

21世纪高等院校教材

An Introduction to American  
and British Culture

# 英美文化博览

王淑花 李海英 贾颖 张娜 主编



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## 内 容 简 介

本书以介绍英美国家的社会与文化概貌、地理、历史、政治、经济、教育体制、节日习俗、社会生活、文化传统、英美主流价值观念等方面的基本知识和现象为主, 兼顾大学生感兴趣和关注的热点话题, 引导学生将语言学习与文化知识紧密结合起来, 为培养大学生的跨文化交际能力打下基础。本书在文后附有英语思维训练题, 涵盖理解、概括、分析、批判、创造等多个高级英语思维能力发展层次, 有利于培养大学生的批判性思维能力和创新思维能力。

全书知识覆盖面广, 反映时代发展的最新动态, 较为系统地介绍英美文化的典型特色, 并通过丰富的图片、影视素材的介绍使英美文化特征具体化、形象化、生动化。本书所选文章皆出自以英语为母语者之手, 语言优美, 信息量大, 内容新颖, 与时俱进。本书词汇注释准确、详细, 为读者阅读扫清障碍, 每章配有专题词汇库, 不仅有利于读者增强语感、扩大词汇量, 还有利于学习者针对话题拓展听说读写能力。

### 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英美文化博览/王淑花等主编. —北京: 科学出版社, 2013

21世纪高等院校教材

ISBN 978-7-03-037833-0

I. ①英… II. ①王… III. ①英语-高等院校-教材 ②英语-概况 ③美国-概况 IV. ①H31

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2013)第 126956 号

责任编辑: 张 宁 / 责任校对: 桂伟利

责任印制: 徐晓晨 / 封面设计: 蓝正设计

科学出版社出版

北京东黄城根北街16号

邮政编码: 100717

<http://www.sciencep.com>

北京市安泰印刷厂印刷

科学出版社发行 各地新华书店经销

\*

2013年6月第一版 开本: 787×1092 1/16

2013年6月第一次印刷 印张: 17

字数: 403 000

定价: 39.00 元

(如有印装质量问题, 我社负责调换)

# 前 言

英语学习在我国是外语学习,阅读成为学习者掌握英语知识、获取信息的主要渠道。学习英语不仅需要掌握与语言本体相关的知识,更需要了解语言所承载的文化,了解英语国家的历史、政治、经济等方面的基本信息。只有在阅读中了解了国外的文化和习俗,培养起分析批判的能力、独立思考的习惯,才能够吸收西方文化的精华、提高人文素养,才会在用英语交流时言之有物、言之有理。

英语是语言学科也是思维学科,在学习英语的过程中,学习者不仅需要发展英语能力,同时要发展思维能力,激发想象力和创造力,掌握科学的思维方法。我们将英语阅读视为对书面信息进行理解的复杂过程,也视为训练、发展思维的过程。英美文化历史悠久、林林总总、五光十色。学习者面对这林林总总的浩繁内容,需要主动建构意义,获取新知识,而不是被动地接受、记忆事实。英语阅读中学习者需要发展基本的认读能力、归纳总结能力、分析能力、批判鉴赏能力,以及应用和创造能力。

基于上述指导思想,我们撷取英国和美国的地理、历史、教育、经济、外交、休闲生活等方面的内容作为非英语专业大学生素质拓展阶段的阅读内容,使他们能够博览英美文化。同时,我们将高级思维能力的训练作为本书的重点和特色,在每章的主要课文之后提出问题供学习者思考,思考题包含字面理解、归纳总结、分析推断、评判与鉴赏、创造应用五个层次,有意引导学习者突破机械认读和浅层理解的局限,引导他们分析文本字里行间的意义,学会理性、客观、全面地看问题,养成分析、思辨的习惯,培养发散思维及寻求真理的本领。

除此之外,本书还有如下特点:

