

ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГА  
КОМИТЕТ ПО ОБРАЗОВАНИЮ

Санкт-Петербургское государственное бюджетное нетиповое  
образовательное учреждение  
«Центр регионального и международного сотрудничества»

«ПРИНЯТО»  
Педагогическим советом  
Протокол № 1

от «25» августа 2020г.

«УТВЕРЖДЕНО»

Приказом от «25» августа 2020г.

№ 39 У/Д

Директор



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**АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК**  
**СТРАНОВЕДЕНИЕ**  
**Учебно-методическое пособие**

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Санкт-Петербург  
2020

## **От составителя**

Настоящее учебно-методическое пособие по английскому языку предназначено для аудиторной и самостоятельной работы обучающихся.

Материалом для данного практикума послужили аутентичные тексты из британских источников. Тематика текстов охватывает основные аспекты социально-политической и культурной жизни Великобритании.

Тексты значительны по объему, информационно и лексически насыщены. Работа с текстовым материалом и выполнение прилагаемых заданий позволяет обучающимся приобрести навыки всех видов чтения: ознакомительного, поискового и с полным пониманием прочитанного.

Усвоение страноведческого материала, содержащегося в текстах, способствует расширению кругозора обучающихся и обеспечивает в будущем более эффективную коммуникацию с носителями языка в разных сферах общения.

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# Chapter I. Kingdom of Great Britain

## Text 1

### English - the International Language

English is part of the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family of languages. It is spoken as a native language by around 377 million and as a second language by around 375 million speakers in the world. Speakers of English as a second language will soon outnumber those who speak it as a first language.

Around 750 million people are believed to speak English as a foreign language. English has an official or a special status in 75 countries with a total population of over 2 billion.

The domination of the English language globally is undeniable. English is the language of diplomacy and international communications, business, tourism, education, science, computer technology, media and Internet. Because English was used to develop communication, technology, programming, software, etc, it dominates the web. 70% of all information stored electronically is in English.

British colonialism in the 19th century and American capitalism and technological progress in the 20th century were undoubtedly the main causes for the spread of English throughout the world.

The English language came to British Isles from northern Europe in the fifth century. From the fifteenth century, the British began to sail all over the world and became explorers, colonists and imperialists. They took the English language to North America, Canada and the Caribbean, to South Africa, to Australia and New Zealand, to South Asia (especially India), to the British colonies in Africa, to South East Asia and the South Pacific.

The USA has played a leading role in most parts of the world for the last hundred years. At the end of the 19th century and first quarter of the 20th, it welcomed millions of European immigrants who had fled their countries ravaged by war, poverty or famine. This labor force strengthened American economy. The Hollywood film industry also attracted many

foreign artists in quest of fame and fortune and the number of American films produced every year soon flooded the market. Before the Treaty of Versailles (1919), which ended the First World War between Germany and the Allies, diplomacy was conducted in French. However, President Woodrow Wilson succeeded in having the treaty in English as well. Since then, English started being used in diplomacy and gradually in economic relations and the media.

The future of English as a global language will depend very largely on the political, economical, demographic and cultural trends in the world. The beginning of the 21st century is a time of global transition. According to some experts, faster economic globalization is going hand in hand with the growing use of English. More and more people are being encouraged to use English rather than their own language. On the other hand, the period of most rapid change can be expected to be an uncomfortable and at times traumatic experience for many people around the world. Hence, the opposite view, that the next 20 years or so will be a critical time for the English language and for those who depend upon it. The patterns of usage and public attitudes to English which develop during this period will have long-term effects for its future in the world.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. What were the reasons for English spreading all over the world in the last centuries?
2. How many people speak English as a native language?
3. When did English begin to be used in diplomacy ?
4. Why does English dominate in the Web?
5. What will the future of English as a global language depend on?
6. Describe the usage of English in different fields of economy and social life.

***Task 2. Give short summary of the text.***

## **Text 2**

### **Great Britain**

Britain, Great Britain, the United Kingdom (UK for short), England – these different names are sometimes used to mean the same thing, and they are sometimes used wrongly.

The name used at the United Nations is the “United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.” Strictly speaking, “Great Britain” should only be used as the name of the country, since England is only a part of Great Britain.

The United Kingdom includes four nations and only the people of England call themselves English. The others refer to themselves as Welsh, Scottish, or Irish. Both in Wales and in Scotland there are strong demands for more recognition of their national distinctions through the system of government. There are distinct Scottish customs and ways of speaking the English language. Scotland has always had a separate educational system as well as a legal system and local administration. Wales has been assimilated administratively. Most Scottish and Welsh people live in small and heavily concentrated areas of coal-mining and heavy industry.

England is highly industrialized and was the country in which the earliest development of modern industry took place. The original basis of British industry was coal-mining, and the early factories grew up not very far from the main mining areas. Glasgow and Newcastle became great centres of engineering and shipbuilding. Lancashire produced cotton goods and Yorkshire woollens, with Sheffield concentrating on iron and steel. Birmingham and the other towns developed light engineering. The world does not go to Britain to buy textiles or ships as it did in the past. A new light industry, much more diversified, has grown up in place of the old.

The central parts of the old industrial areas with their long rows of red-brick houses, are still rather ugly. A hundred years of winter fogs have left their mark. It was in and around Manchester in the middle of the 19th century that F.Engels found such impressive evidence of what he interpreted as the horrors of capitalism.

The British climate has a bad reputation, which is partly justified. What's the forecast in Britain? It's mainly showers and sunny intervals since there's too little sunshine in the country. The British love to complain about the weather. They practically always mention it when they greet people. However, there are rarely extremes of cold or heat in Britain and when temperatures drop below 0 or rise above 32°C nobody is prepared.

All over the world Britain is famous for its fogs. The smoke-fogs (smogs) of big towns were in the past really unhealthy and dangerous to traffic. Much of the smog was caused by the burning of coal in fire-places, though smoke from factories contributes to the trouble. A Clean Air Act was passed by Parliament in 1956, giving local councils power to control smog in big cities; the effects of the plan have been noticeable. But in everyday life for the business of heating houses, for example, many English people in country places remain loyal to the open coal fire although it causes much work and adds to the pollution of the air.

English people are famous for their love of tradition. They want their customs, like their buildings, their machinery, the operations of their institutions, their Church, to stay established. This reveals itself in their attitude to the monarchy, for example, which is the last link left of the Empire. Also the traditions associated with royal events attract many tourists into the country, thus bringing currency. Their love of traditions can be observed in practically all aspects of life and behaviour.

English people tend to be rather conservative, they love familiar things and take anything that is strange or foreign with suspicion. They have been slow to adopt rational reforms such as the metric system which came into general use in the UK in 1975 or decimal money which became the regular form in 1971.

English people prefer familiar things but they share a world in the 21-st century which is full of change, and new changes are taking place in the country from year to year.

***Task 1. Answer the following questions:***

1. What name of the country is used at the United Nations?



2. How many nations does the United Kingdom include?
3. Which parts of Great Britain are assimilated administratively with England?
4. Which industries were the first to develop in Britain? Which industries are developed now?
5. What customs are English people famous for?

### **Text 3**

#### **The British Parliament**

The British Parliament is the oldest in the world. It originated in the 12th century as Witenagemot, the body of wise councillors whom the King needed to consult pursuing his policy. The British Parliament consists of the House of Lords and the House of Commons and the Queen as its head.

The House of Commons plays the major role in law-making. It consists of Members of Parliament (called MPs for short). Each of them represents an area in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. MPs are elected either at a general election or at a by-election following the death or retirement. Parliamentary elections are held every 5 years and it is the Prime Minister who decides on the exact day of the election. The minimum voting age is 18. And the voting is taken by secret ballot. The election campaign lasts about 3 weeks,

The British parliamentary system depends on political parties. The party which wins the majority of seats forms the government and its leader usually becomes Prime Minister. The Prime Minister chooses about 20 MPs from his party to become the cabinet of ministers. Each minister is responsible for a particular area in the government. The second largest party becomes the official opposition with its own leader and "shadow cabinet". The leader of the opposition is a recognized post in the House of Commons.

The parliament and the monarch have different roles in the government and they only meet together on symbolic occasions, such as

coronation of a new monarch or the opening of the parliament. In reality, the House of Commons is the one of three which has true power.

The House of Commons is made up of six hundred and fifty elected members, it is presided over by the speaker, a member acceptable to the whole house. MPs sit on two sides of the hall, one side for the governing party and the other for the opposition. The first 2 rows of seats are occupied by the leading members of both parties (called "front benches") The back benches belong to the rank-and-file MPs. Each session of the House of Commons lasts for 160-175 days. Parliament has intervals during his work. MPs are paid for their parliamentary work and have to attend the sittings.

As mention above, the House of Commons plays the major role in law making. The procedure is the following: a proposed law ("a bill") has to go through three stages in order to become an act of parliament, these are called "readings". The first reading is a formality and is simply the publication of the proposal. The second reading involves debate on the principles of the bill, it is examination by parliamentary committee. And the third reading is a report stage, when the work of the committee is reported on to the house. This is usually the most important stage in the process. When the bill passes through the House of Commons, it is sent to the House of Lords for discussion, when the Lords agree it, the bill is taken to the Queen for royal assent, when the Queen signs the bill, it becomes act of the Parliament and the Law of the Land.

The House of Lords has more than 1000 members, although only about 250 take an active part in the work in the house. Members of this Upper House are not elected, they sit there because of their rank, the chairman of the House of Lords is the Lord Chancellor. And he sits on a special seat, called "WoolSack" The members of the House of Lords debate the bill after it has been passed by the House of Commons. Some changes may be recommended and the agreement between the two houses is reached by negotiations.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. How old is the British Parliament?
2. The British Parliament has two Houses. What are their names?
3. What is the difference between the two Houses? Which of them is more important?
4. What term are the Members of Parliament elected for?
5. How many MPs does the House of Commons consist of?
6. Through what procedure is the bill passed?
7. For what term are the members of the House of Lords elected?

## **Text 4**

### **Classes in Britain**

In Britain there traditionally were 3 classes: upper-, middle- and working. The upper possessed wealth, the middle were the professionals, administrators, businessmen. The working class consisted of manual workers with poor wages. Then “middle class” gradually began to grow. Sociologists even began to talk about “upper middle class” and “lower middle class”.

Now people are divided in many other ways according to kinds of work, relationship between jobs etc. In the early 70s sociologists devised a new scale, according to which there are 7 basic classes: Class 1 includes property owners, managers in large establishments, higher-grade administrators in government, university lecturers, most doctors etc.; class 2 involves lower-grade administrators and officials, managers in smaller business, school teachers, junior doctors, social workers etc.; class 3 consists of non-manual employers: clerks and other office workers, salesmen (they are called “white collar labour force”); class 4: small businessmen, farmers, self-employed skilled workers; class 5: lower-grade technicians, supervisors of manual workers; class 6: skilled manual workers; class 7: unskilled manual workers.

Classes 1 and 2 are seen as most desirable groups with the best opportunities and attractive work. When people from these classes retire, they usually receive a pension, or (and) some allowances for housing,

travel etc.

Class affects even leisure activities. For example, opera, ballet, drama are visited almost exclusively by the educated middle (and certainly, upper) class. Most working class people also almost don't have books at home.

Social Welfare System. It comprises the National Health Service (NHS), Personal Social services, and the Social Security program.

Due to Industrial revolution a lot of hospitals were built with private subscriptions and were made increasingly available to the general population. Free "infirmaries" were provided under the Poor Law for the destitute, aged and infirm.

Rapid growth of towns in the 1st half of the 19th century caused an intensification of sanitary problems with consequent cholera, typhoid etc. A program of sanitary reform led to the passage of the Public Health Act in 1848, which, for the first time, established a comprehensive public health system under unified control and laid down minimum standards for its services. In 1875 was passed the second Public Health Act, upon which all subsequent health legislation has been based.

The Second World War precipitated reform in Health Service. The final plan of NHS was embodied in 1946 in the special Act. It started on 5 July 1948. It provided a complete general practitioner and hospital service from the community. Britain became the first country to offer free medical care for all.

Over 80% of the cost of the health service in Britain is paid through general taxation. The rest comes from NHS element in National Insurance contributions, paid by employed people, employers etc. and from charges from drugs and general dental treatment.

