

WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Choose the correct answer:

1. Which of these is not an acceptable short name for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland?
 - a) England
 - b) Great Britain
 - c) The United Kingdom
2. Which city is not in the U.K.?
 - a) Belfast
 - b) Cardiff
 - c) Dublin
3. Which is the smallest of the four nations in terms of area?
 - a) Ireland
 - b) Scotland
 - c) Wales
4. What is the capital of Scotland?
 - a) Aberdeen
 - b) Glasgow
 - c) Edinburgh
5. What is the flag of the U.K. called?
 - a) Stars and Stripes
 - b) Union Jack
 - c) Tricolour
6. Which island lies between Ireland and England?
 - a) Isle of Man
 - b) The Shetland Islands
 - c) The Hebrides
7. What is the capital of the Republic of Ireland?
 - a) Belfast
 - b) Cardiff
 - c) Dublin
8. The British currency is...
 - a) Euro
 - b) Dollar
 - c) Pound

1. THE BRITISH ISLES

1.1. NAME AND LOCATION.

Geographically speaking

British Isles are a group of islands off the west coast of Europe. They consist of the following islands:

Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales)- the largest island;

Ireland (the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland (part of the United Kingdom));

The Orkney and Shetland Islands (Islands off the northeast coast of Scotland);

The Isle of Man (an island in the Irish Sea);

STEFANIA MANEA-GEOGRAPHY OF THE UK
 UNIT 1. THE BRITISH ISLES

Hebrides (including the Inner Hebrides, Outer Hebrides and Small Isles); all are islands off the northwest coast of Scotland;

The Isle of Wight (an island off the southern coast of England);

Isles of Scilly (an island off the southwest coast of England) etc.

At one time it is believed that they were joined to the Continent; the chalk downs of Kent are a continuation of the chalk heights in France, and the Highlands of Scotland belong to the same system as the Scandinavian plateau.

The British Isles are very fortunate in their position. **The North Sea** separates them from Denmark, Germany, and Holland, and although this did not keep out all invaders (for the Saxons and Danes sailed across and entered England), it prevented those constant border wars from which most European countries suffered wars which did much harm by checking the prosperity and learning which could only flourish during times of peace.

At the same time England was not quite cut off from what was happening on the Continent; **the Straits of Dover** are very narrow, and new ideas were brought across, and prevented the English from becoming "behind the times" in their island country.

The British Isles are surrounded to the south by the **English Channel**, which separates it from continental Europe, to the east by the **North Sea** and to the west by the **Irish Sea** and the **Atlantic Ocean**.

Activity 1. Fill in the table below with the boundaries of the British Isles.

north	south	east	west

Activity 2. Work in pairs to fill in the table with the longitude and latitude of the two main islands, i.e. Great Britain and Ireland.

Latitude	
Longitude	

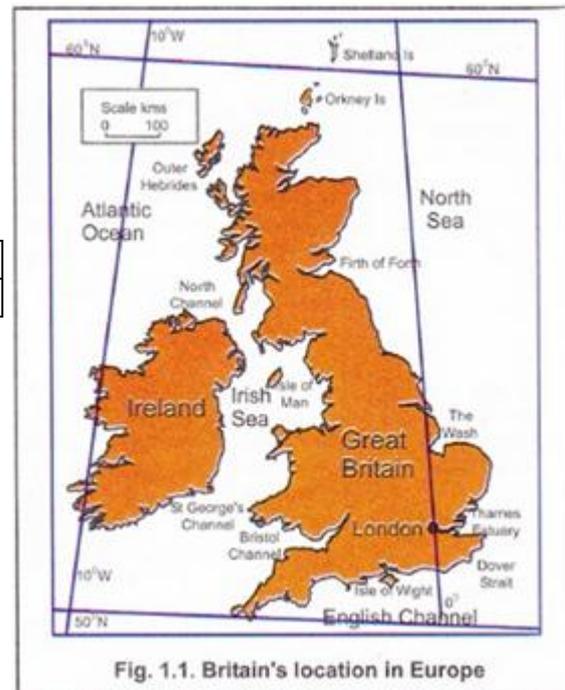


Fig. 1.1. Britain's location in Europe

Politically speaking

In the British Isles there are two states. One of these governs most of the island of Ireland. It is called **The Republic of Ireland** ("EIRE"). The other state that has authority over the rest of the British Isles is **The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**.