1. 选材内容有代表性,满足学习者的兴趣和需求。我们对非英语专业的学生进行了多年的分级教学,给已经通过了大学英语四级考试的学生开设了英美文化选修课,对学生未知的内容和感兴趣的话题有较为全面的了解。本书内容的选择考虑了学习者的需求和兴趣。

2. 选材新颖,语言地道。英美文化包罗万象,我们在内容上不求面面俱到,但力求包含近年来的热点话题、新现象和新问题。选材均来自英美两国的官方网站、报刊、杂志、科研机构论文以及外交部门的官方网站等,兼顾了语言文字的水平及内容的时效性、信息性和趣味性。

3. 建立专题词汇库,培养英语学习者敏捷的英语理解力和表达力。除在每篇文章之后附上单词和术语的解释外,围绕每一个文化专题,我们都拓展了相关的词汇和术语,建立专题词汇库,供学习者学习,以便在英语交际时理解更顺畅,英语表达言辞更丰富。

4. 文章详略有序,用途广泛。全书共 14 个单元,每个单元分为四个部分。Section A 和 Section B 的文章长度在 1200 词左右,皆配有思维训练题和拓展训练题,通过此部分的精讲细练,学习者既能掌握这两部分提供的文化知识,同时也通过拓展练习,打开更多的窗口,思考和掌握更多的知识和技能。Section C 为补充阅读材料,长度在 2000 词左右,有利于业余训练阅读速度、拓展词汇和文化知识。Section D 为本单元的专题词汇库,有利

于读者提高英语理解能力和表达能力，做到事半功倍。

5. 图文并茂，易学易懂。图片和图表有助于学习者理解文字内容，并且在真实的阅读环境下，阅读材料通常是图文并茂的，这种形式有助于加强读者对异域风情和异域文化的感性认识。

本书可供高等院校已通过大学英语四六级考试的学生以及英语自学者进行阅读训练使用，还可供广大英美文化爱好者、研究者、出国人员及英语教师参考使用，也可作为大学英语素质拓展课程的专门教材，具有较高的实用价值。

本书的疏漏之处，请广大读者不吝赐教。

编者

2013年3月

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# Chapter 1

## Traveling in Britain and America

英国，全称大不列颠及北爱尔兰联合王国，包括英格兰、威尔士、苏格兰（三者在大不列颠岛上）和北爱尔兰四个部分，首都为伦敦。英国历史悠久，风景优美，有多处旅游胜地，如大本钟、伦敦塔、大英博物馆、威斯敏斯特大教堂、马克思墓地、格林尼治天文台、莎士比亚故居、巨石阵遗址等。

幅员辽阔的美国，拥有丰富多元的气候与地质景观，二百多年的兼容并蓄，则让此地成为民族的大熔炉。美国也是旅行的理想去处。在美国，不可不看的景点有黄石公园、科罗拉多大峡谷、自由女神像、帝国大厦、好莱坞、尼亚加拉大瀑布、金门大桥等。

读万卷书，行万里路。阅读本章，我们足不出户，却可以领略英美的异国风情，漫游名山大川，在泰晤士河边漫步，在伦敦街头徜徉，畅游在美利坚的著名景点，浏览河山。

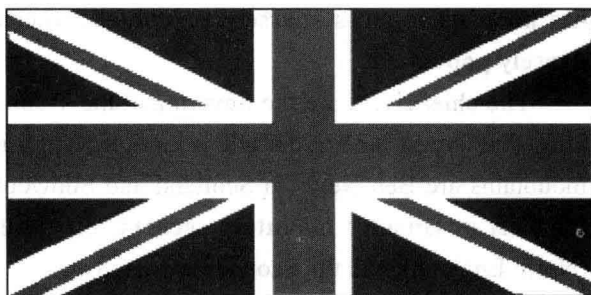


### Section A Intensive Reading

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

##### ➤ Introduction

The United Kingdom is very small compared with many other countries in the world. The total area of Great Britain is 244,820 square kilometres. However, there are only nine other countries with more people, and London is the world's seventh biggest city. The population of Great Britain is 60,776,238 (2007 estimate).