***Task 1. Match the words to their definitions:***

legislation	to leave job because of the age
infirmary	private cars, house that a person has
comprise	to have

wages	to include
possess	money given to retired people
property	money paid for work
retire	hospital
pension	a poor man
destitute	a code of laws in the country

***Task 2. Answer the questions:***

1. What traditional classes were there in Britain?
2. What are principals of modern division of the population in classes?
3. What classes have the best opportunities and good work?
4. Do all people in Britain have the same opportunities for leisure time?
5. What social services can be found in Britain?
6. When did British people get free medical care?
7. What are the main sources of health service payment?

**Text 6**

**A Guide to Visiting Britain  
The Do's and Don'ts of Social Etiquette**

As with any society, Britain has a standard set of rules which most citizens observe while mingling. Knowing some of these "do's" and "don'ts" will keep you from making a blundering fool of yourself when you spend time in England, Scotland or Wales.

**Do's**

Call or write in advance of visiting someone. Britons do not take kindly to visitors dropping by casually. It is considered very rude to intrude on one's home without giving proper notice. Be sure to make contact several days before you would like to have a visit. Many Brits keep schedules weeks in advance. However, do not make calls after 10:00 PM, as this is considered quite rude as well.

Shake hands with men and women alike upon meeting. Among the upper classes, there is still a propensity for giving a mild, casual kiss on

one or both cheeks when greeting, but this is not done regularly by the masses.

Keep conversations general. Avoid asking personal questions at all costs. Brits are fiercely protective of their privacy and will be careful to guard yours as well. Weather is the common introductory subject discussed by acquaintances. Let your native counterpart guide the conversation to more specific topics as he is comfortable.

Defer to elderly people or expectant ladies when boarding public transportation. This is common courtesy.

Be green conscious. Many Brits are exceedingly aware of the widening gap in the ozone layer and hold passionate views on the environment. Taking care to recycle and handle your trash responsibly will keep you in their good graces.

Tip above and beyond for exceptional service. Most taxi fares and restaurant bills will include a tip and protocol demands that you pay it without complaint. Establish a good reputation by giving extra incentive and reward for good service.

Hold a teacup by the handle and not in the palm of your hand when drinking and conversing.

Place your knife and fork down side by side on your plate when you have finished a meal.

Keep a variety of change with you when you travel on the public transport system. Tubes and trains often don't have a system by which you can obtain change if you only have large denominations of currency.

### **Don'ts**

Don't seek out services in shops, and never budge in line. Store keepers in Britain only serve one customer at a time. Things move at a slower pace than they do in the U.S. and Americans may find this lackadaisical approach to service to be irksome. You must wait your turn patiently. A sales associate will help you as he has time and not before.

Don't complain or be pushy in restaurants. Complaining in Britain is considered very bad form. The established mode of complaining at a restaurant is simply to not frequent that establishment a second time. Don't wave your hand at a waiter to be seated either, he will get to you when he has time.

Don't enter private areas of a home, ever! Also, never ask the price of an item found in a home, or request to use a person's home phone.

Don't pick at your teeth, belch, or make any other unpleasant noises or gestures while seated at a meal. Do not spit out bones, lick your fingers, slurp your soup, etc. Consider yourself in a refined society and remember your manners.

Don't stare at people while commuting. Britons are very private, reserved people. Being visually evaluated by a visitor is truly offensive. Keep your eyes on something of interest to you that is not another person.

Don't jaywalk. It is illegal to cross the street anywhere but at a designated zebra walk.

Don't stand still on the left side of an escalator. During high traffic times, you are likely to be shoved aside.

Don't leave your hotel room, hostel, or front door in your pajamas. Appearing in anything other than day clothes is considered crass and offensive.

Don't speak loudly on your cell phone in public.

Keep in mind that some of these social mores may be more relaxed in the outlying regions of Britain. Londoners and other large city residents are more irritated by inconsiderate tourists than those in the pastoral parts of the Kingdom. By using these do's and don'ts as a guide, you will likely make as favorable an impression on Britain as it does on you.

***Task 1. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?***

1. You don't need to make a phone call or write a letter if you want to visit somebody in their house. You can drop by casually.
2. Never shake hands with women when you meet them for the first time. You should kiss her on her cheek.
3. It's bad manners not to pay tips in a restaurant.
4. Have some change with you when travelling around the city by bus.
5. You should wave you hand to the waiter in a restaurant to have his attention.
6. Nobody minds you talking on the mobile phone on the bus or on the tube.

## **Text 7**

### **Scotland**

Scotland is a country that occupies the northern third of the island of Great Britain. It is part of the United Kingdom, and shares a land border to the south with England. It is bounded by the North Sea to the east, the Atlantic Ocean to the north and west, and the North Channel and Irish Sea to the southwest. In addition to the mainland, Scotland consists of over 790 islands including the Northern Isles and the Hebrides. The population is not very large : 5,200,000 people live in the country.

Edinburgh, the country's capital and second largest city, is one of Europe's largest financial centres. It was the hub of the Scottish Enlightenment of the 18th century, which saw Scotland become one of the commercial, intellectual and industrial powerhouses of Europe.

The Kingdom of Scotland was an independent state until 1 May 1707 when it joined in a political union with the Kingdom of England to create a United Kingdom of Great Britain. This union was the result of the Treaty of Union agreed earlier and put into effect by the Acts of Union that were passed by the Parliaments of both countries despite widespread protest across Scotland. Scotland's legal system continues to be separate from those of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland; Scotland still constitutes a distinct jurisdiction in public and in private law. The continued independence of Scots law, the Scottish education system, and the Church of Scotland have all contributed to the continuation of Scottish culture and Scottish national identity since the Union. Although Scotland is no longer a separate sovereign state, the constitutional future of Scotland continues to give rise to debate.

### **Edinburgh**

The capital city of Scotland, is one of the main tourist areas in Great Britain, due to its historic and cultural complexity. A true centre of the Scottish culture, Edinburgh stands out as the owner of one the finest collections of medieval and



Georgian architecture, as well as the seat of many stone tenements that contribute to its cultural strength.

Once a Roman military fortification, the settlement was conquered by the Anglo tribes, and the very name of the city dates back to that mighty period, as it means Edwin's fort. The termination "burgh" in the name is the Saxon equivalent of the German "burg" as it could refer to both the fortification as such or to a group of buildings or a town.

The main remnant of Edinburgh's past is the Old Town that has maintained the same medieval plan; here many of the Reformation buildings have a high preservation level. The main feature of the Old Town is the presence of an impressive number of squares marking the spots of major historic buildings.

The city has all the beauty of a medieval town with the castle perched up a hill and with the rest of the main streets running down from it. Definitely, a main tourist attraction, the castle is considered Scotland's symbol, since evidence shows inhabitation levels on this site that date back to the 9th century BC. It also Houses the Royal Scots Regiment whose function is mainly ceremonial.

There is one other sight in Edinburgh that is just as famous as the Castle: Arthur's Seat, a group of hills in Holyrood Park situated right in the middle of Edinburgh. With an excellent panoramic view, this area is very popular for tourists who want to climb and walk over a place full of legend where once King Arthur might have trodden, given the fact that one of the hills is named after him.

However, beyond all the history sites and culture laden buildings, there is one particular thing about Edinburgh that attracts millions of tourists every year: the annual Festivals. There is an Official Festival for theatre, opera and classic music. Every August at the beginning of a Fringe Festival the population of the city doubles to see a big variety of plays ,concerts, dance performances and films. Other famous events are the Edinburgh International Festival, The

Military Tattoo-a parade held in Edinburgh Castle and the International Film Festival.

No matter which time of the year you're visiting Edinburgh, there is certainly something to tempt you. Visitors will always have some entertainment options to choose from, as the festivals cover the entire year not just summer. There is an Official Festival for theatre, opera and classic music, and a Fringe Festival, where visitors see a big variety of plays, concerts, dance performances and films. There are great jazz performances and modern art shows, usually advertised in advance.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. Was Scotland always a part of Great Britain?
2. Does the country have its own legislation system?
3. What compiles the national identity of Scotland?
4. Why is Edinburgh a tourist attraction?
5. What is the main feature of the Old Town in the city?
6. What is considered as Scotland symbol?
7. What festivals can be found in the country?

**Text 8**

**The Mystery of Wales**

To the west of England lies a small, almost secret country called Wales. It is a land of green and grey: green fields, valleys and hills; grey mountains and sky, grey mining villages and grey stone castles.

The story of the Welsh people is one of determined resistance to invaders -the Romans, Saxons, Vikings, Normans and finally the English. After the fall of the Roman Empire in 410 AD, the barbarian Anglo-Saxons invaded Britain. Legendary kings and princes, like King Arthur, won important victories against the Saxons, but gradually these original 'Britons' were pushed west, into the hills and mountains of Wales. Welsh princes

fought hard against the English, but Wales was finally conquered. In 1301 Edward I gave his son the title of Prince of Wales and in 1536 Wales was united with England.

Despite the conquest, Wales has maintained its unique culture and strong national identity, particularly through its language. Welsh, a Celtic language, very different from English, is one of the oldest languages in Europe. However, in the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century, the Welsh language declined. The British government made English the official language and English was the only language allowed in schools. The number of Welsh speakers went down from 80% to under 20% of the population. Since the 1960s, though, there has been a revival of the Welsh language. Welsh is also an official language, it is taught in schools and there is a Welsh language TV channel.

A tradition of storytelling, poetry and singing began in the castles of the Welsh princes in the middle ages and continues today. Every year ‘eisteddfods’ are held around the country. An ‘eisteddfod’ is a meeting of poets and singers who take part in competitions. As well as literature in the Welsh language, Wales has produced important poets in English such as Dylan Thomas and R.S. Thomas. Famous actors include Richard Burton, Sir Anthony Hopkins and Catherine Zeta-Jones. Wales is a musical nation and choirs are important. Nowadays, when the national rugby team plays in Cardiff, 80,000 voices can be heard singing the Welsh hymn ‘Bread of Heaven’.

The flag of Wales, with its red dragon, is one of the oldest in the world. It was brought to Britain by the Romans. The patron saint of Wales is St David. St David converted Wales to Christianity and established the Welsh church. The leek is another symbol of Wales. According to legend, St David ordered his soldiers to wear them on their helmets before the Welsh fought a victorious battle over the Saxons.

***Task 1. Which parts of the text correspond to the following headings?  
Match the following headings with the sections of the text below:***

- Symbols of Wales

- Welsh History
- Welsh Culture
- The Welsh Language

***Task 2. Answer the questions:***

1. What is the population of Wales?
2. What city is the capital of Wales?
3. What is the official language of Wales?
4. What is the national symbol of Wales: a dragon and a leek; lion and a rose, a horse and a tree?
5. Why is Wales called an 'almost secret' country?

**Text 9**

**Celtic rules**

The Corrs' second album, *Talk on Corners*, was one of the most popular albums of the nineties, along with international bestsellers by Enya. The success of the Irish dance musical, *Lord of the Dance*, made its creator, Michael Flatley, one of the richest performers in show business. And veteran group the Chieftains, who began playing in pubs, now give sell-out concerts at major venues all over the world. What do they have in common? They are all Irish. Celtic music is clearly having some of its best moments. In fact, with Irish pubs opening all over the world, Irish music is played from Kiev to Katmandu. Most of the music you hear in them is traditional dance music - and you are expected to dance. An Irish music session is not a spectator sport! If you don't participate, you'll miss out on the 'craic' - the most exciting moments of the evening.

Of course, Irish music has its quieter moods. Some people say that the harp, a national symbol, has magical powers. Another national instrument is the Uilleann pipes, a kind of sophisticated bagpipes, which featured in the

film Titanic. There is a local saying that it takes ‘seven years of learning, seven years of practising, and seven years of playing’ to master them. The violin, or ‘fiddle’, is played all over the country.

Music is an important new export of Irish culture, but writers are doing well, too. In the past, Ireland has produced some of the best writers and poets in the English language; people like Jonathan Swift, James Joyce, W.B. Yeats, George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde. More recently, the poet Seamus Heaney won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995, and Roddy Doyle received praise throughout Europe for his novels.

Not to be left out, the Irish film scene is looking good. The government has created a fund for films about (and produced in) Ireland, and actors such as Liam Neeson and Pierce Brosnan are international stars. Among the films you should watch are My Left Foot, which won two Oscars, In the Name of the Father and Michael Collins.

