, which places them into four categories: "U" (for universal showing) – the film suitable for any person over 5 years of age; "A" films are for people over 5 years, but they contain material that some parents might prefer their children not to see; "AA" films are for people over 14 years of age; "X" certificate means that a film is for people over 18; "PG" means paternal guidance in which some scenes may be unsuitable for young children; figures 15 or 18 show a restriction for seeing those films by youngsters. London is a major international film centre. There are about 50 cinemas in central districts, many of which are ultra-modern multi-screened complexes.

Photography has had a particular role in shaping the world view of Britain since the 1960s, but the nation's role in photography goes back much further, right back to the days when assiduous Victorians worked in

sheds with tubs of acid. Britain was intensely involved in the very beginnings of photography. In 1839 **Henry Fox Talbot** (1800–1887) took the age-old camera obscura trick, used some new chemicals and produced the first paper negative, of an oriel window in Lacock Abbey, Wiltshire (a location used more recently for filming the *Harry Potter* series). His hobby developed further with images of nature and architecture. Photographic technology improved rapidly in the Victorian era, and the medium came to be seen increasingly as an art form. Cameras were faster by the 1870s, and available to the masses by the end of the century thanks to the push-button innovations of Kodak.

Before long, travel photography began to develop. **Roger Fenton** (1819–1869) was one of the first practitioners, although his images of British military life in the Crimea in the 1850s have more often led him to be described as the first photojournalist. Others journeyed simply to record things that were exotic. **Samuel Bourne** (1834–1912) took some memorable shots of India and the Himalayas in the 1860s. Scotsman **John Thomson** (1837–1921) went to the Far East in the same decade, capturing Sumatran villagers, Siamese royalty and the jungle-smothered temple of Angkor Wat. Later he took up residence in Brixton and photographed London's poor, one of the first to document British penury with a camera.

But perhaps the most famous adventuresome Victorian photographer was **Francis Frith** (1822–1898). He photographed Egypt and the Middle East in the 1850s, before returning to England to establish a photo factory that churned out millions of prints of virtually every town in Britain. They were sold to the masses as postcards, many of which can still be purchased today. One more name that could be mentioned is that of **Linnaeus Tripe** (182–1902), an army officer who photographed India and Burma in the 1850s.

The adoption of photography by the media industry in the early twentieth century contributed to the development of its role as a documentary tool. Photojournalism came to the fore, pushed forward by smaller, easy-to-use cameras, and in *Britain Picture Post* magazine printed the new visual narrative for a massive audience. First published in 1938, within a couple of months it was selling well over a million a week. Some notable photographers shot for *Picture Post*.

Bert Hardy (1913–1995) covered the Blitz with his trusty Leica and went on to capture the Allies' advance across Western Europe, from D-Day to the liberation of Bergen-Belsen. **Bill Brandt** (1904–1983), the best-known British photographer of the interwar years, also contributed to

Picture Post. Born in Germany to a British father, Brandt too covered World War II, although concentrated as much on society as soldiers. Before the conflict he had been depicting the poor and the rich of London; after it he photographed brooding landscapes and stretched, sculptural nudes. His portraits featured everyone from *Ezra Pound* (1928) to *Peter Sellers* (1963). A third *Picture Post* man, **Humphrey Spender** (1910–2005), confirmed Britain’s mid-century prowess in photojournalism. Surreptitiously he captured life in the industrial north, working for the Mass Observation Project, an anthropological study of working-class England. Spender did everything he could to ensure spontaneity, even hiding a camera in his rain mac. His photos of “Worktown” (actually Bolton disguised) were seminal in their ordinariness.

As Britain pursued its passion for photojournalism in the mid-twentieth century a more affected genre of photography also evolved, set to explode in the 1960s. It embraced fashion, advertising and high society, and found its outlet in magazines like *Vanity Fair*, *Harper’s Bazaar* and *Vogue*. **Cecil Beaton** (1904–1980) bore the torch with staged, glamorous images of Marlene Dietrich, Audrey Hepburn and the royal family from the 1920s through to the 60s. After a post-war lull, Beaton’s influence emerged in the 1960s with a group of photographers that distilled the spirit of swinging Britain.

East End boys **David Bailey** (b. 1938) and **Terence Donovan** (1936–1996) led the pack, moving in the same circles as the musicians, actors and socialites they photographed. Bailey shot The Beatles, the Kray Twins and model Jean Shrimpton in a style that, while mindful of Beaton’s, was edgier, its situations minimalist and less contrived. Like Bailey, Donovan worked primarily in monochrome and shot a similar array of sixties faces. Both moved from fashion and portraiture to advertising campaigns and filming TV commercials. Others like **Lewis Morley** (1925–2013), **Norman Parkinson** (1913–1990) and **Lord Lichfield** (1939–2005) operated in the same milieu in the 1960s and 70s.

Fashion/portrait/society photography still thrives in Britain today. **Nick Knight** (b. 1958) and **Corinne Day** (1962–2010) have been the big names in fashion in recent years, involved in editorial shoots for the likes of *Vogue* and *i-D Magazine*, as well as framing some memorable ad campaigns. In the 1990s, *Day* was accused of fostering ‘heroin chic’ by shooting pallid models in drab locales. In portraiture, **Rankin** (b. 1966) has become internationally famous, perhaps the best-known British photographer of modern times – the Bailey of his generation if you like.

His polished, commercial portfolio features everyone from Kate Moss to the Queen, usually shot against a white backdrop. The distinctions between documentary, fashion and portraiture on one hand and ‘art photography’ on the other can be fuzzy. The works of Rankin and Nick Knight, who often manipulate images in the manner of a modern day Rejlander (he would have loved the digital age), is sometimes referred to as fine art photography, as are the landscapes of **James Ravilious** (1939–1999).

The cultural powers-that-be recognise the connections: **Richard Billingham** (b. 1970) took photographs of places he’d visited as a child, most of them waste ground, and won a Turner Prize nomination in 2001. There are, however, contemporary British photographers who work overtly in the manner of the artist, contriving and staging the subject for record as a piece of art. **Helen Chadwick** (1953–1996) made use of animal parts, food, fluids and her own image in the 1980s, and exhibited *Opal* (1996), photos of dead human embryos, shortly before dying prematurely from a viral infection. **Matt Collishaw** (b. 1966), often lumped together with the Young British Artists, creates collages of flowers, humans and fairies, but came to fame in 1997 with a large close-up of a fresh bullet hole in someone’s head.

Another YBA and Turner prize nominee, **Sam Taylor-Wood** (b. 1967), shot *Crying Men*, portraits of actors in tears, some examples being Daniel Craig, Jude Law and Steve Buscemi.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- The first use of animation in movies actually happened before 1900. It was a British film producer who made a stop-motion short titled *Matches* that pled with viewers to send matches to British troops fighting in the Boer War.
- Britain’s first cinema was the Regent Street Cinema in London, which opened its doors on 21 February 1896.
- Half of the top 20 global box office successes of the last 12 years is based on novels by UK writers.
- London has 55 % of the UK film industry.
- The UK has the third largest film entertainment market in the world, after America and Japan.
- 47% of the people working in film and video industry are freelance.
- It’s estimated there are only eight UK military ambulances from WWII in the world... and they all appeared in *Atonement* (2007).
- The first movie to show a toilet flushing: *Psycho* (1960).



Questions

1. When did the history of English cinematography begin?
2. Who were the first British directors?
3. What is the role of Charlie Chaplin in the history of world cinema?
4. Who was the most famous director of early British films?
5. What were some well-known early British films?
6. When did the golden age of British cinema begin?
7. Who were the great British directors of the golden age?
8. Who were the great British actors of the golden age?
9. What were the great films of the golden age?
10. What were the main topics of the series of comedies produced by Ealing Studios in the decade after World War II?
11. When was a new movement Free Cinema established?
12. Who established a new movement Free Cinema?
13. When did the New Wave of British film begin?
14. Who was the most famous director of the New Wave of British film?
15. Who was the most famous actor of the New Wave of British film?
16. What were the main topics of the British films of the New Wave?
17. How did British cinema develop in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s?
18. Why did British cinema endure some lean years in the 1970s?
19. Who were the great British directors in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s?
20. Who were the great British actors in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s?
21. What were the great films in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s?
22. How did British cinema develop today?
23. Who are the most famous modern British actors?
24. How are all the submitted to the British Board of Film Classification categorised?
25. What do you know about the development of British photography?
26. Who are the greatest British photographers of fashion, portrait, and society?

British Folk, Classical and Modern Music

Music is the precocious talent of contemporary British culture, and has been since the 1960s. Multicultural, global, cool – is there a better advert for the modern nation? But there's much more to British music than backbeats, iconic riffs and the Winehouse beehive; it also harbours a rich folk and classical repertoire.

Traditional **folk music** traces its beginnings back beyond the Middle Ages. This was the music of the common people; the love songs, work songs, lullabies and dance tunes of the peasantry, passed from generation to generation. The songs and tunes evolved and mutated over time, and those that survive are impossible to attribute or date, which, of course, is part of their charm. Scotland, Wales and England each have their own styles and traditions.

Scotland has a proud folk music tradition, from the Gaelic waulking songs sung by tweed makers and *puirt a beul* (improvised nonsensical 'mouth music') of the Highlands and Islands to the ballads of the Lowlands and Borders, all accompanied by the fiddle, bagpipe, whistle and *clarsach* (small Celtic harp). The Scottish tradition evolves still, pursued in the local *mods* (festivals of Gaelic music) and by groups like the *Tannahill Weavers* and *the Battlefield Band*.

In **Northern Ireland** the old counties of Ulster share in the wider Irish rituals of Gaelic music. Here, more than anywhere else in the UK, traditional music remains a regular feature of life, even while the legendary pub sessions featuring guitar, fiddle, bodhran (shallow goatskin drum), squeezebox and flute actually began with Irish expats in English pubs. The most prominent Gaelic folk band from the north in recent years has been *Altan*. In Northern Ireland specifically, the Scots and English plantation settlers of the seventeenth century brought *ballads* that remain part of the folk repertoire. The Ulster Scots tradition of marching bands, featuring pipe (or flute) and giant *lambeg* drum, also remains strong. World conquering flautist James Galway blew his first flute in a Belfast band.

Wales: the self-proclaimed '*Land of Song*' is famed worldwide for the male voice choirs that live on in the former mining communities of South Wales; the ruddy-faced gents of *the Treorchy* and *the Morriston Orpheus choirs* are considered masters of the craft. To the north and west of Wales, instruments like the *crutch* (six-stringed lyre) and the *pigeon* (wooden pipe), and the performing of simple, vernacular *pavilion* songs can be traced back to the twelfth century, to the finest *eisteddfods*, the

spirited contests of music and poetry. England: pre-Christian festivals and ceremonies, like the *Furry Dance* in Cornwall, the *Nutter Dance* in Lancashire (both spring things) and apple tree wassailing in Somerset, often provided the initial inspiration for English folk music.

From the sixteenth century, popular songs detailing the exploits of heroes and villains were printed on sheets known as broadsides and sold on the streets. One of the earliest recorded 'broadsides' is *A Lytel Geste of Robyne Hood* (ca. 1506). Traditional English instruments include the fiddle, concertina and Northumbrian pipes (a bagpipe blown with bellows), of which Kathryn Tickell is a well-known modern-day exponent.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the English folk song was an endangered species, lost in the new urban sprawl and shoved aside by music hall. But folk had its protectors: **Cecil Sharp** (1859–1924) and a small group of enthusiasts from the *Folk Song Society* set about collecting, transcribing and cataloguing folk songs from around the country. Sharp, a composer and music teacher, gathered thousands of songs, often adding his own clumsy piano parts. Significantly, he encouraged others to join in, most notably the composer **Ralph Vaughan Williams** (1872–1958), whose work would owe a large debt to the English folk song.

A second revival of folk music occurred in the 1950s and '60s, instigated almost single-handedly by **Ewan MacColl** (1915–1989) (real name Jimmie Miller), a communist, playwright and singer/songwriter. He founded the 'London's Ballads and Blues Club' and, in reaction to the rise of American folk, introduced a draconian policy demanding that performers only play songs from their own country. Suddenly, folk clubs were popular; for a few years they were even considered cool. Peggy Seegar, an American who became MacColl's third wife, and for whom he wrote his masterpiece *The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face* (1957), **Shirley Collins** (b. 1935), and **Martin Carthy** were also instrumental to the revival.

By the 1960s folk was fusing with rock 'n' roll. Folk Roots, *New Routes* (1964) by Shirley Collins and Davey Graham is usually considered the landmark album, while *Steeleye Span*, the jazz-influenced Pentangle, Fairport Convention and The Incredible String Band, a psychedelic Scottish outfit, were also important. Alas, the boom was short-lived – by the mid 1970's, folk rock had become regularly self-indulgent and unwittingly ridiculous. In 1980s the International Folk Music Council was reborn as **the International Council for Traditional Music**. Yet while the Scots, Irish and Welsh now appear to cherish their traditional folk

music, in England the negative stereotypes persist. In recent years, English folk music has undergone yet another revival with young musicians like **Seth Lakeman** and **Kate Rusby** playing traditional English music with energy, confidence and pride.

In the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Britain had highly spiritual **religious music**. Highly trained choirs of medieval churches were part of the European Catholic tradition. After King Henry VIII broke away from Rome, a great deal of new choral music was written in English. Henry VIII is said to have written the very popular song “*Greensleeves*” that can still be heard today on various occasions. Englishmen played mainly string instruments. The Elizabethan age (the seventeenth century) was the age of creating music. All those who had any musical gift or who could play any musical instrument tried to compose their own music, in a variety of styles. Music was a part of theatre, but unfortunately that music has not been preserved. One of the most popular musical instruments of that time was the lute.

The origins of **classical music** lie in the monophonic (single melodic line) liturgical plainsong and Gregorian chant of the early Middle Ages, which, with the later organum and motet (both polyphonic – having more than one part), dominated medieval music. All of this was in the background of the work of **John Dunstable** (1390–1453), the first great British composer, in the early fifteenth century. Most of the manuscripts of Dunstable, who represented an important musical link between the medieval and Renaissance eras, were burned at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and much of the surviving repertoire was pieced together from fragments discovered in Europe. His best-known work is a motet – *Veni Sancte Spiritus – Veni Creator* (fifteenth century).

Polyphonic music continued its development in the Renaissance era, aided by the appearance of new instruments like the viol and the virginals (an early harpsichord). Henry VIII’s rift with Rome increased the importance of royal patronage and, while most music remained religious in nature, there was a growing demand for more secular material. The major composers of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries included **John Taverner**, **Orlando Gibbons** and **William Byrd**, but perhaps the most important was **Thomas Tallis**, whose *Spem in alium* (ca. 1570), a forty-part motet, is considered a masterpiece. By the later sixteenth century, English madrigals had become very popular. They were light, melodic, secular songs, usually for three to six unaccompanied voices, and any composer with any ability had created a few of them. Few did better than

Thomas Morley, although today his *Now is the Month of Maying* (1595) actually reads like a prime example of just how banal the English madrigal could be.

At the end of the seventeenth century a **national English opera** took shape. Music in the late seventeenth century was illuminated by the brief brilliance of **Henry Purcell** (1659–1695), considered by many to be the greatest of all British composers. He showed brilliant musical abilities at an early age and when he was eighteen he was invited to the court of Charles II. He organized royal theatrical productions, royal birthdays, and official celebrations. Purcell was an exceptional organist and, as a composer, his sheer inventiveness and mastery of the Baroque form commanded the admiration of all his contemporaries. He produced a great body of work including music for the church, the theatre and royalty. He died at the age of 36 and was buried in Westminster Abbey next to the organ. Purcell's one opera, *Dido and Aeneas* (1689), featuring the famous *Dido's Lament*, is considered his best work.

The leading figure of eighteenth-century British music was undoubtedly **George Frideric Handel** (1685–1759). Born in Germany, he moved to London in 1712 at the age of 27, and later became a British subject. Influenced by Purcell and by Italian composers such as Corelli, Handel's many operas and oratorios displayed a deceptive simplicity, bringing him great fame, wealth and popularity during his lifetime. Mozart, Beethoven and Bach all apparently admired his work. He is best remembered for his *Water Music* (1717) and *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (1749), orchestral works written for Kings George I and George II (both of them also German) respectively, and for his supreme achievement, *Messiah* (1741), the oratorio with which his name will always be associated. Another notable composer of the period was **Thomas Arne** (1710–1778) whose *Masque of Alfred* (1740) featured the ever-popular song *Rule, Britannia!*

The twentieth century saw a **renaissance in British classical music** that incorporated a new nationalist style. Four great British composers emerged in this period – Edward Elgar, Gustav Holst, Vaughan Williams, and Benjamin Britten. **Edward Elgar** (1857–1934): despite having no formal training in composition, Elgar progressed from a job as bandmaster at Worcester and County Lunatic Asylum to being the first British-born composer in 200 years to achieve international recognition. He came to prominence with his first major orchestral work, *Enigma Variations* (1899) – the enigma being that the fourteen variations are on an original theme

that is never heard. Elgar's greatness, some say his Englishness, lies in the use of bold melodic themes set against a brooding, nostalgic melancholy. An oratorio, *The Dream of Gerontius* (1900), is considered his finest work and his *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1* (1901), otherwise known as *Land of Hope and Glory*, continues to be a highly popular composition whenever it is performed.

Gustav Holst (1874–1934), born in England of Swedish extraction, was a highly original composer, a master of orchestration who drew on influences as disparate as English folk songs and madrigals, Hindu mysticism and the avant-garde sounds of Stravinsky and Schoenberg. He was also fascinated by astrology, the study of which provided the inspiration for his most famous work (although he never considered it his best), *The Planets* (1914–1916), a seven-movement orchestral suite.

Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) is considered to be the most characteristically English of composers. He rejected most foreign influences, infusing his music instead with the moods and rhythms of native folk songs and the work of sixteenth century English composers. Williams is best known for *A Sea Symphony* (1910) and *A London Symphony* (1913), and for his concerto *The Lark Ascending* (1914) featuring that famous, ethereal solo violin.

Benjamin Britten (1872–1958) was the last of the great British composers. His dexterity and inventiveness, particularly as a vocal composer, brought him international fame on a par with Elgar. He is best remembered for the opera *Peter Grimes* (1945), the orchestral work *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* (1946), and *War Requiem* (1961), a large scale orchestral and choral work featuring the poetry of Wilfred Owen.

