

## ИЗУЧЕНИЕ ТЕМЫ THE BRITISH PEOPLE (11-Й КЛАСС)



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### **Exercise 1. Read the words and word combinations, practise their pronunciation and pay attention to their meaning:**

aloof [q'lHf] – надменный, равнодушный  
amiable ['eImjəbl] – дружелюбный, добродушный  
amorous ['xmqrqs] – влюбчивый  
cautious ['kLSqs] – осторожный, предусмотрительный  
contempt [kqn'tempt] – презрение  
courtesy ['kWtIsI] – учтивость, вежливость  
gregarious [grI'gFqrIqs] – общительный  
haughty ['hLtI] – надменный, высокомерный  
prudent ['prHdqnt] – благоразумный, предусмотрительный  
queue [kjH] – очередь  
reserve [rI'zWv] – сдержанность, скрытность  
stingy ['stInGI] – скупой  
vivacity [vI'vxslItI] – живость

### **Exercise 2. Read the text and do the tasks that follow:**

Almost every nation has a reputation of some kind. The French are supposed to be amorous, gay, fond of champagne; the Germans dull, formal, efficient, fond of military uniforms, and parades; the Americans boastful, energetic, gregarious and vulgar.

Great Britain is an island separated from the European continent and its geographical situation and climate influence its inhabitants. There is one more important fact: for centuries the English had lived in a privileged situation, when Great Britain ruled the seas and continents. They felt superior to the native people. They felt and acted as “masters” in their numerous colonies in Africa, India, Malaya and Australia. This might have left a certain imprint on their character, too.

Britain is known as the land of law and order.

The British people are prudent and careful about almost everything. Their lawns are closely cropped, their flowerbeds primly cultivated, and their trees neatly pruned. Everything is orderly.

The most striking features of English life are self-discipline and courtesy of people of all classes. The British people have also been known as superior, snobbish, aloof, hypocritical and unsociable. The advertisers are very clever in their use of the snobbery of the British. Motorcar manufacturers, for example, advertise the colour of their cars as “Embassy Black”.

The Britons are practical and realistic; they are infatuated with common sense and not misled by romantic delusions.

The best-known quality of the British is reserve. A reserved person does not talk very much to strangers, does not show much emotion. English people don't like displaying their emotions even in dangerous and tragic situations.

The British are said to be very conservative, they love familiar things. They keep old traditions. They stick to their own measurement system (miles and yards, pounds and ounces, pints and gallons). Everybody knows that traffic in London and other large cities in Britain keeps to the left. English people say, “If you go left, you'll go right. If you go right, you'll go wrong”.

Queuing is a national habit and it is considered polite to wait your turn. They will become angry or even rude, if you “jump” the queue.

The British are the world's greatest tea drinkers. They drink a quarter of all the tea grown in the world each year. Another national drink in England is beer, and the “pub”, where Englishmen go to drink to, is a peculiarly English institution.

British people are also known to have sense of humour which they praise highly. They often laugh at themselves.

Much leisure time is spent in individualistic pursuits, of which the most popular is gardening. Most English people love gardens, and this is probably one reason why so many people prefer to live in houses rather than flats.

English people show great love for animals. They are so devoted to pet dogs, cats, hens, canaries and many other animals which have a good life in Britain and protected by law.

The British have a reputation for being mad about sports. Various sports and games (rugby, soccer, cricket, lawn tennis, golf, all kinds of racing, walking, swimming, cycling) are very popular among the British. They regard sport as one of the most popular spare time activities.

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**There are certain national stereotypes we have about the English, the Scottish, the Welsh and the Irish character.**

**The English** The national character of the English has been very differently described. Most commentators agree over one quality, which they describe as self-satisfaction, sense of superiority or pride. The English are also known for their patriotism, strong sense for public order, conformity, conservatism and their extraordinary toleration of individual eccentricities. The English are reputed to be cold, reserved, rather haughty people. They are steady, easy-going, and fond of sport.

