

## Living in the UK

**Topic:** The UK

**Aims:**

- To develop the ability to read and assimilate information from various sources

**Level:** Intermediate/Upper Intermediate

### Introduction

In this lesson, learners read about the different countries of the UK, either online as a webquest or in paper form. They practise reading for specific information, and guessing the meaning of words from the context, both important reading micro-skills. There is an optional extension in the form of a role-play, in which groups of learners compete to persuade a professional couple to move to 'their' UK country.

### Procedure

#### Introduction (5 minutes)

- Give students **Worksheet A** In groups or with the whole class, ask them to label the different countries of the UK, and to name the capital cities. (*England – London, Scotland – Edinburgh, Northern Ireland – Belfast, Wales – Cardiff*).
- Brainstorm words and phrases they associate with each UK country, either as a whole class activity, or in groups with feedback to class.

#### Reading for specific information (35-40 minutes)

- If you have Internet access in class, direct students to the website <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-central-culture-living-ukhome.htm>
- Ideally they should work in pairs with one computer between two to encourage communication. Give them **Worksheet B** and tell them to find the answers to the questions as quickly as possible. The questions are not grouped by country or page, which encourages learners to browse around the entire site, and makes the exercise more challenging.
- Those without internet access can stick the texts from the site around the classroom. Learners in pairs have to move around the room looking for the answers. To keep the number of texts to a minimum, only the *About.....*, *National icons* and *Culture of ....* sections of the site are included here. All the answers to the questions on Worksheet B can be found in these sections.
- When the first pair finish, stop the activity and hold a brief feedback session.

**Answers**

(Location of answers in brackets)

1. Wales (*About Wales*)
2. Charles Rennie Mackintosh (*Culture of Scotland*)
3. Wales (*About Wales*)
4. A number of things are mentioned: computers, the Industrial Revolution, Emmeline Pankhurst (one of the suffragettes who campaigned for votes for women), music, Victorian industrialism, the countryside, culture and leisure, urban deprivation, international cuisine, pubs and football. (*National icons – England*)
5. In Northern Ireland (or the Republic of Ireland), when musicians gather in traditional music pubs to play, without being paid or charging the audience. If the evening is good, this is known as ‘great craic’. (*Culture of Northern Ireland*)
6. Rugby union (*About Wales and Culture of Wales*)
7. Scotland (*About Scotland*)
8. Northern Ireland (*About Northern Ireland*)
9. St. George (*National icons – England*)
10. A white, sandy beach on the North West coast of Scotland, fish suppers, the Firth of Clyde, the scenery and the Lochs (lakes). (*National icons – Scotland*)
11. Festivals celebrating Welsh language, art, culture and heritage (*About Wales*)
12. Northern Ireland (*About Northern Ireland*)
13. The Millennium Stadium (*National icons – Wales*)
14. England (*About England – many people commented that it was very difficult to distinguish between English and British culture and identity*)
15. Edinburgh (*About Scotland*)
16. Northern Ireland (*National icons – Northern Ireland*)

**Guessing the meaning of words from the context (20 minutes)**

- Give students in pairs **Worksheet C**. Direct them to the *About England* section and do question 1 as an example. Encourage learners to use the context to help them guess the words.
  
- All the words appear in the *About.....* sections of the site.

**Answers****About England**

1. icon
2. indistinct
3. survey

**About Northern Ireland**

4. mindset
5. shun
6. polarise
7. sweeping statements

**About Scotland**

8. stunning
9. host (verb)
10. thriving

**About Wales**

11. distinguish
12. home ground

- In Part 2, emphasise to learners that they may have to change the form of the word to fit the sentence. Do no. 1 as an example. Check answers in class.

**Answers**

1. will host / is going to host
2. icon
3. polarised
4. home ground
5. sweeping statement
6. is shunning
7. thriving
8. survey
9. is distinguished
10. mindset
11. stunning
12. indistinct

- To round off, ask learners what they learnt about any of the UK countries during the whole activity.

**Optional extension – role play**

- Two students are a professional couple or friends (they can decide on their occupations) who wish to emigrate to the UK. They haven't yet decided where in the UK they want to live.
- Divide the remaining students into 4 groups, each representing one country of the UK. While the couple discuss what is important to them in deciding where to live, and questions they wish to ask, the groups prepare a short

presentation aimed at persuading the couple to come to 'their' UK country. They can either choose one spokesperson, or if the groups are small, each student can give a specific part of the presentation.

- Give them at least 10 minutes to prepare, using the **role cards** to help them, and with access to the website or the texts to back up their case.
- After each group has made its presentation, give the couple a few minutes to take a decision. Meanwhile, the groups discuss how they think they did compared to the other countries. Finally, the couple give and explain their decision.