**[London](http://anglictina-maturita.studentske.cz/2008/03/london.html)**

London is the capital city of Great Britain. It is one of the largest cities in the world. London is one of the world's most important financial and cultural centres. It lies on the river Thames, so there are many bridges. There is a seat of the Monarch, the Parliament and the Goverment. London is the centre of cultural, political and social activities. Tourists come there in all seasons of the year to visit the monuments, museums, galleries, but also the theatres, of which there are about one hunderd.  
  
The city’s history is very rich. Several disasters have afflicted London. In 1665 the Black Plague killed 70 000 people. In 1666 the Great Fire broke out, destroying most of the city.  
Despite this, many of London’s monuments have survived.  
In London there are 5 airports (the biggest are Heathrow and Gatwick). The other main means of transport are**:** busses, underground and the well known black taxis.  
There are two cities in the centre of London: the City of London and the City of Westminster.  
  
**Places of Interest:**  
**The Tower of London** – It was built by William the Conqueror. It has been put to many uses  
such as a royal residence, the zoo, royal mint and most recently as a museum. It has been known as a prison too. Today the Tower of London is home to the Beefeaters, Crown Jewels and the famous black ravens. The legend says that if the ravens fly away, it will be the end of the Monarch in England.  
  
**The Tower Bridge** – It is the best-known of all bridges spannig the Thames. It has two  
characteristic towers.  
  
**The Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament** – London’s Big Ben is not the tower, but the bell inside the tower. Houses of Parliament are political centre of the United Kingdom and the residence of the British Parliament.  
  
**Buckingham Palace** – It is the home of Monarch since Queen Victoria.  
  
**Trafalgar Square** – It is the largest square in London.  
  
In London there are many theatres too. For example The National Theatre. It is situated on the south bank of the Thames. The next theatre is the Globe. It is the Shakespeare’s theatre.  
The most favourite parks are Hyde Park, St. James’s Park and the Regent’s Park.