Activity 3. Label the following elements on the map: *Isles of Scilly, Isle of Wight, Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands, Inner Hebrides, Outer Hebrides, Anglesey, North Sea, Atlantic Ocean, Hebrides Sea, Irish Sea, English Channel, Strait of Dover.*

Activity 4. Follow the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNu8XDBSn10>. Watch the video and complete the tasks:

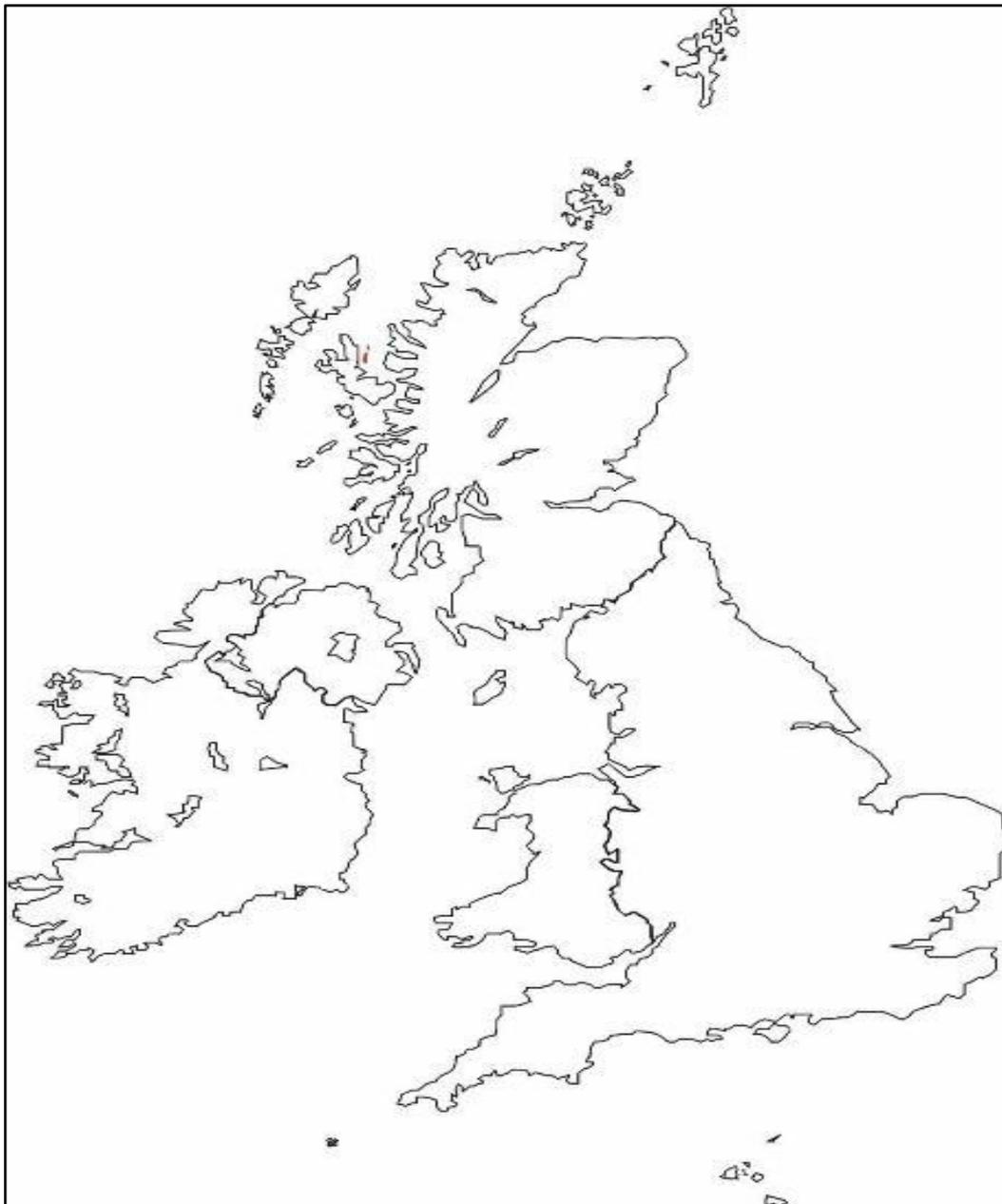
- 1) Draw the Venn Diagram of the British Isles;
- 2) Mention three important landmarks from London that appear in the video.
- 3) Which are the Crown Dependencies?
- 4) Choose from the list below two countries which are British Overseas Territories and mention the countries with which the U.K. went at war.