***Task 1. Read the text about Ireland and match these titles with the paragraphs:***

- a Dance Music \_\_\_\_\_
- b Worldwide Success \_\_\_\_\_
- c Irish Cinema \_\_\_\_\_
- d Traditional Instruments \_\_\_\_\_
- e Irish Writers \_\_\_\_\_

***Task 2. Read the text again and say if these sentences are true (T) or false (F)?***

- a) The Chieftains have always played to large audiences.
- b) The best way to appreciate Irish dance music is to sit and to listen.
- c) The Uilleann pipes are easy to play.
- d) Many great names in English Literature were Irish.
- e) The Irish government helps the Irish film industry.

## **Chapter II. London and its Sights**

### **Text 1**

#### **London**

##### **Capital City**

London is the largest urban area and capital of England and the United Kingdom. London is the home of the Government of the United Kingdom which is located around the Houses of Parliament in Westminster. Many government departments are located close to Parliament, particularly along Whitehall, including the Prime Minister's residence at 10 Downing Street.

The British Parliament is often referred to as the "Mother of Parliaments" because it has been the model for most other parliamentary systems, and its Acts have created many other parliaments.

An important settlement for two millennia, London's history goes back to its founding by the Romans. Since its settlement, London has been the centre of many important movements and phenomena throughout history such as the English Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, and the Gothic Revival. In light of this, the city has become one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world which has increased over the years due to the city's economic growth. London boasts four World Heritage Sites; these are Palace of Westminster, the Tower of London, the historic settlement of Greenwich, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

It is one of the world's leading business, financial, and cultural centres, and its influence in politics, education, entertainment, media, fashion and the arts all contribute to its status as a major global city.

London has an official population of 7,512,400 (as of mid-2006) within the boundaries of Greater London. London's diverse population draws from a wide range of peoples, cultures, and religions, and over 300 different languages are spoken within the city.

It is an international transport hub, with five major international airports serving the area and a large port. It serves as the largest aviation hub in the world, and the multi-terminal Heathrow Airport\* carries more international

passengers than any other airport in the world.

\*Heathrow Airport is an international airport in London. Heathrow is the largest airport in the UK, and it is 20 miles to the west of London.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. How old is London? Who was it founded by?
2. How big is it? What is the population of London?
3. What are the main tourist attractions in London?
4. What is Downing Street known for?
5. What is the name of London big international airport?

**Districts**

London's vast urban area is often described using a set of district names (e.g. Bloomsbury, Knightsbridge, Mayfair, Whitechapel, Fitzrovia). These are either informal designations, or reflect the names of superseded parishes and city wards. Such names have remained in use through tradition, each referring to a neighbourhood with its own distinctive character, but often with no modern official boundaries. Since 1965 Greater London has been divided into 32 London boroughs in addition to the ancient City of London.

London is one of the world's three largest financial centres (alongside New York and Tokyo) with a dominant role in several international financial markets, and more foreign banks and investment houses than any other centre. **The City** has its own governance and boundaries, giving it a status as the only completely autonomous local authority in London.

London's new financial and commercial hub is **the Docklands** area to the east of the City, dominated by the Canary Wharf complex. Other businesses locate in the City of Westminster, the home of the UK's national government and the famous Westminster Abbey.

**The West End** is London's main entertainment and shopping district, with locations such as Oxford Street, Leicester Square, Covent Garden and Piccadilly Circus acting as tourist magnets.

The West London area is known for fashionable and expensive

residential areas such as Notting Hill, Knightsbridge and Chelsea – where properties can sell for tens of millions of pounds. The average price for all properties in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is £894,000 with similar average outlay in most of Central London.

The eastern side of London contains **the East End and East London**. The East End is the area closest to the original Port of London, known for its high immigrant population, as well as for being one of the poorest areas in London.

The surrounding East London area saw much of London's early industrial development; now, brownfield sites throughout the area are being redeveloped as part of the Thames Gateway including the London Riverside and Lower Lea Valley, which is being developed into the Olympic Park for the 2012 Olympics.

***Task 2. Answer the questions:***

Which part of London ...

- a has its own governance?
- b is a new financial and commercial centre?
- c is main entertainment and shopping centre?
- d is known for fashionable and expensive residential areas?
- e has high immigrant population?
- f is going to be the Olympic Park soon?

**Text 2**

**Soho**

The name "Soho" is derived from a hunting call "so-ho" that huntsmen were heard to cry as they chased deer in royal parklands. It has been a cosmopolitan area since the first immigrants, who were French Huguenots, arrived in the 1680s. More French arrived escaping the revolution during the late 18th century, followed by Germans, Poles, and Italians. Soho is packed with continental food shops and restaurants. More



recently there have been a lot of a Chinese from Hong Kong. Gerrald Street, which is pedestrianalised, is the centre of London's Chinatown. It has restraunts, dim sum houses, Chinese supermarkets, and in the February, there are the New Year celebrations.

Many famous people have lived in Soho, including Mozart, Karl Marx, and the T.S.Eliot .It has a reputation for attracting artists, writers, poets, and people in the media. Shaftesbury Avenue is in the heart of London's theatre land, and there are endless clubs, pubs, and cafes.

There are also street markets, advertising agencies, clothes shops, music publishers, and recording studios, which makes it an exciting place to live and work. Piccadily Circus is like a magnet for young people from all over the world. They like to sit on the steps under the statue of Eros, celebrating the freedom and friendship of youth. It is said that if you wait long enough at Piccadily Circus, you'll meet everyone you've ever know!

**Task 1.** The text is divided into three paragraphs. What is the purpose of each paragraph?

**Task 2. Answer the questions:**

What's your favourite town or city? Why do you like it?

Which parts of it do you particularly like ?

**Task 3.** Give a description of your favourite part of a town or city.

### **Text 3**

#### **Buckingham Palace**

Buckingham Palace is The Official London Residence of the British Monarch .

Buckingham Palace is located in the City of Westminster. The first house built on the site of Buckingham Palace was a townhouse designed by William Wind in 1702 for the Duke of Buckingham. The Duke was a former Lord Chamberlain. His wife was an illegitimate daughter of the future King James II. Buckingham House was built of brick and stone. In

1742 the house passed to Sir Charles Sheffield after the death of the Duchess.

King George III bought the house from Sheffield in 1760 and it became known as “The Queen’s House.” Over the next decade, Sir William Chambers directed a renovation. The house was modernized and enlarged to accommodate the royal family.

In 1820 King George IV succeeded his father. Four years later Parliament approved funds for the king to commission a new building. The King asked his favorite architect, John Nash, to design the building. Nash wanted to build an entirely new palace, but the King wanted Nash to enlarge Buckingham Palace instead because, the King claimed, Nash was too old to build something new.

Work on Buckingham Palace began in 1825, but was delayed because of frequent mind changes on the part of both Nash and the King. As a result, the cost of the enlargement greatly exceeded the original estimate. When the King died in 1830, Nash was dismissed and work stalled. During the reign of King William IV and Queen Mary II, Edward Blore was named architect. He continued in this position during the reign of Queen Victoria.

Queen Victoria was the first sovereign to live at Buckingham Palace. King William IV died before the enlargement was complete. In 1840 she married Prince Albert and soon the palace’s inadequacies became apparent. A serious problem was the lack of nurseries. In addition, there were too few bedrooms for visitors. It was decided that a fourth wing was needed.

In 1911 the forecourt of the palace was formed. This forecourt is where the Changing the Guard ceremony takes place. In 1913 Sir Aston Webb was commissioned to reface the façade of the palace. He chose to use Portland Stone, which takes twelve months to prepare. Once it began, the refacing took only thirteen weeks to complete. During World War II, the palace was bombed seven times, the most serious of which destroyed the chapel. Today Buckingham Palace is nearly 830,000 square feet and contains 775 rooms.

Buckingham Palace is a symbol of the British Monarchy. All official business takes place at the palace, including investitures, state banquets, garden parties, and family portraits. In addition to housing Queen Elizabeth II and the Prince of Edinburgh, the palace is also the London residence of the Duke of York and the Earl and Countess of Wessex. Three hundred staff live at Buckingham Palace, including more than 200 domestic staff. The Palace has a police station and post office. During the year more than 50,000 people are invited as guests to various functions at the palace.

***Task 1. Decide if these sentences are true or false:***

1. In the 18th century the Queen's House was expanded for the Royal Family.
2. The King and Nash easily agreed on the design of a new Palace.
3. After George IV death the Queen asked Nash to continue the work.
4. Nobody lived in the Palace until Queen Victoria.
5. During World War II the Palace didn't suffer from bombing.
6. The visitors felt comfortable in the Palace because everybody had place to sleep.
7. There are thousands servants in the Palace.

***Task 2. Answer the questions:***

1. Where is the Palace situated?
2. What material was it built from?
3. Who bought the Palace in 1760?
4. What happened to the Palace during Queen Victoria reign?
5. What arrangements take place in the Palace?
6. Who lives in the palace now?
7. How many servants work there?

**Text 4**

**The Queen's Day**

The Queen's day begins when a maid tiptoes into her bedroom, opens

the curtains, lays out the clothes that the Queen will wear that day, and goes into the bathroom to run the water for the Queen's bath.

The Queen has breakfast with Prince Philip. They both go quickly through the newspapers as they eat their breakfast. An array of covered dishes sits on hotplates from which they can help themselves. No servant waits on them, so that they can chat privately and freely.

Breakfast finished, the Queen goes to her large sitting room, which is also her study. She then settles down to what is perhaps the most important of her royal duties, what she calls 'doing my boxes'. These contain all the reports, secret and otherwise, from government departments. She takes this job very seriously and never misses it, even when on holiday at Balmoral, in bed with flu, or abroad on a State visit.

Every year Buckingham Palace receives over 10,000 letters. While the Queen is working at her desk, one of her Private Secretaries brings her a basket of letters, for she likes to see every letter sent to her. Many are answered in her name, but she herself only writes private and personal letters to friends and relatives. The rest of the morning may be spent receiving people 'in audience': ambassadors, military personnel, bishops and so on.

Afternoons vary. Sometimes there may be official engagements in or close to London. Part of Monday afternoon is always reserved for her hairdresser. Other afternoons she may spend a couple of hours with her shoemaker, milliner or one of her three main fashion designers to plan her clothes for a forthcoming visit abroad.

Her designers have to keep a few basic points always in mind. There must not be too many buttons, for a quick change is often necessary and the Queen must be able to slip her clothes off and on very easily.

Colours should be bright and sharp so that she stands out in a crowd. Her hats must be small so that her face is not in shadow. Hemlines are 'weighted' so that her skirts will not be blown up by a sudden breeze. Shoes must be comfortable rather than fashionable for she may have to stand a long time in them.

People often ask what happens to her old clothes. Probably her favorite tartans and sweaters keep on being worn at Sandringham and Balmoral, but the people who know what happens to the other clothes are not going to give away the secret.

Every afternoon at teatime the Queen likes to feed her beloved Corgi dogs herself. Using a silver spoon and fork, she mixes chopped up dog meat and dog biscuits with a little gravy and puts it in their feeding bowls on the red carpet in the corridor outside her sitting room.

If there are no evening engagements (the Queen undertakes fewer of them these days) she will go to her study after dinner to deal with anything that has appeared on her desk since she was last there. Then she can take off her shoes, lie on the sofa and relax with her feet up. Sometimes she watches television if there is a programme that interests her - a good comedy show, a programme about horses and horse-racing, or a serial about one of her royal ancestors. If nothing interests her, she will do a crossword puzzle or chat with her husband. By half past ten it is usually time for bed.

***Task 1. Choose the right answer (a, b, or c), according to the text.***

1. While the Queen has breakfast ...
  - a) lots of servants wait on her.
  - b) one servant wait on her.
  - c) no servants wait on her.
2. Unless she is going out on an official visit, the Queen spends a couple of hours every morning ...
  - a) doing whatever she wants.
  - b) studying governments papers and reports.
  - c) looking after domestic matters in the Palace.
3. The Queen sees ...
  - a) every letter that is sent to her.
  - b) a random selection of the letters sent to her.
  - c) only letters from friends and relatives.

5. Clothes designers try to make sure her clothes are ...
- a) examples of the latest fashions.
  - b) as expensive as possible.
  - c) very practical.
6. What happens to the Queen's old clothes?
- a) they are sold for charity.
  - b) the Queen keeps them.
  - c) the answer to the question is a well kept secret.
7. The Queen's dogs are fed ...
- a) by the Queen herself.
  - b) by the head cook in the royal kitchens.
  - c) by a special dog servant.
8. If the Queen spends the evening at home ...
- a) she sometimes watches a comedy programme on television.
  - b) she only watches the news on television.
  - c) she never watches TV.