**The Scottish** There are many symbols of Scottishness which are well-known. Every Scotsman belongs to a clan, or a family group. Each clan has its own special tartan which is used for clothes. A Scotsman's traditional clothes are socks, shoes, a kilt, a tie, a jacket and a bonnet. Some people in the north of Scotland wear a kilt every day. But in other parts of the country most Scottish people put on their traditional clothes only on holidays and wear them with pleasure.

The Scottish have a reputation of the stingiest or at least thrifty people. The Scottish people are very clever and simple, and they also have a natural sense of humour. The Scots are proverbially kindly, but at a glance not so amiable. They detest compromise, lean much upon logic and run much to extremes.

They may be extravagant in gesture and manner. The Scots are reputed to be a serious, cautious, and hard-working, rather inventive and somewhat mystical people (народ).

**The Welsh** The Welsh call their country "Cymru" and themselves "Cymry" ['kImrI]. Wales is part of the UK where national spirit is very strong and national pride is very much intense. The Welsh still proudly wear their national clothes on festive occasions. They have preserved their language to a remarkable extent. The foreigners generally look upon the Welsh as an emotional people who is, however, difficult to get to know easily. They are hard-working people as well. The Welsh people are renowned for their good voices and highly developed artistic sense. They are distinguished in poetry, song and drama.

**The Irish** The Isle of Ireland is politically divided into two parts: Northern Ireland (which is called Ulster ['Alstq]) and the Republic of Ireland (which is called Eire ['Fqrq]). Most of the population of Northern Ireland regard themselves as Protestants, others are Roman Catholics. The Protestants are British by culture and tradition. They are for the union with Great Britain. The Roman Catholic population is mainly Irish by culture and history, and the majority supports a united Ireland. Both the Protestant and the Catholic communities have illegal secret armies fighting a bloody war. The "Irish question" has remained in the centre of British politics for many years but the problem is still too difficult to solve.

The first thing you notice when you come to Ireland is the slightly easier tempo at which everything moves. People are not much of a hurry. There is a national habit of politeness, a desire to say what will please and avoid saying what will distress. The Irish are known for their charm and vivacity, as well as for the beauty of their girls. They are also supposed to be great talkers.

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All in all the British like to think of their private customs as differentiating them from the rest of the world. They are so proud of being different! They look on foreigners in general with contempt and think that nothing is as well done elsewhere as in their own country.

**Exercise 3. There are stereotypical features of the British, as you have read. Complete the chart using the information from the text above and some extra information:**

The English	The Scots	The Welsh	The Irish

**Exercise 4. Answer the following questions:**

1. What nationalities live in Britain?
2. What do you think influenced the formation of British character?
3. What surprises you most in the way the British people live?
4. Can you give any proofs of British conservatism?
5. What are the English as viewed by foreigners?
6. Who are the Scots? What language do the Scots speak? What are the signs of Scottishness?

7. Who are the Welsh? What language do the Welsh speak? What are the national features of the Welsh?

8. Who are the Irish? What language do the Irish speak? What are the distinct features of the Irish?

9. The English are Anglo-Saxon in origin, but the Welsh, the Scots and the Irish are Celts, who were conquered by the Anglo-Saxons in the 5th-6th centuries A.D. Do you think this fact has influenced somehow the relations among the British?

10. Do you know any anecdotes concerning national stereotypes of the British?

**Exercise 5. Give a character sketch of a typical British man. Make use of the following words and word combinations:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ to be careful about</li><li>✓ to be devoted to</li><li>✓ to be different from</li><li>✓ to be distinguished in</li><li>✓ to be extravagant in</li><li>✓ to be infatuated with</li><li>✓ to be known for</li><li>✓ to be mad about</li><li>✓ to be popular with smb.</li><li>✓ to be proud of</li><li>✓ to be renowned for</li><li>✓ to be reputed to be</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ to detest</li><li>✓ to display emotions</li><li>✓ to have a common sense</li><li>✓ to have a reputation of</li><li>✓ to have a sense of humour</li><li>✓ to lean upon</li><li>✓ to look upon smb. as</li><li>✓ to prefer</li><li>✓ to praise highly</li><li>✓ to regard</li><li>✓ to run to extremes</li><li>✓ to show love for</li></ul>
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