Any discussion of British classical music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries must include references to **John Taverner** (1944–2013), a direct descendant of the sixteenth composer of the same name, and **Peter Maxwell Davies** (1934–2016); both produced well-received works, but nothing of any real magnitude has emerged. Classical music does have a place in modern British culture, but perhaps not in the way its advocates would hope. It may be heard in TV commercials and at various sporting events, and the average Briton may well watch the Last Night of the Proms on television, but, it actually is associated mainly with 'respectable' middle-class people. Nonetheless, there is a large choice of concerts to attend in London on any given evening. There are many

professional orchestras and hundreds of amateur ones including *the National Youth Orchestra*.

There are two classical radio stations – *BBC Radio 3* and *Classic FM*. The violinist **Nigel Kennedy** (b. 1956) is very popular on the basis of his recording of Vivaldi's "Four Seasons". Nevertheless, attitudes to classical music are strangely contradictory. Many young people learn to play instruments but listen to pop music at home. People can also be identified on the basis of music. Those who attend the Royal Opera House or Covent Garden belong to the middle class.

Modern music – British people like to talk about this subject, just as they might speak about the weather, politics, and sport. Perhaps it's the one thing Brits feel sure that they can do as well as anyone else in the world. **Tommy Steele** (b. 1936) and **Cliff Richard** (b. 1940) both claimed to be Britain's answer to Elvis Presley, but even though Cliff's first single, *Move It* (1958), was excellent, it soon became clear that they weren't really comparable to Elvis. Perhaps of greater significance was the explosion of interest in the stifle genre that arose at the same time.

Lonnie Donegan (1931–2002) was the figurehead and his single *Rock Island Line* (1955) typified the form: stifle was fast, basic, rock 'n' roll with a hint of country music, played with acoustic guitars, washboards and the odd homemade tea chest bass. Sniffle's simplicity, and the fact that most of the instruments could be found in the kitchen, encouraged teenagers to form their own bands. A few of them would, in the next decade, change the history of **popular music**.

Modern jazz has a certain number of devotees and a few venues where it is performed, such as **Ronnie Scott's** (1927–1996) in London but only a small minority in Britain showed much interest in it. However, while home-grown talent hasn't been abundant, a few noteworthy figures have appeared, such as saxophonist **Johnny Dankworth** (1927–2010) and pianist **Stan Tracey** (1926–2013) are veterans of the jazz scene and have always commanded respect – Tracey's album *Under Milk Wood* (1965) is regarded as a highlight of British jazz; the 1970s brought the acclaimed avant-garde music of pianist **Keith Tippett** (1947–2020) and saxophonist **Evan Parker** (b. 1944); and in recent years saxophonist **Courtney Pine** (b. 1964) has come to the fore, fusing jazz with modern elements like drum 'n' bass.

In 1660s London and Liverpool were the musical power-houses. **The Beatles** became a living legend. In October 1962 their first hit, *Love me, Do*, entered the British Top Thirty. However, the road to success for

John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr was not always easy. John and Paul spent many afternoons listening to American stars like Elvis Presley before they were able to write their own songs. Their style of singing was not the only thing that was new. Their unusual haircuts and sense of humour became the latest fashion. During the 1960s the Beatles were constantly in the news headlines, in connection with their films, world tours and scandals. *Please Please Me* (1963) soon followed and 'Beatlemania', with its screaming, clawing girls and ringing record shop tills, swept Britain. Recording techniques became more innovative, while their songwriting grew increasingly sophisticated, producing some of their finest work on the albums *Revolver* (1966) and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967).

The only songwriting partnership to rival Lennon and McCartney in the 1960s was that of **Mick Jagger** and **Keith Richards**. The pair had both briefly played stifle but **The Rolling Stones** was formed in 1962 with their roots firmly in rhythm and blues. Success followed, with the singles *(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction* (1965), *Get Off My Cloud* (1965) and *Paint it Black* (1966) all hitting No.1 on both sides of the Atlantic. With Jagger's snarling vocals and menacing persona, The Stones were seen as dangerous, a dark image in contrast to The Beatles' light. Later songs like *Sympathy for the Devil* (1968) simply aroused anxiety among parents. The band maintained their status and record sales throughout the 1970s, achieving eight consecutive No.1 albums in the USA. The albums *Let it Bleed* (1969) and *Exile on Main Street* (1972) are considered their best. Somewhat implausibly, The Rolling Stones are still going, and are giving sell-out stadium gigs over 45 years after their group was formed. **The Who**, following their early hits *I Can't Explain* (1965) and *My Generation* (1965), became famous for their dynamic, often destructive live performances, with the frenzied drums of **Keith Moon** and the trademark 'windmill' guitar-playing of **Pete Townshend** (a trademark that regularly made his right hand bleed). The epic single *Won't Get Fooled Again* (1971) and *Tommy* (1969), **the first rock opera**, featuring the single *Pinball Wizard*, were Who highlights. **The Kinks** came to prominence with *the No.1 single You Really Got Me* (1964). The song's distorted guitar riff would be echoed in the heavy rock and punk bands to come. Singer Ray Davies was perhaps the most distinctly English writer of his generation; songs like *Waterloo Sunset* (1967) would inspire many future British bands.

After such a remarkable array of musical talent and output, it could well have been asked what could possibly follow the 1960s. The answer: with sequin-spangled trousers, five-inch platform heels and men in make-up. The **glam rock** of the early 1970s was polished guitar music resembling that of the Rolling Stones, played by an eclectic range of artists, from the pouting, slinky **T-Rex** to the progressive, arty **Roxy Music**; their albums, *Electric Warrior* (1971) and *Roxy Music* (1972) respectively, are highly regarded. The most significant figure to emerge from glam rock was **David Bowie** (1947–2016). Bowie added a sense of theatre to music, paving the way for the spectacular live shows gig-goers have come to expect from contemporary bands. The albums *Hunky Dory* (1971) and *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* (1972) are among those which enthusiasts must not miss.

While glam rock was working its way up the singles chart, its less effeminate cousins were selling albums in great quantities. **Hard rock** bands like *Black Sabbath*, *Deep Purple* and *Led Zeppelin* played heavy, blues-influenced rock music and introduced the world to the now obligatory long guitar solo, tight jeans and screaming lead vocal. The Led Zep albums *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971) and *Physical Graffiti* (1975) were monumentally successful; the former featured *Stairway to Heaven* (1971), frequently cited as a contender for the title of ‘best rock song ever’.

Progressive rock was perhaps more intricate, inventive and conscious of its own artistic depth, with keyboards a major feature of bands like **Yes**, **Genesis**, and **Pink Floyd**. They showed off their musical talents in epic songs strewn with time and key changes. Genesis’ *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* (1974) moved many, while Pink Floyd’s *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973) is one of the most successful records of all time, having sold 40 million copies worldwide. Queen, the hugely popular group of the mid 1970s already mentioned, were a mixture of heavy, glam and prog rock. *A Night at the Opera* (1975) is considered their finest album, and not just because it featured Britain’s third best-selling single of all time, *Bohemian Rhapsody*. The band maintained their commercial success until singer Freddie Mercury’s death from AIDS in 1991. Finally, Reginald Kenneth Dwight (better known as **Sir Elton John**) found his form in the 1970s with expertly crafted piano rock, and since then he has sold over 300 million records.

Punk exploded out of the urban decay of mid-1970s Britain, rebelling against the bloated music industry of the day and against society as a whole. With **The Sex Pistols** and **The Clash** at the fore, punk was rock music stripped of all sophistication. It was angry and anarchic, and was played very

fast, very loudly and usually very badly. Following the release of The Sex Pistols' single *Anarchy in the UK* (1976), punk blazed a controversial trail across Britain. Its anti-establishment, "do-it-yourself" philosophy inspired members of a disaffected generation to form their own bands. A few were successful but most disappeared without a trace. Punk found a particularly receptive crowd in Northern Ireland, where bands like **The Undertones** and **Stiff Little Fingers** gave the province its most fruitful period of modern music. By the time The Sex Pistols' bass player, Sid Vicious, died of a heroin overdose in 1979, punk had burnt itself out, but its spirit permeated British culture, influencing hairstyles, fashion and music – as bands like **The Libertines** and **Arctic Monkeys** proved – well into the twenty-first century.

2 Tone, named after the Coventry record label responsible for most of the releases, combined Jamaican **ska music** (calypso-tinged rhythm and blues) with an urban punk sensibility for uplifting, insistent dance music. **The Specials**, **Madness** and **The Beat** were the big names, and The Specials' *Ghost Town* (1981) was probably the stand-out track. Another clique, the **New Romantics**, appeared in the early 1980s wearing outlandish clothes and laughable make-up. The music was synthesiser-driven, heavily influenced by Bowie and shamelessly pretentious.

Spandau Ballet and **Duran Duran** were the main protagonists. Other 80s bands weren't so easily categorised. **The Police** emerged out of the punk scene, but weren't really a part of it. *Synchronicity* (1983) is considered the best among their albums, which have sold more than 50 million worldwide. **Dire Straits** weren't part of any scene either but their presence is hard to ignore. The album *Brothers in Arms* (1985) was staggeringly successful. **The Jam**, a modish blend of anger and sharp suits, were another important band in the late 1970s and early 80s. Manchester became a focal point for British music in the latter half of the 1980s. **The Smiths'** simple, naked musical style, and their name itself, was a reaction against the pomposity of the New Romantic trend. Their sound relied heavily on the inspired, jangling guitar of **Johnny Marr** and on the talent of singer **Morrissey** whose lyrics had their own unique blend of maudlin wit and emotional depth – the album *The Queen is Dead* (1986) stands out. **The Stone Roses** and **Happy Mondays** arose from the drug-fuelled, all-night rave culture of the "Madchester" scene in the late 1980s to produce some of the most important music of the period. Top one, nice one, get sorted: the dance revolution. In 1990s the new pop generation took root in Manchester's club land, the birthplace of **Acid House music**.

Whatever you may prefer – house, acid house, techno, jungle, trance, or garage – **electronic dance music** and the attendant club scene have been potent forces in British culture since the late 1980s. From underground beginnings, each scene has had its influence on mainstream pop and rock music with its use of computer-based recording and sampling techniques. The nature of clubland music, its tunes spliced into one continuous stream of music, made stars of club DJs like **Pete Tong**, **Sasha** and **Danny Rampling**. Perhaps the most significant artists emerged from the Bristol trip hop scene. The down-tempo moodiness of the genre is best experienced on **Massive Attack**'s *Blue Lines* (1991) and **Portishead**'s *Dummy* (1994).

Looking back, it feels like the dominant trend in 1990s popular music was **Britpop**, even while British music had become a hugely varied beast. The Britpop tag was applied to a number of bands, notably **Oasis**, **Blur**, **Radiohead** and **Pulp**, who took their influences in the 1990s, sang about life in modern Britain and wrapped it all up in a Union Jack. Oasis' *(What's the Story) Morning Glory?* (1995), *Park Life* (1994) by **Blur** and *Different Class* (1995) by **Pulp** are among the classic albums of the era. A wave of new British music dominated the international music scene.

British music is proceeding into the new century as it did through the last. It's diverse, daring, inventive – all the things that have made it such a global cultural force. Rave, emo, electropop, dance punk – just read the NME for whatever's new. Good old guitar bands remain a key part of the story: **Coldplay** are among the glitterati of world rock, even if they haven't broken much new ground since their debut album *Parachutes* (2000). Other bands like **Franz Ferdinand**, **Snow Patrol**, and the **Libertines** have made an important impact, and **Radiohead** remain out front in terms of innovation.

Hip hop has made inroads into the charts in recent years, led by American artists but restyled by British acts like **Dizzee Rascal** and **Kano**, who also draw rap, dancehall, garage and other elements of urban music – a vital force in modern British culture – into their work. Perhaps the unexpected revelation of the later **Noughties** has been the rise of the female singer/songwriter. **Amy Winehouse**, **Adele** and **Duffy** have reshaped listening habits with smoky, soulful vocals that, however derivative, repeatedly impress. Both Winehouse and Adele attended the Brit School, a performing arts college which, along with reality TV shows like **Pop Idol**, **Popstars: The Rivals** and **The X-Factor** (which generously coughed up **Girls Aloud**, **Leona Lewis** (another Brit School graduate) and **Will Young**), perhaps proves that modern pop stars are made, not born. The Brit-led reality TV talent show format has been sold around the world, a source of national

pride or shame depending on your outlook. Every year styles from all over the world are celebrated at an open-air festival called WOMAD (World of Music, Arts and Dance). All these styles have a common name world music. Somewhere between pop, classical and world music there is jazz. It came from America, but it is very popular in Britain now. Some great English jazz names are **John McCloughlin** (guitar) and **Geoff Simpkins**.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- The Beatles song *Martha, My Dear* was written by Paul McCartney about his sheepdog Martha.
- Duran Duran got its name from that of a mad scientist in the movie *Barbarella*.
- Ireland has won the most Eurovision song contests (7 times).
- Annie Lennox holds the record for the most Brit awards (8).
- Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* earnings were invested in a floating restaurant, a fudge-making hotel, a computer game, a film nobody saw, a skateboard company, a car hire business, and a children's shoe factory. All complete failures.
- Freddie Mercury's real name is Farrokh Bulsara.
- In 2007 listeners of BBC Radio 2 ranked Queen as the 'top British band' of all time, better than The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, and The Rolling Stones.
- The Oxford English Dictionary cites The Beastie Boys as being responsible for coining the term "mullet" in 1994 to refer to the popular 1980s hairstyle.

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Questions

1. Where were the roots of traditional folk music?
2. What folk music singers are you aware of?
3. What was the origin of British classical music?
4. Who was the first great British composer?
5. Who were the major British composers of the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries?
6. When did a national English opera take shape?
7. What period is called the renaissance in British classical music?
8. What are some of the patterns in modern music?
9. What do you know about the Beatles?
10. When was the first rock opera performed?
11. What is your favourite present-day British band?

English Clothing through the Ages, and the British Sense of Style

Archaeologists have discovered several interesting details about the clothing of the **Celtic** tribes. It has been demonstrated that the Celts were able to weave and spin cloth, and thus had woollen and linen garments to wear. It is known that men wore multi-coloured trousers; there is no definite information about women's clothes, but some old coins show women wearing long belted gowns, both sleeveless and with short sleeves. Hair was worn loose, and lime water was used to lighten the colour of the hair. Men wore moustaches, but not full beards. Inhabitants of Scotland decorated their bodies with tattoos. Angles, Saxons and Jutes wore neck rings, chains, and finger rings. The **Druids** wore long, broad gowns of plain linen.

With the **Norman** invasion the clothing fashions of English people changed somewhat. Knights and bards wore dark-coloured clothing. From the time of William the Conqueror, many people tried to imitate French customs, and the women began to embroider their dresses. It was in style to have long sleeves that reached down and covered the hands.

In the twelfth century English women striving for beauty severely limited their eating in order to have paler, less ruddy cheeks, as paleness was esteemed to be a sign of an affectionate heart. In the fourteenth century men and women wore hats with peacock feathers, and clothes of silk or velvet richly embroidered and with fur. In Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* we learn a considerable amount about the clothes people wore in that period. Young noblemen wore shirts embroidered with white or red flowers (depending on whether they were supporters of the Lancasters or the Yorks during the Wars of the Roses), with long broad sleeves. Women preferred green-coloured clothes and hats. Merchants generally wore beards. Craftsmen wore the colours associated with their professions. Doctors were dressed in dark blue.

Queen Elizabeth I liked to dress in a luxurious manner. To make one of her parade dresses, one hundred people worked for three weeks, and the garment weighed about 20 kilograms. Rich men wore ruffs, breeches, doublets, cloaks and an occasional codpiece, while women endured the corset, farthingale (hooped petticoat) and brocaded gown. Dress was governed by social standing, and fashion *faux pas* were even criminalized. In 1574 the Queen set dress codes in law: only royal garments could be trimmed with ermine; lesser nobles were permitted to use fox or otter. Anyone violating the Sumptuary Clothing Laws could face fines and the

loss of property, title and even life. The masses tried to imitate the styles of the court but used much cheaper materials.

In the Regency period women wore neo-classical, high-waisted ‘empire silhouette’ dresses that allowed for a low, square neckline and short puff sleeves. For men, breeches were extremely tight, coats had tails, waistcoats were double-breasted and linen shirts were finished off with an elaborate cravat; men who dressed in this way were sometimes referred to as “dandies”.

In the seventeenth century the **Spanish style** of clothing was in fashion. Men carried walking sticks with jewelled knobs and wore shoes with buckles. After the time of Charles I we can learn a lot about royal clothing because portrait painting became quite realistic. Creating tiny portraits, called limning, acquired a special popularity with the public. One of the most famous painters of this genre was Nickolas Hillard. He managed to show not only the appearance but the character of the models. The limnings were framed in medallions for wearing on the neck. The limnings of that period display a lot of information about the English dress. We can observe highly-elevated hair in fantastic forms along with feathers, such as sailboats or baskets of fruit. Women of that time had their necks, breasts and arms partly exposed, wore artificial wigs, and used powder.

The eighteenth century was an age when wigs were worn by both men and women. Women also wore corsets, and used fans made of gold, silver, or ivory. The kilt also appeared at that time. Many **Victorian** men had beards or moustaches. Some preferred side-whiskers called mutton-chops. In Victorian Britain well-to-do women enlarged their posteriors using steel-framed bustles but their waists were confined by brutal corsetry. Legs could be imagined but were not seen; even bathing costumes covered the entire body. Men’s clothing became more serious after the extravagance of the Regency period, and was dominated by dark colours and sharply-cut frock coats. Umbrellas offered a useful key to social status; wealthy people owned a broly, while the majority rented one in wet weather or simply did without. Eyeglasses were used as fashion accessories rather than visual aids; often they didn’t even have lenses. The Victorian age also saw the advent of *haute couture*, in which fragile gauze dresses decorated with flowers and ribbons were worn once or twice and then cast aside because they so easily became soiled or crushed. Of course, these questions of style did not concern the masses, who wore rough but restrictively formal clothes in their daily lives.

Fashions changed rapidly during the course of the twentieth century. Sewing machines, synthetic fibres and youth culture all played a part in the century that democratised modes of dress. Even now, **certain decades** are remembered **for a particular look**, while the derivative, recycling mode of modern fashion means that each period has its own cultural resonance for the average Brit. Certain phases last longer in the memory than others:

1. **The Edwardian Lady.** A final fling for old-school elegance initiated the S-bend silhouette, achieved with a corset that forced hips back and busts forward, and the long, tight and aptly named hobble skirt. Fancy blouses were *de rigueur*; the less wealthy used lace, faggoting and pin tucks to emulate detailed *haute couture*. The Edwardian blouse returned with vigour in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Merry Widow hats, with a wide brim and feathered trim, were named after the popular Edwardian operetta.