***Task 2. Answer the questions.***

1. Do you think the Head of State of your country leads a life similar to that of the Queen?
2. Do you think it is possible for the Queen to make close friendships?
3. Why is the Queen so fond of dogs? (She also loves horses.)
4. In Britain there is great public interest in the life of the Royal family. Why?

**Text 5**

**Westminster Abbey**

Westminster Abbey is more than any other church in Britain. It is the church of the nation and Commonwealth. Since William the Conqueror chose the new, then incomplete, Westminster Abbey for his coronation as king of his new subjects on Christmas Day, 1066, it has been the scene of the coronation, marriage and burial of British monarchs and a place of

tribute to Britain's heroes. The Abbey contains the bones of fifteen English kings (one of them a saint), five queens and those of a great many poets, statesmen and soldiers.

In Westminster Abbey are held great national services in times of national peril, such as prayers for the success of the evacuation of Dunkirk during the Second World War. In the Abbey are held great national services commemorating the nation's greatest victories, such as the Battle of Britain, when the nation, standing almost alone, withstood the merciless bombing of Hitler's air force. In the Abbey are held great national services remembering the nation's dead who fell in all its wars.

Although Westminster is a solemn place and a soaring and graceful offering to God, there are special delights for today's visitors. With the money from a world-wide appeal launched in 1953 by Sir Winston Churchill (now himself commemorated by a carved stone at the west end of the nave), the interior of the church has been thoroughly cleaned and the beautiful whiteness of the stone, long hidden by layers of London grime, has been revealed. Much of the Abbey's former colour has also been restored. The bosses and ribs of the vault are now regilded, the marble piers repolished and the choir screen and many of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century monuments repainted in brilliant hues.

So careful and complete has been the restoration of Westminster Abbey that it is often said that only the visitors of today see the building Henry III saw on that day in 1269 when it was reconsecrated by his order.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. What events of the Royal Family take place at the Westminster Abbey?
2. Only members of the Royal family were buried in the Church, didn't they?
3. What national services are held in the Abbey?
4. What are today's visitors delighted in Westminster by?

## **Text 6**

### **Trafalgar Square**

Trafalgar Square was built before any specific plans to commemorate Nelson's naval victory in 1805 had been made. Only an initiated letter to The Times newspaper resulted in the building of the 170 foot (52 metres) column. The unknown letter writer suggested that the square was a good site to honour Nelson's victory against the Spanish and French navies. The column was designed by William Railton and was built between 1839 and 1842. The 17 foot (5.3 metres) high statue was sculpted by E.H.Bailey. It was greatly criticized because people thought it was too simple. They forgot that no-one would be able to see Nelson's face!

People also criticized the height of the column, which they said spoilt the Whitehall view. One reason why it was so high was because people wanted it to rise above the Duke of York's 124 foot (37.8 metres) column in nearby Waterloo Place. A high column was built for him for a very good reason. The Duke of York died with debts of over £2 million and so it was suggested that he should be a safe height above his creditors.

In Trafalgar Square today, many tourists feed the pigeons and British people gather there for demonstrations and political rallies. On New Year's Eve, they often sing and dance in the fountains. Very few notice the small police station in the South-East corner. This is inside the hollow column of one of the lamps and if you are lucky, you might see a policeman stepping into it. This is the smallest police station in England and is just large enough for two policemen or a policeman and a policewoman. They have a direct telephone link with New Scotland Yard near Victoria Station and quietly keep an eye on Trafalgar Square when it is particularly full or busy.

#### ***Task 1. Decide if these sentences are true or false:***

1. The government decided to erect a monument in the square.
2. The square was built to commemorate Nelson's victory in the sea battle.
3. The design of the column was made by Bailey and Railton.



4. Citizens liked the column because of its beautiful decoration .
5. The Duke York's column was high to accentuate his significance to the city.
6. Nowadays people celebrate the New Year in Trafalgar Square.
7. Inside the column there is a large police station.
8. Two policemen keep an eye on Trafalgar square when it's overcrowded.

## **Text 7**

### **The Tower of London**

The Tower of London is a historic castle on the north bank of the River Thames in central London.

It was founded towards the end of 1066 as part of the Norman Conquest of England. The White Tower, which gives the entire castle its name, was built by William the Conqueror in 1078, and was a resented symbol of oppression, inflicted upon London by the new ruling elite. The castle was used as a prison since at least 1100, 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. There were several phases of expansion, mainly in the 12th and 13th centuries. The general layout established by the late 13th century remains despite later activity on the site.

The Tower of London has played a prominent role in English history. It was besieged several times and controlling it has been important to controlling the country. 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 the United Kingdom. From the early 14th century until the reign of Charles II, a procession would be led from the Tower to Westminster Abbey on the coronation of a monarch. In the absence of the monarch, the Constable of the Tower is in charge of the castle. This was a powerful and trusted position in the medieval period. In the late 15th century the castle was the prison of the Princes in the Tower.

Under the Tudors, the Tower became used less as a royal residence, and despite attempts to refortify and repair the castle its defences lagged behind developments to deal with artillery.

The peak period of the castle's use as a prison was the 16th and 17th centuries, when many figures fallen into disgrace, such as Elizabeth I before she became queen, were held within its walls. This use has led to the phrase "sent to the Tower". Despite its enduring reputation as a place of torture and death, only seven people were executed within the Tower before the World Wars of the 20th century. Executions were more commonly held on the notorious Tower Hill to the north of the castle, with 112 occurring there over a 400-year period.

In the latter half of the 19th century, institutions such as the Royal Mint moved out of the castle to other locations, leaving many buildings empty. Anthony Salvin and John Taylor took the opportunity to restore the Tower to what was felt to be its medieval appearance, clearing out many of the vacant post-medieval structures.

In the First and Second World Wars, the Tower was again used as a prison, and witnessed the executions of 12 men for espionage. After the wars, damage caused during the Blitz was repaired and the castle reopened to the public. Today the Tower of London is one of the country's most popular tourist attractions. It is cared for by the charity Historic Royal Palaces and is protected as a World Heritage Site.

### **Crown Jewels**

The Tower of London is home to the world famous British Crown Jewels. They have been kept at The Tower since the 14th century and are still in use by the Queen and the royal family today. Amongst the jewels you will see the largest cut diamond in the world (530 carats), the Cullinan I, which sits on top of the Queen's Sceptre.

### **Beefeaters**

The Tower of London tour guides are the Yeoman Warders who live at the Tower. They are better known as Beefeaters, which we think comes from when their job was to taste the king's food to check it wasn't poisoned. The Yeoman Warders are the experts on the Tower and are happy to answer your questions.

## **Ravens**

The Ravens are one of the 'must sees' for a trip to the Tower of London. Legend says that if the ravens ever leave then the monarchy will fall, the White Tower at The Tower of London will crumble and a great disaster will befall England. Ever superstitious, we don't take any chances and Ravens have lived at the Tower since Charles II was told this tale. They are even protected by a royal decree. Each of the ravens has a color-coded leg band. Pick up the Raven identification leaflet so you can check their names.

### ***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. When was the Tower founded?
2. Has the Tower ever been besieged?
3. Why has controlling of the Tower always been important?
4. Do people still live within the walls of the Tower?
5. What name are the Yeoman Warders also known as?
6. Which birds reside around the Tower grounds ?

## **Text 8**

### **Tower Bridge**

London's River Thames has twenty-seven bridges. Westminster Bridge, Waterloo Bridge, Vauxhall Bridge, London Bridge – they are all names from London's history. But Tower Bridge, the first bridge over the Thames as you travel to London from the sea, is the most famous of them all. What makes Tower Bridge so exciting? Why do visitors come from all over the world to see it?

The thing that is surprising about Tower Bridge is that it opens in the middle. It does this to let the big ships through to the Pool of London. If you are lucky enough to see the bridge with its two opening arms high in the air, you will never forget it.

There are wonderful things to see all round Tower Bridge, too. It is in one of the most interesting parts of London. On its south side are many tall, old buildings – warehouses – holding things that have come to London by ship and are waiting to be sold. On its north side stands the Tower of

London itself.

Although they look the same age, the Tower is almost a thousand years old, and Tower Bridge is less than one hundred. It was built in the 1890s. By 1850, everyone agreed that a bridge across the Thames near the Tower was most necessary. But the designers argued about the new bridge for another thirty years. They took so long because they had two big problems. The new bridge must look like the Tower – everyone said so. It must not look like a modern bridge. But because of the tall ships it was necessary to have a modern bridge. At last two very clever designers had the idea of an opening bridge. And they made it look like the old Tower, so everyone was happy.

The bridge took eight years to build and cost £900,000 – a lot of money in those days. But it was a wonderful success. It had equipment for every emergency. It had special horses to help with pulling, so that buses and other heavy things could get over the bridge quickly. It had special small boats – tugs – to help big ships in trouble under the bridge. There was so much traffic on the river that the bridge opened at least twelve times a day. A hundred years ago, the River Thames was London's busiest road.

Today big ships don't come so far up the Thames. Tower Bridge opens perhaps only twice a week, but the same wonderful machinery is still working. Green, yellow and red, the colourful wheels and engines look smart and new, not a hundred years old. They still lift the two heavy opening arms – each 1,000 tonnes – leaving seventy metres for the ships to go through. And they still can open and close the bridge in one-and-a-half minutes.

When the bridge is going to open, the traffic lights at both ends turn red. Road traffic must wait for river traffic. Once a London bus went through the red lights. The driver drove his fastest, and 'flew' the bus over the hole, just as the bridge was starting to open!

The bridge has two towers. Some of the lifting machinery is inside these towers. The walkways at the top go from one tower to the other. The idea was that people could cross by them when the bridge was open.

Things have changed at Tower Bridge. The horses have gone, of course, and so have the tugs: now they are no longer necessary. The bridge works by electricity. The beautiful wheels are part of a special exhibition for the public to visit. There is a restaurant in one of the towers, and a pub in the other. The walkways are open again. Fewer ships and more people use Tower Bridge.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. How many bridges are there in London?
2. What is special about the Tower Bridge?
3. How long did it take to build the bridge?
4. What buildings can be found around the Bridge?
5. What were horses and boats used for ?
6. How often was the Bridge opened in the past?
7. Do the engines and wheels look old today? Do they still work?
8. How much time does it take to open and close the Bridge?
9. How are things changing at the Tower Bridge now?

**Text 9**

**The British Museum**

The British Museum is the biggest in the world. Inside, you feel smaller than usual. Notices tell you about a hundred different things to see: clocks which have been telling the time for six hundred years, Roman money, some of the earliest books in the world, Shakespeare's own writing . . .

The story of the British Museum goes back three hundred years to one unusual man: Sir Hans Sloane, doctor to King George II. The doctor couldn't stop collecting - books, drawings, clothes, money, animals, flowers: things from all over the world. The doctor wanted everything to stay together when he died, so that people could come and look at it. The British Museum had begun. King George II gave his library, and the Museum started to grow. It has never stopped.

The first difficulty was finding a home. One idea was Buckingham

Palace, but the Palace wasn't big enough. Finally people found a larger building for the Museum in the middle of London. To pay for it, they bought tickets at £3 each.

The British Museum opened in 1759, six years after Sir Hans Sloane died. The doctor wanted people 'to enter freely'. But the Museum was afraid of letting everybody in. Assistants with guns stood at the doors. Only 'gentlemen' could visit the Museum and then they had to buy tickets. They also had to make two or three journeys to the Museum to ask for the ticket, and then they had to wait weeks or months before it came. Ladies could only come in pairs, and children were forbidden! And as the Museum was only open three days a week and only ten people could enter in an hour, there wasn't much time to see things. Visitors had to run through the rooms! But as nothing had a label, perhaps it didn't matter!

By about 1800, things began to get better. Wonderful statues, three thousand years old, arrived from Egypt. There were kings with animals' heads. There were strange lions with wings and men's faces. A Scotsman, Lord Elgin, brought back some of the oldest and most beautiful Greek sculptures in the world - girls with vases, horses and riders. When he found them, they had been lying on the ground, broken and forgotten. Lord Elgin saved all the pieces he could, spending thousands of pounds of his own money. During the Second World War, the Museum hid the Elgin sculptures in London's underground railway to keep them safe.