The flag of The United Kingdom of Great Britain is called **the Union Jack**. The main areas of high land are in Scotland, Wales and Cumbria. In the centre of England is a range of hills called the **Pennines**, which are also known as the “backbone of England”. The highest

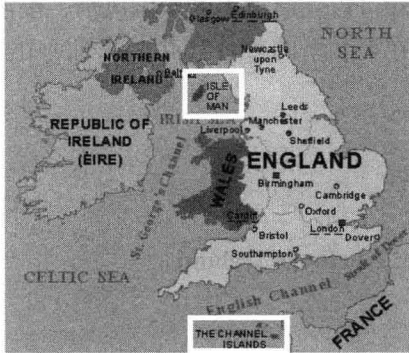
mountains are in Scotland and Wales: **Ben Nevis** is 4,406 feet (1,343 m) and **Snowdon** is 3,560 feet (1,085 m). Of course, these are very small compared with other mountains in the world—**Everest**, the highest mountain in the world, is 29,000 feet (8,839 m). In fact, everything in the United Kingdom is rather small—the longest rivers are the **Severn**, 220 miles (354 km) and **the River Thames**, 215 miles (346 km). Compare these with the River Amazon in South America which is 4,195 miles (6,751 km) long!

Despite its size, there is a great deal of variety within the islands of the United Kingdom.

### ➤ **Geography**

The River Thames lies off the north-western coast of **Continental Europe**. Great Britain is the largest island consisting of **England, Scotland, and Wales. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, often abbreviated to the UK, is the **political name** of the country which is made up of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland (also known as Ulster):

Some small islands off the coast of Great Britain are part of the UK (e.g. **the Isle of Wight, the Orkneys, Shetlands, Hebrides**), whereas others are not even part of **the Commonwealth** although they have very close political, economic, and cultural relations with Britain, and recognize the Queen as the Head of State (e.g. the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey, and the Isle of Man). The latter ones have their own legislatures and administration. The number of islands and islets of the British Archipelago amounts to 750.



The total area of the UK is 241,752 square kilometres. The area of England is 130,423 sq km; that of Scotland is 78,080 sq km; Wales is 20,766 sq km; Northern Ireland is 13,483 sq km. The UK **coastline** is 4057-kilometre long. In Britain the highest mountains are found in the north and west (**the Scottish Highlands and the Welsh mountains**). The part of Britain which lies in the south-east of a line drawn from Devon to Durham is mainly a **plain** broken by **low hills**. **Highland** Britain

has **poor soils** and is **sparsely populated**, whereas **Lowland** Britain has **fertile soils** and is **densely populated**.

The chief rivers are the Severn and the Thames. Scotland's largest river is **the Clyde** (169 km). The largest lake in the UK is **Lough Neagh** in Northern Ireland (396 sq km). The highest mountains are Ben Nevis in Scotland and Snowdon in Wales. **Glaciation** has been responsible for most of Britain's **mountain scenery**, especially in Snowdonia (Wales), the **Lake District** (North England), and the Scottish Highlands.

In prehistoric times most of Britain was covered by oak, ash, birch and beech trees. As the population began to grow, forests were cut down to clear the land for farming, for use as fuel, and for the building of homes and building of ships. By the time of the **Industrial Revolution** in the 18th century vast areas of forests had been cleared. In recent decades a programme of **afforestation** has been carried out on a large scale. Modern agricultural methods have caused



serious transformation of the natural environment in Britain. **Moorland** and **heaths** have been ploughed up in many regions, land has been **drained**, and many **hedgerows** have been removed by farmers in order to increase the size of fields.