2. **The Flapper Girl.** Sporting short hair (the “bob”), shortish shift dresses, snug cloche hats and flat chests (often bandaged into submission), the flapper girls strove for a boyish look in the 1920s. A cigarette in a long holder usually completed the ensemble. The uncomplicated construction of the flapper dress led women to make their own, narrowing the disparities of fashion between classes.

3. **Make do and mend.** In wartime Britain pillow-cases were converted into shorts or blouses, and leather soles were replaced with cork. Siren Suits and Kangaroo Coats could be zipped up in a hurry, and their roomy pockets quickly filled with essentials on the way to the air raid shelter. In 1941 the government introduced Utility Clothing, taking charge of production and outlawing anything too fancy – pockets and turn-ups were both restricted in an effort to save material. The CC41 label attached to the mass-produced designs gained an ironic, collectable fame.

In wartime Britain it became ‘unfashionable’ to be seen wearing clothes that were obviously showy, yet women were frequently implored not to let ‘standards’ slip too far. There was genuine concern that a lack of interest in personal appearance could be a sign of low morale, which could have a detrimental impact on the war effort. The government’s concern for the morale of women was a major factor in the decision to continue the manufacture of cosmetics, though in much reduced quantities. Make-up was never rationed, but was subject to a luxury tax and was very expensive.

4. The **Teddy Boys**. Take a long jacket with a velvet collar, some drainpipe trousers, a narrow tie, a duck's arse quiff (as the tall hairstyle was called) and a pair of thick-soled suede shoes, and you've got the first real uniform of youth rebellion. Teddy boys emerged in the 1950s and kickstarted the fashion revolution of the following decade with its mods, rockers and hippies. The name itself is derived from a taste for Edwardian ('Teddy') jackets.

5. **Biba, Mary Quant and the miniskirt**. Despite the egalitarian trend of the early 1960s, designer fashion remained restricted to the wealthy. Biba changed all that in 1964. It was a London fashion boutique that sold the latest European looks at a fraction of designer prices. The Biba brand became hugely successful, and other, similar ventures followed, including Miss Selfridge, a groovy spin-off from the Oxford Street department store. Meanwhile Mary Quant lopped inches off hemlines, introducing every British girl to the miniskirt (although it was actually invented by André Courrèges). Quant herself became a fashion icon, sporting a sharp Vidal Sassoon 'five-point' haircut. Trousers began to flare late in the decade.

6. The **1970s**. In this decade, the most vibrant one in recent history for British fashion, there was a feeling that "anything goes" – nothing is forbidden. Early on, hippies popularised kaftans, Macramé bags and Afghan coats. The flares of the late 1960s widened out to bell-bottom proportions before high-waisted straight trousers and platform soles appeared. It was only a short leap to the lycra trousers and stretch sequin tube tops of disco. Even young men got involved, suddenly (and briefly) comfortable with outrageous sideburns and tight-crotched trousers. By the end of the decade, the impetus of punk was leading to a smaller flare, and was customising jackets and causing offence with rude t-shirts. Punk's influence would be long ranging. Mohican haircuts, spikes and ripped fabric, which people initially found shocking but which were later adopted by the mainstream.

For many years the British had been known for conservatism in their apparel as in other aspects of life. This all changed in the mid-60s, when boring old London discovered pop music, the Labour party came to power, and ordinary people began to lose respect for the out-dated ruling class. Fashion historians always look for meaning in clothing styles: the state of the economy affects colours and skirt length. In this context, new fabrics like jersey (soft knitted fabric) and PVC (polyvinyl chloride) were used in the fashion world for the first time. Clothes became sexy as never before:

Mary Quant introduced the miniskirt and hot pants (an American slang word for very short female shorts). Since that time the British fashion industry has been in and out of favour many times. The punk look came out of London in the mid-70s, and achieved worldwide popularity. In the early 80s there was a new romantic look connected with young radical pop music-based styles. A number of supermodels have been British, including Naomi Campbell, Kirsty Hume, Stella Tennant, and Kate Moss.

Outside **the world of designers**, British people wear clothes that reflect their age, class, race, religion, or political tendencies, just as is the case in many other countries. It is true to say that the British are really careless about clothes. Smart suits are rarely worn outside working hours. Upper-class young people, in spite of money available to them, often prefer a cheaper grunge look. The word grunge came from America in connection with bands like Nirvana, and now it is a slang word meaning “very careless and even dirty”. Classic grunge includes torn jeans and heavy boots. Some rich girls also think it is chic to wear second-hand clothes. Working-class young people tend to dress more carefully in sport clothes. As each social tribe in the country has a range of its little identity markers, conservative upper-class women like pearls and silk head scarves. One fashion trend is piercing. Some people wear metal in their eyebrows, tongues, teeth, nipples and even their genitals. Parents do not like it and this is reflected in school rules that allow earrings but forbid nose rings. Anyone who has piercing performed is not allowed to be a blood donor for 12 months thereafter.

Surveys show that most British people claim not to care much about clothes, but there are still powerful prejudices about dress codes in everyday situations. Most schools have uniforms, and offices are strict about suits and ties, though some of them have adopted the American custom of a dress-down Friday when employees can wear more casual clothes for one day a week. Even away from the world of work there are a lot of rules. For example, if you do not look cool, you will simply not be admitted to some dance clubs. The influence of “green” politics may be visible in the sense that British people hardly ever buy fur. The fashion industry generally supports the campaign showing fur as an outdated fashion trend. A few years ago a group of super models appeared in an advertisement wearing nothing at all, and displayed the slogan “We would rather go naked than wear fur”.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- Elizabeth I loved hats so much that she made it compulsory for all females over the age of 7 to wear hats on Sundays and holidays. Anyone who refused to do so was severely fined.
- Wearing a white dress was initially associated with mourning, until Queen Victoria decided to wear one on her wedding day.
- A Victorian widow was expected to wear black mourning clothes for two years after the death of her husband.
- It was not acceptable for women to wear shorts in public until World War II.
- The mini skirt was named after the Mini Cooper, the favorite car of its designer, Mary Quant.
- The four major fashion capitals of the world are New York, London, Milan, and Paris.
- London Fashion Week is an invite-only event, which means only a select number of people can attend it.
- London Fashion Week live streams are watched from 190 countries worldwide.
- Burberry is the top luxury fashion company in the UK. The iconic British fashion brand has a market value of £5.8 billion pounds, with revenues of about £2.5 billion a year.
- With 6 million searches, Gucci's official website is the most popular fashion designer site in the UK.
- Kate Middleton is often pictured wearing fashionable clothing, and she has spent more than \$54,000 on her wardrobe since 2012.



Questions and Tasks

1. What did the Celts look like?
2. What did the Druids wear?
3. What did people wear in the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries?
4. What fashions are associated with Elizabeth I?
5. When was the Spanish style in clothing popular?
6. What did Victorian men and women wear?
7. When did people wear wigs?
8. What is a dress code?
9. What British models are you aware of?
10. Name the main phases of British clothing fashions.
11. How did the state of the economy affect colours and fabrics?

Education in Great Britain

Education has a long history in the United Kingdom. In early times, Christian churches influenced the teaching and development of education. Since the nineteenth century, successive governments of the UK have had increasing control and influence on education, particularly in school education. Many developments in education in England are similar, and in some instances identical, to those of the education systems in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Early Education

Schools were in existence in England during the Middle Ages, between the fifth and sixteenth century. Teaching was dominated by Christian churches. In this period, Christian teachings and religious songs called hymns were written in Latin as it was the official language of Christianity. Trainee monks, priests and laypeople were taught to read Christian teachings and hymns in Latin in schools attached to Cathedrals or monasteries. These schools were known as grammar schools, but the learning of grammar as we know it in the present day was not taught in these schools. Students were only taught how to pronounce and read Christian religious texts aloud in Latin. The reading of Latin hymns was also taught in the same way, so that they could be sung in a church choir. The schools in this historical period were referred to as grammar and song schools. They are also known as cathedral schools and chantries. The earliest cathedral schools; Kings School in Canterbury and Kings School in Rochester, were founded in the sixth century.

An apprenticeship was another form of education that was in existence in the medieval period. Students were called apprentices and undertook practical training that was taught by a master craftsman in a trade such as a bakery or a blacksmith. The apprentice or protégé lived and worked with the master craftsmen, usually for seven years, while learning their trade. Apprentices were mainly boys but girls could also become apprentices in trades such as embroidery. The apprentice system was supervised and controlled by organisations of the master craftsmen called trade guilds or by town councils.

By about the ninth century the curriculum in many Cathedral schools also included basic studies of mathematics, astronomy, law, poetry, natural history and music. The purpose of study in these disciplines was to support church activities. For example, mathematics and astronomy were used to

develop or maintain the Church calendar while knowledge of law was necessary for the administration of a Church. The study of these disciplines together with Latin was modernised by the twelfth century and became known as liberal arts studies.

By the twelfth century, the first universities were established for liberal arts studies, first at Oxford and later at Cambridge. Students from grammar schools were the main entrants to these universities. The control and influence of education by the Christian churches began to weaken from this time. The universities at Oxford and Cambridge also developed curricula in philosophy, medicine and law. The Church was excluded from the control and supervision of these disciplines. The development of grammar schools that were 'independent' of the Christian churches also occurred shortly after this period. An independent grammar school called Eton College was founded in 1440 and Bridgenorth Grammar School was founded in 1503. The latter school was established by the Bridgenorth Town Council and forbade the teaching of pupils by the local clergy. More independent grammar schools continued to be established after the fifteenth century by the endowments of noblemen, wealthy merchants, guilds and town councils.

Questions and tasks

1. Why was it important to study Latin in the medieval schools of Britain?
2. Why were these schools called grammar and song schools?
3. What was the 'grammar' that was learned by the students grammar schools?
4. Is there a difference between grammar and song schools compared to cathedral schools and chantries?
5. Compare and contrast study in cathedral schools and by a master craftsman.
6. What are liberal arts studies? Why were they called 'liberal'?
7. What were the initial factors that started the decline of influence of the Christian Churches in education?
8. State if the following statements are true or false:
 - 1) Latin was a Greek language and the origin of many modern languages such as Italian, Spanish and French as well as the official language of the Vatican.

True/False

2)A church choir is a group of people who sing hymns during a church service.

True/False

3)Students in cathedral schools and chantries learned literature through speaking exercises.

True/False

4)Eton and Bridgenorth Grammar Schools were grammar and song schools.

True/False

5)A master craftsman was someone who was an accomplished senior tradesman.

True/False

Early Modern Education

By the nineteenth century there were approximately 800 grammar schools in Britain. This century marked the beginning of the involvement of British governments in school education. Government control of education became a decisive factor in its development and this continues up to the present day. About twenty laws have been passed in the House of Commons between 1841 and 2009 on the supervision, ownership, funding, and curriculum of schools. The involvement of British governments in all areas of education caused a further decline in the influence of the Christian churches in education.

Up to this time, education was usually affordable by the privileged classes in Britain. Poor students were only able to enter education through endowments. This inequality was first addressed by the British parliament in 1833 when it voted to provide funds each year for the construction of schools for poor children. In 1840, the Grammar Schools Act broadened the curriculum of grammar schools to include English, European and Ancient languages as well as the science, history, geography and mathematics. Earlier, in 1830, entrance examinations for admission to a university were introduced to improve academic standards in grammar schools and Universities.

A series of Elementary Education Acts between 1870 and 1902 enabled the gradual implementation of compulsory education for all children between 5–12 years of age. These acts also created methods for the funding of schools. For example, the Act of 1870 enabled the creation of school boards who were empowered to obtain the cost of children's

schooling from the local community. The duties of the school boards were replaced by Local Education Authorities (LEAs) through the Education Act of 1902. These Acts helped to increase the participation of British working class children in education. The schools that were created by these reforms were called elementary schools and taught a curriculum known as the three R's. This was in reference to the teaching of reading writing and 'rithmetic' (a popular shortened pronunciation of *arithmetic*) to six levels. At the sixth level or sixth year, a student was expected to demonstrate these skills. The student had to read with 'fluency and expression', write a short essay topic, a letter or an easy paraphrase and be able to calculate decimal and common fractions. The technique of paraphrase is commonly known as sentence transformation. These early Acts were further improved by Education Act of 1918 which raised the age limit for compulsory education of children to 14 years.

Questions and tasks

1. How was education modernised after the nineteenth century in comparison to previous times?
2. Why did the influence of Christian churches on education decrease after the nineteenth century?
3. Explain why successive British Governments became involved in education.
4. Which Act or Acts were the most important for the development of education in Britain?
5. If you had been poor and lived in Britain before 1944 how would you have obtained education?
6. Why were reading, writing and arithmetic called the three R's?
7. Can you compare the study of the three R's with education in your country in the same period?
8. State if the following statements are true or false:
 - 1) The privileged classes in Britain were the rich merchants and the nobility of Britain.
True/False
 - 2) The fund that a poor student received for schooling from a rich person or an organisation was called an endowment.
True/False
 - 3) By 1840, students in grammar schools were able to study subjects similar to those studied by students in schools today.
True/False

4) It was illegal for a child over 12 years old not to attend school for some part of the day after 1902.

True/False

5) You could become an apprentice if you were 15 years of age after 1902.

True/False

Primary and Secondary Education

The next major reform of education was through the 1944 Education Act which introduced several major improvements to school education. Firstly, it made education completely free for all elementary schools by funding from the British government. The Act also restructured elementary education into primary and secondary education and divided the secondary education system into grammar schools and secondary modern schools. The age for compulsory education of children was also increased to 15 years. Further increases to the age limits have occurred since then. The 1944 Education Act is also known as the Butler Act, in recognition of the Conservative politician R. A. Butler who was responsible for drafting it. The Act stipulated that children between 5 and 11 years of age should receive a 'primary education'. Schools teaching children in this age group became known as primary schools. Students in these primary schools were taught reading and writing in English and a second language such as French or Latin, arithmetic, science, history, geography, music and religion. These studies continued to an advanced level during their secondary schooling.

In their last year of primary schooling, at the age 11–12 years, students undertook the 11plus examination. A student's results from this test decided whether he or she would enter a grammar school or a secondary modern school. The examination consisted of three parts: a section on problem solving in arithmetic, an essay writing section on a general topic and another section on problem solving that tested a student's general knowledge and logical skill. If a student's 11plus results were in the top 25 % of results for all primary schools they would be eligible to enter a grammar school. Grammar schools had a reputation for academic excellence and pupils were prepared for university education. They sat for public exams in the final year of their study to enter a university. Students who had scores that were below 75 % of all 11plus results had to enter a secondary modern school. The academic level in

these schools was insufficient for students to prepare for public examinations to enter universities.

Instead, secondary modern schools could only provide education necessary for employment in manual, skilled and clerical jobs. Students of the privileged classes enrolled their children to fee-paying preparatory schools up to the age of 11 or 13 for their primary education. Similar examinations were also available for students of preparatory schools in the last year of their schooling to enter an independent (fee paying) grammar school. Leading independent grammar schools are also called 'public schools'. Some examples of these elite schools are Eton College, Harrow School, Rugby School and Winchester College. These exclusive public schools were founded in the Middle Ages and have educated children from the upper class and nobility of Britain to the present day. There were no secondary modern schools within the independent fee paying institutions.

Questions and tasks

1. Why did the British government have to make laws so that children would attend schools?
2. If you had been poor how would you have obtained education in England after 1944?
3. Would you have had a better education in an elementary school or a primary school?
4. Why was the primary school examination called 11plus?
5. Why did the students in the last year of primary school have the 11plus examination?
6. If 10,000 students took the 11plus exam in England in 1955 and 1500 students got a total score between 100 %, and 75 %. How many students would enter a secondary modern school the next year?
7. Compare and contrast the 11plus examination with exams for Ukrainian students of the same age.
8. Why did independent schools not accept or follow the reforms of the 1944 Education Act?
9. State if the following statements are true or false:
 - 1) By 1944, elementary education consisted of primary schools, grammar schools and secondary schools.

True/False

2) The Butler Act developed the curriculum of the compulsory elementary education to a similar standard imposed on grammar schools one hundred years earlier.

True/False

3) The examination at the end of primary school was called the 11plus exam because students were usually between the age of eleven and twelve.

True/False

4) Students were not allowed to sit for a university entrance examination if they attended a secondary modern school.

True/False

5) After 1902, you could have become an apprentice if you had been 15 years of age.

True/False

Comprehensive schools and the National Curriculum

The division of students at the end of their primary schooling into either grammar schools or secondary modern schools by their results from the 11plus examination was called streaming. The system of streaming was criticized by many educationalists, local educational authorities (LEAs), parents and politicians for several reasons. Firstly, the low academic standards provided by secondary modern schools made it difficult, if not impossible, for students in secondary modern schools to gain entry and succeed in higher education. Secondly, if students could not enter a grammar school due to their 11plus score they lost their chance to improve their ability for a higher academic level when they were older. Therefore, the 11plus examination was considered an unfair test of a student's future academic potential. Thirdly, in some areas of Britain, the local authorities did not have the resources to create the two separate types of schools, thus creating problems for LEA's. The dissatisfaction with steaming led to the gradual implementation of comprehensive (secondary) schools and the discontinuation of the 11plus examination. These comprehensive schools were created by the amalgamation of existing grammar schools and secondary modern schools. They are also known as 'comprehensives'. The equivalent of a comprehensive in many other parts of the world is a 'high school'. Primary school students did not have to pass an examination, such as 11plus, to enter a comprehensive and all students entering a comprehensive had access to the curriculum and

academic standards of a grammar school. Later, when new government schools were built they were designed as comprehensive schools. The age limit for compulsory education was raised to 16 years in 1973 and students had to undertake work experience in the last year of schooling.

By 1975, most of the LEA's in England and Wales had abolished the 11-plus examination and had adopted the comprehensive system. Comprehensives have enabled millions of school children in government schools to gain access to higher education after completion of their secondary studies. This did not happen in the former system of streaming. At the present time, approximately ninety percent of British students attend comprehensives. Most of the fee paying exclusive independent grammar schools of the middle and upper classes of Britain did not join the comprehensive system.

The next significant development of education, since the Butler Act of 1944, was the Education Reform Act of 1988. This Act introduced a National Curriculum for all primary and secondary government schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This meant that schools across these three regions of Britain had to teach their students the same syllabus that was specified in the National Curriculum (see below).