More and more people wanted to visit the Museum. George IV gave all his books, too – though the truth was that he secretly sold them to the Museum for £180,000! The 'King's Library' is the most beautiful of the new museum buildings.

New books as well as old ones arrived at the Museum a hundred years ago, and more people came to read them. The old reading rooms were crowded. The air was bad and readers got terrible headaches. The Librarian, Panizzi, like Sloane, wanted poor students, as well as rich men, to be able to learn. He got a free copy of every new book for the British Museum. Soon, there were three rows of books on every shelf and

hundreds of books on the floor. Something had to happen. So Panizzi himself designed the famous round Reading Room, with a beautiful high roof and forty kilometres of bookshelves. Some of the equipment was unusual. Cool air came up through small holes in the tables. Hot air in tubes underneath the floor kept readers' feet warm.

When the new Reading Room opened, there was a party with drinks and a large breakfast on the desks. Everybody said that the new Reading Room was wonderful! Since then, many famous men have written and studied there. And the Library is growing faster and faster: there are four kilometres of new shelves every year!

A lot of the Museum's work now is also scientific. New machines can find out how old things are - and how to mend them and keep them for the future. And Sir Hans Sloane would be happy to see what the British Museum does for its visitors today. It is open every day of the year, except for three holidays. Entrance is free. There are lots of special exhibitions and every day there are different films and talks, some of them for children. Small machines tell you about the Museum as you walk round it: you can look and listen at the same time. So if you are one of the British Museum's two million visitors this year, you have a lot to look forward to. Don't try to see it all too quickly. There is a life-time of looking in the British Museum.

***Task 1. Decide if these sentences are true or false:***

1. In the British Museum only pictures and sculptures are exhibited.
2. Doctor Hans Sloane gave all his books to the museum.
3. At first only noble people could visit the Museum.
4. All items had labels and visitors read them.
5. The Museum was opened 3 days a week, so few people managed to visit it.
6. Ancient statues were brought from Egypt.
7. At first there were so many books that they couldn't be accurately put on the shelves.
8. Panizzi didn't let poor students read books.

**Task 2. Answer the questions:**

1. When was the Museum opened?
2. Were women with children allowed to enter it?
3. From the beginning people spent much time in the Museum, didn't they?
4. What sculptures did Lord Elgin bring to the Museum?
5. What happened to the sculptures during the World War II?
6. Did first visitors pay entrance fee?
7. What were the first reading rooms like?
8. Who designed the famous round Reading Room? What was it like?
9. How does the Museum work today?
10. How many visitors come to the Museum every year? Are the tickets expensive?
11. Do you like visiting museums?
12. What museum did you visit? What did you like most of all there?

**Text 10**

**The London Zoo**

The giraffe family, the mountain sheep, and the river crocodile thinking about his lunch are living in the middle of London with 6,000 other animals at the London Zoo.

The Zoo opened in 1828. At first, there were only 200 animals, most of them a present from king George IV. Londoners wanted their Zoo to be as good as the one in paris. So they build it in a special garden in one of London's most beautiful parks – regent's Park. Animals arrived from all over the world to fill its twelve hectares.

Four of the first giraffes, after coming by ship up the River Thames, walked eight miles through London to London Zoo. Tommy, a small monkey, traveled on a London bus with his keeper. Queen Victoria sent the Zoo its first hippopotamus, Obaysch, from Egypt. Obaysch was very young and only drank milk, so a lot of sheep came to give him his fourty



litres of milk every day. Jumbo, one of the Zoo's first elephants, stood three and a half metres high – and still gives his name to anything big, like a jumbo jet.

The Zoo's new buildings were exciting, too. Its snake house and its aquarium (for fish) were the first in the world. Ships brought salt water to the aquarium from warm seas thousands of kilometers away.

Today, people at the Zoo have new ideas about letting animals live free. Many of them live outside their cages in special yards. There are deep holes round the yards so people can watch the animals safely. The elephant's new house has hospital rooms, and two pools, one outside and a warm one inside, where the elephants have their bath every day. The keepers usually get wetter than the elephants!

Perhaps the birds have the Zoo's most beautiful home. You can walk through their high cage on a bridge, with 140 different birds flying through the tops of the trees all round you. Other, beautifully coloured birds from hot countries fly inside a warm Bird House. The special lights in it make the doors look dark. The birds don't like this, so they never fly out into the Zoo.

Eighty keepers work at London's Zoo. One of their biggest jobs is feeding the animals – with 12,500 litres of milk, 50,000 eggs and 45,000 tonnes of meat every year. At first, visitors could bring food for the animals, too. But this is now forbidden because it was dangerous for them both. One year, while visitors were giving elephants things to eat, they broke ten cameras, and tore up fourteen coats, twelve handbags and six train tickets! But worst of all, visitors often gave the animals the wrong food – and sometimes poison.

Today, the Zoo must look after its wild animals most carefully. It is getting more and more difficult to find them. The world's one thousand most unusual animals are in trouble, and in a hundred years there may not be any at all. The Zoo works hard to help. It makes sure the animals can have babies while they are inside the Zoo. And sometimes, when Zoo animals have lots of babies, the Zoo sends some of them back to the

countries their parents came from.

London Zoo's two million visitors a year come to look – and to learn. Teaching people is a job the Zoo does well. It has the best library of animal books (100,000 of them) in the world. It answers 40,000 questions a year about animal life. Schools often make special visits to the Zoo. At the Children's Zoo, boys and girls can hold the smaller animals and ride on some of the bigger ones. And they love the little machines which tell them where the animals come from, how they live and what they eat.

The word 'zoo' is only a hundred years old. Londoners first thought of it as a shorter and easier name for their much-loved Zoological Gardens. Now the word has travelled round the world and has got into the dictionaries of many different countries. London's Zoo will always have a lot to give – to its animals, its visitors, and to the future.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. When was the London Zoo opened?
2. What park is around it?
3. What's the territory of the Zoo?
4. Who presented the first animals to the Zoo?
5. Do all the animals live in the cages?
6. Why is it forbidden to feed animals there?
7. Are there any facilities to gain knowledge about animal life?
8. Do you like going to the Zoo? Why/why not?
9. When did you go there last time? What was your impression like?
10. Is it a good idea to keep animals in the zoos?

***Task 2. Imagine you are a director of a Zoo. What suggestions would you make to improve its work and keep animals better?***

## Chapter III. Customs, Traditions and Festivals

### Festivals and Special Days in Great Britain

Many festivals and holidays in Britain are centuries old. Here are some of the important British festivals and holidays (some of them are celebrated in England, Wales, Scotland and northern Ireland only):

January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1st New Year's Day</li><li>• 5th Twelfth Night</li></ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1st Candlemas Day</li><li>• 14th Valentine's Day</li></ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1st St David's Day (Wales National Day)</li><li>• 17th St. Patrick's Day (Ireland's Special Day)</li></ul>
March/April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shrove Tuesday</li><li>• Lent</li><li>• Mothering Sunday</li><li>• Maundy Thursday</li><li>• Easter</li></ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1st April Fool's Day</li><li>• 23rd St George's Day (England's National Day)</li></ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1st May Day</li></ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trooping the Colours</li><li>• Wimbledon Tennis Tournament</li></ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swan Upping</li></ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notting Hill Carnival</li></ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harvest Festival</li></ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 31st Halloween</li></ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5th Guy Fawkes Night (Bonfire Night)</li><li>• 11th Remembrance Day</li><li>• 30th St Andrew's Day (Scotland's National Day)</li></ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advent</li><li>• 25th Christmas</li><li>• 26th Boxing Day</li></ul>

## **Text 1**

### **Bank Holidays**

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, public holidays are often called bank holidays. When an anniversary day that is usually a bank holiday falls on a weekend, the date of the bank holiday is postponed and declared for a following weekday. This new date is termed a 'bank holiday in lieu' of the actual anniversary day. In this way, public holidays are not 'lost' on years when they coincide with weekends (which will already be a day off for many people).

There are different bank and public holidays in different parts of the UK. There are currently six permanent bank holidays in England and Wales.

New Year's Day is just one of the British bank holidays recognized since 1871 that are observed by banks, government offices, and the post office. The others include: Easter Monday, May Day, Whitsun (Spring Bank Holiday), Summer Bank Holiday, and Boxing Day. Christmas Day and Good Friday are public holidays.

Bank Holidays get their name because they are days when banks and many other businesses are closed for the day. Most of the population get a day off work.

Obviously, those employed in essential services must still work (e.g. police, fire, health, etc). Many employed in tourist industries and retail also work these days as they are popular for family days out and shopping. The only day that everything really shuts is Christmas Day (25 December).

The tubes and buses still operate on Bank Holidays, although the service is less frequent (usually a Sunday timetable).

#### ***Task 1 . Answer the questions:***

1. Where does the name "bank holiday" come from?
2. How many Bank Holidays are there in the UK?
3. Which industries work on bank days?
4. Is public transport available?

## National Days in the UK

The United Kingdom has no single national holiday. It has a number of days of celebration which go largely uncelebrated, and others which are associated with the constituent countries of the UK. The latter category includes St George's Day in England, St Andrew's Day in Scotland, St Patrick's Day in Northern Ireland and St David's Day in Wales.

### Text 2

#### **Saint George's Day**

St George's Day in the United Kingdom remembers St George, England's patron saint. The anniversary of his death, which is on April 23, is seen as England's national day. He is popularly identified with England and English ideals of honour, bravery and gallantry - but actually he wasn't English at all. Very little, if anything, is known about the real Saint George.

St George was born sometime around the year 280 in what is now Turkey. He was a soldier and rose up through the ranks of the Roman army, eventually becoming a personal guard to the Emperor Diocletian. He was executed for being a Christian on April 23, 303, and is buried in the town of Lod in Israel.

St George is most widely known for slaying a dragon. According to legend, the only well in the town of Silene was guarded by a dragon. In order to get water, the inhabitants of the town had to offer a human sacrifice every day to the dragon. The person to be sacrificed was chosen by lots.

On the day that St George was visiting, a princess had been selected to be sacrificed. However, he killed the dragon, saved the princess and gave the people of Silene access to water. In gratitude, they converted to Christianity.

St George was a soldier in the Roman army. The Roman Emperor Diocletian liked St George, although he didn't like other Christians and ordered all he found to be killed. George was a brave man so he went to

the Emperor and told him he didn't agree with killing Christians, and then left the Roman army. For leaving, he was tortured and finally beheaded.

The most widely recognized symbol of St George's Day is St George's cross. This is a red cross on a white background, which is often displayed as a flag. It is used as England's national flag, forming part of the Union Flag, the national flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

During the crusades in the 1100s and 1200s, English knights used St George's cross as part of their uniform. It has been the official flag of England for centuries, but the Union Flag, a combination of St George's cross, St Andrew's cross and St Patrick's cross, is the national flag of the United Kingdom. Now Saint George's cross is used as a national symbol by fans of the English national football, rugby and cricket teams. At international matches, flags and scarves bearing this cross are worn and people paint it on their faces.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. Is April 23 the day of birth or the day of death of St George?
2. What is known about the life of St George?
3. What is the symbol of St George's Day?
4. What does England's national flag look like?
5. Is the national flag of the UK the same as England's national flag?

**Text 3**

**St David's Day**

St David is the patron saint of Wales. March 1 is a day of celebration of both St David's life and of the Welsh culture in Wales and in countries such as Canada and the United States. Many people attend special church services, parades, choral recitals or Welsh literature readings. Schools plan celebrations, often involving choirs, on the day.

The Welsh flag, a red dragon on a white and green background, is displayed prominently and a festive mood prevails. Children, particularly

girls, and some adults wear traditional costume. Other people may pin a daffodil or a leek to their clothes as these are symbols of Wales. The traditional meal on St David's Day is cawl. This is a soup that is made of leek and other locally grown produce.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. When is St David's Day celebrated in Wales?
2. How do Welsh people celebrate it?
3. What does the flag of Wales look like?
4. What is the national flower of Wales?

**Text 4**

**Saint Andrew's Day**

On November 30th on St Andrew's Day the Scottish flag, or Saltire, is flown on public buildings in Scotland. In the rest of the United Kingdom, the British Union Flag is flown. Saint Andrew's Day parties (Ceilidhs) are held in towns and villages across Scotland. Ceilidhs usually include a traditional Scottish dance with couples dancing in circles or sets (groups of eight people). The parties usually involve the playing of traditional Gaelic folk music, often played on bagpipes, and dancing.