STEFANIA MANEA-GEOGRAPHY OF THE UK
UNIT 1. THE BRITISH ISLES

India	South Africa
Gibraltar	Taiwan
Canada	Falkland Islands

Name: _____
Class: _____

MY MAP OF THE BRITISH ISLES



2. GREAT BRITAIN vs. THE U.K.

Great Britain is a term used to refer to England, Scotland and Wales. It is often called Britain.

The name “Britain” comes from the Greco- Roman word used for the inhabitants of Britain, i.e. “Pretani”. The Romans mispronounced it and called the island “Britannia”.

It is the 8th largest island in the world and an island included in the group of the British Isles together with Ireland and some other islands near their coasts.

The UK is a term used to refer to Great Britain and Northern Ireland as a political unit.

The United Kingdom is officially called the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is an island nation, a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy¹ comprising four constituent countries — England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales — with Elizabeth II as head of state.

Many people think that “English” is the same as “British”. But, England is only one of the four nations in the U.K. The Scots, the Welsh and the Northern Irish are British, too.

Activity 5. Use different colours to represent the countries: *Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales*;



3. THE UNITED KINGDOM

3.1. LOCATION

A. In the world, the U.K. lies in northern hemisphere.

- The geographical coordinates:
 latitudes: 49°N and 59°N;
 longitudes: 8°W to 2°E;

Greenwich Meridian (International Meridian or Prime Meridian)- passes through Royal Observatory in Greenwich (borough of London); it is the meridian at which the longitude is defined at 0 degrees;



Why is it important?

- Every place on Earth is measured in terms of its distance east or west from this line. It was founded in 1675 by King Charles II. At that time, there were 14 locations with 0 degrees longitude. In 1884, at the International Meridian Conference, there were 41 delegates from 25 countries: 22 voted for, 1 against (San Domingo) and 2 abstained (France and Brazil).
- It is used to calculate longitude.
- The prime meridian and the opposite 180th meridian (at 180° longitude), which the International Date Line generally follows, separate the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

B. In Europe.

The UK is in Western Europe and has a total area of approximately 245,000 sq. km. The UK lies between the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea, and comes within 35 km of the northwest coast of France, from which it is separated by the English Channel. Northern Ireland shares a 360 km international land boundary with the Republic of Ireland. The Channel Tunnel bored beneath the English Channel, now links the UK with France.

Its nearest neighbours are Ireland, and the Netherlands, Belgium and France across the Channel. Denmark, Norway and Sweden are also easily accessible.

Activity 6. If the UK has a total area of approximately 245,000 sq. km, search on <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/economies/Europe/United-Kingdom.html> the areas of the countries that form it.

Country	area (sq.km)	rank
Wales		
Scotland		
England		
Northern Ireland		

4. THE COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of countries that were formerly British colonies. Members of the Commonwealth of Nations recognize the United Kingdom Monarch as their own king or queen, but remain politically independent.

Activity 7. Choose from the countries enumerated below the ones that are Commonwealth members:

The USA	Belize
Canada	Portugal
Australia	India
Bahamas	Grenada
Taiwan	Solomon Islands
Papua New Guinea	China
Japan	New Zealand
Saint Lucia	Singapore

5. THE U.K. AND THE E.U.

The UK joined the European Community in 1973 under a Conservative government. The UK was the 6th country to join and membership was to be 'of unlimited duration'. This was in accord with the terms of the original Treaty of Rome, which started the Community in 1958. In 1975 Parliament's decision that the UK should become a member was confirmed by a referendum of the whole electorate (the 1st in British history): over 8 million wanted to get out, but over 17 million wanted to stay in. Therefore, the UK continued to be a member, although not all the members of the Labour government which called the referendum were sure that this was the right decision.

