

1. Why do tourists from all over the world like to go to Scotland?

Tourists from all over the world like to go to Scotland to enjoy the beautiful Scottish scenery, to drink Scotch whisky and to see Scotsmen wearing kilts and playing bagpipes.

2. How many periods can the development of the English language be divided into and what are they?

The development of the English language can be divided into three periods: Old English, Middle English and Modern English.

3. Why did English become more important after the Black Death?

The laboring and merchant classes grew in economic and social importance after the Black Death, and English thus grew in importance compared to French.

4. Who are the British people?

The earliest known inhabitants of Britain were Celts who were the ancestors of the Welsh, Scottish and Irish people. Then came the Anglos, the Saxons and the Jutes who brought with them the English language. Many people from other countries came later. In modern times there are a lot of immigrants from many former colonies of the British Empire. Britain is thus a country of mixed cultures and the British people are of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

5. What is Standard English?

Standard English is based on the speech of the upper class of southeastern England. It is preferred by the educated and is widely used in the media and taught at schools. It has developed and has been promoted as a model for correct British English. It is also the norm carried overseas. Today, Standard English is codified to the extent that the grammar and vocabulary are much the same everywhere in the world where English is taught and used.

6. What were Queen Victoria's major achievements?

Queen Victoria made tremendous achievements in almost every aspect. She promoted further industrialization, the building of railways and the growth of trade and commerce. During her reign, Britain developed into an empire including about a quarter of the global population and a quarter of the world's landmass.

7. What were the two camps in World War I?

In World War I the two camps were the Central Powers—mainly Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and the Allies—mainly France, Great Britain, Russia, Italy and from 1917, the United States.

8. Why did Britain cooperate closely with the United States after World War II?

Britain cooperate closely with the United States after World War II since they were allied during the World War II and shared the same concerns about the Soviet Union.

9. What were the results of the Industrial Revolution in Britain?

The Industrial Revolution changed Britain in many ways. First, its industrial productivity increased dramatically. Britain became the most advanced industrial country in the world. Second, urbanization took place. Many new cities sprang up. Third, it caused great changes in the social class structure. The capitalist class became the most important force in the country and the proletariat class emerged.

10.Explain the rise and fall of the British Empire.

Colonization of Newfoundland in 1583 marked the beginning of the British Empire. By 1837. Britain had been an empire which included the colonies in Canada, India and many small states in the West Indies. During the mid-19th century, the British government consolidated the existing colonies by bringing them under the direct control of the government. By the end of the 19th century, the British Empire included about a quarter of the global population and a quarter of the world's landmass. Before World War I, Britain was the largest colonial empire in the world. However, Britain suffered a great loss of its manpower in the two World Wars and exhausted its reserves of gold, dollars and overseas investment. Most of Britain's colonies gained independence as a result of World War II, which inevitably led to the fall of the British Empire.

11.What are the three functions of the House of Commons?

The three functions of the House of Commons are: to draft laws, to scrutinize the activities of the government and to influence future government policy.

12.What kind of public image does the Liberal Democrats have in Britain?

The Liberal Democrats is perceived as a "middle" party between the Conservative Party and the Labor Party. Many people see it as comparatively flexible and pragmatic in its balance of the individual and the social. It emphasizes the need for a change in Britain's constitutional arrangements to make the government more democratic and accountable.

13.Why are independent candidates unlikely to win in the general election?

Independent candidates are unlikely to win in the general election because even if they were elected, they would be powerless in Parliament against the larger parties. Therefore, voters usually do not vote for them.

14.What do British electoral campaigns usually involve during the process of a general election?

The electoral campaigns usually involve advertising in newspapers, door-to-door campaigning and leaflets. The main parties are given short periods of time on national television to present their policies to the public. Apart from the parties' own publicity, newspapers and TV programs spend a lot of time discussing the campaigns, interviewing politicians and predicting the results.

15.What is the Commonwealth of Nations?

The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of independent sovereign states, all of which acknowledge the British monarch as the symbolic head of the association. The

Commonwealth is not a political union, and its member states have full autonomy to manage their own internal and external affairs. It is primarily an organization in which countries with diverse economic backgrounds have an opportunity for close and equal interaction after gaining independence. Its primary purpose is to advocate democracy, human rights and to promote economic cooperation and growth within its members.

16.What was the negative aspect of Thatcher's reform in the early 1980s?

The negative aspect of Thatcher's reform in the early 1980s was a rapid increase in unemployment. In 1982, the unemployment rate reached the level of the Great Depression years, with three million people out of work.

17.What are the characteristics of Britain's agriculture?

Britain's agriculture is characterized by a small proportion of the population engaged in agricultural activities with a high degree of mechanization. Although it employs only about 1.5% of the country's labor force, it meets around 60% of the national demand for food.

18.What happened to Britain's beef industry in the mid-1990s?

Britain's beef industry was hit badly by BSE in 1996, resulting in a ban on its beef exports until 2006.

