

Группа: 102Фк

Специальность: Лечебное дело

Дата: 07.10.2020

Тема: The United Kingdom. Wales. Northern Ireland.

Задание лекции: Прочитать текст (можно не переводить). Запомнить столицы стран, входящих в состав Великобритании

Домашнее задание: Письменно описать любую столицу государства, входящего в состав Великобритании

The British Isles, which include Great Britain, Ireland and a lot of smaller islands, are situated off the north western coast of Europe and once formed part of that continent. They became islands when they were separated from it. The separation took place thousands of years ago, after the last Ice Age, when the ice melted, the level of the oceans rose and drowned the low-lying coastlands.

Politically the British Isles are divided into two countries — the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Irish Republic or Eire. All in all there are over 5,000 islands in the system of the British Isles which lie on the continental shelf. The two main islands are Great Britain (in which are England, Wales and Scotland) to the east and Ireland (in which are Northern Ireland and the independent Irish Republic) to the west. They are separated by the Irish Sea. The UK is situated off the west coast of Europe between the Atlantic Ocean on the northwest and the North Sea on the east and is separated from the European continent by the English Channel (or La Manche) and the Strait of Dover.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is the official name of the state which is sometimes referred to as Great Britain or Britain (after its major isle), England (after its major historic part) or the British Isles. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the UK) occupies most of the territory of the British Isles. It consists of four main parts which are: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast.

The UK is one of the world's smaller countries (it is twice smaller than France or Spain), with an area of some 244,100 square kilometres. The population of the United Kingdom is nearly 59 million people. English is not the only language which people use in the UK. English is the official language. But some people speak Gaelic in western Scotland, Welsh — in parts of northern and central Wales.

Union Jack The flag of the United Kingdom, known as the Union Jack, is made up of three crosses. The upright red cross is the cross of St. George, the patron saint of England. The white diagonal cross is the cross of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. The red diagonal cross is the cross of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland.

Geographically, the island of Great Britain is subdivided into two main regions — Lowland Britain and Highland Britain, Lowland Britain comprises southern and eastern England, Highland Britain consists of Scotland, most of Wales, the Pennines,

and the Lake District. The Pennine Chain extends southward from the Cheviot Hills into the Midlands, a plains region with low hills and valleys. England is separated from Scotland by the Cheviot Hills, running from east to west.

The chief rivers of Great Britain are: the Severn, flowing along the border between England and Wales, tributaries of which include the Avon famed by Shakespeare; the Thames, which flows eastward to the port of London and some others.

There are many lakes in Great Britain. On the northwest side of the Pennine system lies the Lake District, containing the beautiful lakes which give it its name. This district is widely known for its association with the history of English literature and especially with the name of William Wordsworth (1770—1859), the founder of the Lake School of poets.

The largest cities of Great Britain are: London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Bristol, Leeds, Edinburgh. The most important ports are: London, Liverpool, Southampton, Belfast, Glasgow and Cardiff.

MINERAL RESOURCES.

The rise of Britain as an industrial nation in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was partly due to the presence of considerable mineral resources. They provided raw materials as well as sources of power. She possessed abundant supplies of coal and iron ore, the two chief minerals on which the Industrial Revolution was based.

Britain had enough non-ferrous metals — copper, lead, and tin, for example, to meet her needs for a time. But in the course of the last hundred years or so the situation has gradually changed. Many of Britain's most valuable and accessible deposits have been worked out. Moreover, coal had lost some of its former importance, and such minerals as petroleum and uranium ores have become essential materials in the modern world.

At the same time British industry has been one increasingly orientated towards lighter industry and the heavier coal-based industries have tended to decrease as the dependence upon coal as a source of power has declined. The absence in Great Britain of high-grade iron ore, manganese, chrome, nickel and many other rare metals makes her economy greatly dependent on imported raw materials.

WALES.

Another constituent country of the United Kingdom Great Britain and Northern Ireland is Wales. It became part of England in 1536 by the Act of Union. Until then it had been regarded as a separate principality but a dependency of England.