The UK's membership has not always been easy. There have been arguments over financial and agricultural policies, and for many people the way the EU operates remains a mystery. On the other hand, the UK's poorer regions have benefited receiving 24 per cent on the Union's regional and social funds in 1985, for example. Overall, the UK is a major contributor to the Union's funds. Nearly half of the UK's trade is with the rest of the EU.

Closer to Europe

Over the last 200 years the idea of a tunnel under the sea between GB and France has been put forward a number of times. On several occasions, construction has actually been started: one project was abandoned as recently as 1975. In 1987 a new Anglo- French group called Eurotunnel was chosen to construct a system which links the road and rail networks of Britain and France and improve communications and commercial links inside the EU. The Channel Tunnel has been operational since 1995. There are 2 rail tunnels and a service tunnel, each nearly 50 km. long. There is also a possibility that a separate road tunnel for cars and lorries will be built in the future.

Activity 8. Answer the following questions:

STEFANIA MANEA-GEOGRAPHY OF THE UK
 UNIT 1. THE BRITISH ISLES

- (1). When did the UK join the EU?
- (2). How was the membership confirmed?
- (3). Why hasn't the UK's membership always been easy?
- (4). How is GB linked with France?

Activity 9. Click on Countries at a glance (http://www.countryscorecard.com/country_scorecard). Find the UK in the list of countries. Click on its name, and use the data card to fill in the data for the UK below. Then, do the same for Romania.

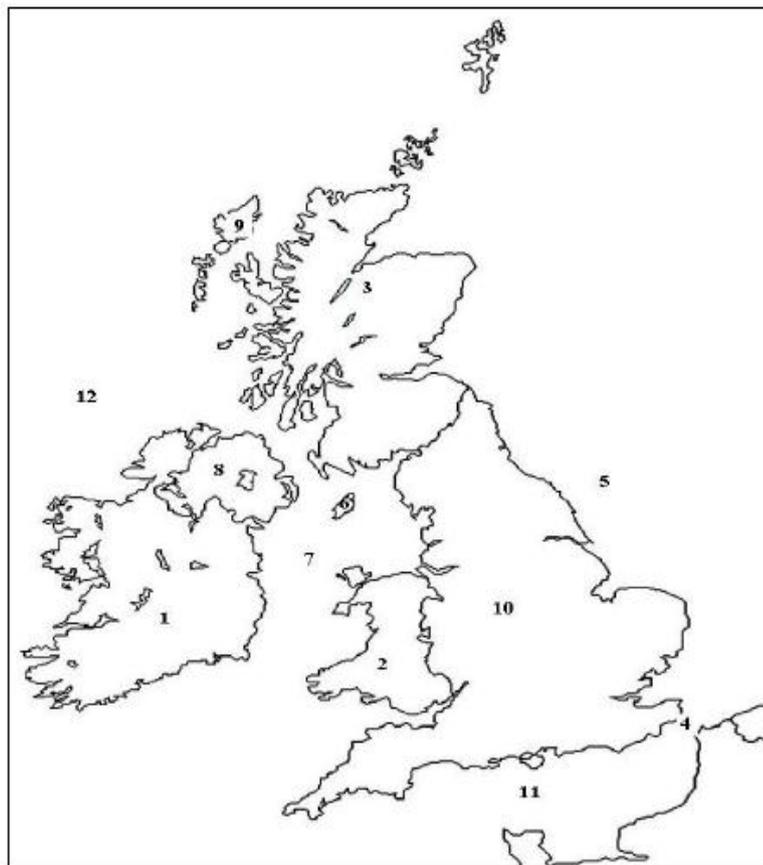
Country	Area		Population (mil. people)	Currency	Flag
	(sq. km)	rank			
UK					
Romania					

Activity 10. Fill in the gaps with the correct words from the list below: *Northern, European, Scotland, Thames, Portland, Wales, Wight, Union;*

Great Britain comprises England, (1)..... and (2)..... The full, official name of the country is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and (3)..... Ireland. The national flag of the UK is the (4)..... Jack. The United Kingdom is a member of the (5) Union. The capital of the UK, London, lies on the river (6)..... . The two largest islands in the English Channel are: (7)..... and (8)..... .