19.What were the major causes of Britain's relative economic decline in the post-war period?

Britain's economy experienced a relative decline in the post-war period for several reasons. First, Britain suffered great losses in the two World Wars and had gone heavily into debt to finance the wars. Second, the era of the British Empire was over by the mid-20th century. India and other British colonies, which provided raw materials and large markets for British goods, gained independence. Third, Britain was forced to maintain an expensive military presence in many overseas locations until the end of the 1960s. What's more, Britain had to make substantial financial contributions to NATO and the U.N. Security Council. Finally, Britain failed to invest in industry after World War II, whereas its competitors like Germany and Japan caught up by investing in industry.

20.Why do developed nations like Britain encourage the development of the service industry?

The service industry has played an increasingly important role in economy in the developed countries. On the one hand, it requires a large group of people working in it so that abundant employment opportunities are provided. On the other hand, the service industry causes little pollution.

21.What used to be the major functions of grammar schools and vocational schools in Britain?

Grammar schools were to train the most academically capable students and prepare them for university, whereas vocational schools were to help the less successful students to learn a trade.

22.What kind of subjects do British comprehensive schools provide?

British comprehensive schools provide a general education, offering both academic subjects like literature and science, and more practical subjects like cooking and carpentry.

23.In what ways do British universities enjoy complete academic freedom?

British universities enjoy complete academic freedom because they can appoint their own staff, decide which students to admit, provide their own courses and award their own degrees.

24.What role does the media play in British leisure culture?

The media plays an essential role in British leisure culture since it helps to shape the public's opinion, determine people's moral and political orientation and consolidate or undermine the rule of a government.

25.What are the general features of Britain's independent schools?

Britain's independent schools require fees from students. Although the National Curriculum is optional in the independent system, most independent schools teach what the curriculum demands. Independent schools get their funding through the private sector as well as tuition fees, with minimal government assistance. Since they are generally better funded than most state schools, they are likely to recruit the best teachers and provide superior facilities. However, the high tuition fees have become an obstacle for many students to enroll although graduates of independent schools are more likely to be accepted by famous universities.

26.What are the "quality press" and the "tabloids" in Britain?

Among the 10 daily national newspapers in Britain, about half of them are regarded as the "quality press" since they carry in-depth articles of political and social importance, reviews and feature articles about "high culture", and they are generally read by well-educated people. The Times, The Guardian and The Daily Telegraph are good examples. The "tabloids", with color photos and striking headlines, usually cover scandals and gossip about celebrities. A typical example is The Sun on Sunday.

27.What are the three categories of Shakespeare's plays and their representatives?

Shakespeare's plays fall into three categories: comedy, tragedy and historical play. His representative comedies include A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It and Twelfth Night. His great tragedies are represented by Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth and Romeo and Juliet. His major historical plays include Richard III, Henry V and Antony and Cleopatra.

28.What is Critical Realism?

Critical Realism is a literary school which flourished in the 1840s and the early 1850s. The critical realists described the chief traits of society and criticized the capitalist system from a democratic viewpoint. The greatest English critical realist is Charles Dickens.

29.What are the two new literary trends prevailing at the end of the 19th century?

The new literary trends that prevailed at the end of the 19th century are Neo-Romanticism and Aestheticism. Those who advocated Neo-Romanticism put emphasis on the invention of exciting adventures and fascinating stories, and those of Aestheticism believed in “art for art’s sake”.

30.What is the stream of consciousness?

The stream of consciousness is a writing technique which puts the unorganized flow of thought onto page. Writers who adopt this technique give precedence to the depiction of the characters’ mental and emotional reactions to external events, rather than the events themselves.

31.What is Romanticism?

Romanticism is a trend that appeared in English literature at the turn of the 19th century. It is revolt against the prescribed rules of Classicism. Writers of Romantic literature are more concerned with imagination and feeling than with reason and intellect. Discontent with the development of capitalism, they seek literary refuge. William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge began the trend with their joint work *Lyrical Ballads*, whose preface is viewed as Romantic poetry’s “Declaration of Independence”. It was the second generation of Romantic poets such as Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats who brought the Romantic Movement to its height.

32.What are the characteristics of English literature in the 20th century?

English literature in the 20th century can be roughly divided into two periods: Modernism and Postmodernism. Modernism prevailed before World War II. It can be viewed as a deliberate departure from tradition and is characterized by the use of innovative forms of expressions. Modernist writing seems disorganized and hard to understand. It often portrays the action from the viewpoint of a single confused individual, rather than from the viewpoint of an all-knowing impersonal narrator. After World War II, Postmodernism began. Postmodernism differs in some ways from Modernism. Modernism, for example, tends to present a fragmented view of human subjectivity, but presents that fragmentation as something tragic and to be lamented as a loss. Postmodernism does not lament the idea of fragmentation, but rather celebrates it. Modernists look for buried meaning below the confusing surface, while postmodernists abandon that search.