

Step 2

BRITIS

We know
books

R&T *Discovery*

The British Isles

Derek Sellen



Contents

CHAPTER ONE	The British Isles	5
CHAPTER TWO	From the Iron Age to the Golden Age	16
CHAPTER THREE	From the Gunpowder Plot to Global Warming	28
CHAPTER FOUR	England	47
CHAPTER FIVE	Scotland	58
CHAPTER SIX	Ireland	75
CHAPTER SEVEN	Wales	85
DOSSIERS	Great British Scientists and Inventors	40
	The British Isles and Films	68
INTERNET PROJECTS		45, 73
ACTIVITIES		4, 13, 25, 37, 46, 55, 66, 74, 82, 92
AFTER READING		94
PET	Cambridge PET-style activities	13, 14, 39, 56, 66, 67, 82, 93
T: GRADES 4/5	Trinity-style activities	55, 83

The text is recorded in full.

n. track



end

These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the passages linked to the listening activities.

The British Isles

*What's the difference between
The British Isles, Great Britain
and the United¹ Kingdom?
Even some British people
can't answer that
question!*

What are they?

'The British Isles' is a geographical description. We use it to describe England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, including both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In other words the British Isles are the two biggest islands, Great Britain and Ireland, and all the small islands around them.

The United Kingdom is made up of four parts: England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. On their passports, British people are citizens of the 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'. 'British' is the adjective to describe the United Kingdom. The southern part of Ireland, known as the Republic of Ireland or Eire, is an independent nation.



track 02

1. **United** : joined together.



The British Isles are to the west of the rest of Europe in an area of shallow sea. Over millions of years, the British Isles have moved from near the equator to where they are now. In fact, they are still moving north, at about 0.8 centimetres a year!

There are many geographical differences within the British Isles. The Atlantic coast on the west is more dramatic than the North Sea coast on the east and less protected than the south coast, on the English Channel. The mountains of Wales and Scotland are different from the hills of many parts of England. There are very big cities and small villages and even areas where very few people live.

There are more than a thousand small islands. The most well-known are: the Scilly Isles to the south-west; the Isle of Wight to the south; Anglesey off the coast of Wales; the Isle of Man between England and Ireland; the Hebrides, a group of islands off the west coast of Scotland; and Orkney and Shetland to the north of Scotland. The Channel Islands are near the coast of France but they are part of the British Isles. Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark are the main Channel Islands.





Most people know the Union Flag, which is informally called the Union Jack by almost everybody. It's the British flag, which the United Kingdom team carries at the Olympics, for example. It's actually made up of three national flags. One of these is the English flag, a red cross — the cross of St George — on a white background. That's the flag you see when England play sports like



football as a separate nation. The Scottish flag, the flag of St Andrew, is a diagonal white cross on a blue background. The third flag is the flag of St Patrick of Ireland, a diagonal red cross on white. When you put the three flags together, you get a red, white and blue flag, the Union Jack.

Wales has its own flag, with a red dragon on it. It isn't included in the Union Flag because the English conquered ² Wales in the thirteenth century. When the Union Flag was created, people thought that Wales was simply a part of

England, so it was represented by the English flag. Each country of the British Isles has its own symbol.

England's symbol is the **red rose**. The national saint is **St George** and 23rd April is his saint's day. The **thistle** or the **Scottish bluebell** are often symbols of Scotland. **St Andrew's** day is 30th November. **St David** is the saint of Wales



2. **conquered** : took by fighting.



and his day is 1st March. The **daffodil** and sometimes the **leek** are symbols of Wales. The **shamrock** is the national symbol of Ireland. **St Patrick's** day is 17th March and Irish people all over the world celebrate it with the Saint Patrick Day's Parade. In the parade, people wear green, the national colour of Ireland, and march through the streets with music and celebrate.

MAES
PARCIO
TALU AC
ARDDANGOS

PAY &
DISPLAY
CAR PARK

A place of many languages

Almost everybody in the British Isles speaks English but it's not the only language. If you go to Wales you will see television programmes, notices and road signs in Welsh and hear people speaking it. About 600,000 people speak Welsh there. In Scotland, some people speak Gaelic, especially in the Highlands, and in Ireland, Gaelic or 'Erse' is sometimes used: about 500,000 people in Ireland speak Gaelic everyday. The people are proud of their national languages, which all come from the Celtic language.

These Celtic languages are very different from English. For example: 'How are you?' is 'Shwmae' in Welsh and 'Ciamar a tha thu?' in Gaelic.

'Wales' is 'Cymru' in Welsh and 'Scotland' is 'Alba' in Gaelic.

There are other languages which very few people speak. In Cornwall, in the south-west of England, only a few hundred people speak Cornish. On the Isle of Man, an ancient language known as Manx is used on special occasions.

You will hear lots of other languages, especially in big cities. People who have come to the British Isles from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh may speak Hindi, Punjabi or Bengali, for example.



As well as different languages, you will hear many different accents and dialects. People in Liverpool have a different accent from people in Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, Cardiff, London or Manchester, which is near Liverpool. In Newcastle, in the north-east of England, there is a dialect known as 'Geordie'. It has several special words: if the people want to call someone 'darling' or 'honey', they use the word 'hinny': "I love you, my hinny."

Stereotypes

When you think of people from the British Isles what type of people do you imagine? In the past, foreigners imagined the typical English man as a person who carried an umbrella and a briefcase and wore a black suit and a bowler hat. But today, many people see a football hooligan³ or a pop singer as the typical English person.

Many people imagine that the typical Scottish person has red hair, wears a kilt and plays the bagpipes. He or she speaks with a strong accent and is very careful with his or her money. People think that the typical Welsh person loves rugby and singing and talks too much. They imagine that it always rains in Wales and that most Welsh people are sheep farmers. The typical Irish person drinks Guinness (a strong black Irish beer) and likes telling stories.



3. **hooligan** : someone who fights or behaves very badly in public.

The text and **beyond**

1 Comprehension check

Decide if each sentence (1-8) is correct or incorrect. If it is correct, mark A. If it is not correct, mark B.

A B

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 The Republic of Ireland is part of the United Kingdom. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 The British Isles are changing their position little by little. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 The Union Jack is made up of the Irish, Scottish and English flags. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 In Wales, people used to speak Welsh but now it is used very little. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 People in one city often have a different accent from those in other UK cities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Most English people have a big breakfast every day. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 In Eire, you pay for things using Irish pounds. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2 Vocabulary

Look at the definitions of some words from Chapter One. Can you complete them?

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1 something which people might carry to represent a nation | a f |
| 2 a flower or other thing which represents a nation | a s |
| 3 the place where political decisions are made | P |
| 4 the process of giving some independent power to parts of a country | d..... |
| 5 a language which not many people speak | a m |
| | language |
| 6 a local pronunciation of a language | an a |

Think about your own country. Can you describe 1? What is 2? Where is 3? Is there 4 in your country? Are there any 5s? Do people from different cities have different 6s? What are some of the stereotypes about people from your country?