Syllabus of the Current National Curriculum

Key Stage	1	2	3	4
Approximate age of student (years)	5-7	7-11	11-14	14-16
Curriculum				
English	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
Mathematics	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
Science	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
Physical Education				
Information and Communication Technology	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory
Music	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Option A
History	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Option B
Geography	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Option B
Art and Design	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Option A
Design and Technology	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Options
Modern Foreign language			Compulsory	Options
Citizenship			Compulsory	Compulsory

Exclusive fee paying independent schools of the middle and upper classes were exempt from this Act. The four 'Key Stages', in this curriculum are defined by the age of students. In Key Stage 4 students have several choices for four subjects (see table above). They have the choice of one arts subject (from options A), a humanities subject (from options B) and choices from a design and technology subjects and modern foreign languages. Schools have to also provide additional non-examinable teaching in religious studies for students in Key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4. Sex and relationship education known as SRE is also to be taught to students in stages 3 and 4. Students at stages 3 and 4 also have to undertake careers education and work experience training. Parents have the choice to allow or disallow their children from undertaking religious studies and some parts of SRE.

The Education Reform Act of 1988 also introduced National Curriculum assessments for students. They are called Standard Assessment Tests and are also known as SATs. SATs examinations are held at the end of each academic year, in July. The assessments were introduced in 1991, 1995 and 1998 for students in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, respectively. The results of these assessments are used to compare the performance of schools by the SATs scores of their students across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Parents were given the choice to select a school for their children based on SATs results. As with streaming, SATs has also been unpopular with some educationalists as it was claimed that schools can be given a 'good' or 'bad' reputation based upon SATs results. Usually, this meant schools in poor areas of Britain, such as in the North where there are social disadvantages would have 'bad' results. The current British government has proposed that in the future, primary and secondary schools will be a graded from A to F in a 'report card' that will rate each school by their students' performance in examinations, truancy rates, pupil behaviour and health. Due to administrative problems, the SATs examination for Key Stage 3 was abolished in 2009. External examinations and internal assessments during Key Stages 3 and 4 are combined to award students a General Certificate of Secondary Education popularly referred to as the GCSE.

Questions and tasks

1. Explain in your own words the meaning of streaming. Is it a fair system?

2. Why has the British Government increased the age of compulsory education so many times and wants to increase it in the future?

3. Do students have a better education in comprehensives compared to a secondary modern school?

4. Why was the Education Reform Act of 1988 the most important development in education, since the Butler Act?

5. Name an arts subject, a humanities subject and a modern language subject in the National Curriculum.

6. Why do students have to undertake work experience in Key Stage 3 and 4?

7. Is the SATs test a good evaluation of a school or would a report card be a better test? Explain why.

8. State if the following statements are true or false:

1) The age limit for compulsory attendance of schools was increased four times between 1870 and 1973.

True/False

2) A comprehensive school is not a secondary school.

True/False

3) The ages of students educated in comprehensives are usually between 11 and 16.

True/False

4) A student must undertake 11 years of compulsory education in Britain in 2009.

True/False

5) There are 10 compulsory subjects in Stages 1 and 2 and 12 compulsory subjects in key Stages 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum.

True/False

6) Students have options in four subjects in key Stage 4.

True/False

9. Read the interview with a teacher at a primary school. Fill in the blanks.

Teacher: We have what we call K___ S___ assessment tasks for children, and that's at the end of s___ years of age. ___ ___ are eleven years of age. And now you find that the girls are doing better at all key stages up to G___ and l___. So it's a concern.

Interviewer: And can you tell us a bit more about the curriculum? ... The N___ C___ ...

Teacher: Yes, well we've got, we're involved in a numeracy project, maths, and we've got a set amount of work for that. We've got a set amount of time set aside for E___ ... because we want to give children who are actually coming out of school a number of basic skills in life, not just to get a job, you know, a variety of things. So we've got, so we have ___ and m___ as the main subjects that we actually do in the morning. And the three c___ subjects are ___, m___ and s___. And then we have a variety of other subjects which we support, RE, that's r___ e___, IT, i___ t___ and DT, d___ t___, a___, m___, PE, that's p___ e___ and h___, g___, all those subjects have to be included as well in the curriculum, you know, so the time scales are very, very tight. So we actually have a planned programme of work – topic work – to take into account h___ and g___, but it's very, very difficult to get everything done adequately, within the time that we have.

Interviewer: And how many hours are the students, the pupils at school?

Teacher: Well we start 9 o'clock till 12, then 1 o'clock till quarter past 3. So that's the length ... and five days a week.

10. Read the interview with the Headmaster of Bablake School in Coventry. Fill in the blanks.

Headmaster: Well, if I start by saying that Bablake is an i___ school, do you know what I mean by ___?

Interviewer: Yeah, but it might be good if you tell us what exactly...

Headmaster: OK. In England, there are in effect two types of school. There is a m___ school, which is really run by the l___ a___, which is responsible to the g___, and then there is the ___ school, which is really independent of local authority and to some extent independent of the government, and which is known as the f___-p___ s___. So the parents who come, who send their children to B___ will pay directly to the school, to have their children educated. So on that basis, as I say, B___ is an i___ school. We're also a s___ school which means that parents who want their children to come here, I only take the children if they've passed an e___ e___. And the children have to sit a v___ r___ paper, an E___ paper and a m___ paper and they also have to have a good report from their current head teacher, right? So we are, as I said, i___ and s___. We're also a highly academic school, and our exam results are exceptionally high. We have nearly a hundred per cent pass rate at G___ ... I don't know

if you're familiar with G___, at 16, and over 95 % will go on to u___. So it's very high. And I take really the top ten, maybe down to the top 15% of the academic range. So, you know, our standards are high, and the expectations of the pupils are that they will get good exam results, and then go on to university.

Interviewer: Are most i___ schools s___ or

Headmaster: The vast majority are s___. Some are more s___ than others, because they can afford to be that way, and particularly d___ schools, which is what B___ is, a d___ school. You also have some b___ independent schools and they tend – although there are again exceptions – but they tend to be less s___, because they don't have the choice. I have two, at least two girls and boys competing for every one place, so you know, there is competition to get into the school. And we are c___-e___, which means that we have boys and girls here. A lot of independent schools tend to be s___ s___. They cater for girls or boys.

Interviewer: Have you adopted the N___ C___?

Headmaster: We have to a certain extent, but the N___ C___ is fairly constraining in what you can offer, so what I say to parents is that we offer the N___ C___, but also a lot more. And we try and gear our curriculum to the needs of the pupils. So we offer more l___, we offer more s___, we offer, you know, more I___, more g___, than a school that follows completely the N___ C___. But we have to follow very much what goes on in the national sector, because although we're i___, we are really part of the whole education system of Great Britain.

Interviewer: Do you have many e___ g___ in your school?

Headmaster: Yes, we do. Yes.

Interviewer: How many?

Headmaster: Seven or eight, I think. Yes ... yes ... don't quote me on that. We have ... we have H___, we have S___, we have M___, we've got J___, we've got A___-C___, we've got C___, so maybe we're up to about eight already on that basis. So there is at least 20 % of the school population is of an ethnic group outside of C___.

Interviewer: Are they B___ ... or B___ citizens?

Headmaster: They regard themselves as being B___ citizens, yes. And you know, most of them are s___ generation or sometimes even third generation, so they regard themselves as being B___ ... or E___. Yes, yes, very much so. And they're actually quite proud ... I mean

they're proud to be B____, but they're also proud of what they are, you know H____, or M____ or S____, or ... or whatever.

Interviewer: And do you have to take this very much into account in the organisation of the school? I mean, are there any special arrangements, say for M____, or ...

Headmaster: No. No, we don't really make any special consideration. I mean, they come to the school for an education, they don't really come to school for r____ purposes. So we are a C____ foundation, but we recognise the other e____ groups and their r____, and we teach all the children about the different ethnic groups and their various religions. But I think once you start to make (*coughs*) ... excuse me ... special arrangements, then you start to highlight one particular group. So, you know we will celebrate special occasions, so ... you know the festival of light, D____, the J____ New Year, the C____ New Year, all of these occasions will be mentioned. And we will celebrate them as a whole school, simply by acknowledging them. But ... and well that's really the only special occasions and special thing that we do.

Further Education and Higher Education

After students finish their compulsory secondary education they have several choices. They can choose to enter the workforce but finding a permanent job at sixteen has become very rare in Britain. Therefore, in present times young students after completing their GSCE will choose further education. Further education refers to education undertaken after GSCE such as an apprenticeship or what is known as 'sixth form'. An apprenticeship is classified as vocational training as the apprentice learns a trade by working in a business such as an automotive repairer, hotel or hairdressing salon. The apprentice has to also attend a trade school to obtain a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) for their trade. They earn a small allowance while undertaking their apprenticeship.

Students who do not undertake apprenticeships can continue their education from Key Stage 4 to 'sixth form' for a further two years. Students currently study 3 subjects in each of sixth form study. They can choose their subjects from a wide variety of subjects in the sciences, arts, humanities business and commerce. For each chosen subject they are tested at the Advanced Subsidiary level (AS level) at the end of the first year of their study. At the end of the second year they sit for a higher test for the same subject called an A2 examination. The satisfactory

completion of AS and A2 for each of at least three subjects is required to award the student with Advanced Level General Certificate of Education popularly known as ‘A-level’ or ‘A-levels’. Students who obtain an A-level can enter university or other higher education institutions. Their entry is based upon the results of their A-level examinations. A-Levels are undertaken by students in most Commonwealth countries and are the common entry qualification to enter a university in these countries.

University education is referred to as ‘higher education’ where students study for an academic degree. The first degree offered at British universities is the Bachelor’s degree which entails three years of study. Students are called undergraduates during this time of study. Graduates with a first degree can continue their studies by taking a Master’s degree, usually for one year or a Doctorate which is usually three years of study and research. Graduates undertaking a Master’s or Doctorate are referred to as postgraduate students.

The government funds all undergraduate higher education but the cost of tuition fees has to be paid by undergraduates. Fees in 2009 were £3,225 per year. Students do not have to pay these fees while they are undergraduates. The fees are repayable after graduation when a graduate is earning more than £15,000 a year.

Postgraduate education is selectively funded by the government and other organisations. Postgraduates pay approximately £3,000 to £50000 per year in fees depending on their university. International students pay between approximately £11,000 and £23,000 for undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Some universities offer scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

Questions and tasks

1. What trade would an apprentice learn in an automotive business, a hotel and a hairdressing salon?
2. What are the differences between a GSCE and an A-level?
3. What are the differences between an apprenticeship and sixth form?
4. What is the difference between compulsory education, further education and higher education?
5. Compare and contrast A-Level study in Britain with studies in a high school in Ukraine.
6. What is the difference between an undergraduate and a postgraduate?

7. State if the following statements are true or false:

1) Studying in 'sixth form' is same as studying for A-levels.

True/False

2) The Advanced Level General Certificate of Education is a higher education qualification.

True/False

3) The study of a first degree at a university can be undertaken by sixth form students who pass their A-levels.

True/False

Oxford

The first written record of the town of Oxford dates back to the year 912. Oxford University, the oldest and most famous university in Britain, was founded in the middle of the 12th century, and by 1300 there were already 1,500 students. At that time Oxford was a wealthy town, but by the middle of the 14th century it was poorer, because of a decline in trade and because of the terrible plague, which killed many people in England. The relations between the students and the townspeople were very unfriendly, and there was often fighting in the streets.

Nowadays there are about 12,000 students in Oxford and over 1000 teachers. Outstanding scientists work in the numerous colleges of the University, teaching and doing research work in physics, chemistry, mathematics, cybernetics, literature, modern and ancient languages, art and music, philosophy, psychology. Oxford University has a reputation of a privileged school. Many prominent political figures of the past and present times got their education at Oxford.

Cambridge

Cambridge is one of the best – known towns in the world, and the principal reason for its fame is its University, the second oldest university of Britain, which was founded in the 13th century. Today there are more than twenty colleges in Cambridge University.

The oldest college is Peterhouse, which was founded in 1284, and the most recent is Robinson College, which was opened in 1977. The most famous is probably King's College, because of its magnificent chapel. Its choir of boys and undergraduates is also well known.

The University was only for men until 1871. In 1871 the first women's college was opened. Another was opened two years later and a third in 1954. In the 1970's most colleges opened their doors to both men and women. Nowadays almost all colleges are mixed.

REVISION TEST AND TASKS

1. Review the material in Chapters I–XI and then take the following test.

1. The Anglo-Saxon tribes were ____ .
a. Angles; b. Scots; c. Britons; d. Jutes.
2. The Romans lived in ____ .
a. villages; b. towns
3. The Tower of London was built by ____ .
a. the Normans; b. the Celts; c. the Romans.
4. The English “chester” (as in Manchester) comes from the ____ word “castra”.
a. Latin; b. Saxon; c. Norman.
5. The days of the week received their names from the names of ____ gods.
a. Germanic; b. Celtic; c. Roman.
6. Christianity was brought to England ____ 1066.
a. before; b. after.
7. The Venerable Bede wrote ____ .
a. the first Anglo-Saxon history; b. the first code of laws; c. the Bible in English.
8. *Beowulf* is a poem about the adventures of a ____ hero.
a. Scandinavian; b. Anglo-Saxon; c. Celtic.
9. William the Conqueror won the battle of ____ .
a. Waterloo; b. Hastings; c. Trafalgar.
10. The first registration of the population was conducted by ____ .
a. the Romans; b. the Danes; c. the Normans.
11. The first English printer was ____ .
a. Johannes Gutenberg; b. William Caxton; c. Geoffrey Chaucer
12. The process of evicting peasants and turning farmlands into pastures is known as the policy of ____ .
a. the open field; b. manufactures; c. enclosures
13. The Renaissance in England occurred in the ____ century.
a. fourteenth; b. fifteenth; c. sixteenth; d. seventeenth
14. The Invincible Armada was defeated by ____ .
a. Francis Drake; b. Charles I; c. Admiral Nelson
15. *The Fairy Queen* was written by ____ .
a. Shakespeare; b. Marlowe; c. Spenser
16. William Shakespeare was ____ .
a. an actor; b. a playwright; c. a literary critic
17. The Gunpowder Plot was carried out in ____ .
a. 1515; b. 1605; c. 1649
18. The Pilgrim Fathers were ____ .
a. Catholics; b. Protestants; c. Puritans
19. The King who dismissed Parliament several times was ____ .
a. Henry VIII; b. James I; c. Charles I

20. After the establishment of the Commonwealth, O. Cromwell was proclaimed ____ .
 a. King; b. Lord Protector; c. Lord Chancellor
21. John Milton wrote ____ .
 a. *Paradise Lost*; b. *The Fairy Queen*; c. *Much Ado About Nothing*
22. *The Father of the English Opera* was ____ .
 a. William Byrd; b. Henry Purcell; c. John Bull
23. As a result of the Civil War, England became ____ .
 a. a parliamentary monarchy; b. a republic; c. an absolute monarchy
24. The Great Fire of London was in ____ .
 a. 1666; b. 1605; c. 1649
25. The Romantic writers and poets were ____ .
 a. W. Scott; b. R. Burns; c. G. Byron; d. W. Wordsworth; e. O. Goldsmith
26. The Chartist movement appeared in the ____ century.
 a. late eighteenth; b. early nineteenth; c. middle of the nineteenth; d. late nineteenth
27. Florence Nightingale is the heroine of the ____ war.
 a. Napoleonic; b. Crimean; c. Boer
28. The Victorian age falls on the ____ century.
 a. late eighteenth; b. early nineteenth; c. late nineteenth; d. nineteenth
29. Disraeli was ____ .
 a. an artist; b. a prime minister; c. a musician
30. The writers of the Victorian age are ____ .
 a. Dickens; b. Maugham; c. Bronte; d. Milton; e. Thackeray; f. Goldsmith;
31. A workhouse was ____ .
 a. a factory for poor workers; b. a prison for homeless children; c. a public institution for sheltering homeless people in return for work
32. The fall of the colonial system came ____ .
 a. after World War I; b. after World War II; c. in the 1980s.
33. American English is ____ .
 a. a separate language; b. a variant of English; c. a dialect of English.
34. Some female authors are ____ .
 a. G. Eliot; b. E. Gaskell; c. P. Shelley; d. J. Austen; e. A. Tennyson; f. E. Brontë
35. J. Constable and W. Turner were outstanding English ____ .
 a. artists; b. writers; c. musicians; d. politicians
36. English policemen are called “bobbies” after ____ .
 a. Robert Peel; b. Robert Browning; c. Robert Walpole
37. What is the capital of Scotland?
 a) Aberdeen; b) Edinburgh; c) Glasgow; d) Inverness
38. What is the capital of Wales?
 a) Canberra; b) Cardiff; c) Glasgow; d) Leeds
39. What is the capital of England?
 a) London; b) Leeds; c) Liverpool; d) Newcastle
40. What is the capital of Northern Ireland?

