

Introduction

You can listen to a recording of this story at:

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/stories/quotes-about-united-kingdom>

This support pack contains the following materials:

- the story that you can listen to;
- two sets of comprehension and vocabulary activities, one for each group of quotes about the UK

Read the story

Quotes about the United Kingdom

A survey commissioned by the British Council gave rise to a number of quotes from people across the globe on their perceptions of the UK.

UAE - When young people say about the British that he's unpleasant or old, it is an impression we have from the time when Great Britain was a great power together with Portugal.

ITALY - I particularly liked the spirit, the liveliness, the people and their open-mindedness.

HUNGARY - It's so fantastic that they are able to look at themselves with self-irony. I think this is exceptional. They write books and make movies that tell a negative picture about them and they show it.

HONG KONG - A lot of them are drunk and cause trouble.

JAPAN - There are bad points such as discrimination but also good points such as the parliamentary government.

KENYA - It's believed that if you go for further education in Britain, you get quality education.

THAILAND - They seem so cold in general.

BANGLADESH - Heritage from Britain, technology and dynamism from the United States.

SINGAPORE - The British always give me the idea of old and boring.

KOREA - Underlying the British people's ideologies is their deeply rooted tradition, long history, long history of the royal family and democracy, and the class structure.

GREECE - I am thinking about music. It's not by accident that the most innovative trends in music come from England.

VIETNAM - UK is a small island but it has a global trading system.

After reading

Exercise 1

In the table are the names of the 12 countries whose people were quoted. Below the table are 12 questions. Can you match the countries to the questions?

Bangladesh	Greece	Hong Kong	Hungary
Italy	Japan	Kenya	Korea
Singapore	Thailand	UAE	Vietnam

1. Which text accuses the British of being dull?
2. Which text mentions both unfairness and democracy?
3. Which text compares Britain with a previously powerful country?
4. Which text says the British are capable of self-criticism?
5. Which text talks of the high standard of British universities?
6. Which text refers to Britain's international business interests?
7. Which text accuses many British people of having bad habits?
8. Which text says the British are distant?
9. Which text mentions British originality?
10. Which text says British people are vigorous and tolerant?
11. Which text says Britain is better known for its history than its modern ways?
12. Which text refers to the origins of British people's beliefs?

Exercise 2

In the table are 12 words or phrases from the texts. Below are the definitions of these words and phrases, and which text you can find them in. Can you match the words and phrases to their definitions?

a. deeply rooted	b. discrimination	c. dynamism
d. exceptional	e. further education	f. ideologies
g. impression	h. innovative	i. irony
j. liveliness	k. trading	l. underlying

1. In the quote from UAE find a word or phrase that means an idea or opinion of what something is like
2. In the quote from Italy find a word or phrase that means the act of having or showing a lot of energy and enthusiasm
3. In the quote from Hungary find a word or phrase that means a means of expression which suggests (humorously or angrily) a different meaning for the words used
4. In the quote from Hungary find a word or phrase that means much greater than usual, esp. in skill, cleverness, quality, etc.
5. In the quote from Japan find a word or phrase that means the treatment of a person or particular group of people differently, esp. in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, religion, sex, etc.
6. In the quote from Bangladesh find a word or phrase that means the state of having a lot of ideas and enthusiasm; the state of being energetic and forceful
7. In the quote from Kenya find a word or phrase that means university-level instruction.
8. In the quote from Korea find a word or phrase that means being the cause of or strong influence on (something)
9. In the quote from Korea find a word or phrase that means theories, or sets of beliefs or principles, esp. one on which a political system, party or organization is based
10. In the quote from Korea find a word or phrase that means very strong and so much a part of something else that it cannot be changed or got rid of

11. In the quote from Vietnam find a word or phrase that means buying and selling
12. In the quote from Greece find a word or phrase that means 'different' and 'new'

Here are some more quotes from the survey from different countries.

MEXICO - The British are limited. They don't try new things.