The UK is warmed by the **North Atlantic Drift**. The climate is **temperate**, generally **mild**, and frequently wet. The temperature seldom reaches extremes of heat or cold. An average temperature in winter is 40°F (5°C) and in summer 60°F (15°C). Britain is famous for its unpredictable and changeable weather. The UK used to receive a plentiful supply of rain, but **rainfall** is not evenly distributed, and the eastern side of the country gets less rain than the west, due to the **prevailing wind**. **Drought** is now a serious threat to British rivers and **reservoirs**. Contrary to popular legend, fog is not a common occurrence. The old London “**smog**”, a combination of fog and smoke from chimneys, is now a thing of the past, as a result of the *Clean Air Act* (1968) which banned the burning of **untreated** coal in city areas.

Britain lies in the **Greenwich Mean Time** zone. Greenwich, in south-east London, is the place, at **longitude** 0°0', from which all the other **time zones** are calculated. Zones west of Greenwich have earlier time, and zones to the east have later time. The time in **Poland**, for example, is one hour later than in Britain. When it is midnight in Britain, it is 1 a.m. in Poland.

#### ➤ **Climate**

The climate of Britain is more or less the same as that of the north-western part of the European mainland. The popular belief that it rains all the time in Britain is simply not true. The image of a wet, **foggy** land was created two thousand years ago by the invading Romans and has been perpetuated in modern times by Hollywood. In fact, London gets no more rain in a year than most other major European cities, and less than some.

The amount of rain that falls on a town in Britain depends on where it is. Generally speaking, the further west you go, the more rain you get. The mild winters mean that snow is a regular feature of the higher areas only. Occasionally, a whole winter goes by in **low-lying** parts without any snow at all. The winters are in general a bit colder in the east of the country than they are in the west, while in summer, the south is slightly warmer and sunnier than the north.

Why has Britain's climate got such a bad reputation? Perhaps it is for the same reason why British people always seem to be talking about the weather. This is because of its **changeability**. There is a saying that Britain doesn't have a climate, it only has weather. It may not rain very much altogether, but you can never be sure of a dry day; there can be cool (even cold) days in July and some quite warm days in January.

The lack of extremes is the reason why, on a few occasions when it gets genuinely hot or **freezing cold**, the country seems to be totally **unprepared** for it. A bit of snow and a few days of **frost**, and the trains stop working and the roads are blocked; if the **thermometer** goes above 27°C (80°F), people behave as if they were in the Sahara and the temperature makes **front-page headlines**. These things happen so rarely that it is not worth organizing life to be ready for them.

(length: 1,207 words)

## Vocabulary

afforestation	n. 造林	low-lying	adj. 低洼的
changeability	n. 可变性; 易变性	low hills	phr. 丘陵
climate	n. 气候	mild	a. 温和的; 轻微的
coastline	n. 海岸线	moorland	n. 荒野
densely populated	phr. 人口稠密	mountain scenery	phr. 山景
drain	v. 耗尽; 使流出; 排水; 流干	plain	n. 平原
drought	n. 干旱	political name	phr. 行政区划名称
European mainland	phr. 欧洲大陆	poor soil	phr. 贫瘠土壤
farming	n. 农业; 耕作	population	n. 人口
fertile soil	phr. 肥沃的土壤	prevailing wind	phr. 盛行风; 主风向
foggy	a. 有雾的	rainfall	n. 降雨; 降雨量
freezing cold	phr. 非常冷	reservoir	n. 水库
front-page headline	phr. 头条	sparsely populated	phr. 人口稀疏
frost	n. 霜; 严寒; 冷冻	square kilometres	phr. 平方公里
glaciation	n. [地质] 冰川作用; 冻结成冰	smog	n. 烟雾
heat	n. 热度; 高温	temperate	adj. 温和的; 有节制的
heath	n. 荒野	thermometer	n. 温度计
hedgerow	n. 灌木篱墙	time zone	phr. 时区
highland	n. 高地; 丘陵地带	unprepared	a. 无准备的; 尚未准备好的
longitude	n. 经度; 经线	untreated	a. 未经过处理的
lowland	n. 低地	wet	a. 潮湿的; 有雨的