The Welsh call their country Cymru, and themselves they call Cymru, a word which has the same root as 'comrader' (friend, or comrade). The population of Wales is over 3 million people. About 75 percent of the people of Wales live in towns and urban districts. South Wales has a rich tradition of struggle for more jobs and better working conditions in mines. Wales is a highland country of old, hard rocks.

North Wales is a country of mountains and deep valleys. South Wales is a land of high hills and wide valleys. The pride of Wales in scenery is Snowdonia, a region of high mountains. Snowdon is the highest mountain in England and Wales. Except for coal, mineral resources are limited, and include gold, silver, lead and copper. South Wales is more developed: coal-mining, steel production, electronics, electrical engineering can be found here.

The capital of Wales is Cardiff, the largest city of Wales. Cardiff is situated near the mouth of the Taff River. It is an important industrial city and a port. It is also an administrative and educational centre. The second largest city in Wales is Swansea where mainly steel production can be found. Since World War II there has been intensive development in the metals industries especially in the south and southeast.

The Welsh people, especially in rural areas, are fond of folk music, singing, poetry and drama. Welsh literature is one of the oldest in Europe. There are many choirs in Wales, the standard of singing is high and the love of good music is widespread. Now there is a growing movement of revival of Welsh culture from which sprang the revival of Eisteddfod. Eisteddfod in the form of a gathering of bards had occasionally been held in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. Now Eisteddfod is a festival of Welsh culture. It includes competitions in prose, poetry and singing. Wales has its own flag called the Welsh dragon.

NORTHERN IRELAND.

Northern Ireland is the smallest component of the United Kingdom. It occupies the northeast of the island of Ireland, only one-sixth of its territory. Northern Ireland contains six of the nine counties of the historic province of Ulster' and that is why the name 'Ulster' is sometimes used as equivalent to Northern Ireland. Its capital city is Belfast.

For seven centuries Ireland was a colony of Britain. Due to the colonial policy of Great Britain the Irish nation was forcefully partitioned. As a result of the hard struggle of the Irish people for independence the larger part of Ireland gained the status of a British dominion in 1921. Much later, in 1949 it was officially proclaimed an independent state, the Irish Free State of Eire. The industrial northeast (Northern Ireland with its 6 counties) was retained by Great Britain as its smallest component. But certain forces of both the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland are for the reunification of the country, against social deprivation which is at its worst among Catholics. They believe that British withdrawal from Ireland is the only way to achieve peace. The Protestants in Northern Ireland wish to retain her links with Britain.

There are low hills and peaks of rocks in the northwest, while the northeast sector of the island is a plateau. The Mourne Mountains in the southeast slope down to Lough Neagh, the largest lake in the British isles. The rivers of Ireland are short but deep. The largest river is the Shannon. The population of Northern Ireland is over 1.5 million people. 53 percent of the total population live in urban areas. The whole economy of Northern Ireland is closely integrated with that of Great Britain. It has

its roots in three basic industries—agriculture, textiles and shipbuilding. The largest industry is agriculture conducted for the most part on small family farms. It occupies about 72 per cent of the land area.

Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland is the leading industrial centre and a large port. Its chief industries are the production of linen and other textiles, clothing, shipbuilding, engineering. In Ireland the national musical instrument is the harp.

POPULATION.

The population of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is nearly 59 million people. The population lives mostly in towns and cities and their suburbs. Four out of every five people live in towns. The distribution of the population is rather uneven. Over 48.8 million people live in England, over 3 million in Wales, a little over 5 million in Scotland and about 1.5 million in Northern Ireland.

Greater London, the south and the southeast are the most densely populated areas, London's population is nearly 7 million. Most of the mountainous parts of the UK including much of Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Pennine Chain in northern England are very sparsely populated.

The UK is inhabited by the English, the Scots, the Welsh, and the Irish' who constitute the British nation. The British are the descendants of different peoples who settled in the British Isles at different times. The earliest known people of Britain were of Iberian origin. Then followed a long succession of invaders including the Celts, the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons, the Danes and at last in 1066 the Normans. It was the last time Britain was invaded.