JAPAN - British scientists are enthusiastic, almost manic, in particular categories. But they are doing something that really doesn't matter.

CZECH REPUBLIC - Britain was the first country with a constitution, I think. So there is a real democratic tradition in Britain.

SPAIN - Out of the European countries I think the closest to the US is England; but you can't separate them from Europe.

SINGAPORE - They have a group of white trash, you know, skinheads. That group is very, very racist. But I think the majority is fine. In fact, I know there are some community leaders that are black.

FRANCE - There are many differences between the English, the Irish and the Scottish. Irish and Scottish are much more friendly.

HUNGARY - Their mistrust with strangers is also a characteristic. Usually this is said for the Germans but it is far more true for the English.

NIGERIA - A British product is very high quality. You'll use it and use it until you are tired.

RUSSIA - People are very involved in the life of society, politics. They are very well aware of what is going on.

GERMANY - The really crazy people all come from England.

SAUDI ARABIA - They don't have any famous artists. They like soccer.

www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish

After reading

Exercise 3

In the table are the names of the 11 countries whose people were quoted. Below the table are 11 questions. Can you match the countries to the questions?

Czech Republic	France	Germany	Hungary
Japan	Mexico	Nigeria	Russia
Saudi Arabia	Singapore	Spain	

1. Which text says that some British people are not as nice as others?
2. Which text says that freedom and equality between people in Britain has a long history?
3. Which text refers to Britain's role in different parts of the world?
4. Which text generalises about people who are not normal?
5. Which text accuses some British people of being keen but not doing significant things?
6. Which text claims that British people are wary of people they don't know?
7. Which text could be referring to a Rolls Royce?
8. Which text claims that the British know what's happening around them?
9. In which text does the writer show ignorance of British cultural achievements?
10. Which text claims that the British don't like novelty?
11. Which text speaks of both prejudice and multicultural integration?

Exercise 4

In the table are 11 words from the texts. Below are the definitions of these words and phrases, and which text you can find them in. Can you match the words and phrases to their definitions?

a. aware	b. characteristic	c. community
d. enthusiastic	e. limited	f. majority
g. mistrust	h. quality	i. separate
j. tradition	k. trash	

- In the quote from Mexico find a word or phrase that means restricted
- In the quote from Japan find a word or phrase that means keen or eager
- In the quote from Czech Republic find a word or phrase that means a belief, principle or way of acting which people in a particular society or group have continued to follow for a long time, or all of these in a particular group or society considered as a whole
- In the quote from Spain find a word or phrase that means consider independently
- In the quote from Singapore find a word or phrase that means something that is worthless and of low quality
- In the quote from Singapore find a word or phrase that means the larger number or part of something
- In the quote from Singapore find a word or phrase that means the people living in one particular area or people who are considered as a unit because of their common interests, background or nationality
- In the quote from Hungary find a word or phrase that means the particular combination of qualities in a person or place that makes them different from others
- In the quote from Hungary find a word or phrase that means to have doubts about the honesty or abilities of (someone)
- In the quote from Nigeria find a word or phrase that means the standard of excellence of something, often a high standard

In the quote from Russia find a word or phrase that means knowing that something exists, or having knowledge or experience of a particular thing

Answers

Exercise 1: 1. Singapore; 2. Japan; 3. UAE; 4. Hungary; 5. Kenya; 6. Vietnam; 7. Hong Kong; 8. Thailand; 9. Greece; 10. Italy; 11. Bangladesh; 12. Korea

Exercise 2: 1. g; 2. j; 3. i; 4. d; 5. b; 6. c; 7. e; 8. l; 9. f; 10. a; 11. k; 12. h

Exercise 3: 1. France; 2. Czech Republic; 3. Spain; 4. Germany; 5. Japan; 6. Hungary; 7. Nigeria; 8. Russia; 9. Saudi Arabia; 10. Mexico; 11. Singapore

Exercise 4: 1. e; 2. d; 3. j; 4. i; 5. k; 6. f; 7. c; 8. b; 9. g; 10. h; 11. a