- a) Bangor; b) Belfast; c) London; d) Newcastle
41. *The Beatles* were an English rock band formed in ____ in 1960.
a) London; b) Leeds; c) Liverpool; d) Newcastle
42. What is name of the English Channel in French?
a) la Manche; b) Pas-de-Calais; c) the Strait of Dover; d) Mor Breiz
43. The ____ is widely recognised as the national flower of England.
a) rose; b) shamrock; c) daffodil; d) thistle
44. The floral emblem of Scotland is ____.
a) rose; b) shamrock; c) daffodil; d) thistle
45. The floral emblem of Wales is ...
a) rose; b) shamrock; c) daffodil; d) thistle
46. The floral emblem of Northern Ireland is ____.
a) rose; b) shamrock; c) daffodil; d) thistle
47. Which of the following is NOT a British daily newspaper?
a) *The Daily Telegraph*; b) *The Guardian*; c) *The Times*; d) *The Sunday Times*
48. ____ is the patron saint of Scotland.
a) St Andrew; b) St David; c) St George; d) St Patrick
49. ____ is the patron saint of Wales.
a) St Andrew; b) St David; c) St George; d) St Patrick
50. ____ is the patron saint of England.
a) St Andrew; b) St David; c) St George; d) St Patrick
51. ____ is the patron saint of Northern Ireland.
a) St Andrew; b) St David; c) St George; d) St Patrick
52. Many people in the USA, the UK, Canada and Australia celebrate Christmas Day on December ____.
a) 24; b) 25; c) 26; d) 28
53. The national anthem of the UK is ____.
a) "The Star-Spangled Banner"; b) "God Save the Queen"; c) "From Sea to Sea"; d) "O Canada"
54. Wimbledon is associated with ____.
a) horse racing; b) soccer; c) tennis; d) cricket
55. Madame Tussaud's is ____ in London.
a) a circus; b) a theatre; c) a museum; d) an art gallery
56. The kilt is ____.
a) an English hat; b) Scottish skirt; c) an Irish coat; d) a kind of Welsh trousers
57. What monument is in the centre of Trafalgar Square?
a) The Statue of Liberty; b) Nelson's Column; c) The Monument to Queen Victoria; d) Peter Pan Statue
58. The UK, Canada and Australian's monarch is ____, who has reigned since 1952, making her the longest-serving current head of state.
a) Queen Victoria II; b) Queen Victoria III; c) Queen Elizabeth II; d) Queen Elizabeth III

59. Which landmark is a prehistoric monument which still stands in the English county of Wiltshire?
 a) Stonehenge; b) Hadrian's Wall; c) Offa's Dyke; d) Fountains Abbey
60. Which tribal leader fought against the Roman conquest of Britain?
 a) Hadrian; b) Boudicca; c) King Canute; d) Churchill
61. Which king defeated the Vikings at the end of the ninth Century?
 a) King Alfred the Great; b) King Canute; c) King William; d) King John
62. Which island lies between England and Ireland?
 a) Isle of Man; b) Isle of Skye; c) Jersey; d) Shetland Islands
63. When do the Irish celebrate St. Patrick's Day?
 a) 17 March; b) 1 April; c) 31 October; d) 5 November
64. The British monarchs are crowned in ____
 a) Westminster Abbey; b) St. Paul's Cathedral; c) the Tower; d) Buckingham Palace
65. When is the Guy Fawkes Night celebrated?
 a) 31 October; b) 2 November; c) 3 November; d) 5 November
66. The cultural monument of Stone and Bronze Age is ____.
 a) the Tower of London; b) the Glastonbury Tor; c) Salisbury Plain; d) the Hadrian's Wall
67. Runic signs can be met on the ____, the cultural monuments of the Celtic tribes used for cult purposes.
 a) dolmens; b) mosaics; c) ornaments; d) monasteries
68. The Romans lived in Britain ____.
 a) towns; b) forts; c) villages; d) forest
69. The Celtic historian Gildas described the Anglo-Saxon period as “__ of Britain”.
 a) the prosperity; b) the ruin; c) the bloom; d) the remnant
70. The Christian mission to Britain headed by the monk Augustine landed in Kent in 597 and built the first church in ____.
 a) Colchester; b) Gloucester; c) Catenbury; d) Londinium
71. The Tower of London was built by ____.
 a) the Normans; b) the Romans; c) the Celts; d) the Danes
72. *Beowulf* is a poem about the adventures of a ____ hero.
 a) Scandinavian; b) Celtic; c) Norman; d) Anglo-Saxon
73. The days of the week in the English language take their names from the names of ____ gods.
 a) Germanic; b) Roman; c) Celtic; d) Druid
74. By myth this man would not accept Norman rule.
 a) Alfred the Great; b) King Arthur; c) Robin Hood; d) King Edward
75. The eighteenth century was the age of wigs that were worn by both men and women. The women also wore ____.
 a) corsets; b) kilts; c) fans; d) hats

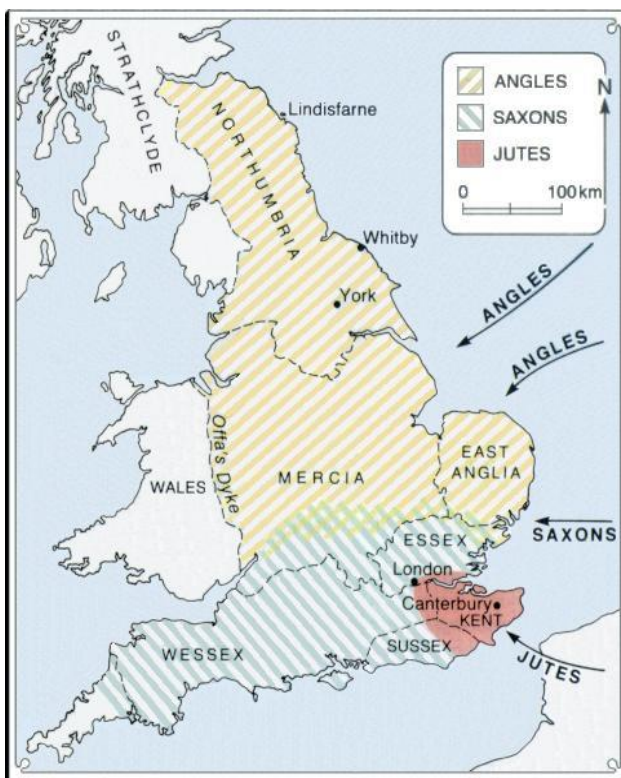
II. Discuss the following topics:

- The first settlers on the British Isles. Stonehenge. The Celts on the British Isles; traces of Celtic culture in present-day Britain.
- The Roman conquest of Britain. The impact of the conquest on the development of culture on the British Isles; traces of Roman culture in present-day Britain.
- The Anglo-Saxon conquest of Britain. The origin of the English language. The impact of Christianity on Anglo-Saxon culture. Anglo-Saxon literature (Caedmon, the Venerable Bede, *Beowulf*).
- The Scandinavian invasion of Britain, and its impact on the political and cultural life of the country (Danelaw, King Canute). The role of King Alfred the Great in the history of Britain.
- Distinctive features of the language in the Old English period. Celtic, Latin and Scandinavian borrowings in the English language. The history of English place-names.
- The Norman conquest of Britain, and its impact on the political and cultural life of the country. The Domesday Book. The first universities. The Magna Carta and the beginning of Parliament. Thomas Becket. English literature of the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries (Robin Hood, King Arthur). Changes in the language.
- The economic development of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Peasants' Revolt of 1381; the abolition of slavery. The Hundred Years War. The Wars of the Roses. Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*. Changes in the language in the Middle English period. William Caxton.
- The Reformation in England. Henry VIII. Mary Tudor ("Bloody Mary").
- The Elizabethan age. England's relations with Spain. The geographical discoveries in the sixteenth century. The development of philosophy, literature and the theatre (Thomas More, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare).
- The reign of James I: the Gunpowder plot, the Pilgrim Fathers.
- The Civil War and the Commonwealth, Oliver Cromwell. The Restoration.
- The Great Fire of London. The development of literature (John Milton), the arts (William Dobson, Christopher Wren, Henry Purcell) and science (Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton, Edmund Halley) in the seventeenth century.
- The Industrial Revolution and the development of England's economy in the eighteenth century.
- The English Enlightenment.
- Britain in the two world wars.
- Great Britain between the two world wars. The development of the economy. The Great Depression. The general strike.
- The fall of the colonial system and the British Empire.
- Britain's political and economic relations with European countries and the USA in the post-war period.
- Literature and the arts in the twentieth century.
- Changes in the English language. Variants of English. The spread of English.

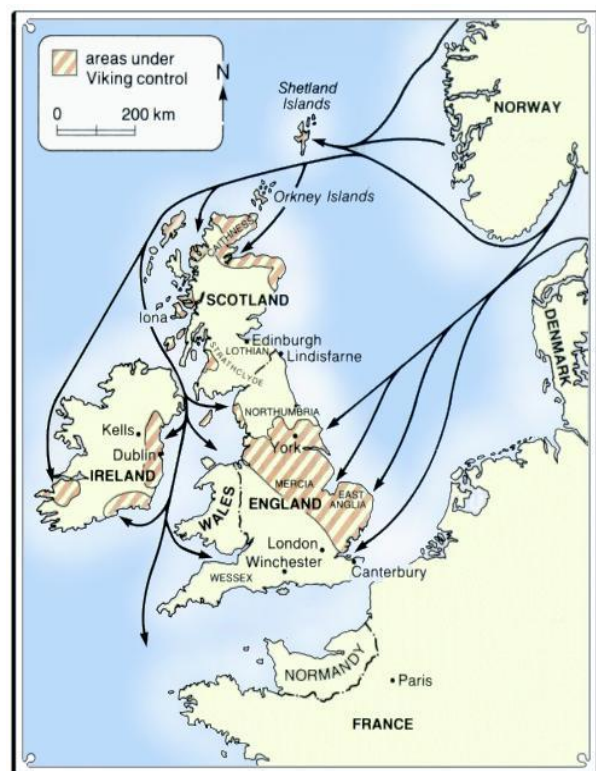
III. The fifth century became an age of increased Germanic expansion and by the end of the century several West Germanic tribes had settled in Britain – the Jutes, and then the Angles and the Saxons. *Use Map 1 to tell about the Germanic expansion in Britain.*

From the end of the eighth and then during the ninth and the tenth centuries Western Europe faced a new wave of barbarian attacks. These barbarians came from the North – Norway and Denmark – and were called Northmen. In various countries they were also known as the Vikings, the Normans or the Danes. *Use Map 2 to tell about the Viking Raids in Britain.*

Map 1



Map 2



III. Topics for presentations and reports:

- The Norman Conquest and its impact on various spheres of life in England.
- England’s economic growth in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.
- The history of the English language.
- The Elizabethan age.
- Science in seventeenth-century England.
- The history of the monarchy in Britain
- The Church of England.
- A bloody period in English history: the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Henry VII. The restoration of the absolute monarchy.
- A bloody period in English history: the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Henry VIII and the Reformation.

- A bloody period in English history: the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Protestant-Catholic struggle.
- Mary I (Bloody Mary) and her reign.
- Elisabeth I and her reign.
- Mary Stuart, the Scottish queen.
- The English Renaissance. Inigo Jones as the first representative of the Italian Renaissance in Britain. The influence of Italian culture.
- The English Renaissance. Christopher Wren.
- The English Renaissance. Thomas More
- The English Renaissance. William Shakespeare
- The English Civil War of the seventeenth century and its results.
- Republican Britain (1649–1660) and its influence on the history of Britain.
- The industrial revolution of the eighteenth century. Famous British scientists and inventors (Isaac Newton, Michael Faraday, Charles Darwin, and others).
- The British Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- The Crimean War (1848–1858).
- Science after the English Civil War: John Milton. G. Bruno, Isaac Newton.
- Art after the English Civil War. Classicism in art and architecture. Hogarth. Gainsborough.
- Art in the nineteenth century. J. M. W. Turner. John Constable.
- English literature in the nineteenth century. Romanticism.
- Theatre in the nineteenth century.
- Chartism and its historical significance.
- Britain at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century.
- Britain in World War I.
- Britain in the pre-war period of the 1930s.
- Britain and Ireland in the twentieth century. The “Irish Question”.
- Britain in World War II.
- Great Britain after World War II. The dissolution of the British Empire.
- Margaret Thatcher as the Prime Minister of UK.
- The political parties of the UK.
- The monarchy in Britain: its functions and powers.
- The British Parliament. The House of Commons and the House of Lords. Traditions of Houses of Parliament.
- The system of secondary and higher education in Great Britain.
- The British Museum.
- Music in Britain.
- The national character and way of life.
- The most popular holidays and traditions.
- Brexit: causes and consequences.

SUPPLEMENTS

RULERS OF ENGLAND AND OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

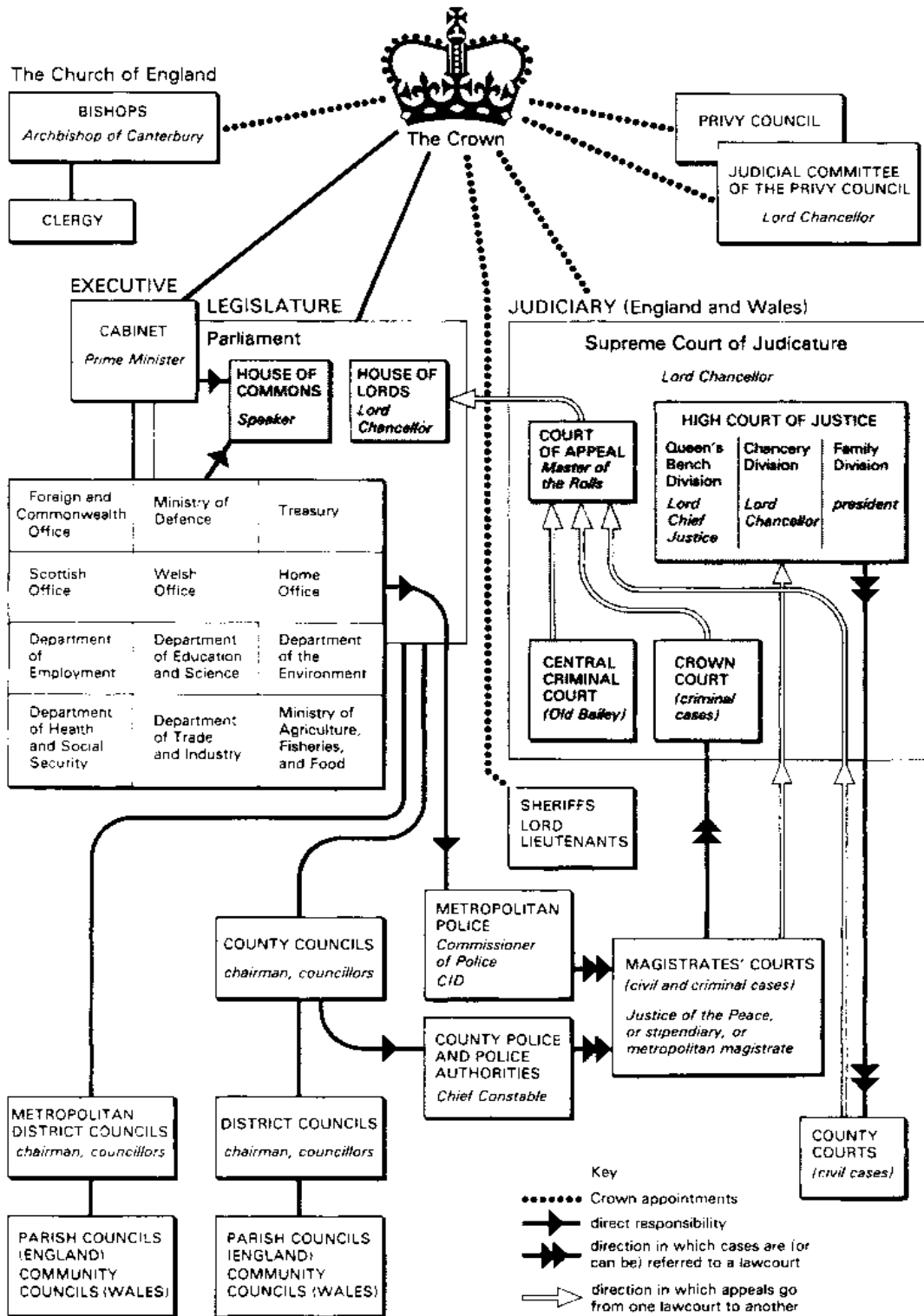
<i>Saxon Line</i>		<i>House of Tudor</i>	
Edwy	955-959	Henry VII	1485-1509
Edgar	959-975	Henry VIII	1509-1547
Edward the Martyr	975-978	Edward VI	1547-1553
Ethelred the Unready	978-1016	Mary I	1553-1558
Edmund Ironside	1016	Elizabeth I	1558-1603
<i>Danish Line</i>		<i>House of Stuart</i>	
Canute (Cnut)	1017-1035	James I of England and VI of Scotland	1603-1625
Harold I	1035-1040	Charles I	1625-1649
Hardicanute	1040-1042		
<i>Saxon Line</i>		<i>Commonwealth (declared 1649)</i>	
Edward the Confessor	1042-1066	Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector	1653-1658
Harold II (Godwinson)	1066	Richard Cromwell	1658-1659
<i>House of Normandy</i>		<i>House of Stuart</i>	
William I (the Conqueror)	1066-1087	Charles II	1660-1685
William II	1087-1100	James II	1685-1688
Henry I	1100-1135	William III and Mary II (Mary d. 1694)	1689-1702
Stephen	1135-1154	Anne	1702-1714
<i>House of Plantagenet</i>		<i>House of Hanover</i>	
Henry II	1154-1189	George I	1714-1727
Richard I	1189-1199	George II	1727-1760
John	1199-1216	George III	1760-1820
Henry III	1216-1272	George IV	1820-1830
Edward I	1272-1307	William IV	1830-1837
Edward II	1307-1327	Victoria	1837-1901
Edward III	1327-1377		
Richard II	1377-1399	<i>House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha</i>	
<i>House of Lancaster</i>		Edward VII	1901-1910
Henry IV	1399-1413	<i>House of Windsor</i>	
Henry V	1413-1422	George V	1910-1936
Henry VI	1422-1461	Edward VIII	1936
		George VI	1936-1952
<i>House of York</i>		Elizabeth II	1952-2022
Edward IV	1461-1483	Charles III	2022-
Edward V	1483		
Richard III	1483-1485		

PRIME MINISTERS OF GREAT BRITAIN

Prime Minister	Political Party	Terms	Prime Minister	Political Party	Terms
Sir Rober Walpole	Whig	[1721]-1742	William Ewart Gladstone	Liberal	1880-1885
Earl of Wilmington	Whig	1742-1743	Robert Gascoyne Cecil	Conservative	1885-1886
Henry Pelham	Whig	1743-1754	William Ewart Gladstone	Liberal	1886
Thomas Pelham-Holles	Whig	1754-1756	Robert Gascoyne Cecil	Conservative	1886-1892
William Cavendish	Whig	1756-1757	William Ewart Gladstone	Liberal	1892-1894
Thomas Pelham-Holles	Whig	1757-1762	Archibold Primrose	Liberal	1894-1895
John Stuart	Tory	1762-1763	Robert Gascoyne Cecil	Conservative	1895-1902
George Grenville	Whig	1763-1765	Arthur James Balfour	Conservative	1902-1905
Charles Watson Wentworth	Whig	1765-1766	Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman	Liberal	1905-1908
William Pitt 'The Elder'	Whig	1766-1768	Herbert Henry Asquith	Liberal	1908-1915
Augustus Henry Fitzroy	Whig	1768-1770	Herbert Henry Asquith	coalition	1915-1916
Lord Fredrick North	Tory	1770-1782	David Lloyd George	coalition	1916-1922
Charles Watson Wentworth	Whig	1782	Andrew Bonar Law	Conservative	1923-1923
William Petty	Whig	1782-1783	Stanley Baldwin	Conservative	1923-1924
William Cavendish-Bentinck	coalition	1783	James Ramsay MacDonald	Labour	1924
William Pitt 'The Younger'	Tory	1783-1801	Stanley Baldwin	Conservative	1924-1929
Henry Addington	Tory	1801-1804	James Ramsay MacDonald	Labour	1929-1931
William Pitt 'The Younger'	Tory	1804-1806	James Ramsay MacDonald	national coalition	1931-1935
William Wyndham Grenville	coalition	1806-1807	Stanley Baldwin	Conservative	1935-1937

