

The Young Citizens' National CV

'Applying for the future'

Name: **Britain**

Britain in full is the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland, the UK

Age: **8,000 years an island**

Everyone else is 'overseas' – since the ice melted that covered most of Britain during the Ice Age; sea levels rose and Britain became an island

Capital city: **London**

An imaginary line runs north-south through the city - the Greenwich Meridian, which is 0° (nought degrees) longitude; this is the central line of reference for measuring time anywhere on Earth and, along with the equator, location

Family members: England, Scotland & Wales are parts of the island known as Great Britain; **Northern Ireland** is another part of the island group known as the British Isles, which is made up of more than 1,000 islands

Overarching statement: Britain has made the most disproportionate (outsized) contribution to civilisation of anywhere on Earth, whilst representing less than 0.2% of the world's land and having under 1% of its people at any given time; Britain launched the modern world (constitutional monarchy & parliamentary democracy, science, Age of Reason, industry, second agricultural revolution) and has made many other pioneering contributions (TV, jet engine, antibiotics, World Wide Web, English language); the British are *The Influential Islanders* – and Britain is 'applying for the future'

Contact details: www.thenationalcv.org.uk

This is a history of Britain told as if Britain were a person. A CV (Curriculum Vitae) is a life story in brief of someone seeking work. Instead of applying for a job, Britain is 'applying for the future'. For more on any item, consult The National CVpedia of Britain at www.thenationalcv.org.uk. Thanks to BT Group plc & our other gracious sponsors. All views are those of The National CV Group

'This sceptred isle¹, this green and pleasant land² of hope and glory³'

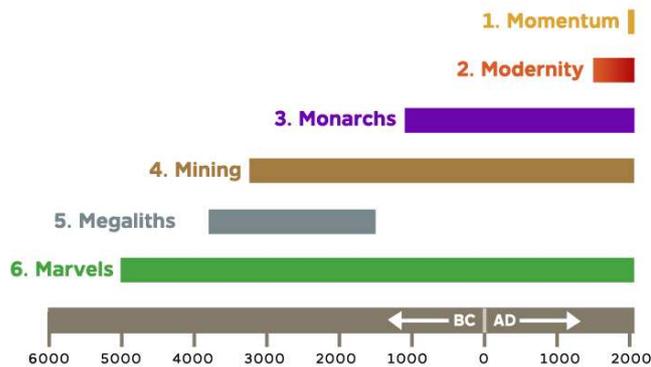
1. Shakespeare, 2. Blake, 3. Elgar



Summary – Britain has given the world:

Megalithic Culture ('great stones', 3800-1500 BC), before Sumer & Ancient Egypt
Tin to harden copper for tools & weapons in the Bronze Age, 2500-750 BC
Druidism (religion BC) & **Roman Empire Christianised** by Helen of Britain & her son Constantine the Great (AD 300s)
Wool: AD 700s-1500s, the Middle Ages
Writing standards: Alcuin of York, AD 789
Common law (880s), **trial by jury** (1166), **habeas corpus** (no unfair detention, 1305)
Constitutional monarchy (king or queen bound by rules) & **parliamentary democracy** (votes, MPs), 1600s
Modern science (Royal Society, 1660)
Age of Reason (clear thinking), after 1680s
Coal & manufactured goods after the Industrial Revolution, which started in Britain c1750; Great Exhibition, 1851
War heroes: Richard the Lionheart, Henry V, Marlborough, Nelson, Wellington, Churchill; fighting tyranny with Allies
Inventions: pencil, dairy ice cream, steam engine, vaccination, postage stamp, jet engine, antibiotics, milk chocolate, sandwich, business suit, modern novel
Ideas: liberty, gravity, evolution, liberal economics, anti-slavery, medical leaps (e.g. scurvy, sanitation, asepsis, nursing), maths symbols (=, x, π), Greenwich Meridian, organised sport, the weekend, names like 'Easter', 'USA' & 'Big Bang'
Globalisation: Britain linked up the world (late 1800s) when she was the first global superpower (with history's most extensive empire) & made crucial contributions to the second link-up (1990s), e.g. packet switching, World Wide Web, English
Legends: Giants, St George & the Dragon, Lady Godiva, King Arthur, Robin Hood
Culture: Chaucer, Shakespeare, Austen, Burns, Dickens, Elgar, Constable, Turner; genre & children's fiction, film/TV, pop, art
English as the first world language

The Influential Islanders



1. Momentum (Motion due to the force of history) 2012: Queen's Diamond Jubilee, London Olympics (29 golds), Paralympics, Higgs boson found & stem cell Nobel Prize; war in Afghanistan (2001-present); fun (Harry Potter, Wallace & Gromit, James Bond 007, Beatles, Red Nose Day); firsts (stem cell bank, solo Pacific oarsman, supersonic car, personal digital assistant, balloon circumnavigation, clockwork radio, bagless vacuum cleaner, World Wide Web, genetic profiling & genomic decoding, cloned mammal – Dolly the sheep – privatisation, National CV); sporting triumphs (Rugby World Cup, 2003, Football World Cup, 1966); new value, *inclusiveness*; traditional values, *freedom, democracy, tolerance, fair play, practicality, individualism & originality, civility, seeing the funny side of things & looking outwards to the world (global destiny)*

