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History of the United Kingdom: Since 1707

The history of the United Kingdom is part of the long story of all the peoples who have at one time or another lived in the lands that make up present-day England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Come and explore how this small island nation pioneered the Industrial Revolution, developed democratic parliamentary government, and helped to shape the modern world!

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Find It!

Find the answers to the questions below by using the "Search" tool to search key words. Since this activity is about the history of the United Kingdom, you can start by searching for the keywords "United Kingdom" to find the article titled "United Kingdom, History of the."

Write the answer below these questions from the beginning of the article or circle the correct multiple-choice selection.

Map It!

Consult the map labeled "United Kingdom" at the start of the article on the History of the United Kingdom to answer the next two questions.

1. What four political divisions (labeled in red on the map) make up the United Kingdom?

2. What is the capital of the United Kingdom?

***Users of the *Advanced* database can find extension activities at the end of this webquest.**

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Find It!

Scroll down or use the article contents icon (at the top right corner of your screen) to find the section of the article titled "Years of progress (1700's)." The remainder of the webquest covers the second half of the article, beginning at this point.

3. In the early 1500's, England and Wales were officially joined under one system of government. The Act of Union passed in 1707 formally joined these areas with Scotland to form what the act called the "united kingdom of Great Britain."

   A. What did the 1707 Act of Union change?

   B. What stayed the same?

4. King George I, who ruled from 1714 to 1727, chose a *cabinet* (team of political leaders) to run his government but realized that these leaders needed to sit in Parliament in order to get important measures passed. So when a team of these leaders, called *ministers,* lost control of Parliament, the king either chose new ministers or called an election. This form of governing became known as

   _____ _____.

5. George I's first chief minister is often considered the first "prime minister" of Britain. What was his name?

6. As a result of the Seven Years' War (also known in America as the French and Indian War) Britain's overseas empire expanded because it acquired most of France's colonial territory in

   a. Asia and Africa.

   b. North America and Africa.

   c. North America and India.

   d. North American and South America.

7. During the 1700's, a rise in population and the growth of towns increased the demand for food. Some farmers increased production with a new system of

   a. crop rotation.

   b. plowing.

   c. using chemical fertilizers.

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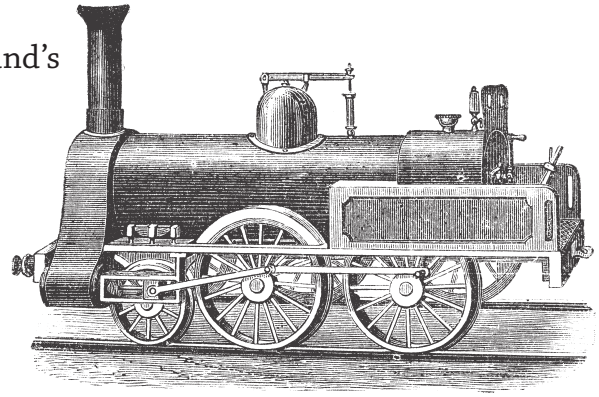
8. The Industrial Revolution began in the 1700's in England's _____ _____industry.

   a. coal mining

   b. cotton textile

   c. iron making

   d. ship building



9. How did the Industrial Revolution change the way most people worked?

10. Name three developments that changed transportation in the 1700's.

    1. _____

    2. _____

    3. _____

11. Why were the industrial areas built around coal fields?

12. Draw lines to match the colonial region with the change that took place there in the late 1700's.

Australia	reorganized into two provinces
Canada	became independent from the British
Thirteen American colonies	where the British sent convicts

13. Britain fought France in the Napoleonic Wars of the late 1700's and early 1800's, during which France conquered and then lost much of continental Europe. Name the famous British military leader who led these great battles during the war.

    Battle of Trafalgar (1805) _____

    Battle of Waterloo (1815) _____

14. What did the Act of Union of 1801 do for Great Britain and Ireland?

15. What act, passed by Parliament in 1829, lifted the restriction that Roman Catholics could not serve in parliament?

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16. Few men in the United Kingdom had the right to vote at the start of the 1800's. What additional groups received voting rights as a result of each of the following acts?

    Reform Act of 1832: _____

    Reform Act of 1867: _____

    Reform Act of 1884: _____

17. Who ruled the United Kingdom during the Victorian Age, and how long did the reign last?

18. The British Empire reached its height during the Victorian Age.

    It included about a _____ of the world's land and about a

    _____ of the world's population.

    a. quarter, quarter

    b. quarter, third

    c. third, third

    d. third, half

19. Unscramble the words to discover inventions of the 1800's that radically changed communications and transportation.

    A. Daoriral: Originally carried freight. They later built passenger lines. _____

    B. metsa nneeig: Used to power ships_____

    C. ttresecra: horse-drawn transportation. Tracks were called tramways_____

    D. ybcicel: J. K. Starley created the first 'safe' version_____

    E. eleponhet: created by a Scotsman who settled in the United States_____

20. In 1837, Rowland Hill wrote a pamphlet calling for a uniform Penny Post. He said it should charge cheap, uniform rates, regardless of distance, with the postage paid in advance by the sender and adhesive stamps to indicate payment. The British Post Office issued the first postage stamps in 1840. Who was Rowland Hill?

    a. the head of the British postal service

    b. the British minister of transportation

    c. a retired British schoolteacher

    d. a British soldier stationed in Australia

21. The Great Irish Famine of 1845 to 1850 killed about _____ people in Ireland out of a population of about _____, and caused several million desperate people to leave the island.