Now there are also many people of all colors and races in the UK. These are mostly former inhabitants of the former British colonies. These people, called 'the coloureds', came to the UK in search of better living standards.

English is the official language of the UK. Besides standard literary English there are many regional and social dialects. A well-known example is the cockney of East Londoners. The Scottish and Irish forms of Gaelic survive in some parts of Scotland and Ireland. Wales is officially bilingual, Welsh is spoken by about a fifth of its population. Welsh is the first language in most of the western counties of Wales and at least formally has the same status as English. Nowadays there is a growing movement in Wales and Scotland for a revival of national culture and languages.

CLIMATE.

The climate in the UK is generally mild and temperate due to the influence of the Gulf Stream. The southwestern winds carry the warmth and moisture into Britain. The climate in Britain is usually described as cool, temperate and humid. As the weather changes with the wind, and Britain is visited by winds from different parts of the world, the most characteristic feature of Britain's weather is its variability. The English also say that they have three variants of weather: when it rains in the

morning, when it rains in the afternoon or when it rains all day long. Sometimes it rains so heavily that they say 'It's raining cats and dogs'.

Rainfall is more or less even throughout the year. In the mountains there is heavier rainfall than in the plains of the south and east. The driest period is from March to June and the wettest months are from October to January. The average range of temperature (from winter to summer) is from 5 to 23 degrees above zero. During a normal summer the temperature sometimes rises above 30 degrees in the south. Winter temperatures below 10 degrees are rare. It seldom snows heavily in winter, frost is rare. January and February are usually the coldest months, July and August the warmest. Still the wind may bring winter cold in spring or summer days. Sometimes it brings whirlwinds or hurricanes. Droughts are rare.

So, we may say that the British climate has three main features: it is mild, humid and changeable. That means that it is never too hot or too cold. Winters are extremely mild. Snow may come but it melts quickly. In winter the cold is a humid cold, not dry. This humid and mild climate is good for plants. Trees and flowers begin to blossom early in spring.

VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE.

The humid and mild climate of Great Britain is good for plants and flowers. Some of them have become symbols in the UK, Probably you know that the poppy is the symbol of peace, the red rose is the national emblem of England, the thistle is the national emblem of Scotland and the Edinburgh International Festival. The daffodils and the leek are the emblems of Wales, the shamrock (a kind of clover) is the emblem of Ireland.

The UK was originally a land of vast forests, mainly oak and beech in the Lowlands and pine and birch in the Highlands, with great stretches of marshland and smaller areas of moors. In the course of time, much forest land was cleared and almost all the Lowlands outside the industrial areas were put under cultivation. Today only about six per cent of the total land area remains wooded.

Extensive forests remain in eastern and northern Scotland and in southeastern and western England. Oak, elm, ash, and beech are the commonest trees in England, while Scotland has much pine and birch. The Highlands with thin soil are largely moorland with heather and grasses. In the cultivated areas that make up most of Britain there are many wild flowers, flowering plants and grasses.

The fauna or animal life of the UK is much like that of northwestern Europe, to which it was once joined. Many larger mammals such as bear and wolf have been hunted to extinction, others are now protected by law. About 50 land mammals are still found in the UK. There are many foxes. Otters are common along rivers and streams, and seals live along parts of the coast. Hedgehogs, hares, rabbits, rats and mice are numerous. Deer live in some of the forests in the Highlands of Scotland and in England. There are several small lizards, two or three kinds of snakes, and several kinds of frogs and toads.

Some 230 kinds of birds live in the UK, another 200 are regular visitors, and many are songbirds. The most numerous are blackbird, sparrow and starling. Robin Redbreast is the national bird of the UK. The number of ducks, geese and other water fowl has diminished during recent years. Pheasants and other large and rare birds are protected by law. Gulls and other sea birds nest near the coast.

There are many threats to wildlife and ecological balance around the coast. The biggest threat to the coastline is pollution. Even much-loved Blackpool is not officially safe. More than 3.500 million tons of industrial waste were pumped into the North Sea every year. 'We cannot continue to use our seas as a dustbin and expect our coastline to survive', says Greenpeace. Many other ecological problems may be caused by privatization of the coast.