

Talk a Lot

Places in the UK

Background Information

Notes for Teachers

- This unit is different from other Talk a Lot units in that the base vocabulary (the discussion words) is a selection of place names, which you won't find in a normal dictionary, rather than everyday vocabulary words. This glossary of places is included to give students and teachers a little background information about each place. To get the most out of this activity – and really bring the unit to life – you could use a large map of the UK, as well as photos, realia or multimedia (e.g. interactive CD-ROMs), where possible. The information below is not designed to be exhaustive, but rather a starting point for further research. If students wish to, they could go online or visit a library to find out more about the places that interest them the most.
- We're sure that you will be able to find lots of ways to use this information in the classroom (e.g. make quizzes and tests, or, better still, get students to make them!), but here is one idea: print the Matching Game pages onto thin card, then cut up the cards and put them into three groups: **place name cards** (the discussion words for this unit), **prompt cards**, and **clue cards** (the ones in blue type). You could look at all of the places in one session, or, say, ten places per session, depending on the level of your group and the time available. **STAGE 1:** put some (or all) of the place name cards out on the table. Ask students to separate them into places that they know something about, and those that they don't know. Elicit as much information as they can tell you about the places that they know. Almost all students will know at least a few of the places, e.g. the country names, like "England" and "Scotland", or the capital cities. Introduce the new places to the students using either your own knowledge of the UK and the places, or by using the information below. Or, ask students to research the places themselves, e.g. online. **STAGE 2:** put the place name cards onto the table. Get students to match the prompt cards and the clue cards with the places. Or you could ask them to match only the prompt cards with the places, or only the clue cards. This will help students to revise what they have learned about the places in Stage 1. **STAGE 3:** students have to create their own questions and answers about different places using the words and phrases on the prompt cards. For example, on the prompt card for "United Kingdom", the words and phrases are:

Parliament, London, pop. 61.1m, England, Scotland, Wales, & Northern Ireland

Students could produce, for example:

"What is the population of the UK?" / "The population of the UK is 61.1 million people."

[etc.]

- Students can also do all of the activities on the **Discussion Words Question Sheet**, using the place name cards, as in a normal Talk a Lot unit.

Places in the UK (in alphabetical order)

Aberdeen **OIL** A city on the north-eastern coast of Scotland. Aberdeen is Scotland's third-largest city. It is at the centre of the North Sea Oil industry, and has the nickname "Granite City".

Alton Towers **ROLLER COASTER** A popular theme park and holiday resort in Staffordshire, England. It is home to "Oblivion", the world's first vertical drop roller coaster.

Belfast **TITANIC** The capital city of Northern Ireland. Population: 579,276¹. The doomed luxury liner RMS Titanic was built at the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast.

¹ Note: the source of the factual information in this activity is <http://en.wikipedia.org/> (accessed on 22.10.09). All population statistics are approximate and based on the most recently available figures.

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Bournemouth **"DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE"** A large seaside town in Dorset, on the south-west coast of England. Novelist Robert Louis Stevenson wrote "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" here.

Brick Lane **MULTICULTURALISM** A famous street in the East End of London, which is often cited as one of London's greatest multicultural success stories. It is well-known for its shops and restaurants and for being the heart of Britain's Bangladeshi community.

Bristol **WESLEY** A large city in South West England that stands on the River Avon. The first Methodist Chapel was founded by John Wesley in Bristol in 1739.

Cambridge **PUNTING** A small city in East Anglia, England. Famed for its university, which was the second university to be founded in England (in 1209), Cambridge is often associated with the image of students slowly punting down the River Cam, alongside perfect green lawns and magnificent college buildings.

Cardiff **"DR. WHO"** The capital city of Wales, with a population of 324,800. The hit BBC TV series "Dr. Who" and its spin-off series "Torchwood" were both filmed in Cardiff recently.

Cardigan Bay **DOLPHINS AND SEALS** A large area of the Irish Sea on the west coast of Wales. From the cliff edge you may be able to spot Bottlenose Dolphins and Grey Seals.

Clumber Park **NATIONAL TRUST** A beautiful country park in Nottinghamshire, which is open to the public. It is owned and managed by the National Trust.

Edinburgh **FESTIVAL** The capital city of Scotland. Population: 471,650. The Edinburgh Festival fills the streets of Edinburgh each summer with hundreds of thousands of visitors, who come in search of the very best in entertainment, including theatre, music, comedy, film, and dance.

England **ST. GEORGE** The largest country in the UK. Population: 51m (about 84% of the population of the UK). St. George is the patron saint of England. He is famous for killing the dragon in the legend, and for not being British – he was born in the Middle East.

English Channel **RECORD-BREAKERS** A narrow part of the Atlantic Ocean that separates England and France. In 1875 Captain Matthew Webb became the first man to swim the Channel. Today different swimmers try to break the record for the fastest crossing.

Giant's Causeway **LEGEND** A natural phenomenon of more than 40,000 interconnected basalt columns. Located in County Antrim on the north-east coast of Northern Ireland. In the Irish legend, the Causeway was built by the warrior king Fionn mac Cumhaill – who was also a giant – so that he could stride across the Irish Sea to Scotland.

Great Britain **ALBION** Great Britain is the name that describes three UK countries together: England, Scotland, and Wales. Population: 59m (million people). Great Britain was first known as Albion, which means "white", which could be a reference to the famous white cliffs of Dover.

Greenwich **GMT** A district of south-east London that is famous for its maritime history and for being the place where GMT (Greenwich Mean Time) begins and ends.