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Map It!

Examine the map titled "British Empire under Queen Victoria" to answer the following two questions.

22. Where were the main British colonial territories located when Victoria came to the throne in 1837?

23. The British Empire expanded greatly during the 1800's. In what parts of the world did most of this expansion occur?

24. A "dominion" is a self-governing member of the British Empire that maintains its allegiance to the Crown. What was the first dominion created within the British Empire, and what was the name of the act that created it?

25. Find a short list of influential British authors from the 1800's below. Indicate whether he or she is a writer from the **Romantic** or **Victorian** Movement. Then find the underlined names in the word search.

_____ Alfred, Lord Tennyson

_____ Jane Austen

_____ Charlotte Brontë

_____ Emily Brontë

_____ Elizabeth Barrett Browning

_____ Robert Browning

_____ Charles Dickens

_____ George Eliot

_____ John Keats

_____ Rudyard Kipling

_____ Sir Walter Scott

_____ Percy Bysshe Shelley

_____ H. G. Wells

_____ William Wordsworth

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T	L	O	S	R	K	T	D	L	Y	T	W
O	I	W	N	Q	A	E	L	I	O	T	N
X	M	P	E	E	T	G	J	X	G	O	O
Z	E	B	K	Z	B	H	V	B	V	L	S
Y	T	C	C	W	R	J	R	N	E	R	Y
L	T	L	I	W	O	O	W	E	Q	A	N
W	O	R	D	S	W	O	R	T	H	H	N
E	C	W	P	N	N	S	B	S	W	C	E
L	S	G	I	B	I	M	A	U	W	P	T
L	A	N	Q	N	N	V	B	A	Y	G	X
S	G	P	R	W	G	N	I	L	P	I	K

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26. In 1914, the British government passed an Irish Home Rule Bill to give Ireland self-government within the British Empire, but home rule was shelved when _____ began.

    a. World War I

    b. World War II

    c. the Easter Rising

    d. Sinn Féin's demands for independence

27. A. What part of Ireland became the Irish Free State in the early 1920's?

    B. What part remained part of the United Kingdom?

28. During the first half of the 1900's, the United Kingdom fought two devastating wars—World War I and World War II. Write "WWI" or "WWII" in front of each statement to indicate which war it describes.

    _____ the U.K. fought in the war from 1914 to 1918

    _____ the U.K. fought in the war from 1939 to 1945

    _____ the World War in which the largest number of British armed forces died

    _____ hundred of German planes bombed the United Kingdom nightly during "the Blitz"

    _____ in the alliance system that developed before the war, the U.K. and its allies were called the Triple Entente

    _____ Winston Churchill served as prime minister during most of the war

29. What political party won a landslide victory in 1945, and what did it do to change British society in the next six years?

30. What is the Commonwealth of Nations?

31. What happened to most of the territories in the United Kingdom's overseas empire in the years following World War II?

32. In what year did the United Kingdom join the European Community (also called the EC), which later became the European Union (also known as the EU)?

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(Hint: For the next three questions see the introductory paragraphs in the "Northern Ireland" article.)

33. Who are the Unionists in Northern Ireland and what do they want?

34. Who are the Nationalists in Northern Ireland, and what do they want?

35. The conflict and violence between Irish Nationalists and Irish Unionists that began in the late 1960's and finally drew to a close in the early 2000's is known by what name?

(Hint: For the remaining questions return to the "United Kingdom, history of" article.)

36. A. Who was the first woman to serve as prime minister of the United Kingdom?

    B. When did she take office?

    C. How long did she serve?

37. What British political leader became prime minster in 1997 and proposed plans to give Scotland and Wales their own legislatures?

38. Later in 1997, the people in Scotland and in Wales each approved plans for a national assembly to which the British government *devolved* (transferred) some of its powers. What are these assemblies called?

    Scotland: _____

    Wales: _____

39. In 1998, a political settlement in Northern Ireland created three new political bodies, which all began meeting the following year. What are the three political bodies, and what is the role of each one?

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Extension Activity 1: **Analyze the Image**

Open "Images, Videos, and Audio" at the top of the article. Find the picture titled "Sheffield." Consider how the various elements of this picture of Sheffield in 1879 illustrate social and economic changes that occurred in the United Kingdom during the 1700's and 1800's. Write an expository essay that identifies and connects elements of the picture with the historical changes occurring during that time.

Extension Activity 2: **Writing Home**

It's 1790. You're young and adventurous. Three months ago, you left the farm where your family had lived for generations and moved to the city of Manchester. Amazed by the difference, you want to let your family know what life is like away from the farm. Write a letter home to your family describing the community and your experiences so far in the big city.

Extension Activity 3: **Happy Birthday to You!**

Pretend that you were born in the United Kingdom 1885. It's 1975, and your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are planning a 90th birthday party for you. Write a speech to give at the celebration, telling your family about three of the most amazing events or changes you've seen during your lifetime. Explain how these events or changes impacted and improved (or did not improve) your daily life.

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