Activity 11. Answer the following questions:

1. What is the capital of the UK? _____
2. What ocean borders the UK to the north? _____
3. What body of water separates the UK from France? _____



4. What is the name of the sea that borders the UK to the northeast?

5. What is the name of the group of islands off the northwest coast of Scotland?

6. Is Scotland north, south, east or west _____ of _____ England?

7. The Strait between Great Britain and _____ France is _____

Activity 12. Name the countries, seas (ocean) and islands marked on the map with numbers from 1-12.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

STEFANIA MANEA-GEOGRAPHY OF THE UK
 UNIT 1. THE BRITISH ISLES

- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

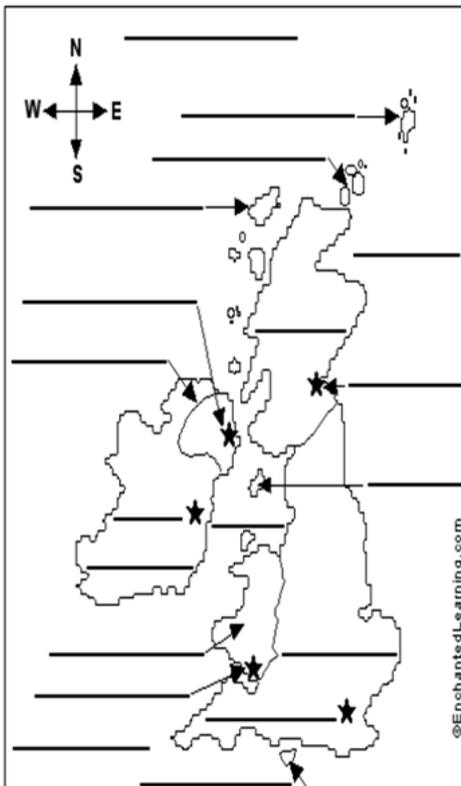
Activity 13. Fill in with appropriate words:

1. _____ is a traditional term used to identify the group of islands off the northwest coast of Europe consisting of two large islands - _____ and _____, and the many smaller adjacent islands.
2. The Ireland is made up of the Republic of Ireland or _____ and _____ Ireland.
3. Great Britain consists of England, _____ and _____ and doesn't include _____.
4. The North Sea and _____ separate the British Isles _____ European continent.
5. Once the British Isles were part of the _____ of Europe.
6. The _____ of the British Isles are washed by the _____ and the North and Irish Seas.

Activity 14. Complete the table with the necessary information:

Country	Capital	Nationalities
England		
	<i>Belfast</i>	
		<i>Scotts, Scottish</i>
	<i>Cardiff</i>	

Activity 15. Fill in the map.



- Atlantic Ocean - the body of water in which the British Isles are located
- Belfast - the capital of Northern Ireland
- Cardiff - the capital of Wales
- Celtic Sea - the sea south of Ireland
- Dublin - the capital of Ireland
- England - the largest area in the United Kingdom; it is attached to Scotland and Wales
- Edinburgh - the capital of Scotland
- English Channel - the body of water off southern England which separates it from France
- Hebrides - islands off the northwest coast of Scotland
- Ireland - (the Republic of Ireland) - a country west of England across the Irish Sea (not part of the United Kingdom)
- Irish Sea - the body of water that separates England and Ireland
- Isle of Man - an island in the Irish Sea
- Isle of Wight - an island off the southern coast of England
- London - the capital of England (and the capital of the United Kingdom)
- North Sea - the body of water northeast of the British Isles separating it from northwestern Europe
- Northern Ireland - a part of the United Kingdom bordering the Republic of Ireland on the northeast
- Orkney Islands - islands off the northeast coast of Scotland
- Scotland - a part of the United Kingdom bordering England on the north
- Shetland Islands - islands far off the northeast coast of Scotland
- Wales - a part of the United Kingdom bordering England on the southwest