

## Destination – Northern Ireland

**Topic:** Northern Ireland

**Aims:**

- To develop all four communication skills
- To revise language of describing places

**Level:** Pre-Intermediate and above

**Introduction**

This lesson gives students the opportunity to find out more about Northern Ireland. It is one of a collection of four Destination UK lesson plans that look at the countries that make up the UK. Students will have the chance to read about Northern Ireland and find out a little about its people and culture.

[http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-ukinfofocus-regional-northern\\_ireland.htm](http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-ukinfofocus-regional-northern_ireland.htm)

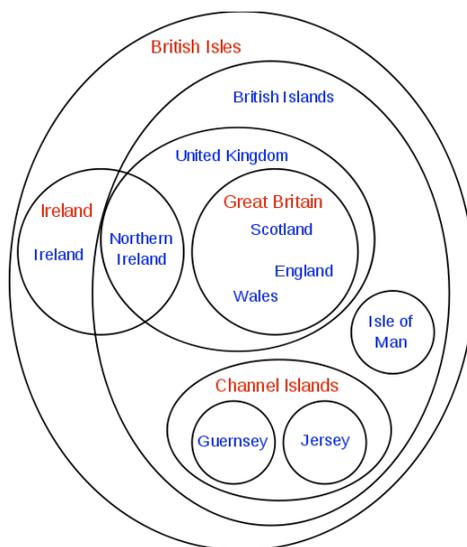
**Procedure**

**GB, the UK or British Isles? What's what?**

- Put students into pairs or small groups to match the questions and the answers. If you have maps, atlases or any visual material to help them that would be great. If not, draw a map on the board to help.

**Answers:** 1 – b, 2 – a, 3 – e, 4 – c, 5 – d.

**Tip:** Use this diagram to help students understand the terminology.



**Source:** Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:British\\_Isles\\_Euler\\_diagram.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:British_Isles_Euler_diagram.svg)

**Worksheet A****GB, UK or British Isles? What's what?**

Match the questions 1-5 with their answers a – e below.

- 1) What is 'The UK' short for?
  - 2) Which countries make up Great Britain?
  - 3) Which country is part of the UK but not part of Great Britain?
  - 4) What are the capital cities of the countries that make up the UK?
  - 5) Which countries make up the British Isles?
- 
- a) Wales, Scotland and England.
  - b) The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
  - c) Cardiff, Edinburgh, London and Belfast.
  - d) The United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.
  - e) Northern Ireland

**Northern Ireland – True or false?**

- This is a simple true or false activity to find out what students may or may not know about the country.

**Answers:**

1 – False, 2 – True, 3 – False (the Republic of Ireland use the Euro and Northern Ireland uses pounds) 4 – True (although there is a dialect called Ulster Scots) 5 – False. (Dublin is the capital city of the Republic of Ireland. Belfast is the capital city of Northern Ireland)

**Worksheet B****Northern Ireland – True or false?**

- 1) You can drive to Northern Ireland from Scotland.
- 2) The famous ship 'Titanic' was built in Belfast.
- 3) Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have the same currency.
- 4) Most people in Northern Ireland speak English.
- 5) The capital city of Northern Ireland is Dublin.

**Reading task – UK in focus**

- Copy and cut up the texts. Divide your class into three groups, A, B and C and give each group a copy (or several if the groups are large) of the corresponding texts, text A to group A and so on.
- Ask the group to read their text and then write two questions about what they have read in the space at the bottom. When all groups have done this, rotate the texts around the three groups (do this in an orderly way, clockwise or anticlockwise) and then instruct the new group to read the text and answer one of the questions at the bottom.
- Then, pass the texts again (in the original direction!) and the new group answers the remaining question. Finally pass the texts to the next group and now each group should have the text that they prepared the questions

for. Ask the groups to correct the answers and give any feedback to their classmates.

- The text is from: [http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-ukinfocus-regional-northern\\_ireland.htm](http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-ukinfocus-regional-northern_ireland.htm)

**Tip:** If you or your students want to find out more about Northern Ireland have a look at this site: <http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/> – Northern Ireland tourist board.

## Worksheet C: Reading task – UK in focus

### Text A – Living in Northern Ireland

#### Where it is

Northern Ireland is part of the UK but is physically separated from mainland England, Wales and Scotland by the wild and sometimes treacherous Irish Sea. Northern Ireland has sea to the north and east, and borders the Republic of Ireland on the west and south, making it the only UK country with a European border.

Unsurprisingly these physical characteristics affect the mindset of its population, and it is not unusual to find some people who feel simultaneously a UK citizen, an Irish citizen and a European citizen. Alternatively, others shun their UK identity and embrace their Irishness, and many others insist on being 'British' and ignore their Irish neighbours.

In a population of 1.5 million nearly 60% are under 40, making it a country with an influential youth culture.

