

MODULE INTRODUCTION: BRITISH CULTURE 2

BRITISH CULTURE 2

General information:

- ❖ **Course name: BRITISH CULTURE 2**
- ❖ **Code: ANHA 033**
- ❖ **Compulsory course**
- ❖ **Prerequisite: Students must finish British Culture 1**
- ❖ **Objectives:**

This course aims to help students:

- Absorb fundamental knowledge about British culture.
- Express and gain a clearer understanding of Vietnamese culture through comparing and contrasting the British and Vietnamese cultures.
- Develop intercultural communication skills (intercultural competence) while simultaneously improving their language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing to enhance their English communication skills.

OUTCOME STANDARDS

➤ Knowledge:

Students will

- Remember and understand basic issues and information about important aspects of life in the United Kingdom.
- Understand the similarities and differences between British and Vietnamese cultures.

Skills:

Students will be able to:

- Describe, explain, and analyze issues about British culture clearly and logically.
- Evaluate fundamental values and traditions in British culture.
- Relate these issues to Vietnamese culture.
- Express opinions and viewpoints about culture fluently in both spoken and written English.

OUTCOME STANDARDS

➤ Attitude and Attendance:

Students will

- Recognize the importance of British cultural knowledge in understanding and using the English language.
- Show interest in and desire to develop this knowledge.
- Be aware of the similarities and differences between British and Vietnamese cultures.

CONTENT SUMMARY

Culture is closely intertwined with language, therefore, understanding British culture is an essential part of learning English. The Advanced British Culture course aims to provide students with a broader and deeper understanding of English and intercultural culture. Thus, certain topics such as higher education, history, and economics will be explored in depth. Furthermore, the course helps students access new topics such as finance, religion, social welfare, British arts and culture, international relations, etc., through group discussions (seminars) and major assignments/projects. More importantly, the course also helps students become aware of the similarities and differences between cultures, enabling them to selectively absorb and critically evaluate the cultural essence of the host country while continuously preserving and promoting their own national identity.

BRIEF INFO



Educational background:

- **Bachelor of Arts: Hue University**
- **Master of Arts: University of Languages and International Studies, Hanoi National University**
- **Doctor of Philosophy (NZ Aid Scholarship): Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand**

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UNIT 1: HISTORY



The origins of the United Kingdom can be traced to the time of the Anglo-Saxon king Athelstan, who in the early 10th century CE secured the allegiance of neighbouring Celtic kingdoms and became “the first to rule what previously many kings shared between them,” in the words of a contemporary chronicle. Through subsequent conquest over the following centuries, kingdoms lying farther afield came under English dominion. Wales, a congeries of Celtic kingdoms lying in Great Britain’s southwest, was formally united with England by the Acts of Union of 1536 and 1542. Scotland, ruled from London since 1603, formally was joined with England and Wales in 1707 to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain. (The adjective “British” came into use at this time to refer to all the kingdom’s peoples.)

Ireland came under English control during the 1600s and was formally united with Great Britain through the Act of Union of 1800. The republic of Ireland gained its independence in 1922, but six of Ulster's nine counties remained part of the United Kingdom as Northern Ireland. Relations between these constituent states and England have been marked by controversy and, at times, open rebellion and even warfare. These tensions relaxed somewhat during the late 20th century, when devolved assemblies were introduced in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Nonetheless, even with the establishment of a power-sharing assembly after referenda in both Northern Ireland and the Irish republic, relations between Northern Ireland's unionists (who favour continued British sovereignty over Northern Ireland) and nationalists (who favour unification with the republic of Ireland) remained tense into the 21st century.

The United Kingdom has made significant contributions to the world economy, especially in technology and industry. Since World War II, however, the United Kingdom's most prominent exports have been cultural, including literature, theatre, film, television, and popular music that draw on all parts of the country. Perhaps Britain's greatest export has been the English language, now spoken in every corner of the world as one of the leading international mediums of cultural and economic exchange.

UNIT 2: RELIGION



Religions and Politics

Religion has historically played a significant role in British politics, although the influence of religious institutions has diminished over time. In contemporary UK politics, issues related to religion often intersect with debates on social policies, human rights, and multiculturalism. While the UK has an established church (the Church of England), it operates within a secular political framework where religious freedoms are protected by law.

Anglicanism

Anglicanism, also known as the Church of England, is the established church in England. It is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, which includes autonomous national churches in other countries. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the symbolic head of the Church of England. Anglicanism is characterized by its blend of Catholic and Protestant traditions, its hierarchical structure, and its liturgical worship style.

Catholicism

Catholicism is the second-largest Christian denomination in the UK, with a significant presence in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales is led by the Archbishop of Westminster, while the Catholic Church in Scotland is led by the Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh. Catholicism in the UK has a diverse and multicultural membership, with a strong emphasis on social justice issues and community outreach.

