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# **BRITAIN**

Учебное пособие



**О. А. Кольхалова, К. С. Махмурян**

# **BRITAIN**

Учебное пособие для обучающихся в бакалавриате  
по направлению подготовки «Педагогическое образование»



Москва-2012

УДК 811.111(075.8)  
ББК 81.432.1-923  
К619

К619 **Кольхалова О. А. , Махмурян К. С. BRITAIN:**  
Учебное пособие для обучающихся в бакалавриате по направлению подготовки «Педагогическое образование». – М.: МПГУ, 2012. – 78 с.

«Britain» – учебное пособие для обучающихся в бакалавриате по направлению подготовки «Педагогическое образование» авторов проф. О. А. Кольхаловой; проф. К. С. Махмурян – состоит из 12 разделов, посвященных географии, истории и культуре, политической системе, образованию, международным отношениям. Целью данного пособия является развитие у студентов лингвострановедческой компетенции как неотъемлемой части социокультурной компетенции. Учебное пособие адресуется студентам гуманитарных факультетов педвузов, а также школьникам 10–11 классов гимназий, лицеев, образовательных учреждений с углубленным изучением иностранного языка.

**Рекомендовано УМО по образованию в области подготовки педагогических кадров в качестве учебного пособия для студентов высших учебных заведений, обучающихся по направлению 050100.62 Педагогическое образование.**

**ISBN 978-5-4263-0117-7**

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# **Chapter 1. GEOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE**

## **Text 1. England Is a Small Place**

For all the fuss it has made in history, for all the language it has distributed about the world, England is a rather small place. The largest of the four constituent elements that make up the United Kingdom, it covers 50,331 sq miles (130,357 sq km), about the same size as New York State or one of New Zealand's islands. But its population of over 62 million is over two and a half times New York State's, and over 15 times both New Zealand's islands.

By far the greater portion of the population lives in the south. The large northern towns, Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle, which grew vast on the Industrial Revolution, have struggled to catch up with the post-industrial age, while Birmingham, Britain's second city, has benefited from its more central location. The country is divided into counties, the old English shires, where sheriffs transacted local business. They have provided titles for the nation's nobility and though their names and boundaries have been tinkered with twice in post-war years, they are redolent of the country's past and continue to inspire local pride.

At the start of the third millennium, England, due to post-war migrations, is a less homogenised nation than ever before – all nations of the world can be found in London. Local accents and dialects that not long ago were thick on the ground, are now waning, but new cultures, traditions and accents have been added by incoming populations.

England's ever-changing landscape provides incomparable scenery, in the Peak District, in the Pennines, on the South Downs, among the Yorkshire and West Country moors and around the Lake District. The variety of architecture characterises every part of the country, from West Country thatch to Cotswold stone, weather boarded Kent to half-timbered East Anglia. It doesn't take much effort in England, and not many miles, to feel that you have travelled a long way.

## Text 2. Britain



People often refer to Britain by another name. They call it «England». But this is not strictly correct. Britain comprises Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) and Northern Ireland and is one of the member states of the European Union. Its full name is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Northern Ireland. Britain constitutes the greater part of the British Isles. The largest of the islands is Great Britain. The next largest comprises Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. These two islands are separated from the Continent by the English Channel and the Strait of Dover. The west coast of the country is washed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea. The east coast is washed by the North Sea.

Geographically Britain is divided into Lowland Britain and Highland Britain. Lowland Britain comprises Southern and Eastern England. Highland Britain includes Scotland, Wales, the Pennines and the Lake District.

The mountains in Britain are not very high, the highest mountain is Ben Nevis in Scotland. The main rivers in Britain are the Thames, the Mersey, the Severn and others but none of them are very long.

The climate of Britain is mild. The Atlantic Ocean and the warm waters of the Gulf Stream influence the weather on the British Isles. The summers are cool and rainy; the winters are not very cold.

### **Text 3. The Union Flag**

The flag of Britain is officially called the Union Flag because it embodies the emblems of three countries united under one Sovereign. It is commonly known as the Union Jack: while the origin of the term is uncertain, the following explanation is the most probable. The original Union Flag was designed for use at sea and the term «jack» was first used in the Royal Navy during the 17<sup>th</sup> century to describe the Union Flag, which was flown from the jack staff of naval vessels.

The emblems that appear on the Union Flag are the crosses of three patron saints: the red cross of St. George, for England, on a white ground; the white diagonal cross, of St. Andrew, for Scotland, on a blue ground; the red diagonal cross, attributed to St. Patrick, for Ireland, on a white ground.

Wales is not represented in the Union Flag because when the first version of the flag appeared, Wales was already united to England.

The first Union Flag was created in April 1606 by combining the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, the national flags of England and Scotland. The final version of the Union Flag appeared in 1801, following the union of Great Britain with Ireland, with the inclusion of the cross of St. Patrick.

### **Text 4. British Economy**

In every country the first resource is land, and densely populated Britain has not much of it. About 2% of the population work on farms, many of them tenants of big estates. After 1945 governments encouraged them by advice and financial inducements, to use their land effectively, and when Britain joined the European Community in 1972 most farms were well-equipped and mechanised.

Now their efficiency is embarrassing. Environmentalists complain that insecticides and fertilisers have polluted air and water. Almost each year much good farmland is sold for building, farmers are encouraged to put some land to other uses, such as facilities for recreation.

But agriculture is a small part of the whole economy. For 200 years manufacturing has been more important, but by 1970s it was clear that British old manufacturing industries were less progressive than the same industries in other Western European countries. Newer industries, such as car manufacture, were no better than the older ones like textiles. Many steel plants were closed. But no industry has suffered so much as shipbuilding. In 1979 many of the old industries were owned by the state. Nationalisation in 1976 failed to stop the industries decline.

New «high-tech» industries developed, manufacturing output rose substantially in the 1980s. Two parallel developments have affected Britain slightly more than most other European states. One is the increase in the service industries, as distinct from the productive ones. The other is the increase in the proportion of people in white collar as distinct from manual jobs. More than half of the working people, whether employees or self-employed, are now providing services. There has been some growth in the number of people who work for schools and hospitals, social services, the police and in public administration. But the biggest growth has been in finance, banking and insurance, along with «other services», including the law, advertising, catering, tourism and entertainment.