Question 1)

Answer 1)

Question 2)

Answer 2)

----- cut here -----

**Text B – Living in Northern Ireland****Religion and identity**

Identity tends to be polarised according to the religious divide – Protestants tend to see themselves as ‘British’ and part of the UK (except when the Irish rugby team is in action and allegiance conveniently switches!), and Catholics tend to embrace the Irish identity and an all-Ireland ethos. As with any such sweeping statement there are many exceptions to the rule, and Northern Ireland is home to many people of other religions and cultural identities. There are also a huge number of people from both the Protestant and Catholic communities who value each other as friends and fellow citizens, and to whom religion takes a back seat.

**Language**

In common with the UK, people in Northern Ireland speak English (with a distinctive, hard to mimic accent). There also exist the lesser-used languages of Irish and Ulster Scots and many associated cultural activities.

Question 1)

Answer 1)

Question 2)

Answer 2)

----- cut here -----

**Text C – Living in Northern Ireland****Political devolution**

Northern Ireland shares the Westminster government with the UK but has had its own devolved Assembly, currently suspended, with local control over various issues including education and arts. The population waits for local politicians to come to agreement so that the Assembly can be reinstated as independence from Westminster is valued.

**Stereotypes**

Stereotypical images of Northern Ireland often centre on its troubled and violent past: bombs, shootings, brutality, along with the more positive: building the Titanic, the Giants Causeway World Heritage Site, linen industry and musicians such as Van Morrison and Ash.

Question 1)

Answer 1)

Question 2)

Answer 2)

----- cut here -----

### Local lingo

This is an activity to show some of the typical words and phrases that are specific to Northern Ireland.

**Tip:** Every region in the UK has their own special phrases and now may be a good time to teach the student some phrases from where you are from. To give some examples, as I am Cornish I would choose some local phrases like, 'alright my bird?' 'What's on?' or 'I'll do it drekly' (directly). If you're not from the same area or country as your students you could use this task for students to tell you about words and phrases that are specific to their local area.

### Worksheet D: Local lingo

Have a look at some of these words and phrases that are specific to Northern Ireland. Then imagine you meet an Irish friend on the street. Write a short dialogue including some of the local language. Read your dialogue to the class.

*Q: How was the craic? A: The craic was mighty!*

Did you have a good time? Yes!

Greeting: *How are yours?*

*Even the dogs on the street know it* – relating to something that is common and apparently is a Belfast only expression.

*I'll do it now in a minute*

*'bout ye?* – How are you?

*founded* – cold

*scundered* – embarrassed

*yer man* – that man

*grand* – good, OK

*wee* – little (also used in Scotland)

*aye* – yes (again, also used in Scotland)

*boggin'* – dirty

*'mon* – come on

*'mere* – come here

*stickin' out* – really good

- Ask your student to look at the ingredients of the Ulster Fry. Teach unknown vocabulary by describing, drawing or translating the items. Then discuss the questions. You could extend this activity by asking students to write the ingredients for their ideal meal or a traditional dish they like.

### Worksheet E: The Ulster Fry

In Northern Ireland they have a special dish known as the Ulster Fry. You can eat it for lunch, supper or breakfast. Have a look at the ingredients:

- Bacon
- Eggs
- Sausage
- Black pudding
- White pudding
- Tomatoes
- Mushrooms
- Soda bread
- Potato bread

All of the ingredients are fried, including the bread, and it is usually accompanied by cups of tea.

- Would you like to try the Ulster fry? Why / why not?
- What did you have for breakfast / lunch this morning?
- What are the typical dishes from your country?

### There was an Englishman, an Irishman, a Welshman and a Scotsman...

- Jokes about different the nationalities of the UK are a classic part of British culture. Everybody has heard some jokes that start, "There was an Englishman, an Irishman, a Welshman and a Scotsman...." The joke varies depending on where you are and where the joke teller is from! The joke can be on any of the nationalities!
- Either tell your students some of these jokes, (or ones of your own that are funnier!) or give them out for students to read. See if they understand any of them and help when necessary. If your class don't fall about laughing don't worry – it may be that they've understood the English but just don't find them funny!
- Then ask your students to translate some jokes to tell you. I've left two blank spaces in the table for students to write their own jokes. When they have done that, they can tell their jokes to the group.

**Worksheet F: There was an Englishman, an Irishman, a Welshman and a Scotsman...**

Many countries make jokes about other nationalities. Who does your country make jokes about? Do you think these types of jokes are funny?

In the UK the different countries often joke about one another. Read the jokes and see if you find them funny, then write two jokes of your own to tell the rest of the group. You can translate the jokes from your own language.

Englishman 1 – “What was the final score in the football match this afternoon?”  
Englishman 2 – “ Nil-nil” (0-0)  
Englishman 1 – “ Oh, and what was the score at half – time?!”

Announcement at a London airport:  
“Will the passenger who has left their hearing aid at the British Airways check in desk please come and collect it?”

After the famous boat race between Oxford and Cambridge, one of the mothers of the crew was consoling her son.  
“Don’t worry son, you were fantastic. You rowed faster than the others in your boat!”

Tell an Englishman a joke on Monday and he might laugh on Friday.

Write a joke here:

Write a joke here: