# 1. My region and Ostrava

## Location and population

* Ostrava, the third largest city in the Czech Republic, is situated in the northeast of the country and forms the heart of the Moravian-Silesian region.
* It is located close to the Slovak and Polish borders on the banks of the Ostravice River and offers beautiful views of the Beskydy Mountains.
* Population of Ostrava: 289k

## Industry and industrial sights

* Ostrava's industrial scene reflects its history and economic strength.
* Steelworks, machinery, coal mines, and blast furnaces dominate its landscape, showcasing its industrial heritage and innovation.
* You can visit the largest Mining Museum in Landek. In the closed Anselm mine you cand see the collection of mining equipment and see working conditions of the miners. If you want, you can go down the mine too.
* The Vítkovice Lower Area is a specific landmark of the city with the special industrial architecture.

## Architecture

* Ostrava's architectural landmarks, like the Cathedral of the Divine Saviour or Church of St. Wenceslaus
* The central Masaryk Square, named after the first President of Czechoslovakia Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, features the historic old city hall building and a Marian plague column from 1702.
* Nearby Smetanovo Square features the Antonín Dvořák Theatre and the Functionalist Knihcentrum bookstore. To the west are a series of grand, imposing bank buildings and the Elektra Palace on Nádražní Street, while to the north is the New City Hall with its landmark viewing tower, overlooking the large open space of Prokeš Square.

## Culture and nature

* Its proximity to the Beskydy Mountains offers residents and visitors a chance to explore nature's wonders.
* There are a few theatres in Ostrava, such as the Antonín Dvořák theatre, Jiří Myron theatre, Petr Bezruč theatre and others. If you prefer cinema, you can go to Multi cinema Cinestar, art Cinema or Minikinokavárna. There are also many houses of culture, art galleries, exhibition halls, where you can see portraits, pictures or sculptures.

## Famous personalities

* The world famous music composer Leoš Janáček was born in 1854, to honour of whom the International Music Festival Janáčkův Máj is held.
* Petr Bezruč – important poet, Jaromír Nohavica, František Palacky,

## Past and present (history)

* Ostrava has been an important crossroad of prehistoric trading routes (the Amber Road).
* The town itself was founded in 1267.
* Until the late 18th century, Ostrava was a small provincial town with a population around one thousand inhabitants engaged in handicraft.
* In 1763, large deposits of black coal were discovered, leading to an industrial boom and a flood of new immigrants in the following centuries.
* During the 19th century, several mine towers were raised in and around the city and the first steel works were established.
* The 20th century saw further industrial expansion of the city accompanied by an increase of population and the quality of civic services and culture.
* However, during World War II, Ostrava - as an important source of steel for the army industry - suffered several massive bombing campaigns bringing large damage to the city.
* Since the Velvet revolution in 1989 the city has been going through big changes.
* A thorough restructuring of industry is taking place - coal mining around the city was stopped in 1994 and a large part of the Vítkovice ironworks near the city centre closed in 1998, both improving the environment dramatically.

## Stereotypes

* People in Ostrava speak quickly and shortly

# 2. New Zealand

## Location

* Island country in the South Pacific Ocean
  + Australia, which is its nearest neighbour, is 600 kilometres away.

## Geography and climate

* + New Zealand is an island country which includes two large islands, North and South, which are known for their scenic landscapes of snow-capped mountains and rolling green pastures.
  + These islands are separated by Cook strait.
  + New Zealand has more than 50 volcanoes, some of them are still active today. The South Island is known home to highest mountain peaks in New Zealand. Mount Cook (called cloud piercer by Māori people) rises to 12 316 feet, which is approximately 3,75 kilometres.
  + The capital of New Zealand is Wellington. However, the largest and most cosmopolitan city is Auckland. Hamilton, a short distance south of Auckland, is a centre for dairy farming
  + Due to its remote location, New Zealand is teeming unusual wildlife that cannot be seen anywhere else in the world. Almost all land animals are birds and most of these species have forgotten to fly. Māori people and European settlers brought animals to the islands and the flightless birds had no defence against them

## Population

* + Polynesians first settled on the islands of New Zealand about 800 to 1000 years ago. Their descendants are the Māori. The first European settlers came from the UK, arriving in increasing numbers after New Zealand became a colony of the British Empire in 1840. In 1907 New Zealand became a self-governing dominion within the British Empire. Nowadays New Zealand is an independent country and full member of the British Commonwealth.
  + New Zealanders or Kiwis, as they are called, were shaped by their isolation. Official language of this country is English and Māori. Today, most kiwis are no longer farmers, 86% of the population is living in cities. Māori culture is widely respected by New Zealanders. Rugby is the favourite sport and nearly everyone follows it.

## Industry and agriculture

* + Many of New Zealand’s animals including the giant ostrich-like bird *moa* became extinct after people colonized the islands. Some species were hunted to extinction, while others have survived. The kiwi, a nocturnal bird, is the national emblem.
  + New Zealand is an agricultural country. Industry is closely linked to agriculture. New Zealand is the second largest exporter of wool. The most exports are lamb, butter, kiwi fruit and wine
  + Tourism is the main business in the New Zealand with over 2 million travellers a year.

## Political system and flag

* + Form of government is Parliamentary democracy
  + Head of government is Prime minister (currently Chris Hipkins)
  + Head of the state is Governor General (currently Cindy Kiro)
  + Legislature: House of Representatives, 120 members
  + New Zealand government is predicated in the parliamentary democracy supported the system like in Britain.

## Others

* + Māori Haka dance: The dance, which Māori men once performed before going into battle, is characterized by heavy stomping, loud chanting and aggressive body movements Since 2011, haka has been a very popular way of expressing support of the national “All Blacks” team during the Rugby World Cup.
  + Filming of the LOTR

# 3. Czech Republic

## Location

* The Czech Republic is a state in Central Europe. It occupies an area of about 79,000 sq kms and its populations is around 10,5 millions people. It borders with Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Austria. The major nationalities living here are Czech and Moravian, but there are minority groups such as the Silesians, the Roms, the Poles, the Germans, the Russians etc.
* Border areas are mainly mountainous, interior is mainly hilly or flat
* The Czech Republic lies in the temperate zone (it doesn´t have very cold winters and summers are not extremely hot either)
* The highest peak: Sněžka (1,603 m)

## Industry and Agriculture

* The Czech Republic is an industrial country. The most important part of our economy is engineering (machine tools, locomotives, tractors, agricultural machines). Other important branches are metallurgical and chemical industries, tourism, textile, glass industries
* The main items of our agriculture are wheat, sugar-beet, grapes, hops and fruit. In animal production, cattle-breeding and pig-breeding are the most important. Fish breeding, especially carp-breeding has a long tradition in South Bohemia ponds.

## Politics

* The head of the Czech Republic is the President (Petr Pavel). He’s elected for a 5-year period by the Parliament. The state flag consists of 2 horizontal stripes - white on the top, red on the bottom, and a blue wedge.

## Places of Interest

* In the Czech Republic there are many spots of great natural beauty as well as areas totally spoiled by industries (e.g. the Most area). Among most beautiful natural places belong: the Czech Paradise, “rock town” in Prachov rocks, Macocha abyss, the Jeseník mountains etc. The most beautiful historic towns are: e.g. Prague, Kutná Hora, Tábor (established by radical Hussites), Olomouc, Třeboň. Visitors can walk around preserved old castles or ruins such as Karlštejn, Křivoklát, Konopiště, Bezděz etc.

## Famous Personalities

* The Czech Republic is a birthplace of many famous writers e.g. Němcová, Mácha, Neruda, Jirásek, Čapek, Hrabal, etc., and composers e.g. Janáček, Dvořák, Smetana, etc.
* One of the best and most important rulers was Charles IV, who ruled in the 14th century.

## Free time activities

* The Czech Republic has many beautiful sights, whether you are looking for historical monuments, modern architecture or the tranquillity of nature

## Stereotypes

* One typical stereotype of Czech Republic, or more of its people, is wearing socks in sandals. Another one is so-called “ledvinka” in English you call it bum bag or fanny pack.
* Czech people also have very dark humour.

# 4. History of The Czech Republic

## Cyril and Methodius

* Velká Morava (= Great Moravia) - St Constantine(Cyril) and St Methodius
* 863: Christian missionaries, both highly educated; the language they used – Old Church Slavonic (= staroslověnština, the first Slavonic literary language)

## Přemyslid dynasty

* 10th century – 1306

## Charles the IV.

* Karel IV (=Charles IV, ruled 1346-1378) – the House of Luxembourg - under his rule, the Czech Lands became a prosperous country, Holy Roman Emperor – made Prague centre of the Roman Empire, established Nové Město, Charles Bridge, Charles University 1348. The Hungry Wall, Karlštejn – Coronation Jewells

## John Hus and his movements

* Jan Hus (1370-1415) – priest, philosopher and preacher at the Bethlehem Chapel, sharply criticized the Church (Church told the people that God would forgive them if they pay the Church), burned at the stake for heresy. The day of his death (6th July 1415) is a national holiday.
* The Hussite Wars (1419-1436): culmination of the tension – a series of battles between supporters and followers of Hus (Žižka, Prokop Holý) and his enemies.

## Habsburg dynasty

* In year 1526 The Habsburgs came to the Czech throne – 400 years of rule. Habsburg Monarchy → Austrian Empire.

## The battle on the White mountain

* 1618-1648: 30 – years war nobility x Habsburgs they wanted power and money (1620 – The Battle of the white mountain; 1648 – The Vestfal peace)

## The national revival

* The Revolution year, uprising against the monarchy (Germany, Italy, France, Czech lands against Habsburg – were very strong Austria-Hungary) – National Revival – Národní obrození

## World War I

* 1914- 1918 First World War (The Great War) (Austria x France, England) – winner Austria – Czech losers and assassination of Ferdinand de Este in Sarajevo (we were part of Austria) USA – neutral

## Tomáš Garyk Masaryk

* 1918 - Creation of the Czechoslovakia republic. First president.

## World War II

* 1939 – 1945 Second World War (Germany x France, England, Poland, Russia, CZ) Spain, Switzerland, Norway – neutral, USA sent soldiers

## Velvet revolution

* 1989 –the Communist Party lost power. Václav Havel. OF. Democratic Forum

# 5. Praha

## History and Legends

* The city’s origin dates back to the 9 th century. Prague was founded by Princess Libuše of Premyslid dynasty. Charles IV. founded Charles University in 1348, Charles Bridge and many sights. In 1918 Prague became the capital city of Czechoslovakia. In 1939 Prague was occupated by German military. In 1968 it was occupied by Russian military. In 1989 was Velvet Revolution. In 1993 Prague became the capital city of Czech republic.
* The story of Horymír and Šemík - Horymír was unhappy with prince Křesomysl’s rule and warned that neglecting farming would result in famine. His protests were not liked by the miners who set Horymír’s property on fire. Horymír and his followers in turn burned down the miners’ village. Horymír was punished and sentenced for execution. When he was asked his last wish, he requested one last ride around the castle grounds on his horse Šemík. His wish was granted. When Horymír got on his white horse, he whispered something in his ear. Šemík ran to the ramparts, jumped over them and slid down the cliff. The miraculous jump exhausted Šemík. The dying horse spoke to Horymír in a human voice and asked for a tomb to be built for him. Horymír did as the horse wished. The tomb has since disappeared but Šemík is said to be sleeping in the Vyšehrad rock, ready to come out when his help is needed again.
* Libuše and the foundation of Prague, The Golem of Prague

## Important parts

* Prague consist of six parts, mostly former towns which were integrated in the 18th century. They are The Old Town, The Jewish Town (now called Josefov), The New Town, The Little Quarter, Hradčany and Vyšehrad.

## Most popular tourist attractions

* Prague offers modern facilities for sport and recreation – sport stadiums and halls for sports and concerts, parks, swimming pools, amusement parks. There are also many theatres, cinemas, museums and art galleries. We can visit the Prague zoo to see various exotic animals.

## Culture

* In Prague, there are many theatres, for example Smetana Theatre, Magic Latern, the Lucerna Hall, the Tyl Theatre, and National Theatre.
* National Theatre: after opening in 1881 it was damaged by fire and rebuilt in the next two years.

## Public transport

* Most people in Prague live in suburbs and travel to work by cars or by public transport. They can go by the underground, trams or buses. If you have a lot of money, you can take a taxi
* The Prague Metro network consists of 3 lines, designated by letters (A, B, C) and differentiated in colours. Underground is the fastest means of transport.

## Institutions and universities

* Charles University, Czech technical university in Prague, Prague University of Economics and Business

# 6. Canada

## Geography

* The second largest country after Russia, Canada shares borders with USA, and Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic oceans. The capital is Ottawa, although not the largest city, which is Toronto. Population of Canada is around 38 million people.
* Mountain ranges include the Coast Mountains, the Rocky Mountains and the Mackenzie Mountains in the west. Eastern parts are mostly flat or gently rolling.
* The highest point of Canada is Mount Logan (6 050 m) in St. Elias Mountains, Yukon
* Canada shares four of the five Great Lakes (all bud Michigan) with the USA. Major rivers include the ST. Lawrence, the Mackenzie and the Fraser River.
* Canada’s climate is extremely cold in the north and generally cold elsewhere, but with warmer temperatures along the west coast. The Pacific Ocean moderates west coast temperatures – mild summers and cool winters.

## Natural resources

* Canada has a 13% share of global oil reserve and large gas resources, which makes it one of the most powerful exporters of petroleum and energy in general. The country is also a leading exporter of zinc, uranium, gold, nickel, steel, iron ore and lead.

## Economy, industry and agriculture

* One of the largest world’s economies. As a developed country, Canada is dominated by the service sector. As far as agriculture is concerned, Canada’ forestry is very prominent. Also fishing is a crucial part of national economy (cod, lobster, salmon). Major crops involve wheat and barley, animal production is dominated by cattle breeding.
* Canada spends a lot of its financial resources on the development of science, technology and research.
* Besides petroleum industries, machinery and motor vehicles account for considerable part of national economy as well.

## Political system

* Form of government in Canada is Constitutional monarchy (King Charles the III), in practice a parliamentary democracy with a federal system. Governor general is Mary Simon.

## Places of interest

* Newfoundland and Labrador: More than 70 parks and natural areas. A Viking village from about 100 AD was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
* New Brunswick: Thick forests and rich wildlife population (moose, bears, deer, beaver, fox)
* Quebec: French speaking province. The capital, Quebec City, is the oldest city in Canada. Contains some of the oldest houses, churches and streets in Canada (often dating back to the 17th century).
* Toronto, the capital of the province, is one of the most populated cities on Canada.
* The Niagara River, carrying water from four western Great Lakes, plunges 51 meters over Horseshoe Falls in Ontario and 54 meters over American Falls in New York. The falls are more than a kilometre wide.
* Vancouver is one of the largest cities in Canada and ranks as the country’s busiest port.

# 7. London

## Famous parts, streets, squares, parks

* Theatres: The National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company
* Concert halls: The Royal Festival Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, and the Queen Elizabeth Hall
* Whitehall is the street where the government offices are. Horse Guards Parade takes place here.
* Downing Street 10 is the official home of British Prime Ministers.
* Westminster Abbey was founded in the 11th century. Britain’s Kings and Queens are crowned here. England’s famous people are buried here in the Poet’s Corner (e.g. Newton, Handel, etc.).
* The City is the oldest part of London around St. Paul. There are many banks (the most important is Bank of England) and offices here.
* Tower Bridge is one of the most famous symbols of London. It can open in the middle and let large ships go through.
* Trafalgar Square was named after Admiral Nelson’s victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Trafalgar.
* The National Gallery is in Trafalgar Square. It houses paintings by nearly all the great European artists and a large collection of British paintings and sculptures.
* The British Museum is the largest museum in the world. It houses the biggest collection of all kinds of animals and minerals and rocks. There is a collection of fine and applied arts of all countries, periods and styles. The British Museum’s library is the largest in the world.
* Buckingham palace is the Queen’s residence in London. One of the biggest London’s parades is Changing the Guard here.
* Windsor Castle is the residence of nearly all the British sovereigns outside London.
* There are many parks in London, e.g. St. James’s Park, Green Park, Regent’s Park. The largest of them is Hyde Park. It is also known for its Speaker’s Corner where anybody can have a speech.

## The Tower of London

* Now it is museum where tourists go to see the Crown Jewels
* It belongs in the UNESCO World Heritage Site
* The Tower was built in the 11th century It served as royal palace first, then prison and fortress. It is a museum now. The Crown Jewels guarded by the Beefeaters are kept here.

## Houses of parliament

* Political centre of the UK, home of the British Parliament (House of Lords and Commons)
* Buildings are in gothic style but were built after the old building had burnt down. The only part, which escaped the fire, was Westminster Hall. There is also a famous clock-tower with Big Ben.

## Saint Paul’s Cathedral

* The highest point in the city of London.
* One of the largest cathedrals in the world. It stands in the City (oldest part of London). The Cathedral is known for its Whispering Gallery.
* Seat of Bishop
* Marriage Diana + Charles

## Transport (double-deckers, underground)

* There is a various means of transport in London, like red double-deckers (first used in 1920s), underground (which is the oldest in the world), 3 airports (the most important are Heathrow and Gatwick.

# 8. Education

## Primary education

* Starts at basic schools and lasts 9 years. Children receive an education foundation: writing, counting and reading skills, native language and literature, basics in physics, biology, civics etc.

## Secondary education

* Lasts usually 4 years – from the age of 15 or till the age of 19. Secondary education may be divided among: Secondary grammar schools, Secondary special schools (technical schools, schools of economics, agriculture schools, music schools, schools for health workers etc.), Vocational schools which prepare young people for practical professions.
* Students end their secondary education after passing their graduation exam, which consists of two parts: written part and oral part in Czech language and literature, accounting, economics, and a foreign language or mathematics.

## Universities

* Starts at the age of 19 and lasts usually from 4 to 6 years. Students may attend various universities or colleges (Medical Faculty, School of Economics, Law Faculty etc.). For those who do not want to enter the university there are various types of two-year training courses for opticians, managers, social workers, au-pairs etc.

## School subjects

* Subjects taught at Czech schools are as follows: Czech, foreign language (English, German, French, Russian, Spanish), geography, mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry music, fine arts, labs, civics, physical education. Additional subjects taught at special secondary schools are e.g. economics, typing, lab work, workshop, accounting, electronics etc.

## Exams

* After each exam students are evaluated by marks from 1 to 5. 1 is the best and 5 is the worst. Each term a student gets his school reports with marks from both compulsory and elective subjects.
* Final exams in secondary schools are called Maturity exams, they consists of two parts: written part and oral part in Czech language and literature, accounting, economics, and a foreign language or mathematics.

## Equipment of your school

* We have very modern IT equipment, and new desks and chairs. We also use touch interactive whiteboards which are very useful.

## Differences between Czech schools and schools in the UK/USA

* The beginning of school attendance
* Wearing uniform
* Parts of school year
* Marks (1-5; A-E)
* In Czech education we have no exams after leaving compulsory education

# 9. Holidays, festivals and notable days in Great Britain

## Date

* Guy Fawkes night – November 5th
* Halloween - October 31st

## Origin

* People in Britain were pagans thousands years ago. They worshiped the sun, the moon, the wind, the rain, animals and trees. When Christianity came to Britain, people wanted to keep their traditions, so many of old festivals became Christian ones such as St. Valentine´s day, Easter, Halloween, Christmas.
* Halloween - Among the old Celts it was the last day of the year and the beginning of winter when witches and ghosts were supposed to celebrate their rites. When the pagans were Christianized, the holiday was converted to the Eve of All Saints ´Day when the Christian Church honours the memory of the dead.
* Guy Fawkes night - It is the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot from 1605. Guy Fawkes was an English conspirator who, with other Catholics, attempted to blow up James I and the Parliament. The plot was discovered and the conspirator and his friends were executed.

## Symbol

* Guy Fawkes night – Gunpowder, Guy masks
* Halloween – scary costumes and decorations, carved pumpkins, lanterns

## How it is celebrated

* Guy Fawkes night – Some days before Bonfire Night, as the 5th November is called, many children make a guy (Guy Fawkes) from old clothes, stuffed with newspapers. The children carry the guy around the streets to show people and ask “A penny for a guy”. This is the way of collecting money for fireworks. At night there are bonfire parties, where the guy is burnt. People roast potatoes in the gardens. There is a rhyme about Guy Fawkes Day: Remember, remember, The fifth of November, Gunpowder, treason and plot.
* Halloween - People cut horrible faces in pumpkins and put a candle inside. Children dress up as ghosts and monsters and go round people’s houses asking, “Trick or treat?”. A treat means that they get candies, fruit, nuts or money. If the children do not get a treat, they play a trick on the people. A favourite trick is to put soap on the windows or to make a lot of noise at the door.

## Public holidays

* New Year’s Day - January 1, Good Friday – Friday before Easter, Easter Monday, Early May Bank holiday, Spring bank holiday, Summer bank holiday, Christmas Day – December 25th,

Boxing Day – December 26

# 10. Holidays, Festivals and Notable Days in the USA

## Date

* Independence Day - July 4th
* Thanksgiving Day – 4th Thursday in November
* Halloween - October 31st

## Origin

* Independence Day - This day commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, thus establishing USA.
* Halloween - Among the old Celts it was the last day of the year and the beginning of winter when witches and ghosts were supposed to celebrate their rites. When the pagans were Christianized, the holiday was converted to the Eve of All Saints ´Day when the Christian Church honours the memory of the dead.
* Thanksgiving Day – It’s holiday celebrated by Pilgrim settlers to God and Indians as thanks for their help.

## Symbol

* Halloween – scary costumes and decorations, carved pumpkins, lanterns
* Independence Day - Each city has its own ceremony and parades, band concerts and firework displays in the evening.
* Thanksgiving Day – Turkey, Pilgrim and Indian costumes and decorations.

## How it is celebrated

* Halloween - People cut horrible faces in pumpkins and put a candle inside. Children dress up as ghosts and monsters and go round people’s houses asking, “Trick or treat?”. A treat means that they get candies, fruit, nuts or money. If the children do not get a treat, they play a trick on the people. A favourite trick is to put soap on the windows or to make a lot of noise at the door.
* Independence Day - A holiday from work. People have barbecues with friends and family. They eat hamburgers, hot dogs and baked beans. One of the most popular activities is the three-legged race. There are American flags everywhere and in the evening big fireworks displays in the cities.
* Thanksgiving Day - Thanksgiving is a family holiday. People have their traditional dinner consisting of turkey, sweet potatoes, beans, corn with cranberry sauce, autumn vegetables, cider and pumpkin pie.

## Public holidays

* New Year’s Day - January 1, Martin Luther King’s Birthday - 3rd Monday in January, Washington’s Birthday - 3rd Monday in February, Memorial Day - last Monday in May, Juneteenth National Independence Day - June 19, Independence Day - July 4, Labor Day - 1st Monday in September, Columbus Day - 2nd Monday in October, Veterans’ Day - November 11, Thanksgiving Day - 4th Thursday in November, Christmas Day - December 25

# 11. History of Great Britain

## Early history

* 4000 BC: The first people to inhabit the British Isles were settlers from Europe. They introduced farming, pottery and stone tools. They lived in the south of England. Stonehenge was built by these early inhabitants around 3000BC.
* 55 BC: the first invasion by the Romans under Julius Ceasar took place.
* 122 AD: the Romans built Hadrian’s Wall between Scotland and England, to keep out the Scots, and tax was introduced for the first time.
* 410: the Romans finally left Britain.
* 420: Angles and Saxons invaded the south-eastern shores of England and quickly became well established.
* 597: Christianity was brought to England by Augustine. He built a church and a school in Canterbury.
* 793: Viking invaders started to settle in England.

## Battle of Hastings (1066) William the Conqueror

* William, Duke of Normandy, invaded at Hastings in the south. King Harold rushed down from north with his army to fight the invaders. He was killed in the battle.
* This battle changed the future of England
* William became King of England (therefore called William the Conqueror)

## Henry VIII (Tudor)

* 1509: Henry the VIII became king. In his lifetime he married six times (Catherine Aragon, Anne Boleyn - executed, Jane Seymour, Anne from Cleves, Catherine Howard - executed, Catherine Parr). He divorced two of his wives, and beheaded two. He argued with the Pope and made himself head of a new Church of England.

## Elizabeth I (Tudor)

* 1558: the reign of Elizabeth I (second daughter of Henry VIII) began. She was one of England’s most important monarchs. William Shakespeare lived at this time.

## Queen Victoria (colonial expansion, industrial age)

* 1837: Queen Victoria came to the throne at a time of exploration, discovery, industrialisation and Empire. Britain became the first industrial power in the world “the workshop the world”.
* Queen Victoria reigned for exactly sixty-three years, seven months, and two days. Her rule is the second longest after Queen Elizabeth II.

## Origins of English language

* Having emerged from the dialects and vocabulary of Germanic peoples—Angles, Saxons, and Jutes—who settled in Britain in the 5th century, English today is a constantly changing language that has been influenced by a number of different cultures and languages, such as Latin, French, Dutch, and Afrikaans.

# 12. My Favourite English Author

## Name and nationality

* George Orwell (1903-1950) – He was born in India but his family was English

## Life

* He was born in India in 1903. He was an English novelist, essayist, and critic famous for his novels Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-four, the latter a profound anti-utopian novel that examines the dangers of totalitarian rule
* George Orwell was born as Eric Blair in 1903 in India. At that time India was a part of the British Empire, and Blair’s father Richard, held a post as an agent in the Opium Department of the Indian Civil Service.
* Despite his excellent academic record, he decided to carry on the family tradition and joined the Indian Police Service and was sent to Burma.
* His five years there led him to reject every aspect of imperialism and the brutality it could create in those in authority, and to feel closer to those who were oppressed than to those who oppressed them.
* A similar sympathy with those at the bottom of a social system led him, on his return to Europe, to travel around England and France, living on the road among the poorest groups of society and entering as completely as he could into their ways of life. He wrote about these experiences under the name of George Orwell, partly to protect his family from embarrassment and partly because he had never liked his own name very much.
* In the next few years he worked briefly as a teacher in private schools and in a bookshop. But his most important activity at this time was his writing.
* In 1937 he went to Spain to fight in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Republic, with the force from the United Marxist Workers Party, until he was badly wounded in the neck and returned to England.
* In 1938 Orwell became ill with tuberculosis, and spent the winter in Morocco.
* During World War 2 (1939-45) he worked for the BBC, producing programmes for India and South Asia, and as a manager of a bookshop, as well as being very active as a journalist.
* In 1945 he settled on the island of Jura off the Scottish coast and started writing Nineteen Eighty-Four (1948). The title of this book was reached by switching the last two digits in the year nineteen forty-eight, the year the book was finished. The islands climate was unsuitable for someone suffering from tuberculosis and Nineteen Eighty-Four reflects the bleakness of human suffering, the indignity of pain.
* George Orwell died on 21st January 1950

## The authors entire work

* Burmese Days (1934) – His first novel
* A Clergyman's Daughter (1935) - He hardly criticizes social problems in England during 30s.
* Keep the Aspidistra Flying (1936) – It’s a socially critical novel. Main theme is money.
* Coming Up for Air (1939) - Nostalgia, the folly of trying to go back and recapture past glories and the easy way the dreams and aspirations of one's youth can be smothered by marriage and getting old.
* Animal Farm (1945) - The main theme is the desire for power. This desire is closely related to theme of corrupt politics.
* Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949) - To teach people a lesson about the negative things that could happen if they allowed their government to exercise total control.
* Down and Out in Paris and London (1933) - Oppression and the cycle of poverty.
* The Road to Wigan Pier (1937) - A powerful exploration of the harsh living and working conditions faced by industrial workers in 1930s England.
* Homage to Catalonia (1938) - About his experiences in the Spanish Civil War.
* His other part of literary creation was writing essays.

## Your favourite piece of his

* Animal Farm is a beast fable, in the form of a satirical allegorical novella, by George Orwell. It tells the story of a group of anthropomorphic farm animals who rebel against their human farmer, hoping to create a society where the animals can be equal, free, and happy.
* Three younger pigs—Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer—formulate a philosophy called Animalism.
* They adopt the Seven Commandments of Animalism, the most important of which is, "All animals are equal". The decree is painted in large letters on one side of the barn.
* The pigs elevate themselves to positions of leadership.

# 13. Washington DC

## General information and location

* Washington D.C. is the capital city of the USA. It is named after the first president of the United States, George Washington. "D.C." stands for the "District of Columbia" which is a federal district coextensive with the city of Washington.
* Divided into four districts - northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest
* Area: 180 km2
* Washington lies on the Potomac River on the eastern coast of the USA
* It is the first city in the world especially planned and built as a capital city
* The capital city is not a part of any of the 50 states and there are no skyscrapers so typical for the USA.
* It is the legislative, administrative and judicial centre of the USA
* The streets running from north to south have numbers (1, 2, 3… )
* The streets from east to west have letters (A, B, C ...)
* The address of the White House: 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
* In 1910 the Height Buildings Act stated that structures could not exceed 15 floors ensuring that D.C. would remain a horizontal and spacious city.

## Population

* Population: about 700 000 inhabitants

## Famous parts, streets, squares

* National Mall - it is the park 1 mile long, it connects the Capitol and the Washington Monument.

## Government buildings

* The White House is the official residence and workplace of the president of the USA (currently Joe Biden). It was built between 1792 and 1800. In fact, the White House was not always white. The building was set on fire by the British during the War of 1812 and so it was then restored and painted white.
* The US Capitol - the Congress meets here.
* The US Supreme Court – the highest court in the federal judiciary of the USA.

## Presidents memorials

* The Lincoln Memorial pays homage to Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln, who opposed slavery and was president at the time of the American Civil War, was assassinated while watching a play at Ford Theatre in Washington D.C.
* The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is the newest memorial on the Mall and is the only monument paying homage to an African American and not dedicated to a president or war. Dr King was a pastor who led peaceful protests against racial inequality and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 35, the youngest person ever to have done so. He was assassinated in Memphis in 1968.
* The Washington Monument was built in honour of George Washington. At 170 metres high, this monument is the tallest stone structure in the world and can be seen from almost anywhere in Washington D.C.
* The Jefferson Memorial was built in memory of Thomas Jefferson.