Other Conventional Christian Churches

In addition to Anglicanism and Catholicism, the UK is home to various other Christian denominations, including Presbyterianism, Methodism, Baptist, and Orthodox churches. These churches have smaller but devoted congregations and contribute to the religious diversity of the country.

Other Religions

The UK is also home to a diverse array of religious communities, reflecting its multicultural population. Islam is the second-largest religion in the UK, with significant Muslim communities in cities like London, Birmingham, and Manchester. Hinduism, Sikhism, and Judaism also have sizable populations, particularly in urban areas. Additionally, there are smaller religious communities such as Buddhism, Jainism, and various New Age and Pagan movements.

Churches and Religious Movements

Beyond established religious institutions, the UK has a dynamic landscape of churches, religious movements, and spiritual communities. This includes independent Christian churches, charismatic and Pentecostal movements, as well as new religious movements and alternative spiritualities. These groups contribute to the religious pluralism and diversity of belief systems present in the UK.

Summary

Overall, religion in the UK is characterized by a rich tapestry of faith traditions, reflecting the country's historical and cultural heritage, as well as its evolving social and demographic dynamics. While Christianity remains the dominant religion, the UK's religious landscape is increasingly diverse, with a growing presence of non-Christian faiths and alternative spiritualities.

UNIT 3: THE LAW



The Police and the Public

In the UK, law enforcement is primarily the responsibility of territorial police forces operating in England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The police are tasked with maintaining public order, preventing and detecting crime, and ensuring the safety and security of citizens. The relationship between the police and the public is governed by principles of accountability, transparency, and respect for human rights. Community policing initiatives aim to foster trust and cooperation between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve.

Crimes and Criminal Procedure

The UK legal system distinguishes between criminal and civil law. Criminal law deals with offenses against the state or society, such as murder, theft, and assault. Criminal procedure involves the investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of criminal offenses. Investigations are conducted by the police, who gather evidence to support criminal charges. Prosecutors, such as the Crown Prosecution Service in England and Wales, then decide whether to bring charges against suspects. Criminal trials are conducted in courts of law, where defendants have the right to legal representation and a fair trial.

The System of Justice

The UK has a hierarchical system of courts that adjudicate civil and criminal matters. At the lowest level are Magistrates' Courts, which handle less serious criminal cases and preliminary hearings. Crown Courts hear more serious criminal cases, including indictable offenses and jury trials. In addition, the High Court and Court of Appeal have jurisdiction over civil and criminal matters, with the Supreme Court serving as the highest court of appeal in the UK. The legal system operates on the principles of judicial independence, fairness, and due process.

The Legal Profession

The legal profession in the UK is divided into solicitors and barristers. Solicitors provide legal advice, prepare legal documents, and represent clients in lower courts. They may specialize in various areas of law, such as family law, commercial law, or criminal law. Barristers, on the other hand, specialize in advocacy and represent clients in higher courts, such as the Crown Court and the Court of Appeal. Barristers typically work in chambers and are instructed by solicitors to provide expert legal representation in court proceedings. Both solicitors and barristers are regulated by professional bodies, such as the Law Society and the Bar Council, which set standards of conduct and ethics for the legal profession.

SUMMARY

Overall, the legal system in the UK is founded on principles of justice, fairness, and the rule of law, with mechanisms in place to ensure accountability, transparency, and the protection of individual rights and liberties.

UNIT 4: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



The End of Empire

Following World War II, the British Empire underwent a rapid process of decolonization, leading to the independence of many former colonies and territories. This process transformed Britain's role in the world, as it transitioned from a global imperial power to a more modest position on the world stage. While the UK maintains close ties with many former colonies through the Commonwealth of Nations, its influence as a colonial power has significantly diminished.

The Armed Forces

The United Kingdom has a well-established and respected military, consisting of the British Army, Royal Navy, and Royal Air Force. The armed forces play a crucial role in national defense, as well as in supporting international peacekeeping missions and humanitarian interventions. The UK is a member of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), which serves as a cornerstone of its defense and security strategy, providing collective defense with its allies.

Transatlantic Relations

The relationship between the UK and the United States is often described as "special" due to historical, cultural, and political ties. The UK and the US collaborate closely on a wide range of issues, including defense and security, trade and investment, and intelligence-sharing. The "Special Relationship" between the two countries remains a cornerstone of UK foreign policy, although it has evolved over time in response to changing global dynamics.