## Proper Names

Ben Nevis	本尼维斯山(位于英国苏格兰中西部)	Scotland	苏格兰
Continental Europe	欧洲大陆	Severn	塞文河(英国西南部地方的河名)
Cumbria	坎布里亚郡(英国英格兰西北部郡)	Shetlands	设得兰群岛(位于苏格兰东部的一群岛)
Everest	珠穆朗玛峰(世界最高峰)	Snowdon	斯诺登峰(英国威尔士西北部)
Great Britain	大不列颠	the Clyde	克莱德河(英国苏格兰河流, 注入克莱德湾)
Greenwich Mean Time	格林尼治标准时间	the Commonwealth	英联邦
Industrial Revolution	phr. 工业革命	the Isle of Wight	怀特岛(英国)
Hebrides	赫布里底群岛(位于英国苏格兰西部)	the Orkneys	奥克尼群岛(苏格兰东北方群岛)
Lake District	湖区	the River Thames	泰晤士河
Lough Neagh	内伊湖(英国最大的淡水湖)	the Scottish Highlands	苏格兰高地
North Atlantic Drift	北大西洋洋流	the Union Jack	英国国旗
Northern Ireland	北爱尔兰(在爱尔兰岛东北部)	The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	(简称 UK) 大不列颠及北爱尔兰联合王国
Pennines	奔宁山脉	Wales	威尔士



## Exercises

### I. Comprehension

#### 1. Recall

- 1) What is the flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain called?
- 2) What is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made up of?

#### 2. Summarize

What is the passage mainly about?

#### 3. Make Inferences

What do British people always talk about?

#### 4. Analyze

- 1) On what occasions do the trains stop working and the roads are blocked in the UK?
- 2) Why is it said that “Britain doesn’t have a climate, it only has weather” ?

#### 5. Evaluate

What do you think of the *Clean Air Act*? Can British people benefit from it? Cite evidence to support your answer.

### II. Further study

Choose one map of the UK and identify the places mentioned in the passage. Then choose one question you are interested in concerning the climate and weather to ask your classmates.



## Section B Extensive Reading

### ➤ Who are the British?

Why British not English?

Many foreigners say “England” and “English” when they mean “Britain”, or the “UK”, and “British”. This is very annoying for the 5 million people who live in Scotland, the 2.8 million in Wales and the 1.6 million in Northern Ireland who are certainly not English (46 million people live in England). However, the people from Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England are all British. So what is the difference between the names “Great Britain” and “the United Kingdom” and what about “the British Isles”?

### ➤ The United Kingdom

This is an abbreviation of “the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”. It is often further abbreviated to “the UK”, and is the political name of the country which is made up of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (sometimes known as Ulster). Several islands off the British coast are also part of the United Kingdom (for example, the Isle of Wight, the Orkneys, Hebrides and Shetlands, and the Isles of Scilly), although the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are not. However, all these islands do recognize the Queen.

### ➤ **Great Britain**

This is the name of the island which is made up of England, Scotland and Wales, and so, strictly speaking, it does not include Northern Ireland. The origin of the word “Great” is a reference to size, because in many European languages the words for Britain and the “**Brittany**” in France are the same. In fact, it was the French who first talked about Grande Bretagne! In everyday speech “Britain” is used to mean the United Kingdom.

### ➤ **The British Isles**

This is the geographical name that refers to all the islands off the north-western coast of the European continent: Great Britain, the whole of Ireland (Northern and Southern), the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. But it is important to remember that Southern Ireland—that is the Republic of Ireland (also called “**Eire**”) —is completely independent. So you can see that “the United Kingdom” is the correct name to use if you are referring to the country in a political, rather than in a geographical way. “The British” refers to the people from the UK, Great Britain or the British Isles in general.

### ➤ **How Was the United Kingdom Formed?**

This took centuries, and a lot of armed struggles were involved. In the 15th century, a Welsh prince, Henry Tudor, became King Henry VII of England. Then his son, King Henry VIII, united England and Wales under one parliament in 1536. In Scotland a similar thing happened. The King of Scotland inherited the crown of England and Wales in 1603, he became King James I of England and Wales and King James VI of Scotland. The Parliaments of England, Wales and Scotland were united a century later in 1707. The Scottish and Welsh are proud and independent people. In recent years there have been attempts at **devolution** in the two countries, particularly in Scotland where the Scottish Nationalist Party was very strong for a while. However, in a **referendum** in 1979 the Welsh rejected devolution and in the same year the Scots did the same. So it seems that most Welsh and Scottish people are happy to form part of the UK even though they sometimes complain that they are dominated by England, and particularly by London.

The whole of Ireland was united with Great Britain from 1801 to 1922. In 1922 the independent Republic of Ireland was formed in the South, while Northern Ireland became part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. 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 (with the arms going into the corners) 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. **St David** is the **patron saint** of Wales. The national anthem of the United Kingdom is “God Save the Queen”.

### ➤ **Invasion**

What makes the Scottish, Welsh, English and Northern Irish different from each other? About 2,000 years ago the British Isles were inhabited by the Celts who originally came from the continental Europe. During the next 1,000 years there were many invasions. The Romans came from Italy in 43 AD and, in calling the country “Britannia”, gave Britain its name. The Angles

and Saxons came from Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands in the 5th century, and England got its name from this invasion (Angle-land). The **Vikings** arrived from Denmark and Norway throughout the 9th century, and in 1066 (It is the year in history that every British school-child knows) the Normans invaded from France. These invasions drove the Celts into where is now Wales and Scotland, and they remained, of course, in Ireland. The English are the descendants of all the invaders, but are more **Anglo-Saxon** than anything else. These various origins explain many of the differences to be found between England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland—differences in education, religion and the legal systems, but the most obviously, in language.

### ➤ **Language**

The **Celts** spoke **Celtic** which survives today in the form of Welsh, Scottish **Gaelic** and Irish Gaelic. Less than a quarter of all the Welsh people (600,000, out of 2,800,000) speak Welsh. Scottish Gaelic and Irish Gaelic are still spoken, although they have suffered more than Welsh from the spread of English. However, all three languages are now officially encouraged and taught in the schools.

English developed from Anglo-Saxon and is a Germanic language. However, all the invading peoples, particularly the Norman French, influenced the English language and you can find many words in English which are French in origin. Nowadays, all the Welsh, Scottish and Irish people speak English (even if they speak their own languages as well), but all the countries have their own special accents and dialects, and their people are easily recognizable as soon as they speak. Occasionally, people from the four countries in the UK have difficulty in understanding one another because of these different accents. A southern English accent is generally accepted to be the most easily understood, and is the accent usually taught to foreigners.

### ➤ **Multiracial Britain**

Recently, there have been many waves of immigration into Britain and movement within the UK. For example, many people from Wales, Scotland and Ireland have settled in England; and Jews, Russians, Germans, and **Poles** have come to Britain (particularly London) during the political changes in the rest of Europe.

British culture is being enriched through its contact with other cultures. For example, the British are becoming more adventurous in their cooking and eating habits, and Chinese, Indian and **Pakistani** restaurants are very popular. Another example can be found in the pop music scene where West Indian reggae music has become very influential.