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Hadrian's Wall **BARBARIANS** A long fortification built by the Romans, now ruined, that stretched 73.5 miles (117 km) across the width of northern England, from Newcastle upon Tyne in the east to Carlisle in the west. It is named after the Roman Emperor Hadrian, and was begun in AD 122. Its purpose was to mark the border of the Roman Empire in Britain, and to keep out the "barbarians" from the north.

Hathersage **LITTLE JOHN** A pretty village in the Derbyshire Peak District. Winner of the Best Village in Central England Competition in 2009. It is home to what is believed to be the grave of Little John, who was Robin Hood's right-hand man in the local legend.

John o'Groats **FERRY** A small settlement in Northern Scotland, which is the most northerly inhabited place in mainland UK. From here you can take a ferry ten miles across the sea to Orkney.

Lake District **JUST ONE** A popular place for holidaymakers in North West England. In spite of its name and being home to many "waters" and "meres" (small lakes), it has just one official lake – Bassenthwaite Lake.

Land's End **CHARITY** A place in Cornwall. Known as the most south-westerly inhabited place in the UK. Many people raise money for charity by walking, cycling, or otherwise travelling between Land's End and John o'Groats, because it is more or less the furthest distance possible between two places in mainland Britain.

Llandudno **PUNCH AND JUDY** A seaside town on the north coast of Wales. On the 376 metre-long Llandudno Pier you can watch a traditional Punch and Judy show, just as visitors did 150 years ago.

Loch Ness **NESSIE** A deep loch (large lake) twenty-three miles south-west of Inverness in the Scottish Highlands. Famous as the home of Nessie, the celebrated Loch Ness Monster.

London **"LUNDENWIC"** The capital city of England, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom. Population: 7.6m. In Roman times London was known as "Londinium", and in Anglo-Saxon days it was called "Lundenwic". Today we call London "the Smoke", or "the City".

Manchester **FOOTBALL AND MUSIC** A major city in the North East of England. Among other things, Manchester is famous for football – Manchester United play at Old Trafford and Manchester City play at Eastlands – and seminal pop music – Joy Division, The Smiths, New Order, James, The Charlatans, Stone Roses, Happy Mondays, and Take That all came from Manchester.

Norfolk Broads **BIRD-WATCHING** An extensive, mainly man-made network of rivers, waterways, and lakes (broads), which is located in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, in the East of England. A great place for both sailors and ornithologists (bird-watchers) alike.

Northern Ireland **"MOONDANCE"** The smallest country in the United Kingdom, with a population of about 1.8 million. Singer-songwriter Van Morrison hails from Belfast in Northern Ireland. Among his most famous songs are: "Moondance", "Brown Eyed Girl", and "Have I Told You Lately".

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Norwich **DELIA** The only city in the entire county of Norfolk. Located in East Anglia, England. TV cook Delia Smith is the owner of Norwich City F.C. Comedian, author, and actor Stephen Fry grew up in Norfolk and studied at City College, Norwich. American author and traveller Bill Bryson lives near Norwich.

Orkney **NORWAY** An archipelago (group of islands) situated about ten miles off the coast of Northern Scotland. Orkney was ruled by Norway between AD 875-1468.

Oxford **UNIVERSITY** A city in South East England which is home to the oldest university in the UK – Oxford University was founded in 1096. The world-famous Oxford English Dictionary is published in Oxford by Oxford University Press.

Scotland **DOUGLAS FIR** The second-largest country in the United Kingdom, with a population of about 5.2m. The Scottish Parliament is responsible for Scottish affairs. The tallest tree in the UK is a Douglas Fir in Argyll, Scotland that stands 63.79 metres tall.

Sherwood Forest **ROBIN HOOD** An extensive forest in Nottinghamshire, England, which was once home to Robin Hood and his Merry Men – if the stories are to be believed!

Skegness **STICK OF ROCK** A popular seaside town in Lincolnshire, on the east coast of England. Here you can sunbathe on the beach in the unrelentingly cold wind, bathe in the freezing waters of the North Sea, and purchase a stick of rock as a souvenir for a friend or relative that you don't like very much. Skegness is commonly known as "Skeggy" (pronounced /'ske.ge/) and also "Skegvegas", reflecting its status as an entertainment centre to (almost) rival Las Vegas!

Snowdonia **MOUNT SNOWDON** A breathtakingly beautiful National Park in Wales that takes its name from Mount Snowdon, which, at 1,085 metres, is the highest mountain in Wales.

Stonehenge **MYSTERY** Thought to date from 2500 BC, Stonehenge is a prehistoric stone monument situated high on a hillside in Wiltshire, South West England. Nobody knows why Stonehenge exists – it's a mystery. It is thought that the site was used for religious rituals or as a kind of observatory.

Stratford-upon-Avon **"THE BARD OF AVON"** A small market town in Warwickshire in the heart of England, situated on the River Avon. Shakespeare (known as "The Bard of Avon") was born here in 1564 and is buried here in Holy Trinity Church.

United Kingdom **FOUR IN ONE** The name of the country that is formed by England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The full name of this country is: "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland". It has a population of about 61.1m. The UK is governed by Parliament from Westminster in London.

Wales **RED DRAGON** The third-largest country in the United Kingdom, with a population of about 3m. The Welsh national flag is a fierce red dragon on a white and green background. The National Assembly for Wales is responsible for Welsh affairs.

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Wimbledon **LAWN TENNIS** A suburb of south-west London, Wimbledon is famous for the international tennis championships that take place there for two weeks every June and July. First held in 1877, it is the oldest tennis tournament in the world.

York **VIKINGS** An ancient city in North Yorkshire, which is a county in the north-east of England. York is famous for being a Viking city, after being invaded by raiders from Scandinavia in AD 866.