## War memorials

* Arlington National Cemetery - the veteran ‘s graves that represent every war the US has fought. The Tomb of Unknown Soldier. The Kennedy Memorial Grave

## Museum and cultural centres

* The Smithsonian Institution, founded in 1846, operates the National Zoo and 19 museums in Washington D.C. including the National Postal Museum and the National Air and Space Museum. It is the largest museum, education and research complex in the world.
* In addition to its monuments and museums, Washington D.C. is well-known for its parks and green spaces. About 7,000 acres of the city is considered public parkland. The most attractive parks are the West and East Potomac Parks and Constitution Gardens.

# 14. Mass Media

## Printed media

* Print media is any mass communication which has been printed, such as newspapers and magazines.
* The main types of print media include newspapers, magazines, and books. In print media Live show, Live discussion, and Live reporting is not possible it is based on the interval update method.

## Tabloid / Broadsheet

* Broadsheets (quality/serious newspapers) - aim at the educated readers, contain detailed news comment, many topics written by experts in their field, the arts and literary reviews, larger in size, few black and white pictures, the text is serious, reliable, unemotional
* Tabloids (popular newspapers) - printed on sheets that are half the size of large papers, a lot of gossips about famous people, don’t have much serious news, shorter texts with many coloured pictures, large headlines that tell the whole story

## Broadcasting media

* The term “broadcast media” covers a wide spectrum of different communication methods such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines and any other materials supplied by the media and press.

## TV programmes

* A television program or television show or television series, is something that people watch on television.

## Internet

* The Internet is a system of connecting millions of computers worldwide.
* To get online you must connect your computer to a modem or a router. You also need an Internet Service Provider.
* On the Internet there are different search engines you can use to find what you are looking for.
* When you go online, you can browse different websites and download stuff from the Internet. Also, you can receive emails, read newspapers, do your shopping, watch TV, book your journey, chat, search for any information you wish, use e-banking…etc.
* The Internet was invented for military usage.

## Streaming platforms

* A streaming media service is an online platform that allows users to watch or listen to content, such as movies, TV shows, music, or podcasts, over the internet.
* For example: Netflix, Disney+, Amazon Prime, YouTube, Paramount+, Peacock, Twitch, Hulu, Crunchyroll, HBO

## World Wide Web

* It refers to all the public websites or pages that users can access on their local computers and other devices through the internet. These pages and documents are interconnected by means of hyperlinks that users click on for information.
* A vast collection of interactive multimedia resources.

## Social networking sites

* Social networking uses internet-based social media platforms to connect with friends, family, or peers. Some of the most popular social networking sites include Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and X (former Twitter).

# 15. History of the USA

## Discovery of America

* 12,000 B.C. – the first settlers came to the American continent from Asia via the Bering land bridge. It is now the Bering Strait, which is the narrowest point of which the two continents are about 53 miles.
* 12th October 1492 – although Christopher Columbus planned on finding a new way to India. He was an Italian working for the Spanish Queen Isabella and died believing that he had landed in India, hence the term for the native Americans, Indians.
* Other important explorers of the American content of that time were: John Cabot, Amerigo Vespucci, Giovanni Verrazzano and Ponce de Léon.

## First colonies

* After the first European settlers had come to the continent, tobacco, potatoes and other goods started being exported to Europe.
* 1587 – the first British attempt at settlement in the US took place.
* 1607 – the first successful British settlement was established in Jamestown. At first, it was difficult for the colonist to survive as they were unprepared. However, they were helped by the Indians.

## War of independence

* April 19, 1775 – September 3, 1783
* 1775 – the War for Independence, known as the American Revolution, started. The Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia acted as the government. The US army was established (consisting of 17,000 men) with George Washington as its leader.
* 1776 – all political ties with Britain were cut and on 4 July 1776 the Declaration of Independence, written mainly by Thomas Jefferson, was signed.
* 1778 – the French started to support Americans.
* 1783 – Treaty of Paris officially recognised the 13 colonies as the United States of America. A new government had to be established.

## Civil war (1861-1865)

* The Civil War was a series of fights between the North, which was industrial and where slavery was abolished, and the South, which was more oriented on agriculture and where slavery was still legal. The decision of whether the new US states would support slavery or not has not been made.
* Lincoln wanted to negotiate with the Confederacy (11 southern states), yet this brought no results and the Civil War ensued.
* 1865 – a peace treaty was signed in Appomattox (Virginia) and the 13th amendment was introduced: slavery was abolished.

## World War I

* The Great War (WWI) was fought between the Allies (Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Romania, Japan and the United States) and the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire). At first, the USA did not want to interfere; the war should have been a European matter.
* 1915 – British passenger ship Lusitania was sunk by the Germans on its way from the USA
* 1919 – The Treaty of Versailles formally ended the war between Germany and the Allied Nations.

## World War II

* 1939 – the war broke out in Europe but the USA did not want to interfere again. The same year, the Manhattan Project, which was a secret research and development of atomic bombs started.
* 1941 – the Japanese attacked the navy main base in Pearl Harbour.
* 1941 – the USA declared war on Japan and Hitler declared war on the USA.
* 6 June 1944 – American troops disembarked in Normandy (France) in Operation Overlord during World War II. Codenamed Operation Neptune and often referred to as D-Day, it was the largest seaborne invasion in history.
* 5th May 1945 – Germany surrendered.
* 6th August 1945 – an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and three days later on Nagasaki in Japan by the US army.
* 14th August 1945 – Japan surrendered too.

## Cold War

* 1947-1991 – the Cold War against the Soviet Union began because it was believed that this power posed a threat to the United States by its possession of the atomic bomb and by dominating Eastern Europe.

# 16. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

## Location

* Britain lies off the north-west coast of Europe across the English Channel, the Strait of Dover and the North Sea.
* It consists of two large islands (Great Britain and Ireland) and about 5,000 smaller ones.
* Its neighbours are Ireland and France. It covers the area of 250 thousand square kilometres.

