

Talk a Lot

Places in the UK – Where would you like to...?

Student A

Ask and answer questions to complete the gaps, and find out information about four counties in the UK. Where would you like to... a) visit for the day, b) go on holiday for a fortnight, c) move to for work or study, d) move to permanently, e) never visit? Why?

	County Down, N. Ireland	Staffordshire, England
County Town / Population of County	Downpatrick / 516,000	
Major Towns & Cities / Area		Burton upon Trent, Tamworth / 2,713 km ²
Distance / Time from John o'Groats*	455 miles (732.25 km) / 10 hrs 51 mins	
Tourist Attractions / Natural Features		Alton Towers, Tutbury Castle, Ilam Park / Cannock Chase
Education / Hospitals / Leisure**	4 / 3 / 4	
Cultural Notes / Rainfall (May avg.)		An extensive network of canals / 52mm
Property Values / Crime Rate		going down / going up
Local History & Traditions	St. Patrick is believed to be buried at Down Cathedral	

	Powys, Wales	Aberdeenshire, Scotland
County Town / Population of County		Aberdeen / 241,500
Major Towns & Cities / Area		
Distance / Time from John o'Groats*	594 miles (955.73 km) / 12 hrs 46 mins	
Tourist Attractions / Natural Features	The Old Bell Museum / Pistyll Rhaeadr – the highest waterfall in England and Wales	
Education / Hospitals / Leisure**		4 / 4.5 / 5
Cultural Notes / Rainfall (May avg.)	Centre for Alternative Technology / 47mm	Evelyn Glennie hails from Aberdeen / 64mm
Property Values / Crime Rate	going up / going up	
Local History & Traditions		There have been human settlements in Aberdeenshire for at least 8,000 years

* By car. ** As rated by a panel of 2,100 local residents, who gave marks out of 5 (0 = lowest mark, 5 = highest mark).



Student B

Ask and answer questions to complete the gaps, and find out information about four counties in the UK. Where would you like to... a) visit for the day, b) go on holiday for a fortnight, c) move to for work or study, d) move to permanently, e) never visit? Why?

	County Down, N. Ireland	Staffordshire, England
County Town / Population of County		Stafford / 816,700
Major Towns & Cities / Area	Newry, Bangor / 2,448 km ²	
Distance / Time from John o'Groats*		537 miles (862.67 km) / 11 hrs 3 mins
Tourist Attractions / Natural Features	Exploris Aquarium / Mourne Mountains	
Education / Hospitals / Leisure**		5 / 4 / 2
Cultural Notes / Rainfall (May avg.)	Father of Brontë sisters born here / 59mm	
Property Values / Crime Rate	going up / going down	
Local History & Traditions		A mermaid appears at Mermaid's Pool once a year on the night before Easter Sunday

	Powys, Wales	Aberdeenshire, Scotland
County Town / Population of County	Llandrindod Wells / 132,000	
Major Towns & Cities / Area	Hay-on-Wye, Brecon, Welshpool / 5,196 km ²	Peterhead, Stonehaven, Ellon / 6,313 km ²
Distance / Time from John o'Groats*		221 miles (354.47 km) / 5 hrs 58 mins
Tourist Attractions / Natural Features		Glenbuchat Castle, Strathdon / Sands of Forvie Nature Reserve
Education / Hospitals / Leisure**	3.5 / 4 / 5	
Cultural Notes / Rainfall (May avg.)		
Property Values / Crime Rate		going down / going down
Local History & Traditions	In 1400 Welsh ruler Owain Glyndŵr of Powys led the Welsh Revolt against the English	

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Information Exchange

Answers

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Education / Hospitals / Leisure**	3.5 / 4 / 5	4 / 4.5 / 5
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Where would you like to... a) visit for the day, b) go on holiday for a fortnight, c) move to for work or study, d) move to permanently, e) never visit? Why? Answers will vary. When they have completed filling the gaps, students should discuss which county they would like to visit for each question a) - e). They should produce appropriate reasons for their choices – why they would choose one county rather than another. There are lots of sentences that students could create using this information. For example: "I would like to visit Staffordshire for the day, because I love Alton Towers [theme park]... but I wouldn't want to live there permanently, because the crime rate is increasing..." Or... "I would like to move to Powys in Wales permanently, because it has very good leisure facilities and the property values are going up..." [etc.]

Sample Questions

What is the county town of _____?
 What is the population of _____?
 How many people live in _____?
 Which major towns and cities are there in _____?
 What is the area of _____?
 How big is _____?
 How far is _____ from John o'Groats?
 How long does it take to drive from John o'Groats to _____ [on average]?
 What tourist attractions has _____ got?
 What natural features are there in _____?
 How do local residents rate education in _____?
 How high are hospitals rated in _____?
 What's the rating for leisure in _____?
 Tell me some cultural notes about _____.
 What is the average rainfall in May each year in _____?

Sample Answers

The county town of _____ is _____.
 About _____ people.
 About _____ people live in _____.
 _____ are in _____.
 It's _____.
 _____ is _____ from John o'Groats.
 It takes about _____ to drive from John o'Groats to _____ [on average].
 It's got _____.
 _____ out of five.
 Quite high / low [etc.] – _____ out of five.
 _____ out of five.
 _____ on average.

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How are the property values doing in _____?
Is the crime rate in _____ going up or down?
Tell me about the local history and traditions
of _____.

They're _____.
It's _____.
_____.

Examples

How many people live in County Down
How far is Staffordshire from John o'Groats?
How high are hospitals rated in Powys?
Tell me about the local history and traditions
of Aberdeenshire.

About 516,000 people live in County Down.
Staffordshire is 537 miles from John o'Groats.
Quite high – four out of five.
There have been human settlements in Aberdeenshire
for at least 8,000 years.

[etc.]

Extension: you could try to encourage some comparative/superlative questions and sentences too, for example:

Which is the largest county... a) by area, b) by population?
Which county is the furthest from John o'Groats?
Which county has the best hospitals?

Aberdeenshire is the largest county by area... [etc.]
Powys is the furthest...
Aberdeenshire has the best...

[etc.]

Notes and Sources

Note 1:

*In the question "Distance / Time from John o'Groats", the figures quoted represent time and distance from John o'Groats to the **county town**. For example, from John o'Groats to Stafford. All figures for this question are quoted from <http://www.rac.co.uk/route-planner/> (accessed on 30.10.09).*

Note 2:

Aberdeenshire is not technically a "county", but rather a "council area" governed by a unitary authority. However, it is generally treated as a county, and as such is included in this activity. For more information, see here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_areas

Sources for factual information in this activity (accessed on 30.10.09):

<http://www.answers.com/>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/>
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/wl/>
<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/>