The Sovereignty of the Union: Europe



The Sovereignty of the Union: Europe

The UK's relationship with Europe has been a significant aspect of its international relations for decades. The UK joined the European Economic Community (EEC), the precursor to the European Union (EU), in 1973. However, debates over sovereignty, national identity, and the balance of power between Brussels and London have fueled Euroscepticism within the UK. This culminated in the 2016 Brexit referendum, in which a slim majority of voters opted to leave the EU. Brexit has had profound implications for UK-EU relations, including trade, security cooperation, and the future of the Irish border.

The Sovereignty of the Union: Scotland and Wales



The Sovereignty of the Union: Scotland and Wales

Within the UK itself, there are ongoing debates over the sovereignty of Scotland and Wales. Both countries have devolved governments with varying degrees of legislative power, allowing them to govern certain domestic affairs independently of the UK Parliament in Westminster. However, questions of independence and self-determination remain contentious issues, with calls for greater autonomy or outright independence from some political groups in Scotland and Wales.

The Sovereignty of the Union: Northern Ireland



The Sovereignty of the Union: Northern Ireland

The issue of sovereignty in Northern Ireland is deeply complex and historically fraught. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 brought an end to decades of conflict known as the Troubles and established a power-sharing government in Northern Ireland. However, questions of identity, nationality, and the border with the Republic of Ireland remain sensitive issues. Brexit has added further complications to the situation, particularly regarding the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which is now the only land border between the UK and the EU. Efforts to maintain peace and stability in Northern Ireland while respecting the sovereignty of all parties involved continue to be a priority for UK foreign policy.

UNIT 5: PRESENTATION

**Students are divided into groups to present the
aforementioned themes**

UNIT 6: WELFARE



The Benefits System

The UK benefits system provides financial assistance to individuals and families who are in need of support. This includes various forms of welfare benefits such as:

- **Income Support:** Financial support for individuals on low incomes who are not in full-time employment.
- **Jobseeker's Allowance:** Financial support for individuals who are unemployed and actively seeking work.
- **Housing Benefit:** Assistance with housing costs for those on low incomes or who are unemployed.
- **Disability Benefits:** Support for individuals with disabilities or long-term health conditions, including Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

Social Services and Charities

Social services in the UK are provided by local authorities and are aimed at supporting vulnerable individuals and families, including children, elderly people, and those with disabilities. Social workers assess needs and provide assistance such as care services, safeguarding, and support for families in crisis. Additionally, there are numerous charities and voluntary organizations operating in the UK that provide a wide range of welfare services, including food banks, homelessness support, counseling, and advocacy.

The National Health Service (NHS)

The NHS is the publicly funded healthcare system in the UK, providing comprehensive medical services free at the point of use for residents. It is funded through general taxation and provides healthcare services including:

- General Practitioner (GP) services
 - Hospital care
 - Emergency services
 - Mental health services
 - Community healthcare
- The NHS is one of the largest employers in the world and is highly valued by the British public for its commitment to providing healthcare based on need rather than ability to pay.

The Medical Profession

The medical profession in the UK encompasses a wide range of healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and allied health professionals. Doctors in the UK typically undergo rigorous training and education, including medical school and postgraduate training, before becoming fully qualified. The General Medical Council (GMC) regulates the medical profession and sets standards for medical practice, ethics, and education. The medical profession plays a vital role in delivering healthcare services through the NHS and private healthcare providers, as well as in research, teaching, and public health initiatives.

UNIT 7: ATTITUDES



Conservatism

- In general, the British value continuity over modernity for its own sake.
- There is prestige in living in an obviously old one.
- They have a general sentimental attachment to older, supposedly safer, times.
- Their Christmas cards usually depict scenes from past centuries;
- they like their pubs to look old;
- they were reluctant to change their system of currency.

Being different

- They are rather proud of being different.
- driving on the left-hand side of the road
- The double-decker bus
- Systems of measurement
- everybody in Britain still shops in pounds and ounces.
- Nearly everybody still thinks in Fahrenheit when talking about temperature.
- Their financial year is at the beginning of April.

The love of nature

- Love of the countryside is another aspect of British conservatism.
- an active interest in country matters
- gardening

The love of animals

- Rossendale Pet Cemetery in Lancashire is just one example of an animal graveyard in Britain.
- the status of pets is taken seriously.
- Wildlife programmes are by far the most popular kind of television documentary.
- Millions of families have 'bird-tables' in their gardens.
- There is even a special hospital (St Tiggywinkles) which treats injured wild animals.

Formality and informality

- It all depends on whether a person is playing a public role or a private role.
- Clothes - 'on duty' – formal
- Clothes - not playing a public role – informal
- Being friendly in Britain disregards formalities.
- not addressing someone by his or her title (Mr, Mrs, Professor etc),
- not dressing smartly when entertaining guests,
- not shaking hands when meeting and
- not saying 'please' when making a request.