2. Modernity Britain launched the modern world through (1) science (gravity, atomic theory, evolution, electromagnetism), (2) industry, (3) thinking (the Age of Reason) & (4) agriculture; she (5) linked up the world (globalisation) and gave great ideas about (6) freedom & democracy and (7) humanitarianism & health; also, Britain has been influential through (8) six great wars won, (9) the British Empire (450 years from late 1400s; maritime, trading, liberal), (10) language & culture, (11) invention of modern sport & (12) as a hot spot for firsts (car, 1711, dynamo, 1831, penicillin, 1928)

3. Monarchs World's oldest monarchy; 3,000-year history, ~140 kings & queens, representing extraordinary continuity; ancient tradition is of mixed government of royal and democratic; now, a constitutional monarch within a parliamentary democracy; some nations have not allowed women to rule, but Britain has proudest tradition of queens anywhere, to Elizabeth II – today's most Influential Islander – and is personified by a goddess, Britannia

4. Mining Longest tradition anywhere of extracting riches from the Earth; Britain was 'Tin Island' in the Bronze Age; copper, the other component of bronze, has also been mined since remote antiquity; pioneered extraction of salt from seawater & deep mines; graphite (for pencils); coal & iron for the industrial revolution, which started in Britain; North Sea oil & gas; recently, Ulster gold, Yorkshire potash (for fertiliser), Devonian tungsten (hardens steel)

5. Megaliths 'Great stones' for burial chambers & standing stones; full-on Megalithic Culture by 3500 BC, before Sumer & Ancient Egypt; Britain is a fabulously ancient land; unique chalk hill figures; island had been reinhabited after Ice Age (ended c8000 BC); of ethnic British genes, 2/3rd relate to this founder population

6. Marvels Unique flood story (Welsh Triads); home of Druidism (literate BC); birth of Christendom (Constantine the Great, half British, decreed Sunday holy); female pope (Joan); Domesday Book (1086); cathedrals; wool trade; wollen business suit (c1860); weekend (Robert Walpole, 1700s); Uranus found (1781); Scotch whisky; 1st bottled beer & sparkling wine; dairy ice cream; stilton, cheddar; fine wine appreciation; milk chocolate; sandwich; Western curries; pubs & beer; fish 'n' chips; roast lunch, proper pudding; cup of tea

Key dates

2015 800th anniversary of Magna Carta
 2001 Human genome decoded, 31% in UK
 1990s Second globalisation; WWI (1914-18, UK)
 1982 Falklands War won; Margaret Thatcher
 1973 Britain enters EU
 1953 DNA structure solved in UK; Elizabeth II
 1939-45 WWII won; Winston Churchill; first functional computer, Colossus; George VI
 1925 Television invented in Britain (J L Baird)
 1918 British women gain vote
 1914-18 WWI won; Lloyd George; George V
 1880-1914 First globalisation (railways, iron steamships, telegraph); Victoria, Edward VII
 1859 Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*
 1833 Slavery abolished in British Empire
 1803-15 Napoleon vanquished (Trafalgar, 1805, Waterloo, 1815); George III (lost US)
 1776 Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*
 1759 Best-ever year for British arms; wins in North America, India & Europe; George II
 c1750 Industrial Revolution starts in Britain
 1733 Invention of flying shuttle by John Kay
 1712 Newcomen steam engine, refined Watt 1768
 1709 Smelting iron with coke (Abraham Darby)
 1701-14 War of the Spanish Succession won; Blenheim, 1704; Marlborough; Anne
 1700s Age of Reason (the Enlightenment)
 1690 John Locke describes rights to life, liberty & property; rulers should serve the people
 1688 Glorious Revolution; William & Mary; Bill of Rights, 1689
 1687 Isaac Newton, *Principia* (laws of motion)
 1670 Juries don't need to convict or say why
 1666 Great Fire of London; Charles II
 1660 Royal Society founded; modern science
 1642-51 English Civil War; Charles I beheaded as traitor, 1649; republic under Cromwell
 1640 Star Chamber abolished as unjust; accused's right to silence affirmed
 1564-1616 William Shakespeare; *Holinshed's Chronicles*; Guy Fawkes (1605); Bible (1611)
 1588 Spanish Armada defeated, Elizabeth I
 1534 Protestant Reformation, Henry VIII
 1455-85 Wars of Roses; Richard III killed 1485
 1415 Agincourt won by Henry V, during Hundred Years' War (1337-1453)
 1381 Peasants' Revolt; Wat Tyler & Richard II
 1348 Black Death; Edward III; Order of Garter
 1200s Science based on evidence; Roger Bacon, first scientist; Henry III, Edward I
 1265 Elected parliament; Simon de Montfort
 1215 Magna Carta (king must obey rules); John
 1166 Trial by jury; Henry II
 1102 Slavery outlawed in England; Henry I
 1066 Battle of Hastings, William beat Harold
 973 Coronation Oath, pledging justice; Edgar
 880s Common law; Alfred the Great
 789 Alcuin of York standardises writing
 c670 *Tysilio Chronicle* started by monk Tysilio
 55 BC – AD 51 Britons resist Romans, then in Roman Empire to AD 410; Boudicca, AD 60
 390 BC Sack of Rome by Brennus of Britain
 c420 BC Molmutine Laws; King Molmutius
 c1100 BC Brutus the Trojan names island 'Britain' & founds London; traditional tale
 2500-750 BC Bronze Age Cornish tin
 3800-1500 BC Megalithic monuments erected
 c6000 BC Britain becomes an island