William Cavendish-Bentinck	Tory	1807-1809	Neville Chamberlain	Conservative	1937-1940
Spencer Perceval	Tory	1809-1812	Sir Winston Churchill	coalition	1940-1945
Robert Banks Jenkinson	Tory	1812-1827	Clement Attlee	Labour	1945-1951
George Canning	coalition	1827	Sir Winston Spencer Churchill	Conservative	1951-1955
Fredrick John Robinson	Tory	1827-1828	Sir Anthony Eden	Conservative	1955-1957
Arthur Wellesley	Tory	1828-1830	Harold MacMillan	Conservative	1957-1963
Charles Grey	Whig	1830-1834	Sir Alexander Douglas-Home	Conservative	1963-1964
William Lamb	Whig	1834	Harold Wilson	Labour	1964-1970
Sir Robert Peel	Whig	1834-1835	Edward Heath	Conservative	1970-1974
William Lamb	Whig	1835-1841	Harold Wilson	Labour	1974-1976
Sir Robert Peel	Conservative	1841-1846	James Callaghan	Labour	1976-1979
Lord John Russell	Whig	1846-1852	Margaret Thatcher	Conservative	1979-1990
Edward Smith Stanley	Conservative	1852	John Major	Conservative	1990-1997
George Hamilton Gordon	Peelite	1852-1855	Tony Blair	Labour	1997-2007
Henry John Temple	Liberal	1855-1858	Gordon Brown	Labour	2007-2010
Edward Smith Stanley	Conservative	1858-1859	David Cameron	coalition	2010-2015
Henry John Temple	Liberal	1859-1865	David Cameron	Conservative	2015-2016
Lord John Russell	Liberal	1865-1866	Theresa May	Conservative	2016-2019
Edward Smith Stanley	Conservative	1866-1868	Alexander Boris Johnson	Conservative	2019-2022
Benjamin Disraeli	Conservative	1868	Mary Elizabeth (Liz) Truss	Conservative	2022
William Ewart Gladstone	Liberal	1868-1874	Rishi Sunak	Conservative	2022-
Benjamin Disraeli	Conservative	1874-1880			

THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION



THE COMMONWEALTH

(Also known as: **British Commonwealth of Nations, Commonwealth of Nations**)

The Commonwealth is an association of countries across the world. Although historically connected to the British Empire, any country can apply to be a member of the Commonwealth, regardless of its intersection with Britain's colonial past. The Commonwealth consists of 56 countries, including the United Kingdom.

The Commonwealth was an evolutionary outgrowth of the British Empire. Contemporaneous with its shedding of mercantilist philosophy, the empire began implementing "responsible government" – i.e., a system under which the governor could act in domestic matters only upon the advice of ministers enjoying the confidence of the elected chamber – in parts of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Ireland in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. These dependent but self-governing states attained growing measures of sovereignty, and their autonomy was subjected only to a British veto. The Imperial Conference of 1926 declared that such states were to be regarded as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." The Statute of Westminster (1931) implemented the decisions made at both that and a subsequent conference, formally allowing each dominion to control its own domestic and foreign affairs and to establish its own diplomatic corps.

For a period after the promulgation of the Statute of Westminster, membership in the Commonwealth came on condition of allegiance to the British monarch. But the rapid growth of nationalism from the 1920s in parts of the empire with chiefly non-European populations required a reconsideration of the nature of the Commonwealth. India in particular had been a special case within the British Empire; by title an empire in its own right, it had a viceroy, a separate secretary of state in London, its own army, and even, to a certain degree, its own foreign policy. When India and Pakistan were granted independence in 1947, they became members of the Commonwealth. In 1949 India announced its intention to become a republic, which would have required its withdrawal from the Commonwealth under the existing rules, but at a meeting of Commonwealth heads of government in London in April 1949 it was agreed that India could continue its membership if it accepted the British crown as only "the symbol of the free association" of Commonwealth members. That declaration was the first to drop the adjective British, and thereafter the official name of the organization became the Commonwealth of Nations, or simply the Commonwealth.

Members of the Commonwealth	
Country	Date of Commonwealth membership
United Kingdom	1931
Canada	1931
Australia	1931
New Zealand	1931
South Africa	1931 (left in 1961; rejoined 1994)
India	1947
Pakistan	1947 (left in 1972; rejoined 1989)
Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon)	1948
Ghana	1957
Malaysia (formerly Malaya)	1957
Nigeria	1960
Cyprus	1961
Sierra Leone	1961
Tanzania	1961 (Tanganyika in 1961; Tanzania in 1964 upon union with Zanzibar [member 1963])
Jamaica	1962
Trinidad and	1962

Members of the Commonwealth	
Country	Date of Commonwealth membership
Tobago	
Uganda	1962
Kenya	1963
Malawi	1964
Malta	1964
Zambia	1964
The Gambia	1965 (left in 2013; rejoined 2018)
Singapore	1965
Guyana	1966
Botswana	1966
Lesotho	1966
Barbados	1966
Mauritius	1968
Nauru	1968 (joined as special member; full member since 1999)
Swaziland	1968
Tonga	1970
Samoa (formerly Western Samoa)	1970
Fiji	1971 (left in 1987; rejoined 1997)

Members of the Commonwealth	
Country	Date of Commonwealth membership
Bangladesh	1972
The Bahamas	1973
Grenada	1974
Papua New Guinea	1975
Seychelles	1976
Solomon Islands	1978
Tuvalu	1978 (joined as special member; full member since 2000)
Dominica	1978
Kiribati	1979
Saint Lucia	1979
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1979 (joined as special member; full member since 1985)

Members of the Commonwealth	
Country	Date of Commonwealth membership
Vanuatu	1980
Belize	1981
Antigua and Barbuda	1981
Maldives	1982 (joined as special member; became full member in 1985; left in 2016; rejoined in 2020)
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1983
Brunei	1984
Namibia	1990
Cameroon	1995
Mozambique	1995
Rwanda	2009
Gabon	2022
Togo	2022

India's grant of independence was the first in a long series of grants, and, as former dependencies attained sovereignty, Commonwealth membership grew dramatically in the second half of the 20th century. Most of the dependent states granted independence chose Commonwealth membership; like India, many opted not to recognize the Crown as head of state. In 1995 Mozambique became the first country granted entry that was never part of the British Empire or under the control of any member. Rwanda, also never part of the British Empire, joined in 2009. Some states became independent and rejected membership, such as Burma (Myanmar) in 1948. The Commonwealth was also beset by some members opting to withdraw from the organization, as did Ireland (1949), South Africa (1961), and Pakistan (1972), though both South Africa and Pakistan eventually re-joined (the former in 1994 and the latter in 1989).

In addition to independent members, the Commonwealth also comprises dependent territories, which are formally governed by the United Kingdom, Australia, or New Zealand. Most of the older dependencies are colonies. Dependencies include Anguilla, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, and the Turks and Caicos Islands (United Kingdom); Christmas Island, the Cocos Islands, the Coral Sea Islands, and Norfolk Island (Australia); and Niue and Tokelau (New Zealand). The United Kingdom has followed a policy of leading the dependencies toward self-government by creating territorial governments in them. These governments comprise a law-making body (often called the legislative council); an executive body (called the executive council), which with the governor is the executive authority; and an independent judiciary. At first government posts are appointive, but an increasing elected element is introduced, as constitutions are altered, until elected officials are made wholly responsible for local affairs. After a colony achieves internal self-government, its legislature may apply to the British Parliament for complete independence. It then decides whether to remain in the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth differs from other international bodies such as the United Nations or the World Trade Organization. It has no formal constitution or bylaws. The members have no legal or formal obligation to one another; they are held together by shared traditions, institutions, and experiences as well as by economic self-interest. Commonwealth action is based upon consultation between members, which is conducted through correspondence and through conversations in meetings. Each member country sends an emissary, called a high commissioner, to the capitals of the other members.

The member states' heads of government make up the primary decision-making component of the Commonwealth. The Head of the Commonwealth, a title historically belonging to the British Crown, is largely ceremonial. Succession to the post is non-hereditary and is determined by the Heads of Government. The Commonwealth Secretariat, headed by a secretary-general, organizes and coordinates Commonwealth activities and facilitates relations between member states. The Secretariat is responsible to the Board of Governors, composed of the member states' high commissioner to the United Kingdom. At high-level international events, the Commonwealth is represented by the Chair-in-Office, which rotates between member states every two years.

A Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting is held every two years. At the meeting in Singapore in 1971, members adopted a declaration that restated the Commonwealth's voluntary and cooperative nature and committed the organization to promoting international peace, fighting racism, opposing colonial domination, and reducing inequities in wealth. This declaration was echoed at the meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1991, when leaders further committed the organization to human rights and democracy. In 2011, in Perth, Australia, leaders tasked the Commonwealth with drafting a charter; the charter – which enshrined core principles such as democracy, human rights, freedom of expression, sustainable development, access to health and education, and gender equality – was adopted at the close of 2012.

Britain has huge overseas investments, both government and private, in the Commonwealth. When Britain joined the European Economic Community (later succeeded by the European Union [EU]) in 1973, the trade privileges of member countries began to be reduced. Now Commonwealth members have trade agreements with the EU. Malta and Cyprus are members of both the Commonwealth and the EU; they remained in the EU even after Britain left in 2020. Many of the exports of Commonwealth countries go to other member countries. In 1996 the Commonwealth Africa Investment Fund was established to increase investment in that continent. There are also significant educational links between members, as many British teachers travel overseas and many students from Commonwealth members study in Britain. Other cultural links include the Commonwealth Games, a sporting competition held every four years.

English language, belonging to the Germanic languages branch of the Indo-European language family, is widely spoken on six continents. The primary language of the U.S., Britain, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and various Caribbean and Pacific island nations, it is also an official language of India, the Philippines, and many sub-Saharan African countries. It is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world (approximately 1.5 billion speakers, 2022), the mother tongue of more than 350 million people, and the most widely taught foreign language. English relies mainly on word order (usually subject-verb-object) to indicate relationships between words. Written in the Latin alphabet, it is most closely related to Frisian, German, and Dutch. Its history began with the migration of the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons from Germany and Denmark to Britain in the 5th and 6th centuries. The Norman Conquest of 1066 brought many French words into English. Greek and Latin words began to enter it in the 15th century, and Modern English is usually dated from 1500. English easily borrows words from other languages and has coined many new words to reflect advances in technology.

As of 2022 there are 1.5 billion English speakers around the world. This makes it the most spoken language, ahead of Mandarin Chinese (1.1 billion speakers) and Hindi (602 million speakers). More than 50 countries officially list English as an official language.

English is an official language (de facto and de jure) of the following countries and territories.

North America: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States, United States Virgin Islands

South America: Falkland Islands, Guyana

Europe: Akrotiri and Dhekelia, Gibraltar, Guernsey, Ireland, Isle of Man, Jersey, Malta, United Kingdom

Africa: Botswana, Cameroon, Eswatini, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Asia: Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Hong Kong, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore

Oceania: Australia, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Norfolk Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

Although not official, English is also an important language in some former colonies and protectorates of the British Empire where it is used as an administrative language, such as Brunei, Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

Because English is so widely spoken, it has often been referred to as a “world language”, the lingua franca of the modern era, and while it is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language. It is, by international treaty, the official language for aeronautical and maritime communications. English is one of the official languages of the United Nations and many other international organizations, including the International Olympic Committee. It is also one of two co-official languages for astronauts (besides the Russian language) serving on board the International Space Station.

English is studied most often in the European Union, and the perception of the usefulness of foreign languages among Europeans is 67 % in favour of English ahead of 17 % for German and 16 % for French (as of 2012). Among some of the non-English-speaking EU countries, the following percentages of the adult population claimed to be able to converse in English in 2012: 90 % in the Netherlands, 89 % in Malta, 86 % in Sweden and Denmark, 73 % in Cyprus, Croatia, and Austria, 70 % in Finland, and over 50 % in Greece, Belgium, Luxembourg, Slovenia, and Germany. In 2012, excluding native speakers, 38 % of Europeans consider that they can speak English.

Books, magazines, and newspapers written in English are available in many countries around the world, and English is the most commonly used language in the sciences with Science Citation Index reporting as early as 1997 that 95 % of its articles were written in English, even though only half of them came from authors in English-speaking countries.

In publishing, English literature predominates considerably with 28 % of all books published in the world and 30 % of web content in 2011 (down from 50 % in 2000).

This increasing use of the English language globally has had a large impact on many other languages, leading to language shift and even language death, and to claims of linguistic imperialism. English itself has become more open to language shift as multiple regional varieties feed back into the language as a whole.

CHRONOLOGY

- 250,000 – 300,000 ago Earliest prehuman and human archaeological years finds.
- 11,000 years ago British island separates from Continent.
- 6,500 years ago Beginning of Neolithic Age in Britain.
- ca. 3000 B.C. Start of Stonehenge construction.
- ca. 2000 B.C. Use of Stonehenge declines.
- ca. 1500 B.C. Change in climate leads to sharp decline in population.
- 6th century B.C. Beginning of Iron Age and Celtic culture in Britain.
- ca. 325 B.C. Greek traveller Pytheas of Massilia circumnavigates Britain.
- 55 B.C. First Roman invasion of Britain, under Julius Caesar.
- 43 A.D. Roman invasion under Claudius followed by conquest of most of Britain.
- 60 – 61 Rebellion of Boudicca.
- 196 In an attempt to seize rule over the Roman Empire, Clodius Albinus launches the first recorded invasion of Europe from Britain.
- 306 Constantine is proclaimed emperor at York.
- 410 The end of Roman rule in Britain.
- 449 Traditional date for the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in England.
- 563 Founding of the monastery of Iona in the Hebrides by the Irish monk Columba.
- 597 A papal mission, led by a monk named Augustine, lands in Anglo-Saxon Kent and begins the conversion of the southern Anglo-Saxons.
- 664 Synod of Whitby in the kingdom of Northumbria adopts the customs of the Roman church over those of the Irish.
- 673 First Synod of Anglo-Saxon bishops at Hertford.
- 768 The Welsh church adopts Roman customs.
- 793 The first recorded major Viking raid in Britain.
- 843 Traditional date for the founding of the Kingdom of Scotland by Kenneth MacAlpin.
- 871 – 899 Reign of Alfred the Great of Wessex.
- 927 Traditional date for the founding of the Kingdom of England by Athelstan, after he subjugates Viking Northumbria.
- 1066 Battle of Hastings, the start of the Norman Conquest of England.
- 1154 Accession of Henry II (r. 1154 – 1189), already ruler of Anjou and Aquitaine.
- 1170 The murder of Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, by supporters of King Henry II.
- 1192 Papal decree establishes the independence of the Scottish church from the Church of England.
- 1199 – 1216 Reign of King John sees the loss of most of the Angevin possessions in France, quarrels with the pope, and rebellions by the king's barons.
- 1215 Magna Carta, treaty agreed between King John and his rebellious barons, asserts some fundamental rights of free English people.

- 1266 The Scots take over the Hebrides and the lordship of the Isle of Man from Norway.
- 1267 England recognizes Gruffydd ap Llywelyn as prince of Wales.
- 1282 Conquest of Wales by English king Edward I.
- 1284 Declaration of Rhuddlan brings Wales under English rule.
- 1290 Edward I expels the Jews from England, confiscating their property; death of Margaret of Norway leads to dynastic uncertainty in Scotland, eventually prompting English attempts at conquest.
- 1314 Scottish victory over the English at Bannockburn.
- 1320 Declaration of Arbroath establishes Scottish support for independence.
- 1328 In the Treaty of Edinburgh, England recognizes Scottish independence.
- 1337 – 1453 Hundred Years' War between England and France.
- 1348 First arrival of the Black Death in Britain.
- 1349 The Black Death arrives in Scotland.
- 1351 Statute of Labourers enacted by the English parliament.
- 1362 The English parliament switches from French to English as the official language of its proceedings.
- 1371 Stewart house ascends to the Scottish throne.
- 1381 Great Peasants' Revolt in England.
- 1400 – 1408 Welsh rebellion against the English led by Owain Glyndwyr.
- 1415 A small English army led by King Henry V defeats the French at Agincourt.
- 1453 The Hundred Years' War ends with English defeat and the loss of all territory in France except the town of Calais.
- 1455 – 1485 Wars of the Roses.
- 1476 First appearance of the printing press in England.
- 1485 Battle of Bosworth Field leads to the death of the last Yorkist king, Richard III, and the accession of Henry Tudor to the throne of England.
- 1507 First appearance of the printing press in Scotland.
- 1509 – 1547 Reign of Henry VIII of England.
- 1513 Battle of Flodden Field between Scotland and England: Overwhelming victory for the English, as James IV of Scotland is killed along with many of his nobles, the last British monarch to die in battle.
- 1529 First meeting of the Reformation Parliament.
- 1534 Act of Supremacy makes the monarch head of the English church.
- 1536 Act of Union between England and Wales.
- 1547 Death of Henry VIII, followed by the accession of his son Edward and a more strongly Protestant religious policy.
- 1550s Protestant Reformation in Scotland.
- 1553 Death of Edward VI, followed by the accession of his Catholic sister Mary and a reversal of religious policy back to Catholicism.
- 1558 The English lose Calais, their last possession in France. Death of Queen Mary followed by the accession of her Protestant sister Elizabeth and a return to Protestantism as the official religion.

