



Additional texts. Read and re-tell your partner.

Symbols of countries of the United Kingdom:

ROSE – the national emblem of England from the times of the Wars of the Roses. Some patriotic Englishmen wear a rose pinned to their jackets on St. George's Day (23rd April).

THISTLE – the national emblem of Scotland, apparently first used in the 15th century as a symbol of defence. Some Scotsmen wear a thistle pinned to their jackets on St. Andrew's Day (30th November).

LEEK – the vegetable which is the national emblem of Wales.

DAFFODIL – symbol of Wales. Many Welsh people wear it pinned to their coats on St. David's Day (1st March, church festival of St. David, a 6th century monk and bishop, the patron saint of Wales).

SHAMROCK – the plant (clover) which is the national emblem of Ireland. According to legend it was the plant chosen by St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland to illustrate the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity to the Irish. According to the elder Pliny no serpent will touch this plant.



Tea

Tea is the British national drink. It makes 45% of everything drunk in the country (196 million cups a day). Tea was brought to Britain from the Far East in the mid-seventeenth century and it was a great luxury. The British drink mostly "Indian tea", which comes from India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and East Africa.

Cutty Sark – is a famous tea-clipper built in 1869 and now anchored on the Thames in Greenwich.

The word **TEA** covers many social habits. **TEATIME** is the afternoon meal of sandwiches, cake and tea introduced by the Duchess of Bedford around 1800 to keep away hunger between lunch and dinner.



Coffee

People in Britain drink about 60 million cups a day. About 90 % of it is instant. Coffee is usually drunk long (with a lot of water) and served with milk and sugar.

Coffee first came to Britain in the 17th century. Drinking coffee was originally a social occasion. The first coffee house opened in Oxford in 1650, in London in 1652. The coffee houses were closed by King Charles II. in 1675 as dangerous to public order.

Coffee drinking became widely popular in Britain in the 20th century. Instant coffee was invented in the World War II. for the American troops.



Stamps

The first stamp in the world was the “**Penny Black**” produced in 1840. It showed a profile of Queen Victoria on a black background. The monarch’s portrait appears on every British stamp, and Britain is the only country not to print its name on a stamp.

The introduction of the stamp made sending a letter much cheaper, since it was a fee for the weight of the letter, not the distance it was carried.

King Charles I. introduced a public postal service in 1636. The first mail coach ran in 1784 between London and Bristol.



British Rail

The first rail service in Britain started in 1812 carrying coal. Passengers were carried for the first time in 1825 from Stockton to Darlington, two towns in the north of England.

This enabled the rise and development of the British industry as well as the English seaside resorts.



Fish and chips

Fish and chips has been a popular meal since the 1860s when the railways brought regular supplies of fresh fish to the cities and ice began to be used to keep fish fresh.



Pier

Pier is a long type of road raised up on high wooden supports and built out into the sea found at seaside resorts in England and Wales. Originally they were landing places for people travelling by ship.

During the 19th century, when holidays beside the sea became popular, piers provided entertainments like theatres, fortune-tellers, restaurants and cafés as well as the place to walk. Piers were often very long, sometimes more than a kilometre. 89 piers were built between 1814 and 1910 and they became something that every holidaymaker expected to find beside the sea. Today there are 44 towns with piers and all the main seaside resorts have them (some more than one).