Many men who attend a Saint Andrew's Day party dress in traditional dress. That is, a kilt, a sporran, a Prince Charlie jacket, a bow tie, and a belt.

The town that bears the saint's name, St Andrew's, holds a week long festival of arts and festivals. It was in St Andrew's that Prince William met his future wife Kate Middleton, when they both attended the University of St Andrew's. [Saint Andrew's University was founded in 1411.]

On Saint Andrew's Day many Scottish families cook traditional Scottish food, and often share it with their extended families and friends. Recipes include soups like Scotch Broth and Scottish Cullen Skink, main courses like Haggis, Scottish Herring in Oatmeal, Beef in Whisky Sauce, and desserts like Scottish Dundee Cake.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. When is St Andrew's Day in Scotland?
2. Which heraldic term is the alternative name for St. Andrew's flag
3. What is national dress in Scotland?
4. What food is traditionally eaten on St Andrew's Day?

**Text 5**

**Saint Patrick's Day**

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in the whole of Ireland on 17 March, in honour of St Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland.

Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland. He was born in Wales somewhere around AD 385. He was carried off by pirates and spent six years in slavery before escaping and training as a missionary.

The most famous story about Saint Patrick is him driving the snakes from Ireland. He died on 17th March in AD 461 and this day has since been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day.

Saint Patrick's Cross (or Saint Patrick's Saltire) is a red saltire (X-shaped cross) on a white field.

St Patrick's Day is marked by the wearing of shamrocks (a clover-like plant), the national emblem of both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. When is St. Patrick's Day?
2. Who was St. Patrick?
3. What does the flag of St Patrick look like?
4. What is the national emblem of Ireland?
5. How is St Patrick's Day celebrated?
6. What is the national emblem of Northern Ireland?



## **Text 6**

### **Christmas Traditions**

Christmas in Great Britain is one such festival which people look forward to throughout the year. It is celebrated on December 25th.

Most people will send and receive Christmas cards, exchanging them with friends, family and work colleagues. For some, it is a way of keeping in touch with old friends and acquaintances who they have otherwise lost contact with.

From early December, homes are adorned with Christmas decorations. The centerpiece of festive decorations is the Christmas Tree, traditionally a small pine tree brought into the home and decorated with coloured lights (fairy lights), tinsel and a variety of Christmas decorations that hang off the branches. Christmas presents are placed at the foot of the tree, usually on Christmas night, although sometimes presents from relatives are put under the tree before Christmas.

Christmas cards that have been received are hung upon around the house. Some people like to decorate the outside of their houses with light up decorations, and in any town you will see some streets where every house is so decorated as neighbours compete with each other to put on the best display.

The main event is Christmas Dinner. Traditionally this is Turkey with Roast potatoes, parsnips, sprouts, cranberry sauce, stuffing and gravy. This is followed by Christmas Pudding, a steamed rich fruit pudding with alcohol. Goose is also a very traditional meat served at Christmas. Other festive food and drink include mince pies, Christmas cake (a fruit cake with icing and marzipan). Traditional Christmas drinks include mulled wine and sherry.

One Christmas tradition particularly for older people is the Queen's Christmas Message, broadcast on TV at 3pm on Christmas Day afternoon. It lasts 5-10 minutes where the Queen reflects on the year just gone and talks to the nation. The tradition has been going since 1932 when King George V broadcast a radio message to Britain and the colonies. The

monarch's Christmas message has been broadcast every year since (except 1969 for some reason).

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. When is Christmas celebrated in Britain?
2. What are the main Christmas decorations?
3. What is the traditional Christmas bird?
4. How are the houses decorated?
5. When is the Queen's message broadcast on TV

**Text 7**

**Boxing Day**

Despite its name, Boxing Day, which is celebrated on December 26 in Great Britain, has nothing to do with pugilistic competition. Nor is it a day for people to return unwanted Christmas presents. While the exact origins of the holiday are obscure, it is likely that Boxing Day began in England during the Middle Ages.

Some historians say the holiday developed because servants were required to work on Christmas Day, but took the following day off. As servants prepared to leave to visit their families, their employers would present them with gift boxes.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. Do they have boxing competitions everywhere in Britain on this day?
2. When did the tradition start?
3. Why is it called Boxing Day?

**Text 8**

**Battle of Britain Day**

Observed on September 15th, this is a national holiday that commemorates the anniversary of the historic World War II air battle in 1940. This is one of the most popular holidays in England.

The Battle of Britain is the name given to air campaign waged by the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) against the United Kingdom during the summer and autumn of 1940. The objective of the campaign was to gain air superiority over the Royal Air Force (RAF), especially Fighter Command. The name derives from a famous speech delivered by Prime Minister Winston Churchill in the House of Commons: "... the Battle of France is over. The Battle of Britain is about to begin."

September 15, 1940, is remembered as the day of the biggest daylight bombing raid of Britain by the German Luftwaffe. The Royal air Force defeated the German raids and the Luftwaffe failed to inflict severe damage on the city of London.

Today the RAF, as well as civilian aviation organizations, commemorate the anniversary with air displays of various kinds. A formal remembrance is observed at Buckingham Palace.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. Which battle is commemorated on September 15 each year?
2. Who defeated the German raids?
3. How is the holiday marked?

**Text 9**

**Guy Fawkes Day**

Guy Fawkes Day is observed each year on November 5th. It commemorates the failure of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, when Roman Catholic conspirators, led by Robert Catesby, attempted to blow up the Parliament.

After Queen Elizabeth I died in 1603, English Catholics who had been persecuted under her rule had hoped that her successor, James I, would be more tolerant of their religion. James I had, after all, had a Catholic mother. Unfortunately, James did not turn out to be more tolerant than Elizabeth and a number of young men, 13 to be exact, decided that violent action was the answer. Their plotting took several months, as in the spring

of 1605 they rented a cellar that extended under the houses of Parliament, where they stored 36 barrels of gunpowder. But as the group worked on the plot, it became clear that innocent people would be hurt or killed in the attack, including some people who even fought for more rights for Catholics. Some of the plotters started having second thoughts. One of the group members even sent an anonymous letter warning his friend, Lord Monteagle, to stay away from the Parliament on November 5th. The warning letter reached the King, and the King's forces made plans to stop the conspirators.

Guy Fawkes, who was in the cellar of the parliament with the 36 barrels of gunpowder when the authorities stormed it in the early hours of November 5th, was caught, tortured and executed.

It's unclear if the conspirators would ever have been able to pull off their plan to blow up the Parliament even if they had not been betrayed. Some have suggested that the gunpowder itself was so old as to be useless. Since Guy Fawkes and the other conspirators got caught before trying to ignite the powder, we'll never know for certain.

In the years since, Guy Fawkes Day, sometimes called Bonfire Night, has become a celebratory day, observed in the United Kingdom with parades and food, and, of course, fireworks (representing the explosives at the center of the failed plot) and bonfires. Straw effigies of Fawkes are tossed on the bonfire, as are—in more recent years in some places—those of contemporary political figures. Traditionally, children carrying these effigies, often recite rhymes associated with the occasion, the best known of which dates from the 18th century:

Remember, remember, the fifth of November  
Gunpowder, treason and plot.  
We see no reason  
Why Gunpowder treason  
Should ever be forgot.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. Guy Fawkes participated in a rebellion to overthrow the King of England. Who was this English monarch?
2. Who was the chief plotter of the failed rebellion of which Guy Fawkes was a participant?
3. Guy Fawkes Day is the annual remembrance of the failed rebellion. What is the date of this odd occasion?
4. How did Guy Fawkes die?
5. How is Guy Fawkes Day celebrated?

## Royal Ceremonies and Pageantry

Britain has preserved its ceremonies and traditions over hundreds of years. Some are every day and some are every year. The most traditional ceremonies are:

- Searching the House of Parliament
- The State Opening of Parliament
- Trooping of the Colour
- Changing of the Guard
- Maundy Money
- the Swan Upping
- the Queen's Telegram
- Honours

### Text 10

#### Trooping the Colour

The custom of Trooping the Colour dates back to the time of Charles II in the 17th century when the Colours of a regiment were used as a rallying point in battle and were therefore trooped in front of the soldiers every day to make sure that every man could recognise those of his own regiment.

After George III became King in 1760, it was ordered that parades should mark the King's Birthday. From the accession of George IV they became, with a few exceptions and notably the two World Wars, an annual event.

This impressive display of pageantry is now held on the occasion of the Queen's Official Birthday. It takes place in June each year to celebrate the official Birthday of the Sovereign and is carried out by her personal troops, the Household Division, on Horse Guards Parade, with the Queen herself attending and taking the salute.

Since 1987, The Queen has attended in a carriage rather than riding, which she did before that on 36 occasions, riding side-saddle and wearing

the uniform of the regiment whose Colour was being trooped. Over 1400 officers and men are on parade, together with two hundred horses; over four hundred musicians from ten bands and corps of drums march and play as one. Some 113 words of command are given by the Officer in Command of the Parade. The parade route extends from Buckingham Palace along The Mall to Horse Guards Parade, Whitehall and back again.

Precisely as the clock on the Horse Guards Building strikes eleven, the Royal Procession arrives and the Queen takes the Royal Salute. The parade begins with the Inspection, The Queen driving slowly down the ranks of all eight Guards and then past the Household Cavalry. After the event, the Royal Family gathers on the balcony of Buckingham Palace to watch an RAF fly past.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. When did the custom of Trooping the Colour start?
2. When is it held?
3. How many people take part in the pageant?
4. What is the traditional route of the parade?
5. What does the Royal Family do after the parade?

**Text 11**

**Swan Upping**

Swan Upping is the annual census of the swan population on the Thames, which takes place in the third week of July each year.

This historic ceremony dates from the twelfth century, when the Crown claimed ownership of all mute swans.

Today, the Crown retains the right to ownership of all unmarked mute swans in open water, but the Queen only exercises her ownership on certain stretches of the Thames and its surrounding tributaries.

In the Swan Upping ceremony, the Queen's Swan Uppers use six traditional Thames rowing skiffs in their five-day journey up-river. They wear traditional scarlet uniforms and each boat flies appropriate flags.

When a brood of cygnets is sighted, a cry of "All up!" is given to signal that the boats should get into position. On passing Windsor Castle, the rowers stand to attention in their boat with oars raised and salute "Her Majesty The Queen, Seigneur of the Swans".

The cygnets are weighed and measured to obtain estimates of growth rates and the birds are examined for any sign of injury (commonly caused by fishing hooks and line).

The swans are also given a health check and ringed with individual identification numbers by The Queen's Swan Warden, a Professor of Ornithology at the University of Oxford's Department of Zoology. The swans are then set free again.

Children from local schools are invited every year to watch this.

At the completion of Swan Upping each year, The Queen's Swan Marker produces a report which provides data on the number of swans accounted for, including broods and cygnets.

This important data enables suitable conservation methods to be used to protect the swans.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. How old is the Swan Upping ceremony?
2. How often does it take place?
3. What happens during the ceremony?
4. Are children allowed to watch it?
5. In which way does it help to protect the swans living on the Thames and its surrounding tributaries?



## Chapter IV. Famous British People

### Famous British Writers

#### Text 1

#### Charles Dickens (1812 - 1870)

*Charles Dickens is much loved for his great contribution to classic English literature. He was the quintessential Victorian author. His epic stories, vivid characters and exhaustive depiction of contemporary life are unforgettable.*

His own story is one of rags to riches. He was born in Portsmouth on 7 February 1812, to John and Elizabeth Dickens. The good fortune of being sent to school at the age of nine was short-lived because his father, inspiration for the character of Mr Micawber in 'David Copperfield', was imprisoned for bad debt. The entire family, apart from Charles, were sent to debtor's prison. Charles was sent to work in Warren's blacking factory and endured appalling conditions as well as loneliness and despair. After three years he was returned to school, but the experience was never forgotten and became fictionalised in two of his better-known novels 'David Copperfield' and 'Great Expectations'.

In 1833 he became parliamentary journalist for The Morning Chronicle. With new contacts in the press he was able to publish a series of sketches under the pseudonym 'Boz'. In April 1836, he married Catherine Hogarth, daughter of George Hogarth who edited 'Sketches by Boz'. Within the same month came the publication of the highly successful 'Pickwick Papers', and from that point on there was no looking back for Dickens.