(length: 1,151 words)

## Vocabulary

devolution	n. 权力下放	patron saint	phr. 守护神; 保护圣徒
diagonal	adj. 对角的	referendum	n. 公民投票; 全民公决
	n. 对角线	upright	adj. 垂直的; 直立的
multiracial	adj. 多民族的		n. 垂直的; 直立的

## Proper Names

Anglo-Saxon	n. 盎格鲁-撒克逊	Pakistani	n. 巴基斯坦人
Brittany	布列塔尼(法国西北部一地区)		adj. 巴基斯坦的
Celt	n. 凯尔特人	Pole	n. 波兰人
Celtic	n. 凯尔特语	St Andrew	圣安德鲁(苏格兰的守护神)
	adj. 凯尔特人的	St David	威尔士守护神圣大卫
Eire	爱尔兰	St Patrick	爱尔兰守护神圣帕特里克
Gaelic	n. 盖尔语	Viking	n. 维京人; 北欧海盗
	adj. 盖尔人的	Union Jack	英国国旗



### Exercises

#### I. Comprehension

##### 1. Recall

What is the national anthem of the United Kingdom?

##### 2. Summarize

Can you compare British with English?

##### 3. Make Inferences

Are people on the British Isles British?

##### 4. Analyze

1) How was the United Kingdom formed?

2) What makes the Scottish, Welsh, English and Northern Irish different from each other?

##### 5. Evaluate

What do you think of different accents spoken in Britain? Is it good or bad for people to communicate with each other?

#### II. Further study

Choose one patron saint and find the story of him. Then tell the story you have searched to your classmates.



## Section C Supplementary Reading

### □ Passage 1 London

London is the capital of the United Kingdom and one of the world's oldest and largest cities. It is Great Britain's economic, cultural and political centre. Its sights attract millions of tourists every year.

#### ➤ Geography

London lies on the River Thames, about 50 km from **the North Sea**. The river has

influenced London for many centuries. Rising tides have flooded the city more than once. In the 1970s and 1980s a large barrier was built in the eastern part of the city to stop **incoming** water from flooding the nation's capital.

London is divided into three main sections.

The City is London's financial district and the oldest part of the capital. It is very small, with a size of only one square mile. Although only a few thousand people live here, hundreds of thousands pour into the City every day to work in the big office buildings of large banks and other institutions.

The West End includes London's government district Westminster as well as the famous shopping streets around **Piccadilly Circus** and **Trafalgar Square**. The city's famous cinemas, theatres and bars are located in the **West End**. Most of London's tourist attractions are concentrated here.

The South Bank is the area south of the River Thames. It is a cultural district with many concert halls, museums, theatres and **galleries**.

#### ➤ **Population**

London became one of the first megacities in the world. Since the end of World War II, however, the population of the city has begun to decrease because many people have been moving to the suburbs and new towns outside of London.

London is a multicultural city. In the 19th century thousands of people began pouring into London as a result of the Industrial Revolution. At the beginning of the 20th century immigrants from other European countries came.

In the 1950s and 60s people from Britain's colonies came to London. Indians, Pakistanis and West Indians are a common sight in the city today. About 25% of London's population are immigrants or the children of immigrants.

#### ➤ **History**

London has a 2000-year-old history. In the first century AD the Romans came to Great Britain and founded a settlement near the mouth of the River Thames. They called it **Londinium**. After they left London about four hundred years later the Saxons, a Germanic tribe, settled in the area. In the centuries that followed Vikings repeatedly attacked the city.

When William the Conqueror invaded Britain in 1066, London was already the biggest town on the island. William made the city its capital and crowned himself king in Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day. He also built the Tower of London to protect the city from invaders.

During the Middle Ages London grew steadily. It became one of Europe's trading centers and its population grew to about 200,000 by the beginning of the 17th century. Then disaster struck the city twice. The Great Plague of 1665 killed about a fourth of the city's population. A year later the Great Fire burned down most of the older part of the city. After this tragedy the city was rebuilt with houses made of stone and brick instead of wood.

At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution almost a million people lived in London. It was the largest city in the world and the centre of the British Empire, which at that time was

growing at a rapid pace .

As more and more people moved to the city from the countryside, London needed more and better transportation systems. In 1863 it became the first city in the world to start an underground railway system.