The Changes

- Buffet-type meals are now a common form of hospitality.
- More groups in society now kiss when meeting each other (women and women, and men and women, but still never men and men!).

UNIT 8: THE ARTS



The Arts in Society

The arts play a vital role in UK society, contributing to cultural identity, social cohesion, and economic growth. They provide avenues for creative expression, reflection, and engagement with diverse perspectives and ideas. The arts also have a significant impact on tourism, attracting visitors to cultural institutions, events, and festivals across the country. Additionally, arts education and participation in creative activities are recognized for their positive effects on individual well-being and mental health.

Characteristics of British Arts and Letters

British arts and letters are characterized by a rich heritage, innovation, and diversity. The UK has a long history of artistic excellence across various disciplines, including literature, theatre, music, visual arts, and film. British artists and writers have made significant contributions to global culture, with their works reflecting the complexities of British society, history, and identity. British arts are known for their creativity, experimentation, and ability to challenge conventions while maintaining a strong sense of tradition.

Theatre and Cinema

The UK has a vibrant theatre scene, with London's West End renowned for its world-class productions and talent. The West End is home to iconic theatres such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, and the Old Vic, showcasing a diverse range of plays, musicals, and performances. Beyond the West End, regional theatres across the country contribute to the richness and accessibility of live theatre. In terms of cinema, the UK has a thriving film industry, with acclaimed filmmakers, actors, and production companies producing a wide range of films, from independent arthouse to blockbuster hits.

Music

The UK has a rich musical heritage and is known for its contributions to various genres, including classical, rock, pop, electronic, and folk music. British musicians and bands have had a significant influence on global music culture, from The Beatles and The Rolling Stones to contemporary artists like Adele and Ed Sheeran. The UK is home to world-renowned music venues, festivals, and institutions, such as the Royal Albert Hall, Glastonbury Festival, and the BBC Proms.

Literature

British literature has a long and distinguished history, spanning from the works of Shakespeare and Dickens to modern-day authors like J.K. Rowling and Zadie Smith. British literature encompasses a wide range of genres and styles, reflecting the diversity of British society and culture. The UK is home to prestigious literary awards, publishing houses, and literary festivals, which celebrate the written word and support emerging and established writers.

The Fine Arts

The UK has a thriving contemporary art scene, with London's art galleries and museums attracting visitors from around the world. Institutions like the Tate Modern, the National Gallery, and the British Museum showcase a diverse range of artwork, from traditional to avant-garde. British artists continue to push boundaries and explore new forms of expression, contributing to the global dialogue in the fine arts. Additionally, the UK has a rich tradition of craftsmanship and design, with industries such as fashion, architecture, and product design making significant contributions to the arts landscape.

UNIT 9: THE MEDIA



1.Importance of the National Press

1. The national press in the UK plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, setting the political agenda, and influencing decision-making.
2. It serves as a watchdog, holding those in power accountable, and provides a platform for debate and discussion on important issues.

Two Types of National Newspaper

1. Broadsheets: Traditionally larger format newspapers associated with more serious journalism and analysis. Examples include The Times, The Daily Telegraph, and The Guardian.
2. Tabloids: Compact-sized newspapers known for their sensationalist headlines, celebrity gossip, and human-interest stories. Examples include The Sun, the Daily Mirror, and the Daily Mail.



Characteristics of the National Press: Sex and Scandal

The UK national press, particularly tabloids, have a reputation for sensationalism and often exploit stories related to sex and scandal to attract readership. This includes coverage of celebrity affairs, political scandals, and sensational crime stories. However, this approach has been criticized for its intrusion into privacy and the ethical implications of the methods used to obtain stories.

The BBC

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a public service broadcaster funded by a license fee paid by UK households. It operates several television channels, radio stations, and online services, providing a wide range of programming including news, entertainment, documentaries, and educational content. The BBC is known for its editorial independence, high-quality journalism, and commitment to impartiality.



Television Organization:

Television in the UK is organized into several channels, both public service and commercial. Alongside the BBC, there are commercial broadcasters like ITV, Channel 4, and Channel 5, each offering a mix of news, drama, entertainment, and reality programming. Additionally, there are digital channels catering to niche interests such as sports, documentaries, and children's programming.

Television Style:

The style of television programming in the UK varies across channels and genres. While some channels focus on serious news and documentary content, others prioritize entertainment and lighter fare. British television is known for its diverse range of programming, including high-quality dramas, comedy shows, quiz and game shows, and reality TV. The style often reflects British sensibilities, humor, and cultural values, with a mix of innovation and tradition. Additionally, the UK has a strong tradition of public service broadcasting, with a focus on educational programming and content that reflects the diversity of the population.



Thank You for your attention !