As well as a huge list of novels he published autobiography, edited weekly periodicals including 'Household Words' and 'All Year Round', wrote travel books and administered charitable organisations. He was also a theatre enthusiast, wrote plays and performed before Queen Victoria in 1851. His energy was inexhaustible and he spent much time abroad - for

example lecturing against slavery in the United States and touring Italy with companions Augustus Egg and Wilkie Collins, a contemporary writer who inspired Dickens' final unfinished novel 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood'.

He was estranged from his wife in 1858 after the birth of their ten children, but maintained relations with his mistress, the actress Ellen Ternan. He died of a stroke in 1870. He is buried at Westminster Abbey.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. What was the profession of Dickens' father at the time of his birth?
2. Dickens was one of how many children born to John and Elizabeth Dickens?
3. When Dickens was 12 his father was imprisoned for what reason?
4. Where did Dickens first work?
5. What are the best-known novels of Charles Dickens?
6. How many children did Charles Dickens and Catherine Thompson Hogarth have?
7. When did Dickens die?
8. Where is Dickens buried?

**Text 2**

**JRR Tolkien (1892 – 1973)**

*J. R. R. Tolkien gained a reputation during the 1960s and 1970s as a cult figure among youths discouraged by war and the technological age from his work *The Hobbit* and the trilogy that followed, *The Lord of the Rings*.*

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born on January 3, 1892, the son of English-born parents in South Africa, where his father worked as a bank manager. To escape the heat and dust of southern Africa and to better guard the delicate health of Ronald (as he was called), Tolkien's mother moved back to a small English village with him and his younger brother when they were very young boys. Tolkien would later use this village as a model for one of the locales in his novels. Within a year of this move their

father, Arthur Tolkien, died in Bloemfontein, and a few years later the boys' mother died as well.

Tolkien received a bachelor's degree from Oxford in 1915 and a master's degree in 1919. During this time he married his longtime sweetheart, Edith Bratt, and served for a short time on the Western Front during World War I (1914–18).

After the war Tolkien returned to Oxford, where he joined the staff of the Oxford English Dictionary and began work as a freelance tutor. In 1920 he was appointed Reader in English Language at Leeds University. The following year, having returned to Oxford as Professor of Anglo-Saxon, Tolkien became friends with the novelist C. S. Lewis (1898–1963). They shared an intense enthusiasm for the myths, sagas, and languages of northern Europe.

During the rest of Tolkien's years at Oxford Tolkien published several well-received short studies and translations. Notable among these are his essays "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" (1936), "On Fairy-Stories" (1947) etc.

As a writer of imaginative literature, though, Tolkien is best known for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. *The Lord of the Rings* presents us with the age-old battle between good and evil.

Tolkien retired from his professorship in 1959. While the unauthorized publication of an American edition of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1965 angered him, it also made him a widely admired cult figure in the United States, especially among high school and college students. Uncomfortable with this status, he and his wife lived quietly in Bournemouth for several years, until Edith's death in 1971.

In the remaining two years of his life, Tolkien returned to Oxford, where he was made an honorary fellow of Merton College and awarded a doctorate of letters. He was at the height of his fame as a scholarly and imaginative writer when he died in 1973.

Nearly thirty years after his death, the popularity of Tolkien's work has hardly slowed. In 2001 *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the*

Ring was released as a major motion picture. The magic of Tolkien's world won over both the critics and public alike as the movie was nominated in thirteen categories, including Best Picture, at the Academy Awards; it won four awards. Two more films are scheduled for release by the end of 2003.

***Task 1. Choose the right answer:***

1. What do the initials J.R.R stand for?
  - a) Nothing
  - b) James Ronald Raul
  - c) John Ronald Reuel
  - d) Jonathan Richard Raif
2. Though Tolkien is best known for his deep English roots and enthusiasm in English literature, he was actually born in:
  - a) South Africa
  - b) France
  - c) Scotland
  - d) Ireland
3. Tolkien fought in what war(s)?
  - a) WWI
  - b) Vietnam
  - c) all of the above or below
  - d) WWII
6. What classic literary work was Tolkien renowned for reviewing and translating?
  - a) The Odyssey
  - b) Beowulf
  - c) The Illiad
  - d) The Chronicles of Narnia
4. What book debuted the beginning of Tolkien's writing career?
  - a) The Silmarillion
  - b) The Hobbit
  - c) The Book of Lost Tales
  - d) The Red book of Westmarch
5. This was known as Tolkien first and last masterpiece:
  - a) The book of Lost Tales
  - b) The Lord of the Rings

- c) The Silmarillion
  - d) The Hobbit
6. What other modern classic author was Tolkien great friends with?
- a) C.S. Lewis
  - b) Edgar Poe
  - c) Margaret Mitchell
  - d) Lewis Carroll

## The Kings and Queens of Great Britain

### Text 3

#### Queen Elizabeth I (1553 – 1603)

The reign of Queen Elizabeth I is often referred to as The Golden Age of English history. Elizabeth was an immensely popular Queen, and her popularity has waned little with the passing of four hundred years. She is still one of the best loved monarchs, and one of the most admired rulers of all time. She became a legend in her own lifetime, famed for her remarkable abilities and achievements.

Elizabeth was born in 1533, the only daughter of Henry VIII and his second wife, Anne Boleyn. When Elizabeth was two, Anne was beheaded for adultery on the orders of Henry, and Elizabeth was exiled from court. Her childhood was difficult, although she received a thorough Protestant education.

When Elizabeth succeeded to the throne in 1558 one of her priorities was to return England to the Protestant faith and one of her greatest legacies was to establish and secure an English form of Protestantism. Her period in power saw a great period of English global expansion and colonisation during which industry prospered. Virginia which was an English colony in North America at the time of Elizabeth's reign was named after her (the Virgin Queen).

It was also one of the greatest periods in English history which produced figures such as Francis Drake, Walter Raleigh and William Shakespeare.

Catholic challenges and plots persisted through much of Elizabeth's reign. The focus of most of these was Elizabeth's cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots, a Catholic with a strong claim to the English throne, who sought exile in England in 1568. Elizabeth imprisoned her and she remained a

prisoner for 20 years until Elizabeth was persuaded to agree to her execution in 1587.

The ill-fated Spanish Armada was launched by Philip II of Spain the following year, bringing to a climax the threat posed to English independence from Spain since Elizabeth's accession. Always a popular monarch, and a brilliant public speaker, Elizabeth proved a focus to unite the country against a common enemy.

Despite pressure from her advisers, particularly her chief secretary, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Elizabeth always refused to marry. She had a close relationship with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and was not averse to using the promise of marriage for diplomatic purposes, but asserted her independence until the end of her life. When she died on 23 March 1603, she was succeeded by the Protestant James VI of Scotland, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots.

She is buried in Westminster Abbey immediately next to her sister Mary I. The inscription on her tomb translates from Latin to "Partners both in Throne and grave, here rest we two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, in hope of one resurrection."

***Task 1. Choose the right answer.***

1. Who was Queen Elizabeth's mother?
  - a) Anne Boleyn
  - b) Catherine of Aragon
  - c) Katherine Parr
  - d) Mary Tudor
2. How old was Elizabeth when she became Queen in 1558?
  - a) 15
  - b) 25
  - c) 35
  - d) 45
3. Who was the King responsible for the 'Spanish Armada'?
  - a) King Henry II of France
  - b) King Henry VIII of England
  - c) King Philip II of Spain
  - d) King James VI of Scotland
4. Who did Elizabeth marry?
  - a) King Philip II of Spain
  - b) Duc of Alencon of France

- c) Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester
  - d) No one
5. Which state of the United States is named for Elizabeth?
- a) Virginia
  - b) Maryland
  - c) Delaware
  - d) New Jersey
6. Which highly-placed person plotted to assassinate Elizabeth and was beheaded for it?
- a) Mary, Queen of Scots
  - b) 'Bloody' Mary Tudor
  - c) Catherine de Medici
  - d) Sir Walter Raleigh

#### **Text 4**

### **Queen Victoria (1819 – 1901)**

Queen Victoria remains a remarkable figure in history not only as the longest reigning British monarch but as figurehead of a vast empire and inspiration for a highly complex culture

Victoria, the daughter of the Duke of Kent and Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg, was born in 1819. She inherited the throne of Great Britain at the age of eighteen, upon the death of her uncle William IV in 1837, and reigned until 1901, bestowing her name upon her age. She married her mother's nephew, Albert (1819-1861), prince of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, in 1840, and until his death he remained the focal point of her life (she bore him nine children). Albert replaced Lord Melbourne, the Whig Prime Minister who had served her as her first personal and political tutor and instructor, as Victoria's chief advisor. Albert was moralistic, conscientious and progressive, if rather priggish, sanctimonious, and intellectually shallow, and with Victoria initiated various reforms and innovations - he organized the Great Exhibition of 1851, for example - which were responsible for a great deal of the popularity later enjoyed by the British monarchy.

After Albert's death in 1861 a desolate Victoria remained in self-imposed seclusion for ten years. Her genuine but obsessive mourning, which would occupy her for the rest of her life, played an important role in the evolution of what would become the Victorian mentality. Thereafter she lived at Windsor or Balmoral, travelling abroad once a year, but making few public appearances in Britain itself. Although she maintained a careful policy of official political neutrality, she did not get on at all well with Gladstone. Eventually, however, she succumbed to the flattery of Disraeli, and permitted him (in an act which was both symbolic and theatrical) to have her crowned Empress of India in 1876. She tended as a rule to take an active dislike of British politicians who criticized the conduct of the conservative regimes of Europe, many of which were, after all, run by her relatives.

By 1870 her popularity was at its lowest ebb (at the time the monarchy cost the nation £400,000 per annum, and many wondered whether the largely symbolic institution was worth the expense), but it increased steadily thereafter until her death. Her golden jubilee in 1887 was a grand national celebration, as was her diamond jubilee in 1897 (by then, employing the imperial "we," she had long been Kipling's "Widow of Windsor," mother of the Empire). She died, a venerable old lady, at Osborne on January 22, 1901, having reigned for sixty-four years.

***Task 1. Choose the right answer.***

1. When did she become Queen?
  - a) 1837
  - b) 1847
  - c) 1857
2. Who ruled immediately before her?
  - a) George III
  - b) George IV
  - c) William IV
3. How long was her reign?
  - a) 53 years
  - b) 63 years



- c) 73 years
- 4. In 1840, she married one of her cousins. What was his name?
  - a) Albert
  - b) John
  - c) David
- 5. How many children did they have?
  - a) Seven
  - b) Eight
  - c) Nine
- 6. How old was Queen Victoria when she died?
  - a) 71
  - b) 81
  - c) 91
- 7. Which of these quotes is often associated with Queen Victoria?
  - a) 'Let them eat cake'
  - b) 'Now is the winter of our discontent'
  - c) 'We are not amused'
- 8. Queen Victoria was the first Empress of what country?
  - a) Canada
  - b) Austria
  - c) India
  - d) Tazmania

## Famous Scientists

### Text 5

#### Isaac Newton (1642 – 1727)

*Newton was an English physicist and mathematician, and the greatest scientist of his era.*

Isaac Newton was born on 4 January 1643 in Woolsthorpe, Lincolnshire. His father was a prosperous farmer, who died three months before Newton was born. His mother remarried and Newton was left in the care of his grandparents. In 1661, he went to Cambridge University where he became interested in mathematics, optics, physics and astronomy. In October 1665, a plague epidemic forced the university to close and Newton returned to Woolsthorpe. The two years he spent there were an extremely

fruitful time during which he began to think about gravity. He also devoted time to optics and mathematics, working out his ideas about 'fluxions' (calculus).

In 1667, Newton returned to Cambridge, where he became a fellow of Trinity College. Two years later he was appointed second Lucasian professor of mathematics. It was Newton's reflecting telescope, made in 1668, that finally brought him to the attention of the scientific community and in 1672 he was made a fellow of the Royal Society. From the mid-1660s, Newton conducted a series of experiments on the composition of light, discovering that white light is composed of the same system of colours that can be seen in a rainbow and establishing the modern study of optics (or the behaviour of light). In 1704, Newton published 'The Opticks' which dealt with light and colour. He also studied and published works on history, theology and alchemy.

In 1687, with the support of his friend the astronomer Edmond Halley, Newton published his single greatest work, the 'Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica' ('Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy'). This showed how a universal force, gravity, applied to all objects in all parts of the universe.