- 1588 Defeat of the Spanish Armada by the English.
- 1603 Death of Elizabeth I leads to the accession of James VI of Scotland to the English throne as James I, unifying the entire island under a single ruler. Final conquest of Ireland by the English.
- 1604 End of the Anglo-Spanish War.
- 1605 The Gunpowder Plot, a plan of radical Roman Catholics to blow up the Houses of Parliament during the king's visit, is frustrated.
- 1607 Founding of Jamestown, the first English colony in North America.
- 1637 Scottish Calvinists rebel against the new Anglican liturgy introduced by King Charles I.
- 1639 – 1640 Bishop's Wars between King Charles I and the Scottish rebels end with Scottish occupation of part of northern England.
- 1641 Irish rebellion.
- 1642 English Civil War begins.
- 1649 Execution of Charles I.
- 1650 Irish rebels defeated by Oliver Cromwell.
- 1653 Republican government overthrown, replaced by military-based rule of Oliver Cromwell.
- 1658 Death of Oliver Cromwell.
- 1660 Restoration of Charles II.
- 1662 Chartering of the Royal Society, Britain's preeminent scientific organization.
- 1665 Last great outbreak of the plague in Britain, centring in London.
- 1666 Great Fire of London.
- 1687 Publication of Isaac Newton's *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*.
- 1688 Revolution overthrows James II; he is succeeded by William of Orange and Mary.
- 1701 – 1713 War of the Spanish Succession.
- 1707 Parliamentary union of England and Scotland leads to the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain.
- 1714 Death of Anne, the last Stuart monarch, followed by the accession of the House of Hanover with the reign of George I.
- 1715 Jacobite rising to restore the Stuarts is defeated.
- 1745 The last Jacobite rising defeated.
- 1756 – 1763 Seven Years' War sees overwhelming British victory, driving the French from Canada and establishing Britain as the world's premier naval and colonial power.
- 1783 Treaty of Paris ends the American Revolution with the loss of most British colonies in North America.
- 1793 The war between Britain and revolutionary France begins.
- 1801 Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland creates the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.
- 1815 Battle of Waterloo ends the revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars with victory for Britain and its allies.

- 1825 First public railroad opened.
- 1832 The Great Reform Bill broadens the right to vote for members of Parliament.
- 1851 Great Exhibition, the first World's Fair, opens in the Crystal Palace in London.
- 1859 Publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, setting forth his theory of evolution by natural selection.
- 1867 Second Reform Bill further broadens the right to vote.
- 1882 Married Women's Separate Property Act allows married women to hold property independently of their husbands.
- 1884 Third Reform Bill further broadens the parliamentary franchise.
- 1899 – 1902 The Boer War ends in British victory but reveals British weaknesses and adds to British global unpopularity.
- 1900 Formation of the Labour Representation Committee, later to be known as the Labour Party.
- 1904 Entente Cordiale, an alliance between Britain and France.
- 1907 Anglo-Russian Entente.
- 1911 Drastic limitations imposed on the power of the House of Lords.
- 1914 – 1918 World War I.
- 1918 Fourth Reform Bill gives the parliamentary vote to men over the age of 21 and women over 30.
- 1922 The Irish Free State is constituted as a dominion of the Crown.
- 1924 Election of Britain's first Labour government.
- 1926 Chartering of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).
- 1929 Women get the right to vote on the same basis as men.
- 1938 Munich agreement.
- 1939 – 1945 World War II.
- 1940 Chamberlain government overturned to give way to Churchill coalition government. Fall of France. Battle of Britain.
- 1941 Germany invades the Soviet Union. Japan enters the war with attacks on Britain and the United States.
- 1942 Fall of Singapore to the Japanese. British victory over the Germans in North Africa at the Battle of El Alamein.
- 1943 British forces capture Tripoli from the Italians. Allied invasion of Sicily followed by invasion of Italy.
- 1944 British and Indian troops win victory over the Japanese at Imphal.
- 1945 End of World War II with Allied victory.
- 1945 General election returns the Labour Party, headed by Clement Atlee. Between 1945 and 1951 the Labour government transforms the British economy with a program of nationalizations and lays the foundations of the British welfare state.
- 1946 "Iron Curtain" speech by Winston Churchill.
- 1947 India and Pakistan win their independence from Britain, while remaining members of the Commonwealth.
- 1948 Britain leaves Palestine.

- 1950 – 1953 Britain participates in the Korean War as a member of the United Nations.
- 1951 Festival of Britain on the 100th anniversary of the Great Exhibition.
- 1953 Coronation of Elizabeth II.
- 1956 The Suez Crisis leads to fall of Anthony Eden as Prime Minister.
- 1958 Founding of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).
- 1960 The British attempt to enter the Common Market (founded in 1957) is vetoed by the French. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan’s “Winds of Change” speech signals British acceptance of its African colonies’ moves to independence.
- 1961 South Africa becomes an independent republic.
- 1962 Formation of the Beatles.
- 1969 Beginning of the Troubles in Northern Ireland.
- 1973 Britain enters the European Common Market.
- 1979 Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister.
- 1982 The Falklands War.
- 1984 Irish Republican Army bombs the hotel in Brighton hosting the Conservative Party Conference.
- 1984 – 1985 Miner’s strike.
- 1990 Margaret Thatcher withdraws from leadership. John Major takes over as Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party.
- 1991 Britain fights as a U.S. ally in the Gulf War.
- 1997 Major government comes to an end as New Labour under Tony Blair wins an overwhelming victory in the parliamentary elections. Handover of Hong Kong to China.
- 1998 Establishment of the Scottish parliament. Good Friday Agreement, or Belfast Agreement, ends Irish Troubles.
- 1999 Establishment of the Welsh national assembly. House of Lords Act removes most of the hereditary element from the upper chamber of Parliament.
- 2000 Millennium Dome opened.
- 2003 Britain joins the United States in the Iraq War.
- 2005 Terrorist bombings in London by Muslim radicals.
- 2007 Gordon Brown replaces Tony Blair as Prime Minister and leader of the Labour Party.
- 2009 Britain withdraws most of its troops from southern Iraq.
- 2010 Conservative leader David Cameron forms the first coalition since the Second World War, with the Liberal Democrats led by Nick Clegg.
- 2011 Britain plays a prominent part in the international intervention in the conflict in Libya. Wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton.
- 2012 Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee – 60 years. Britain hosts the hugely successful Summer Olympics and Paralympics.

- 2013 The Duchess of Cambridge gives birth to a son George – heir to the throne after his grandfather, Charles, and father, William. The House of Commons votes against UK military involvement in Syria.
- 2014 A referendum in Scotland rejects independence (cessation from the UK). Same-sex marriage becomes legal in England, Wales and Scotland. The UK ends combat operations in Afghanistan.
- 2015 Queen Elizabeth II became the longest-reigning UK monarch ever, after Queen Victoria who reigned for 63 years and 7 months.
- 2016 In a national referendum, the UK narrowly voted to leave the European Union. David Cameron resigned as party leader and Prime Minister. Theresa May became the second female Prime Minister of the UK.
- 2017 Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her Sapphire Jubilee – 65 years. Beginning of the UK’s withdrawal (nicknamed ‘Brexit’), from the European Union (EU).
- 2018 Wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.
- 2019 Prime Minister Theresa May resigned as Conservative Party leader. She was replaced by Boris Johnson.
- 2020 The United Kingdom and Gibraltar formally withdrew from the European Union. A national lockdown takes place due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- 2021 Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and husband of the Queen, died at the age of 99.
- 2022 The 70th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II’s accession to the throne – her Platinum Jubilee. The UK supplies arms and other equipment and aid to Ukraine. Prime Minister Boris Johnson resigned as leader of the Conservative Party. Liz Truss became Prime Minister. Queen Elizabeth II died at Balmoral Castle, aged 96. Her son succeeded to the throne as Charles III. Prime Minister Liz Truss resigned. Rishi Sunak was appointed Prime Minister.

HOLIDAYS, SPECIAL DAYS AND TRADITIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN

Back to School – The school year in England, Wales and Northern Ireland begins in the first week of September. Children start primary school when they are four or five years old. The first class in primary school is called Reception, then pupils progress through Years 1–6. They start secondary school when they are 11 years old in Year 7. At the end of Year 11, when they are 16 years old, pupils sit the GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) exams in around 8–10 subjects. Maths, English, a science and a foreign language are compulsory and pupils choose their remaining examination subjects from those offered at their school. The remaining two years at secondary school are not compulsory and are known as the Sixth Form; the first year is the Lower Sixth and the second year is the Upper Sixth. Pupils in the Sixth Form generally study for examinations which will lead to a place in university or college. Scotland has a different school year and examination system from the rest of the UK.

Harvest Festival – a Christian festival of thanksgiving for all the good things we have. There is no set date for Harvest Festival but it usually takes place in September or sometimes October. It is traditional to take gifts of food to elderly people after the church or school Harvest Festival. At one time, these gifts were locally grown fruit and vegetables, but nowadays it is more common to offer dried and tinned foods. Many churches also hold a Harvest Supper. A traditional decoration is the ‘Corn Dolly’, made from straw.

Rosh Hashanah – the Jewish New Year. It is celebrated on the first day of the Jewish month Tishri, which occurs in September according to the western calendar. It is a time to ask God’s forgiveness for the wrongdoings of the past year. At the beginning of the Rosh Hashanah service a shofar (ram’s horn) is blown to call the worshippers to prayer. Apples dipped in honey are eaten for a good and sweet new year.

Clocks Go Back – The clocks in the UK go back an hour at midnight on the last Saturday in October. This marks the end of British Summer Time and a return to Greenwich Mean Time. British Summer Time lasts from the end of March until the end of October. The clocks going back is not a festival; in fact most people dread the darker nights and the cold weather to come after this date.

Halloween is celebrated on 31 October. It was originally the Celtic festival of the dead, known as Samhain. The Christian church tried to suppress this pagan festival, renaming it All Hallows’ Eve (hence the name Halloween). However, the festival remains essentially pagan and has been banned in some Christian schools in Britain. Pumpkin lanterns, masks and costumes are all part of Halloween, as is the custom of ‘trick or treat’. This involves children in costumes going from house to house asking for treats such as sweets, fruit and money. If the householder refuses to give them a treat, the children may then play a trick or practical joke on them.

Bonfire Night is celebrated on 5 November. It falls on the date when, in 1605, a group of Catholics tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London. This was known as the Gunpowder Plot. It was a time of great religious and political unrest in England and the Catholics were suffering persecution at the hands of the Protestant government. The plan failed and the plotters were put to death. The festival is also known as Guy Fawkes' Night, after the man who laid the explosives in the cellars of the Houses of Parliament. It is still the custom to burn an effigy of Guy Fawkes, called a 'guy', on the bonfire. Bonfire Night has survived to this day, perhaps because people welcome the opportunity to have a bonfire, fireworks and a party in the cold, dark month of November.

Diwali – a Hindu festival which takes place on the fifteenth day of the month of Kartik according to the Hindu calendar (October or November in the western calendar). The name comes from the word *diva*, which is a small lamp. A story which is associated with Diwali is that of Rama and Sita. Many Hindus also celebrate new year at this time. Many Hindus in Britain celebrate Diwali with fireworks in the local park. The Hindu population in Britain is currently 155,000 (1 999 figures).

Christmas – The name 'Christmas' comes from 'Christ's Mass'. It is celebrated on 25 December. Every year the people of Norway give the city of London a present. It's a big Christmas tree and it stands in Trafalgar Square. Also central London, Oxford Street and Regent Street always have beautiful decorations at Christmas. Thousands of people come to look at them. In 1846 the first Christmas cards began in Britain. That was five years after the first Christmas tree. Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, brought this German tradition (he was German) to Britain. He and the Queen had a Christmas tree at Windsor Castle in 1841. A few years after, nearly every house in Britain had one. Traditionally people decorate their trees on Christmas Eve – that's December 24th. They take down the decorations twelve days later, on Twelfth Night (January 6th). An older tradition is Christmas mistletoe. People put a piece of this green plant with its white berries over a door. Mistletoe brings good luck, people say. Also, at Christmas British people kiss their friends and family under the mistletoe. Charles Dickens' film and cartoon versions of his novel *A Christmas Carol* are shown nearly every year on British television. It is the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, a rich but miserly old man. He learns to become more benevolent when he is visited on Christmas Eve by three ghosts who show him what the consequences of his meanness will be if he doesn't change. 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". Practising Christians usually attend Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and go to church again on the morning of Christmas Day. British children don't open their presents on December 24th. Father Christmas brings their presents in the night. Then they open them on the morning of the 25th. There's another name for Father Christmas in Britain – Santa Claus. That comes from the European name for him – Saint Nicholas. In

the traditional story he lives at the North Pole. But now he lives in big shops in towns and cities all over Britain. Well, that's where children see him in November and December. Then on Christmas Eve he visits every house. He climbs down the chimney and leaves lots of presents. Some people leave something for him, too. A glass of milk and some biscuits, for example. In Britain the most important meal on December 25th is Christmas dinner. Nearly all Christmas food is traditional, but a lot of the traditions are not very old. For example, there were no turkeys in Britain before 1800. And even in the nineteenth century, goose was the traditional meat at Christmas. But not now. A twentieth-century British Christmas dinner is roast turkey with carrots, potatoes, peas, Brussels sprouts and gravy. There are sausages and bacon too. Then, after the turkey, there's Christmas pudding.

Boxing Day – December 26th is Boxing Day. Traditionally boys from the shops in each town asked for money at Christmas. They went from house to house on December 26th and took boxes made of wood with them. At each house people gave them money. This was a Christmas present. So the name of December 26th doesn't come from the sport of boxing – it comes from the boys' wooden boxes. Now, Boxing Day is an extra holiday after Christmas Day.

Boxing Day Hunts – Traditionally Boxing Day is a day for foxhunting. The huntsmen and huntswomen ride horses. They use dogs, too. The dogs (fox hounds) follow the smell of the fox. Then the huntsmen and huntswomen follow the hounds. Before a Boxing Day hunt, the huntsmen and huntswomen drink hot wine. But the tradition of the December 26th hunt is changing. Now, some people want to stop Boxing Day hunts (and other hunts, too). They don't like foxhunting. For them it's not a sport – it's cruel.

New Year – In Britain, New Year's Eve is celebrated on 31 December when many people hold parties or go to pubs and night clubs. Many of the New Year traditions practised in Britain come from Scotland, where the festival is known as Hogmanay. The Celtic New Year was in October and was called Samhain, which means 'summer's end'. Bonfires were burned and people danced around them. During Roman times a new calendar was invented and the New Year was moved from March to January. At New Year gifts were made to friends and even to the Emperor. Funny costumes were worn at parties. All over the UK, people join hands at midnight and sing the Scottish song 'Auld Lang Syne' by Robert Burns. In Scotland the New Year is welcomed by the playing of bagpipes and the custom of 'first footing' – this involves visiting friends and relatives after midnight. It is lucky if the 'first footer' is a dark-haired man bringing a gift: a lump of coal and a bottle of whisky. New Year's Day is a bank holiday in the UK. In Britain a lot of people make New Year Resolutions on the evening of December 31st. For example, "I'll get up early every morning next year", or "I'll clean my shoes every day." But there's a problem. Most people forget their New Year Resolutions on January 2nd.

Ramadan and Id-ul-Fitr fall a few days earlier every year according to the western calendar, as the Muslims have a lunar calendar. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and is the month of fasting. Most Muslim people do not eat

or drink between sunrise and sunset during Ramadan. This is to help them live as better Muslims. Id-ul-Fitr is the festival at the end of the month of Ramadan. On the last day of Ramadan, many people watch for the new moon, which marks the end of the fast. Id-ul-Fitr is a time for visiting friends and relatives, exchanging gifts and having a special meal. The Muslim population in the UK is currently 3,868,133 (2022 figures).

Chinese New Year – There is a big Chinese New Year festival in Chinatown in London every year. The Chinese New Year is celebrated in January or February. It is the most important festival in the Chinese year. The festivities traditionally include firecrackers and dragon dances. Special foods such as dumplings and cakes are eaten. Red is a lucky colour for the new year, and children are given lucky red envelopes filled with money.

Burns Night – Robert (or ‘Robbie’) Burns (1759–1796) is Scotland’s national poet. He wrote many poems and songs in Scottish dialect. His birthday (25 January) is celebrated in Scotland as Burns Night. Customs include eating haggis (a traditional Scottish dish of minced meat) and drinking whisky, playing the bagpipes and reciting poems by Burns. The Burns Night dinner is usually followed by singing and a ceilidh (traditional Scottish dancing).

Valentine’s Day is the festival of lovers and is celebrated on 14 February. People send an anonymous card to the person they would like to be their girlfriend or boyfriend. St. Valentine was an early Christian who was put to death for his beliefs. He is said to have left a message for his beloved on the wall of his prison cell, signed ‘Your Valentine’.

Pancake Day is the popular name for Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent starts. In the days when people fasted during Lent, Shrove Tuesday was the last day they could enjoy themselves. Pancakes are the traditional dish for Shrove Tuesday, eaten with lemon juice and sugar. The name Shrove Tuesday comes from the verb ‘to shrive’, which means ‘to make a confession’, as this was the day for people to confess their sins before Lent started. Although it is unusual for Christians to fast during Lent these days, many people give up something they enjoy during this period, often sweets, chocolate or alcohol.

Patron Saints’ Days – *St. David* is the patron saint of Wales and his feast day is 1 March. Little is known about his life, except that he was the primate of South Wales in the sixth century and founded many churches there. *St. David’s*, in South Wales, was the place of his shrine and became a place of pilgrimage. The feast day of *St. Patrick*, the patron saint of Ireland, is 17 March. Born in Wales in around 389 AD, he was kidnapped by Irish marauders at the age of 16. After six years he escaped to France and spent a few years in a monastery there. On his return to Britain he was ordained as a bishop and went to Ireland as a missionary. He established churches in the north of Ireland. *St. George’s* feast day is 23 April. He is the patron saint of England. A traditional story about him is that he killed a dragon to save a princess from being eaten. *St. Andrew* is the patron saint of Scotland. His feast day, 30 November, falls outside the spring period covered in this section of the book. He has been included here as all the other patron saints’ days occur in the spring.

Mother's Day – In Britain, Mother's Day is celebrated on the Sunday three weeks before Easter so it usually occurs in March. Mother's Day is the popular name for Mothering Sunday, the day when Christians used to return to the 'mother church' for the Sunday service. Later, when many young girls left home to become servants and boys went to be apprentices, the festival became a holiday for young people to visit their mothers. It was the custom to take flowers and gifts. Many young girls were given a 'simnel cake' to take home to their mothers.

Comic Relief is a recent addition to the festivals calendar. It began in the 1980s to raise money for charity projects in Britain and Africa. It takes place in March every two years (the last one was in 2021). There is a big build-up to Comic Relief day (which is a Friday) on television, and people all over the country organise fund-raising events. The idea is to make fund-raising fun so all the events must be humorous. Red noses (for people and for cars, similar to those worn by clowns) are sold, giving the day the popular name of 'Red Nose Day'.