## Geography

* England is rolling land, rising to the Uplands of southern Scotland.
* Mountains: the Cambrians, the Cumbrian Mountains, the Pennines, the Highlands of Scotland (Ben Nebis) are the highest mountains in Britain.
* The longest rivers are the Severn and the Thames. There are beautiful lake areas in Cumbria and the Highlands of Scotland.

## Climate

* British Isles have milder climate due to the Gulf Stream. The highest pick of England is Scafell Pike.

## Population

* Population is 67 mil. people. The density is one of the highest in the world. People live mostly in urban areas.
* In Britain we can find the following ethnic groups: English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh and others. The majority of people speaks English. There are minority languages that are of Celtic origin.

## Political system

* Constitutional monarchy
* Great Britain is a constitutional monarchy with the King as the head of state. Britain is divided into four parts: England (London), Wales (Cardiff), Scotland (Edinburgh) and Northern Ireland (Belfast). The capital of the whole Britain is London.
* Other big cities according to population are Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and Bristol.

## Flag and anthem

* The countrywide anthem of the United Kingdom is "God Save the Queen
* The Union Flag, or Union Jack, is the country wide flag of the United Kingdom.

## Places of interest

* Oxford and Cambridge are the old university towns.
* Stratford upon Avon is the birthplace of William Shakespeare
* Canterbury is an ancient city with a majestic cathedral. The other old cathedral town is Winchester (once was the capital of England).
* Salisbury in Salisbury Plain, there we can see a beautiful historic monument of Stonehenge.
* Birmingham is the second largest city in Britain. We can see Victorian architecture here and the network of canals, which is evidence of industrial heritage.

## Economy

* The main industries are steel, metals, vehicles, shipbuilding, shipping, banking, insurance, textiles, chemicals, electronics, aircraft, machinery, distilling.
* The main agricultural products are grain, sugar, beet, fruit and vegetables. World known is British sheep and cattle breeding.
* Britain’s natural riches are coal, tin, oil, gas, limestone, iron, salt, clay, chalk and lead.

# 17. The USA

## Location and borders

* The United States of America extend over more than one third of the North American continent.
* With over 9.8 million km2 and a population of about 332 million, the US is the fourth largest country in the world by area. It consists of 50 states and some territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean (Alaska and the Hawaiian Islands).

## Geography and climate

* The USA is a country of many contrasts, covering a very large territory. You can visit anything from crowded metropolises to vast prairies and breathtaking national parks.
* The USA has many rivers. The Mississippi River is the third longest river in the world (6,212 km).
* The Colorado Plateau with the Grand Canyon, the Cascade Range and Sierra Nevada with the highest peak of the continental USA Mt. Whitney (4,418m) and lastly, the Coast Range surrounding the Great Valley in California.
* Climate of the USA is varied - from the Arctic climate in the north to the subtropical climate in the south. However, the temperate climate prevails. The most pleasant climate is, of course, on the Hawaiian Islands. The occurrence of tornadoes, floods, hurricanes and wildfires is not that uncommon.

## Population, languages and nationalities

* Population: around 300 million inhabitants
* Interestingly, the US has no official language. People living in the country have been speaking languages other than English since before the founding of the republic (Dutch, French and German, many languages spoken by Native Americans).
* Spanish is the second most widely spoken language.

## Industry and agriculture

* The US economy is the biggest in the world. The country is responsible for 30% of the world's industrial production and about 20% of the world’s agricultural production.
* The country is enormously rich in raw materials. It ranks first in the world's production of natural petrol, kaolin, salt. It occupies second place in natural gas, sulphur, coal and oil. Except for a few raw materials, it is practically self-sufficient.
* The USA is the leading country in agriculture and industry at the same time (chemicals, the production of lorries and cars, machinery and electronics - Silicon Valley).

## Political system and flag

* Form of government: Federal Republic
* Head of state: President (elected by the people for a 4-year term)
* Congress consists of two houses: the Senate (100 members) and the House of Representatives (435 members)
* There are 3 separate balanced branches: executive (President), legislative (Congress), judicial (Supreme Court)
* The American flag is referred to as "the Stars and Stripes“. It consists of 50 white stars (states of the Union) on a blue background and 13 red and white stripes (original colonies). The red colour signifies courage, the white purity or goodness and the blue justice.

## Places of interest

* New York City: The largest city in the US
* Los Angeles: Famous city of the film industry (Hollywood, Beverly Hills)
* Other places to visit: Mount Rushmore, New Orleans, Jamestown, Kennedy Space Centre, Sequoia National Park, Graceland, San Francisco, the Everglades National Park, Las Vegas and Yosemite National Park

# 18. Australia

## Location

* Australia is the only country that is also a continent, it is also the world's sixth-largest country. The capital is Canberra but Sydney is the largest city.
* It lies between the South Pacific and Indian Oceans.

## Geography

* Much of Australia is flat, but there are some mountains of which Uluru (Ayers Rock) is the best known. Highest mountain is Mount Kosciuszko (2 228 m)
* Major rivers include the Murray and the Darling in the south-east.

## Climate

* Australia's climate is quite unique. It is the driest inhabited country on earth and has one of the lowest rates of rainfall in the world.
* Huge central desert surrounded by a semi-desert zone. Far north – tropical, heavy summer rainfalls. Southwest and Adelaide – hot, dry summers, mild winters

## Population

* Population: 25,7 million
* Major national/ethnic groups: European, Asians and Aboriginals
* Although English is the country's official language, over 200 languages are spoken in Australia.
* In 1606, European explorers learned about the existence of the huge island but it wasn't until 1770, that British Captain James Cook made a scientific voyage to the South Pacific and mapped Australia's eastern coast. He was the first to claim the country for the British.