In 1689, Newton was elected member of parliament for Cambridge University (1689 - 1690 and 1701 - 1702). In 1696, Newton was appointed warden of the Royal Mint, settling in London. He took his duties at the Mint very seriously and campaigned against corruption and inefficiency within the organisation. In 1703, he was elected president of the Royal Society, an office he held until his death. He was knighted in 1705.

Newton was a difficult man, prone to depression and often involved in bitter arguments with other scientists, but by the early 1700s he was the dominant figure in British and European science. He died on 31 March 1727 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

***Task 1. Choose the right answer.***

1. In what town was Newton born?

- a) Cambridge
  - b) London
  - c) Woolsthorpe
  - d) Winchester
2. When did Newton's father die?
- a) When Newton was three
  - b) Before Newton was born
  - c) A month after Newton was born
  - d) A month after Newton died
3. Where did Newton become a student in 1616?
- a) Trinity College
  - b) Jesus College
  - c) Eton
  - d) Oxford
4. In 1665, Newton retreated to his mother's home to escape the...
- a) London Fire
  - b) Inquisition
  - c) Civil war
  - d) Plague
5. The famous story of how Newton came to discover gravity involves the fall of a(n)
- a) Lightning bolt
  - b) Apple
  - c) Dynasty
  - d) Rock
6. In 1669, Newton was appointed to which position?
- a) The Lucasian Chair of Mathematics
  - b) Master of the Royal Mint
  - c) Member of the Royal Society
  - d) President of Trinity College
9. What does the title *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* mean in English?
- a) Natural Philosophy of Mathematics
  - b) Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy
  - c) Principles of Mathematical Philosophy
  - d) Mathematics, the Prince of Nature and Philosophy
10. After 1699, what post did Newton acquire?
- a) Master of the Mint

- b) First Lord of the Admiralty
- c) Chancellor of the Exchequer
- d) Minister of Science

11. Newton was elected President of the Royal Society in what year?

- a) 1703
- b) 1672
- c) 1687
- d) 1714

12. When did Newton die?

- a) 1727
- b) 1714
- c) 1693
- d) 1711

13. Where was Newton buried?

- a) The Vatican
- b) Westminster Abbey
- c) Trinity College
- d) St. Paul's Cathedral

## **Text 6**

### **Alexander Fleming (1881-1955)**

*Fleming was a Scottish bacteriologist and Nobel Prize winner, best known for his discovery of penicillin*

Alexander Fleming was born in Ayrshire on 6 August 1881, the son of a farmer. He moved to London at the age of 13 and later trained as a doctor. He qualified with distinction in 1906 and began research at St Mary's Hospital Medical School at the University of London under Sir Almroth Wright, a pioneer in vaccine therapy. In World War One Fleming served in the Army Medical Corps and was mentioned in dispatches. After the war, he returned to St Mary's.

In 1928, while studying influenza, Fleming noticed that mould had developed accidentally on a set of culture dishes being used to grow the staphylococci germ. The mould had created a bacteria-free circle around itself. Fleming experimented further and named the active substance

penicillin. It was two other scientists however, Australian Howard Florey and Ernst Chain, a refugee from Nazi Germany, who developed penicillin further so that it could be produced as a drug. At first supplies of penicillin were very limited, but by the 1940s it was being mass-produced by the American drugs industry.

Fleming wrote numerous papers on bacteriology, immunology and chemotherapy. He was elected professor of the medical school in 1928 and emeritus professor of bacteriology at the University of London in 1948. He was elected fellow of the Royal Society in 1943 and knighted in 1944. In 1945 Fleming, Florey and Chain shared the Nobel Prize in Medicine. Fleming died on 11 March 1955.

### ***Task 1. Answer the questions***

1. What did Alexander Fleming discover?
2. With whom did Alexander Fleming serve during World War I?
3. Did Alexander Fleming live to see the mass production of the medicine he discovered?
4. Who does Alexander Fleming share the Nobel Prize with?

## **Famous Inventors**

### **Text 7**

#### **George Stephenson (1781-1848)**

*Stephenson was a pioneering railway engineer and inventor of the 'Rocket', the most famous early railway locomotive.*

George Stephenson was born on 9 June 1781 near Newcastle-upon-Tyne. His father was an engineman at a coalmine. Stephenson himself worked at the mine and learned to read and write in his spare time. He gained a reputation for managing the primitive steam engines employed in mines, and worked in a number of different coalmines in the northeast of England and in Scotland.

In 1814, Stephenson constructed his first locomotive, 'Blucher', for hauling coal at Killingworth Colliery near Newcastle. In 1815, he invented a safety lamp for use in coalmines, nicknamed the 'Geordie'.

In 1821, Stephenson was appointed engineer for the construction of the Stockton and Darlington railway. It opened in 1825 and was the first public railway. The following year Stephenson was made engineer for the Liverpool to Manchester Railway. In October 1829, the railway's owners staged a competition at Rainhill to find the best kind of locomotive to pull heavy loads over long distances. Thousands came to watch. Stephenson's locomotive 'Rocket' was the winner, achieving a record speed of 36 (58 kilometers per hour).miles per hour.

The opening of the Stockton to Darlington railway and the success of 'Rocket' stimulated the laying of railway lines and the construction of locomotives all over the country. Stephenson became engineer on a number of these projects and was also consulted on the development of railways in Belgium and Spain.

Stephenson died on 12 August 1848 in Chesterfield in Derbyshire. His only son Robert was also a railway engineer and worked with his father on many of his projects.

### ***Task 1. True or false?***

1. George Stephenson was a railroad engineer who built some of the world's first railroad engines.
2. Stephenson received little formal education.
3. Stephenson built only one engine.
4. The Rocket ran at the impressive speed of 36 miles per hour (58 kilometers per hour).
5. George continued to work on the rapidly expanding railways until his death in 1848.

## **John Logie Baird (1888 - 1946)**

*Baird was a Scottish engineer, most famous for being the first person to demonstrate a working television.*

John Logie Baird was born on 14 August 1888 in Helensburgh on the west coast of Scotland, the son of a clergyman. Dogged by ill health for most of his life, he nonetheless showed early signs of ingenuity, rigging up a telephone exchange to connect his bedroom to those of his friends across the street. His studies at Glasgow University were interrupted by the outbreak of World War One. Rejected as unfit for the forces, he served as superintendent engineer of the Clyde Valley Electrical Power Company. When the war ended he set himself up in business, with mixed results.

Baird then moved to the south coast of England and applied himself to creating a television, a dream of many scientists for decades. His first crude apparatus was made of odds and ends, but by 1924 he managed to transmit a flickering image across a few feet. On 26 January 1926 he gave the world's first demonstration of true television before 50 scientists in an attic room in central London. In 1927, his television was demonstrated over 438 miles of telephone line between London and Glasgow, and he formed the Baird Television Development Company. (BTDC). In 1928, the BTDC achieved the first transatlantic television transmission between London and New York and the first transmission to a ship in mid-Atlantic. He also gave the first demonstration of both colour and stereoscopic television.

In 1929, the German post office gave him the facilities to develop an experimental television service based on his mechanical system, the only one operable at the time. Sound and vision were initially sent alternately, and only began to be transmitted simultaneously from 1930. However, Baird's mechanical system was rapidly becoming obsolete as electronic systems were developed, chiefly by Marconi in America. Although he had invested in the mechanical system in order to achieve early results, Baird had also been exploring electronic systems from an early stage. Nevertheless, a BBC committee of inquiry in 1935 prompted a side-by-

side trial between Marconi's all-electronic television system, which worked on 405 lines to Baird's 240. Marconi won, and in 1937 Baird's system was dropped.

Baird died on 14 June 1946 in Bexhill-on-Sea in Sussex.

***Task 1. Answer the questions to the text.***

1. What is the nationality of John Logie Baird?
2. In which city did he first start his studies of television?
3. For what reason was he rejected from the war?
4. What was his job during the war?
5. Was he the only scientist of the time who wanted to create television?
6. In which year did he first demonstrate his invention?
7. What was the name of American scientist who further developed Bair's idea?

## **Famous British Politicians**

### **Text 9**

#### **Winston Churchill (1874 - 1965)**

Sir Winston Churchill was a British politician, best known as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during World War II. At various times an author, soldier, journalist, legislator and painter, Churchill is generally regarded as one of the most important leaders in British and world history.

Churchill had an ignominious start to his career. Having attended Harrow school he found that he and examinations were not suited. His father, Randolph Churchill, a high ranking Cabinet Minister in the late nineteenth century, was thought to have been disappointed with his son. It was his mother, Lady Jennie Churchill, an American by birth who supplied the young Winston with both encouragement and a much needed affection.

Churchill began his public career as a reporter during the British campaign against the Mahdi in the Sudan. His trade took him to South



Africa when the Boer War began. He was captured and famously escaped from his Afrikaans captors. His fame became a springboard for him to follow his father into the world of politics as the MP for Oldham

He became most notable for his outspoken opposition towards the granting of independence to India. Soon though, his attention was drawn to the rise of Adolf Hitler and Germany's rearmament. For a time he was a lone voice calling on Britain to re-arm itself and counter the belligerence of Germany. Churchill was a fierce critic of Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler.

At the outbreak of the Second World War Churchill was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty. In this job he proved to be one of the highest profile ministers during the so called "Bore War" when the only noticeable action was at sea. On Chamberlain's resignation in May, 1940, Churchill was appointed Prime Minister and formed an all-party government. In response to previous criticisms that there had been no clear single minister in charge of the prosecution of the war, he created and took the additional position of Minister of Defence. He immediately put his friend and confidant, the industrialist and newspaper baron Lord Beaverbrook in charge of aircraft production. It was Beaverbrook's astounding business acumen that allowed Britain to quickly gear up aircraft production and engineering that eventually made the difference in the war.

His speeches were a great inspiration to the embattled United Kingdom. His famous "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat" speech was his first as Prime Minister. He followed that closely, before the Battle of Britain, with "We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

In 1945 when the first post-war General Election was held Churchill was, astonishing as it may seem, voted out of office. He returned to Number Ten in 1951 and was Prime Minister until 1955.

Churchill died on 24 January 1965 and was given a state funeral. Up until that of Diana, Princess of Wales, Sir Winston's was the last British State funeral of the twentieth century.

**Task 1 Answer the questions.**

1. What is Sir Winston Churchill known for?
2. How did he start his political career?
3. What was his first job?
4. What was his job when World War II started?
5. What did he call for during the war?
6. Was Churchill Prime Minister at the time when he died?

## **Text 10**

### **Margaret Thatcher (1925 - )**

*Margaret Thatcher was Britain's first female prime minister and served three consecutive terms in office. She is one of the dominant political figures of 20th century Britain, and Thatcherism continues to have a huge influence.*

Margaret Hilda Roberts was born on 13 October 1925 in Grantham, Lincolnshire, the daughter of a grocer. She went to Oxford University and then became a research chemist, retraining to become a barrister in 1954. In 1951, she married a wealthy businessman, Denis Thatcher, with whom she had two children.

Thatcher became Conservative member of parliament for Finchley in north London in 1959, serving as its MP until 1992. Her first parliamentary post was junior minister for pensions in Harold Macmillan's government. From 1964 to 1970, when Labour were in power, she served in a number of positions in Edward Heath's shadow cabinet. Heath became Prime Minister in 1970 and Thatcher was appointed secretary for education.

After the Conservatives were defeated in 1974, Thatcher challenged Heath for the leadership of the party and, to the surprise of many, won. In

the 1979 general election, the Conservatives came to power and Thatcher became Prime Minister.

An advocate of privatisation of state-owned industries and utilities, reform of the trade unions, the lowering of taxes and reduced social expenditure across the board, Thatcher's policies succeeded in reducing inflation, but unemployment dramatically increased.

Victory in the Falklands War in 1982 and a divided opposition helped Thatcher win a landslide victory in the 1983 general election. In 1984, she narrowly escaped death when the IRA planted a bomb at the Conservative party conference in Brighton.

In the 1987 general election, Thatcher won an unprecedented third term in office. But controversial policies, including the poll tax and her opposition to any closer integration with Europe, produced divisions within the Conservative Party which led to a leadership challenge. In November 1990, she agreed to resign and was succeeded as party leader and prime minister by John Major.

In 1992, Thatcher left the House of Commons for the House of Lords as Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven.

***Task 1. Answer the questions:***

1. What is Margaret Thatcher known for?
2. When and where was Margaret Thatcher born?
3. What was her father's job?
4. When did she first become Prime Minister?
5. Which party did she belong to?
6. How many terms was she in the office?

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