During the Second World War Nazi Germany bombed London heavily. 30,000 people were killed. The rebuilding of the city after World War II caused many problems. City planners did not want London to grow endlessly in all directions. A green belt was created around the city to stop its expansion. Outside of this green area, new towns emerged. They became small cities which many people moved to later on.

In the second half of the 20th century London faced many problems that other megacities also have: air pollution, traffic jams and unemployment.

In the 1970s and 80s the Docklands in the eastern part of London were rebuilt. They were once part of the world's largest harbour. The Docklands lost their importance as the British Empire lost its colonies. In the past decades new office buildings, shopping centers and a new airport have been created in an attempt to revitalize this region.

### ➤ **Economy and Tourism**

London is the UK's main economic and financial centre. It is the centre of trade and **banking**. Factories around the city produce all kinds of consumer goods—from clothes and electronic products to food and chemicals.

Trading companies were founded along the Thames at a time when Great Britain was still the biggest **colonial power** in the world. **Docks** and **wharfs** in eastern London became the centre of world trade. New **container terminals** were built in the 1960s, in order to handle the larger **cargo ships** that come to London.

London is Europe's most important banking and financial centre. Almost all of the world's large banks have regional headquarters in London. The Bank of England, located in the City of London, controls the country's money supply and is responsible for the value of the British pound sterling.

Tourism is an important economic factor for the city. Every year millions of people from all over the world come to London to see the city's well-known sights. Pupils and students from all over the world come here to learn English or to take language courses. Over 200,000 Londoners work in tourist-related industries.

### ➤ **Transportation**

As Europe's **gateway** overseas, London has two big international airports. **Heathrow**, in the western part of the city, is the main airport for international flights. **Gatwick**, halfway between London and the southern coast, was opened in 1958 in an attempt to get some of Heathrow's traffic away from the city. **Stansted**, in the north of London, handles regional flights and flights of budget airlines. London's new City Airport is only 15 minutes from the city centre and is used especially by the business travelers.





There is probably no other city in the world that has such a dense public transport system than London. **The Tube**, London's underground railway, is the oldest in the world. The red **double-decker buses** are well-known around the globe and a symbol of inner city transportation. All together, about 5 million people use London's public transport every day.

London has 6 railway stations that handle over 1.5 million commuters who travel in and out of the city every day. Fast trains from Paris and Brussels arrive in London daily through **the Channel Tunnel**.

### ➤ Culture

London is well known for its museums, art galleries and concert halls.

**The British Museum** is one of the oldest and largest museums in the world. It contains over seven million artifacts from all continents, cultures and civilizations.

The National Gallery, situated on Trafalgar Square, is home to a great deal of selections of European paintings. Tate Gallery has works of British modern art.

London's theatres perform works of Shakespeare and other great dramatists. The Royal Opera House at Covent Garden is host to performances of London's big **orchestras**.

(length: 1,239 words)

## Vocabulary

banking	n. 银行业; 金融
cargo ship	phr. 货船
colonial power	phr. 殖民国家
container terminal	phr. 集装箱码头
dock	n. 码头; 船坞
double-decker bus	phr. 双层的公共汽车

gallery	n. 美术馆; 画廊
gateway	n. 通道; 途径
geography	n. 地理; 地形
incoming	a. 引入的
orchestra	n. 管弦乐队; 乐队演奏处
wharf	n. 码头

## Proper Names

Gatwick	盖特威克 (伦敦第二大机场)
Heathrow	希思罗机场 (位于英国伦敦)
Londinium	伦底纽姆。罗马人是从公元 43 年开始攻入大不列颠岛的, 站稳脚跟之后, 他们在泰晤士河畔修

	建了一个聚居点, 名字叫“伦底纽姆” (Londinium), 也就是今天的伦敦
Piccadilly Circus	皮卡迪利广场 (戏院及娱乐中心)
Stansted	斯坦斯特德 (英国伦敦一机场名)