

全国高职高专统编教材

高职高专英语专业立体化系列教材

英语国家文化 概况(上)

The Culture of Major English-speaking Countries (Book One)

(高职高专英语专业适用)

主 编 李兰波 刘一平 主 审 左 飏

副主编 周俊华



高等教育出版社
HIGHER EDUCATION PRESS

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FOREWORD

随着改革开放的不断深入发展,中国正逐步融入国际社会,当代大学生不仅要学好英语,提高语言运用能力,还应加深对英语国家社会与文化生活基本情况的了解,培养国际视野,从而在工作和生活中更好地进行跨文化交流。为此,我们根据《高职高专教育英语课程教学基本要求》(试行)专门为高职高专学生编写了这本《英语国家文化概况》教材。本书简要地介绍了英国、美国、加拿大、澳大利亚、新西兰这五个以英语为主要语言的国家的地理、历史、政治、经济、教育、文化以及生活习惯等基本情况。此书在充分考虑到高职高专学习者的特点、英语水平和学习需要的基础上,用地道、易懂英语撰写,介绍时不求面面俱到,但求内容具备代表性、趣味性、时效性、简要性和实用性。通过本书的学习,帮助学生获得上述以英语为主要语言的国家的社会文化知识,增强学生对中西文化差异的敏感性,逐步形成跨文化交际意识,进而提高语言交际能力和文化修养。

《英语国家文化概况》分上、下两册,共分10单元,由两所院校10位老师共同完成。《英语国家文化概况》各单元按主题编写。其中,英国、美国的内容占篇幅较大。第一单元介绍**地理、政治和经济**;第二单元介绍**重要的历史事件**;第三单元介绍**不同民族**;第四单元介绍**教育**;第五单元介绍**流行文化**;第六单元介绍**礼仪文化**;第七单元介绍**生活方式**;第八单元介绍**节日文化**;第九单元介绍**风景名胜**;第十单元介绍**文学概貌**。

《英语国家文化概况》每一单元的内容由“学习要点”、“思考讨论”、“问题导入”、“话题阅读”、“文化注解”、“巩固练习”、“参考答案”、“拓展阅读”和“参考译文”九个部分组成,其显著特点可概括如下:

1. 内容翔实,时效性强。在编写过程中,我们参考了众多国内外相关著作、文献资料及相关网站,对大量的信息进行筛选,力求教材的内容权威、

客观、实用,尽量选用最新数据和材料,侧重介绍英语国家最新情况。

2. 结构新颖,注重对比。每个单元一个主题,每个主题进一步细分为一些小的话题,每个小话题有2至3篇简短的阅读材料支撑。其中针对围绕某一话题对以上几个主要英语国家的相关文化集中加以介绍,突出各国特点的同时,注重文化对比,提升学生的文化意识,增强文化敏感度,感悟英语国家之间的文化联系。

3. 任务明确,提高效率。每单元开头部分的学习要点提示清晰明了。每个单元阅读前的思考讨论或头脑风暴等活动以检测学生的背景知识,激发其学习兴趣。单元中的每个小节都以不同的方式提供了阅读前的思考题,以帮助学生在阅读前思考和理解相关话题,明确阅读任务,促进学生阅读能力的提升。

4. 注解实用,图文并茂。每个小节的开头都配有同主题密切相关的精彩图片,阅读材料旁侧对应的页面,以中文形式对重要的历史事件、术语、概念进行简要解释,无须跨页浏览文化注解,使学生快速掌握文章大意。

5. 练习丰富,强调自主。每个单元后均有编者精心编制的3至4种配套练习,便于教师检查和学生自测,以强化、巩固、运用其前面所学知识。另外,拓展阅读部分和学习网站推荐提供学有余力的学生选用,体现因材施教,提倡自主学习。

本教材共5单元,由李兰波和刘一平担任主编。具体分工如下:徐薇负责第一、五单元;徐琰负责第二单元;余建华负责第三单元;刘晓华负责第四单元。

由于编者水平和掌握资料的限制,加之时间仓促,书中定有错误和不足之处,恳请使用本教材的师生和读者给予批评和指正。

编 者

2009年6月

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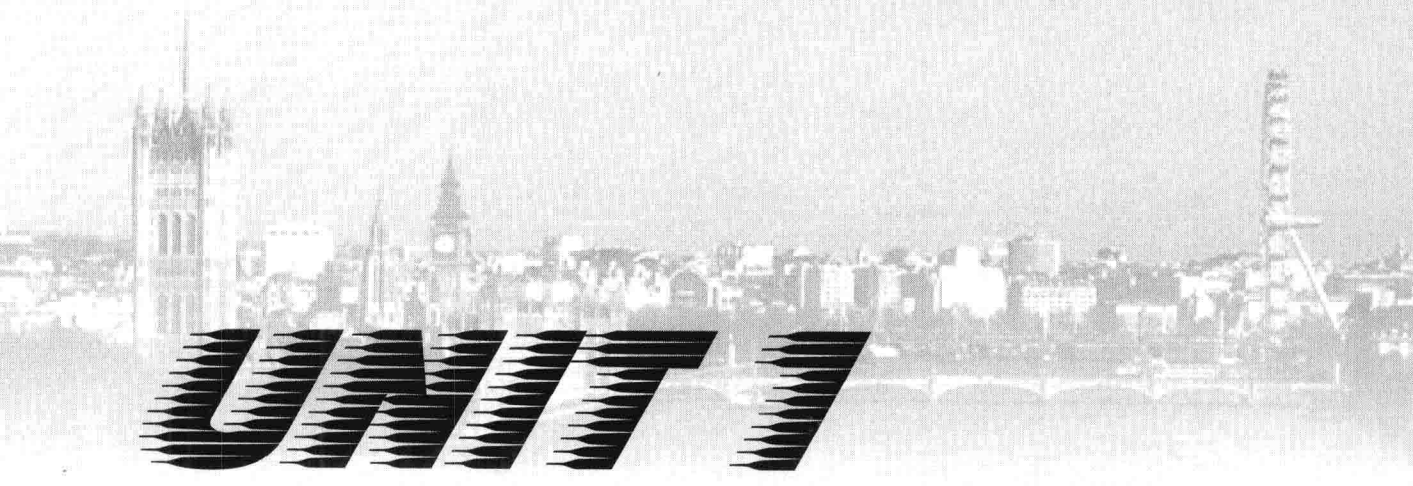
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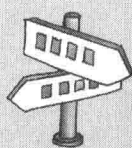


UNIT 1

Land, Politics and Economy

Focus:

- Land of the five countries
- Politics of the five countries
- Economy of the five countries



Before Reading

Guess

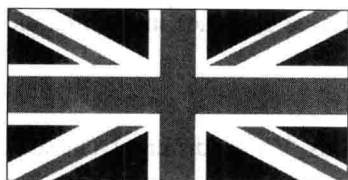
1. Which country is the largest in land size?
_____ the US, _____ Canada, _____ Australia
2. Which country takes the British Queen as its official state head?
_____ the UK, _____ the US, _____ Canada, _____ Australia, _____
New Zealand
3. Which of the following country is the first industrialized country in the world?
_____ the UK, _____ the US, _____ Canada, _____ New Zealand

1.1 The UK

Text A The Land of the UK

Check your comprehension

- Question 1: What is the official name of this country?
- Question 2: What are the geographic features of the country?



The UK, short for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland¹, is a middle-sized country lying off the north-west mainland Europe, with the total area of about 245,000 square kilometers.

It **comprises** (由……构成) the island of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), and the north-east part of the island of Ireland, together with many small islands.

The island country owns a long coastline, surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, the North Sea, the English Channel and the Irish Sea. The land geography features as mostly **rugged** (崎岖的) hills and low mountains; level to rolling plains in the east and southeast.

All parts of the country have a **temperate** (温



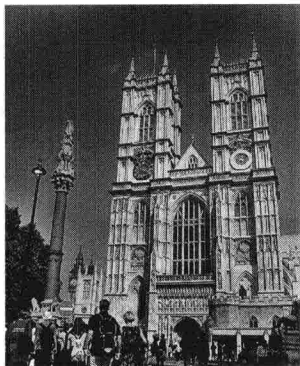
Cultural Notes:

1. the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: 英国的全称为“大不列颠及北爱尔兰联合王国”。

带的) climate. With plentiful rainfall all year round, it bears frequent **spells** (持续的天气) of mild and wet weather. The temperature varies with the seasons, but never with extreme heat or cold. With the temperature between 15°C–30°C, summer is fairly cool, regarded as the best season of the year. In winter and early spring, snowfall can occur, but the temperature seldom drops below -10°C.



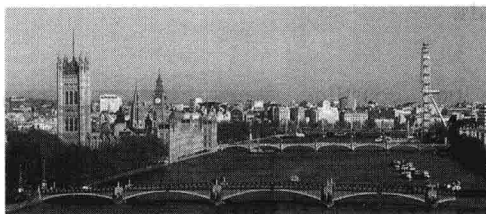
The UK's overall population density is one of the highest in the world. Immigration from the Commonwealth countries was greatly encouraged during 1950s to 1960s, because of the country's lack of labor. As a consequence, there are now over 60 million British of all races, **predominantly** (主要地) of European and Caribbean **origin** (血统).



威斯敏斯特教堂，英国皇室进行加冕礼的场所

English is the official language of the UK. The once huge British Empire has made the language spread to all the corners of the world, promoting it as the international business language. Christianity is the predominant religion of the UK, with distinctive churches in each of the four nations.

In the UK class structures are quite obvious. Three different classes, the working class, the middle class and the upper class, have different social status and different lifestyles.



London is the capital of the UK, which is located at the south of the country, by the Thames. With an area of 1,580 square kilometers and a population of just under 8 million, this **metropolis** (大都会) is by far the largest city not only in the UK but also in Europe.

Since the 17th century, it has maintained the **distinction** (盛名) of

2. British Broadcasting Corporation: 英国广播公司，全球最受尊敬的媒体之一。在相当长的一段时间内一直垄断着英国的电视、电台。今天BBC除了是一家在全球拥有高知名度的媒体，还提供其他各种服务，包括书籍报刊出版、英语教学、交响乐团和互联网新闻服务。

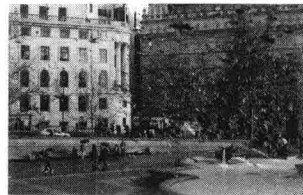


the political, financial and cultural center. Presently, London is the **mecca** (众人渴望之地) of Western culture for arts, education and literature. It has the largest concentration of museums, art galleries and theatres. The fashion, entertainment, publishing and media industries, mostly known for BBC², are also headquartered there.

Samuel Johnson, an English literary figure and the compiler of *A Dictionary of the English Language*, wrote: "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life, for there is in London all that life can afford."



大英博物馆，世界上展品最多的博物馆



特拉法尔加广场，伦敦最受欢迎的广场

Text B The Four Parts of the UK

Check your comprehension

- Question 1: Which part occupies most of the island of Great Britain?
- Question 2: Which nation has the strongest national identity?



There are four constituent nations in the United Kingdom: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

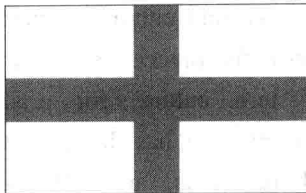
England, bordering with Scotland to the north and Wales to the west, is the largest and most **populous** (人口稠密的) constituent part. Its **inhabitants** (居民) account for more than 82% of the total population of the UK. Regional and

3. So sometimes foreigners would make the mistake of ...: 英格兰经济发达,吸引了英国其他地区的移民,以致众人误认为英格兰就是英国。



4. highland: 苏格兰高地,地势崎岖,风景优美,多山脉和湖泊,人口稀少。

5. Edinburgh: 苏格兰首府爱丁堡,风景优美,被称为“北方雅典”。



cultural differences exist between the north and the south of England. Averagely, southern areas are wealthier than the northern areas.

England is highly urbanized, with 80% of the population live in urban areas. There are many large cities in England. The capital of London is the largest city not only in the UK but also in the European Union. Birmingham is the second largest. A number of other cities, such as Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, mainly in central and northern England, are of substantial size and influence.



The economic prosperity of England has made it a destination for economic migrants from Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. So sometimes foreigners would make the mistake of calling the UK as “England”,³ even people in England would make that mistake too. As a matter of fact, other three nations should be called as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Generally speaking, the English are gentle and polite, sometimes they are considered to be taciturn, tending to keep a distance from the strangers.

Scotland is the second largest part of the UK in geographical area. It is also considered as the most rugged part. Its geography is varied, with lowlands in the south and east and highlands⁴ in the north and west. The lowland is the flattest, lowest lying part of Scotland, home to most of Scotland's population, while the highland is **barren** (贫瘠的) and sparsely populated. Regional and cultural differences exist between the lowland and highland of Scotland.



The capital city of Scotland is Edinburgh⁵, famous for its natural beauty. The largest

city is Glasgow, not very far away from Edinburgh. There are also many other famous cities such as Aberdeen and Dundee.

The Scottish has strong national identity. The local languages are Scots, Gaelic and Scottish English. The typical Scottish garment, the kilt, is worn when the Scots play the Great Highland **bagpipes** (风笛), especially when they march in parades. The custom is rather different from that of England. When it comes to the character, we can see Scottish as unyielding, valuing independence and freedom, partly because of a long history as a unified state independent of the UK.



Wales is the smallest among the three parts on the Britain mainland, though larger than Northern Ireland. It is mountainous, with 25% of the land above 1,000 feet. The coastline stretches for 732 miles, consisting of numerous bays, sandy beaches, **peninsulas** (半岛) and **cliffs** (悬崖). The capital city of Wales is Cardiff, a small city with a small population on the south coast.

Wales is much closer to England, without natural boundary. Such geographical location leads to the fact that Wales has longer been dominated by England than the other nations of the Union. However, the Welsh retain a powerful sense of difference from England. The key indicator of that difference is its own language, the Welsh. It is a Celtic **tongue** (语言) rather different from English. Currently in Wales, a small percentage still speak Welsh, but All the Welsh-speakers are also fluent in English. It is a bilingual nation.



There is distinction between the north and the south of Wales. Most of Welsh speakers



斯旺西, 威尔士南部港口城市



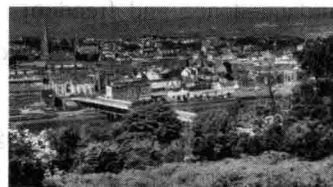
北爱尔兰首府贝尔法斯特

live in the rural North, while English speakers mainly gather in the industrial south, which is more populated. The Welsh are passionate, **talkative**(健谈的) and warm-hearted by nature.



Northern Ireland, consisting of 6 counties in the northeastern part of Ireland, is the smallest of the four nations, both in area and population.

In general terms, Northern Ireland is a series of rolling green hills and it is most rural, with a beautiful lake district in the southwest. There is a long and rugged coastline. The capital city Belfast is a small city, but is still the biggest city in Northern Ireland.



Despite of its small area, Northern Ireland is quite famous in the world, not for its scenery, but for its political problem. Although political violence and street shooting often occur in the Irish's lives, the crime rate is very low. The living costs are relatively low, and the standards of living are guaranteed for the residents. Apart from that, Northern Ireland has a rich culture life with music, poetry, theatres, museum, and cinema. The languages of Northern Ireland are English and Irish.



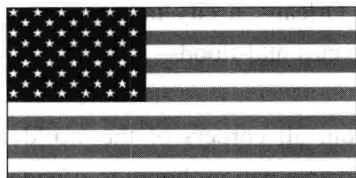
1.2 The US

Text A The Land of the United States

Check your comprehension

Question 1: What is the common abbreviation for this country?

Question 2: Why is the country described as a "melting pot"?



The United States of America, also known as the United States, the US, or the USA, is a large country lying in the south of the North America continent.

It borders Canada on the north and Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico on the south, with the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Pacific Ocean on the west. With an area of 9.6