April Fool's Day is on 1 April. This is a very old tradition from the Middle Ages (between the fifth and fifteenth centuries). At that time the servants were masters for one day of the year. They gave orders to their masters, and their masters had to obey. Now April Fool's Day is different. It's a day for jokes and tricks. People play tricks and practical jokes on their friends. If the friends fall for the joke, they are 'April Fools'. Traditionally, the tricks must be played before midday. If someone plays an April Fool's trick after midday, he or she is the fool.

Shakespeare's Birthday – Every year the anniversary of the birth of William Shakespeare is celebrated in Stratford-upon-Avon, where he was born on April 23, 1564. Flags are hung in the main street; people wear sprigs of rosemary (for remembrance) in their button-holes. A long procession goes along the streets to the church where everyone in the procession puts a wreath or a bouquet, or just one flower at the poet's grave. In the evening there is a performance of the chosen Birthday Play in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. In London, the Aldwych Theatre which has close ties with the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, holds international Shakespeare festivals, during which famous companies from abroad, including the Comedie Francaise from Paris, the Schiller Theatre of Berlin, the Abbey Theatre from Dublin, and others, perform Shakespeare's plays.

Easter – Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter and celebrates the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem. Small crosses made of palm leaves are given to church-goers to mark the occasion. Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter and commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples. It is the day when the Queen/King gives small purses of money to some specially chosen people. This tradition is over 1,000 years old. At one time the king or queen washed the feet of poor, old people on Maundy Thursday. That stopped in 1754. Good Friday is the Friday before Easter Sunday. On Good Friday, Christians remember when Jesus died on the cross, i.e. Good Friday commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus. The name comes from 'God' rather than 'good'. Easter Sunday is the day for

celebrating Jesus's rising from the dead. It falls on the first Sunday after the spring full moon, in March or April. Chocolate Easter eggs are given to children on this day. Sometimes people hide Easter eggs and children look for them. Easter Monday, the day after Easter, is a bank holiday in the UK, as is Good Friday.

May Day – The first day of May is traditionally the festival of the coming of spring. It is usually celebrated with Maypole dancing and Morris dancing. In some towns a May Queen is elected. The May Queen is a beautiful girl who is crowned with a garland of flowers and then goes on a procession around the town. The first Monday in May is a bank holiday in the UK.

Sports Day – Every school in the UK has a sports day in June or July, shortly before the summer holidays. The event usually takes up a whole day and parents come to watch. Traditional races for primary school children include the 'egg and spoon race' (running while holding an egg on a spoon), 'the three-legged race' (in which two people run with their adjacent legs tied together) and the 'obstacle race'. Secondary school pupils compete in athletics events, such as running races, the high jump and long jump and javelin throwing.

The University Boat Race – Oxford and Cambridge are Britain's two oldest universities. In the nineteenth century, rowing was a popular sport at both of them. In 1829 the universities agreed to have a race. They raced on the river Thames and the Oxford boat won. That started a tradition. Now, every spring, the University Boat Race goes from Putney to Mortlake on the Thames. That's 6.7 kilometres. The Cambridge rowers wear light blue shirts and the Oxford rowers wear dark blue. There are eight men in each boat. There's also a "cox". The cox controls the boat. Traditionally coxes are men, but Susan Brown became the first woman cox in 1981. She was the Cox for Oxford and they won.

Summer Fête – Many schools, churches and other organisations, such as the boy scouts and girl guides, hold a fund-raising summer fête in June or July. There are stalls selling home-baked cakes, crafts and second-hand items. There are always games at the fête. Popular games include: the 'tombola', in which people pick numbered tickets to try and win a prize; 'guess the weight of the cake', in which people try to win the cake (variations include 'guess the name of the doll', 'guess how many coins in the jar', etc.); and 'hoopla' (in which people try to throw a hoop over the prizes). Food and drinks are also sold and nowadays there is often a barbecue.

Father's Day is the third Sunday in June. It is a new festival, introduced to provide fathers with a similar occasion to Mother's Day. Children give their fathers cards and presents.

Royal Ascot – Ascot is a small, quiet town in the south of England. But in June for one week it becomes the centre of the horse-racing world. It's called Royal Ascot because the Queen always goes to Ascot. She has a lot of racehorses and likes to watch racing. But Ascot week isn't just for horseracing. It's for fashion, too. One woman, Mrs Gertrude Shilling, always wears very big hats.

Wimbledon – The world's most famous tournament is Wimbledon. It started at a small club in south London in the nineteenth century. Now a lot of the

nineteenth century traditions have changed. For example, the women players don't have to wear long skirts. And the men players don't have to wear long trousers. But other traditions haven't changed at Wimbledon. The courts are still grass, and visitors still eat strawberries and cream. The language of tennis hasn't changed either. Did you know that "love" (zero) comes from "l'oeuf" (the egg) in French?

The London to Brighton Vintage Car Rally – "Vintage" cars have to be more than fifty years old and in very good condition. Lots of people keep or collect vintage cars. And on the first Sunday in November there's a race or "rally" for them. It starts in London and it finishes in Brighton, a town on the south coast of England. That's a distance of seventy kilometres. Before 1896 a man with a red flag had to walk in front of cars. In 1896 that changed. A group of happy drivers broke their flags and drove to Brighton. There they had a party. Now the rally is a sporting tradition. A lot of the people in the rally wear "vintage" clothes, too. In a 1910 car, for example, the driver and passengers wear 1910 hats and coats.

The Edinburgh Festival –The Edinburgh International Festival is held annually during three weeks in late August and early September. The Festival is quite international in its character, as it gives a varied representation of artistic production from many countries. Leading musicians of the world and world-famous theatre companies always take part in it. There are plays, concerts and exhibitions from countries all over the world. That's the "official" festival. But there's an "unofficial" festival, too. This is called the Edinburgh "Fringe". At the Fringe, visitors can see cheaper concerts and plays by students. The idea of the Festival originated in the first post war year. All over Europe rationing and restrictions were the order of the day, and hundreds of towns lay in ruins, and it seemed a good idea to shift people's attention from everyday needs to eternal values. The first Festival was held in 1947. And since that time the Edinburgh International Festival has firmly established its reputation as one of the important events of its kind in the world.

Summer Holidays – Schools break up for the long summer holidays in the third week of July. Children are then on holiday until the first week of September. Naturally this is the time when many families go on their annual holiday. Most British people go away for two weeks, usually abroad. Popular holiday destinations include Spain, Greece and Portugal.

The Proms – Do you like classical music? Every summer in London there are two months of special concerts at the Royal Albert Hall. These are the "Proms". Sir Henry Wood started the Proms (short for "promenade" concerts) in the nineteenth century. Now they're a tradition in British musical life. A lot of young people go to the Proms. They buy cheap tickets and stand up for the concerts. They are the "promenaders". There are seats too, but the tickets for those cost more. The music at the Proms comes from some of the best singers and orchestras in the world. And on the last night there's a big party at the Royal Albert Hall. People bring balloons and paper hats. The orchestra plays popular classical music and at the end everyone sings "Rule Britannia".

Notting Hill Carnival is a big Caribbean festival which takes place every year in Notting Hill in London. A lot of people in the Notting Hill area of London come from the West Indies – a group of islands in the Caribbean. Carnival is always on the August bank holiday weekend (the last Sunday and Monday in August). The first Carnival took place in August 1964 and was organised by some Notting Hill inhabitants from Trinidad. Since then, the Carnival has grown and now attracts nearly two million visitors every year. This is Europe’s biggest street carnival. And for two days in August, Notting Hill is the West Indies. There’s West Indian food and music in the streets. There’s also a big parade and people dance day and night. The Carnival procession includes dancers and music. The traditional Carnival music is played by steel bands.

Eisteddfods is an arts festival in Wales. People sing and read their poetry in the Welsh language. The Welsh name for these poets is “bards”. People also play music. The harp is very popular in Wales. You can always hear harp music at an Eisteddfod. But Eisteddfods aren’t just festivals. They’re also competitions to find the best singers, musicians and poets in Wales.

The Glorious Twelfth – The grouse is a small bird. It lives in the north of England and in Scotland. It tastes very good. But people can’t shoot grouse all the time. They can only shoot them for a few months of the year. And the first day of the grouse “season” is August twelfth. On that day, “the glorious twelfth”, hunters send their grouse to London restaurants. There, people wait for the first grouse of the year. But there’s good news for the grouse, too – the season ends on December tenth each year.

The Highland Games – This sporting tradition is Scottish. The Highland Games take place all over Scotland in late August and early September. In the Highlands (the mountains of Scotland) families, or “clans”, started the Games hundreds of years ago. Some of the sports at the Games are international: the high jump and the long jump, for example. But other sports happen only at the Highland Games. One is tossing the caber. “Tossing” means throwing, and a “caber” is a long, heavy piece of wood. In tossing the caber men lift the caber (it can be five or six metres tall). Then they throw a huge tree trunk in front of them as far as they can. At the Highland Games a lot of men wear kilts. These are traditional Scottish skirts for men. But they’re not all the same. Each clan has a different “tartan”. That’s the name for the pattern on the kilt. So at the Highland Games there are traditional sports and traditional clothes. And there’s traditional music, too, from Scotland’s national instrument – the bagpipes. The bagpipes are very loud. They say Scots soldiers played them before a battle. The noise frightened the soldiers on the other side. Other events include hammer throwing, the hill race, the tug-of-war (in which two teams pull on either end of a rope to try to pull the other team over a line marked on the ground), bagpipe-playing competitions and Scottish dancing competitions. The Highland Games end with a huge pillow fight in which everyone can take part.

The Lord Mayor’s Show – Every year there’s a new Lord Mayor of London. The Mayor is the city’s traditional leader. And the second Saturday in November is always the day for the Lord Mayor’s Show. This ceremony is over six hundred

years old. The Lord Mayor drives to the Royal Courts of Justice (near Fleet Street) in a coach. The coach is two hundred years old. It's red and gold and it has six horses. There's also a big parade. People make special costumes and act stories from London's history.

Royal Traditions

The changing of the guard – This happens every day at Buckingham Palace, the monarch's home in London. Soldiers stand in front of the palace. Each morning these soldiers (the "guard") change. One group leaves and another arrives. In summer and winter tourists stand outside the palace at 11.30 every morning and watch the Changing of the Guard.

Swan Upping – Here's a very different royal tradition. On the River Thames there are hundreds of swans. A lot of these beautiful white birds belong, traditionally, to the king or queen. In July the young swans on the Thames are about two months old. Then the Queen/King's swan keeper goes, in a boat, from London Bridge to Henley. She/He looks at all the young swans and marks the royal ones. The name of this strange but interesting custom is Swan Upping.

The Birthday Honours List and The New Year's Honours List – Twice a year at Buckingham Palace, the Queen/King gives titles or "honours", once in January and once in June. There are a lot of different honours. Here are a few: *C.B.E.* – Companion of the British Empire, *O.B.E.* – Order of the British Empire, *M.B.E.* – Member of the British Empire (These honours began in the nineteenth century. Then Britain had an empire). *Knighthood* – a knight has "Sir" before his name. A new knight kneels in front of the Queen/King. She/He touches first his right shoulder, then his left shoulder with a sword. Then she/he says: "Arise, Sir. . . [his first name]", and the knight stands. *Peerage* – a peer is a lord. Peers sit in the House of Lords. That's one part of the Houses of Parliament. The other part is the House of Commons. Peers call the House of Commons "another place". *Dame/Baroness* – these are two of the highest honours for a woman.

The State Opening of Parliament – Parliament, not the Royal Family, controls modern Britain. But traditionally the Queen/King opens Parliament every autumn. She/He travels from Buckingham Palace to the Houses of Parliament in a gold carriage – the Irish State Coach. At the Houses of Parliament the Queen/King sits on a "throne" in the House of Lords. Then she/he reads the "Queen/King's Speech". At the State Opening of Parliament the Queen/King wears a crown.

The Order of the Garter Ceremony has a long history. King Edward III started the Order in the fourteenth century. At that time, the people in the Order were the twenty-four bravest knights in England. Now the knights of the Order aren't all soldiers. They're members of the House of Lords church leaders or politicians. There are some foreign knights too. For example, the King of Norway, the Grand Duke of Luxembourg and the Emperor of Japan. They're called Extra Knights of the Garter. The Queen/King is the Sovereign of the Order of the Garter. In June the Order has a traditional ceremony at Windsor Castle. All the

knights walk from the castle to St George's Chapel, the royal church at Windsor. They wear the traditional clothes or "robes" of the Order. These robes are very heavy. In fact King Edward VIII once called them "ridiculous". But they're an important part of one of Britain's oldest traditions.

The Queen/King's Christmas Speech – On Christmas Day at 3.00 in the afternoon, the monarch makes a speech on radio and TV. It's ten minutes long. In it she talks to the people of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is a large group of countries. In the past they were all in the British Empire. Australia, India, Canada and New Zealand are among the 49 members. The B.B.C. (the British Broadcasting Corporation) sends the Queen/King's speech to every Commonwealth country. In her/his speech the monarch talks about the past year. Traditionally in speeches, kings or queens say "we", not "I". Queen Elizabeth II didn't do this. She said "My husband and I", or just "I". The Queen didn't make her speech on Christmas Day. She filmed it a few weeks before. Then she spent Christmas with her family at Windsor. Did she watch the speech on TV? Nobody knew.

Food and Drink

The English Breakfast – In a real English breakfast you have fried eggs, bacon, sausage, tomato and mushrooms. Then there's toast and marmalade. There's an interesting story about the word "marmalade". It may come from the French "Marie est malade", or "Mary is ill." That's because a seventeenth-century Queen of Scotland, Mary Queen of Scots, liked it. She always asked for French orange jam when she was ill.

Pancakes – British people eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday in February or March. For pancakes you need flour, eggs and milk. Then you eat them with sugar and lemon. In some parts of Britain there are pancake races on Shrove Tuesday. People race with a frying pan in one hand. They have to "toss" the pancake, throw it in the air and catch it again in the frying pan.

Haggis is a traditional food from Scotland. You make it with meat, onions, flour, salt and pepper. Then you boil it in the skin from a sheep's stomach. In Scotland, people eat haggis on Burns Night. Robert Burns (Scots people call him "Rabbie" Burns), was a Scottish poet in the eighteenth century. Every year Scots people all over the world remember him and read his poems.

Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding – This is the traditional Sunday lunch from Yorkshire in the north of England. It is now popular all over Britain. Yorkshire pudding is not sweet. It's a simple mixture of eggs, flour and milk, but it's delicious. Two common vegetables with roast beef and Yorkshire pudding are Brussels sprouts and carrots. And of course there's always gravy. That's a thick, brown sauce. You make gravy with the juice from the meat.

Tea is Britain's favourite drink. It's also a meal in the afternoon. You can eat tea at home or in a hotel. Tea at the Ritz hotel in London is very good. You can drink Indian or China tea. There are cucumber sandwiches and scones. (Scones are plain cakes. You eat them with jam and cream). There are chocolate cakes and cream cakes too.

Christmas Pudding – Some people make this pudding months before Christmas. A lot of families have their own Christmas pudding recipes. Some, for example, use a lot of brandy. Others put in a lot of fruit or add a silver coin for good luck. Real Christmas puddings always have a piece of holly on the top. Holly bushes and trees have red berries at Christmas-time, and so people use holly to decorate their houses for Christmas. The holly on the pudding is part of the decoration. Also, you can pour brandy over the pudding and light it with a match.

Hot Cross Buns – The first Christians in Rome made hot cross buns two thousand years ago. But now they're an Easter tradition in Britain. Here's a story about hot cross buns. In 1800 a widow lived in a house in East London. Her only son was a sailor and went to sea. Every year she made hot cross buns and kept one for him. He never came back, but she kept a bun for him every year. Then, after many years, she died. Now, her house is a pub. It's called "The Widow's Son". For a long time people remembered the widow. Every Easter they put a hot cross bun in a special basket in the pub. Now the tradition is different. The owner of the pub sells the special hot cross bun. Then he gives the money to the British Sailors' Society.

Pubs are an important part of British life. People talk, eat, drink, meet their friends and relax there. They are open at lunchtime and again in the evening. But they close at 11.00 (10.30 on Sundays). This surprises a lot of tourists. But you can always go to Scotland – the pubs close later there. The word "pub" is short for "public house". There are thousands in Britain, and they nearly all sell pub lunches. One of these is a Ploughman's Lunch, a very simple meal. It's just bread and cheese. Pubs also sell beer. (British beer is always warm.) The traditional kind is called "real ale". That's a very strong beer from an old recipe. An important custom in pubs is "buying a round". In a group, one person buys all the others a drink. This is a "round". Then one by one all the other people buy rounds, too. If they are with friends, British people sometimes lift their glasses before they drink and say "Cheers". This means "Good luck". In the pubs in south-west England there's another traditional drink – scrumpy. You make scrumpy with apples, but it's not a simple fruit juice. It's very, very strong. Pub names often have a long tradition. Some come from the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Every pub has a name and every pub has a sign above its door. The sign shows a picture of the pub's name.

Superstitions

Do you believe in good luck and bad luck? Most people in the world have some superstitious. These are a few British superstitious with long traditions.

Good Luck

- Black cats are lucky.
- Clover is a small plant.
- Usually it has three leaves, but a few have four. A clover with four leaves brings good luck.

- A horseshoe over the door of a new home brings good luck. But the horseshoe must be the right way up. The luck runs out of a horseshoe if it's upside down.
- On the first day of the month it's lucky to say "white rabbits".
- It's good luck to see two magpies (large black and white birds).
- Catch falling leaves in autumn and you'll have good luck. Every leaf means a lucky month in the next year.

Bad Luck

- Don't walk under a ladder.
- Don't walk past somebody on the stairs.
- The number thirteen is very unlucky (and Friday the thirteenth is a very unlucky date).
- Never open an umbrella in the house. That's very bad luck.
- Never break a mirror – that means seven years' bad luck.
- It's bad luck to see just one magpie.

Sayings

Here are ten British proverbs or sayings.

1. *Nothing ventured nothing gained.*
You have to try or you won't get anything.
2. *One man's meat is another man's poison.*
People often don't like the same things.
3. *The other man's grass is always greener.*
You always think that other people's lives are better than yours.
4. *Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.*
Don't question good luck.
5. *Every cloud has a silver lining.*
There's always something good in bad times.
6. *It's no use crying over spilt milk.*
Don't be too sad after a small accident.
7. *Out of the frying pan, into the fire.*
From one problem to another.
8. *Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.*
Stupid people do things that other people never do.
9. *You can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink.*
You can give a person a chance, but you can't make him or her take it.
10. *A stitch in time saves nine.*
Act early and you can save a lot of trouble.

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