## Industry and agriculture

* Agriculture: Sheep, cattle, wheat, wool, milk, barley, eucalyptus, pine timber
* Manufacturing: processed food and beverages, iron and steel, chemicals, textiles. Motor vehicles
* Mining: Coal, oil, iron ore, natural gas, gold, lead, zinc

## Political system and flag

* Form of government: Constitutional monarchy, in practice a parliamentary democracy
* Head of state: King of the United Kingdom, in practice the Governor General
* Head of government: Prime Minister
* Legislature: Parliament of two houses
* The Australian flag is dark blue, with the British flag in the upper left-hand corner. The lower left-hand corner contains a seven-pointed star known as the Commonwealth Star. Each of the star's points represents one of the six sovereign states and the seventh point represents all of the territories. The rest of the flag is a picture of the Southern Cross constellation, which can only be seen in the southern hemisphere. It has one small star and four larger ones

## Places of interest

* Sydney: The largest city. Nearly 60 kilometres of beaches. Called the Paris of the Pacific. The famous Sydney Opera House looks like waves breaking on the shore.
* Caberra: Australian Capital Territory entirely surrounded by New Souths Wales. National capital since 1927.
* Melbourne: Second largest city, financial and commercial centre, Centre of Australian football, cricket, tennis, horse racing. Many parks and gardens (the Royal Botanic Garden)

# 19. Ostrava – a Cultural City

## Location

* Ostrava, the third largest city in the Czech Republic, is situated in the northeast of the country and forms the heart of the Moravian-Silesian region.
* It is located close to the Slovak and Polish borders on the banks of the Ostravice River and offers beautiful views of the Beskydy Mountains.

## Entertainment

* Stodolní Street - Actually, a bunch of streets just next to the town centre, full of bars, pubs and clubs, bringing nightlife to the city and thousands of visitors all year long.
* Contemporary Music Festivals - Ostrava is internationally renowned for several huge summer Music Festivals, such as Colours of Ostrava, Beats for Love and Štěrkovna Open Music attracting thousands of people for several days.
* Colours of Ostrava is the biggest music festival in the Czech Republic and begins every summer. It is 4 days long and thousands of visitors, not only from the CZ, arrive to listen to the best musicians from all over the world.
* There are also many other music festivals to choose from: MichalFest, Oldies Festival or Ostrava v plamenech.
* During each summer several Shakespeare dramas are staged at the open-air theatre at the Castle in Silesian Ostrava. The festival is an exchange project and Slovak and Czech actors participate on one stage.

## Sports and cultural facilities

* There are many theatres in Ostrava.
* The National Moravian-Silesian Theatre (established in 1919) is the biggest and oldest professional theatre in Ostrava and in the Moravian-Silesian region.
* The Petr Bezruč Theatre began its activities in 1945, in the postwar period. The target group is mostly young spectators, students of secondary schools and universities.
* The Mír Theatre is the youngest professional theatre scene in Ostrava. It is to be found in Vítkovice in the reconstructed former Cinema building. Nowadays, the repertoire consists mainly of comedy productions of their own production.
* Puppet Theatre Ostrava It was founded in 1953. The theatre had its seat in a historic building at Masaryk square for almost half a century. In 1999, a new building was opened with seating for 176 spectators.
* The Ostrava City Library is an important cultural and information providing institution of the City of Ostrava.
* E-Motion park Ostrava, HC Vítkovice

## Places of interests

* The Ostrava Zoo - Located in Slezská Ostrava. It was opened on May 1st 1960.
* Silesian Ostrava Castle - The castle was built in the 80-90 of the 13th century. In 1534, the gothic castle was rebuilt into a renaissance chateau.
* The Plaque Column - With the statue of the Virgin Mary, it is the oldest well-preserved Baroque statue and can be found in the Masaryk Square.

## Surroundings

* The Wallachian Open-Air Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm is an internationally known collection of all aspects of Wallachian folk culture, situated in the wooden village.
* The Darkovičky Fortifications were built in 1930s for the purpose of defence of Czechoslovakia and features various types of fortified structures.
* In the Spa Klimkovice the diseases of organs or movement are treated.
* The Castle of Hukvaldy is an important sight because in the village of Hukvaldy the world famous music composer Leoš Janáček was born in 1854, to honour of whom the International Music Festival Janáčkův Máj is held.
* The Štramberk Castle Štramberská Trúba, The Tatra Museum in Kopřivnice.

## Uniqueness of Ostrava

* Even though Ostrava was built for the sole purpose of mining and industrial activities, it is a beautiful historic city with much to offer.
* Ostrava is also home to the well-known and accredited VSB – Technical University of Ostrava.

# 20. Problems of Today

## Development of industry

* Civilization has brought people many advantages but its products also pollute and damage the environment in which we live.

## Social problems

* Poverty: Many people around the world are living in poverty, in both developing and developed countries. Those who live in poverty do not have access to essential things in life like food, money and clothes but also education and suitable living conditions. Charity organisations and shelters provide support to those living in poverty.
* Homelessness: Many people become homeless after leaving the army, prison and care. Homeless people do not always sleep on the streets but might sofa surf, stay with relatives or live in temporary accommodation such as hostels or shelters.
* Unemployment: Unemployment may affect people of all ages but particularly disabled people and young people who have recently graduated and do not have experience.
* Famine: Famine is an issue that predominantly affects developing countries. Charities in developed countries step in to try and support countries where there is extreme hunger.
* Drugs & Smoking: Drugs can be seen as light/ recreational (marijuana, ecstasy, LSD) or hard (heroin, cocaine). It is illegal to sell or use most drugs.
* Racism: Racism describes discrimination based on the colour of your skin.

## Environmental problems

* Environmental problems affect every country in the world and are predominantly caused by human activity. Global warming is an example of one of these problems.
* Global warming, also known as climate change, describes the rise of average global temperatures caused by the burning of fossil fuels which leads to greenhouse gas emissions being released into the atmosphere. This has caused a hole to form in the ozone layer.

## Air pollution

* Air pollution is the biggest problem in large cities and in areas with concentrated industrial production. Substance such as sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide mix with the air moisture and then acid rain falls down onto trees and slowly kill them. Trees are very important for us, because they produce oxygen for breathing. A big danger in nowadays is destruction of rain forests for a building materials.

## Health problems

* Diseases can be curable, incurable or terminal. In developed countries, lifestyle choices mean that many people suffer from heart disease and type-2 diabetes. In developing countries, leprosy, tuberculosis, cholera and HIV/AIDS cause many people to suffer. Cancer affects people worldwide. Alzheimer disease is traumatic and incurable.

## Solution

* First of all, people should try to use alternative sources of energy, such as solar, water, wind, geothermal and perhaps tidal energies. People should use public transportation or fast railways more.