Pre-Intermediate Student’s Book audio scripts

Culture Bank

3.17 Culture 1

How foreigners see the British

What is a typical British person like? People who come to Britain from other countries probably have a few expectations: British people are polite, rather reserved, and enjoy drinking tea and standing in queues! But how accurate is this stereotype? In an online survey of 1,402 foreign nationals living in the UK, just over half said that the British matched their expectations.

The survey also asked which aspects of the British character the foreign nationals liked and disliked. British people’s good manners were popular with 49%, and 40% liked the ability to queue. Many agreed that the British are reserved and for 32% this was a good quality – but for 19% it was negative. Other negative aspects were the British sense of humour (31%) and British culture in general (28%). However, 77% said they liked British people in general and 61% said that their opinion of the British got better as a result of living in the UK.

A spokesman for the researchers said: ‘People probably come to Britain with a stereotype of what to expect. It’s good to see that, for the majority, the reality is better than the stereotype.’

3.18 Culture 1, Exercises 4 and 5

Speaker 1

I love the UK. I just love the atmosphere, the culture, the art, the history. There is also beautiful scenery in places like Cornwall and Scotland. The people here are kind and friendly. The only things I don’t like about the UK are the weather and the food. I had some really bad fish and chips recently!

Speaker 2

British people don’t care about their work like we do. They aren’t very hard-working really – they spend all day waiting to finish work and go home! And when they leave work, they forget about it. I have my own café here in Cardiff and for me, my work is my life.

Speaker 3

I find British people very friendly and I love an English breakfast and fish and chips. But, I don’t like it when I finish work at 11 p.m. or midnight and young people are causing trouble in the street. It’s not always nice and they make a lot of noise. I don’t worry for me but I’m anxious for my wife at night over here. Overall though, I like living in Britain. It’s much better than back home.

Speaker 4

OK, the weather definitely is not great but I love the freedom of living in the UK. It’s so friendly and welcoming. It was difficult for me when I first arrived at the age of sixteen. I was used to rules. My family came first and I always obeyed my parents. I never answered back. But British teenagers have so much more freedom. They don’t have many rules, and that’s not always a good thing. They often behave badly.

Speaker 5

The culture here is amazing and I really like the literature. Shakespeare is one of my favourites and I love Mr Bean. Like me, Rowan Atkinson, the actor, studied electrical engineering at university. But, people here are lazy. You get too many holidays – especially students.

3.19 Culture 2

The real Robinson Crusoe

Written by Daniel Defoe and published in 1719, *Robinson* *Crusoe* is one of the oldest and most famous adventure stories in English literature. In the story, Crusoe is marooned on a desert island and spends 27 years there before he is rescued. Defoe probably got the idea for his novel from the true story of the Scottish sailor, Alexander Selkirk. In the early 18th century, England was at war with Spain, and Selkirk joined the crew of an English ship, the Cinque Ports, which attacked Spanish colonies and ships in the South Pacific. In 1704 Selkirk’s ship stopped at a remote island for fresh water and supplies. Selkirk was worried that the ship was in poor condition and, instead of returning to it, decided to stay on the island alone. He became very lonely and quickly regretted his decision, but he was right about the Cinque Ports: it sank. Selkirk survived by building a shelter and killing animals for food. Two ships visited the island the following year, but unfortunately they were Spanish, so Selkirk hid from sight. An English ship finally arrived at the island in February 1709 and Selkirk was able to return home.

3.20 Culture 2, Exercises 4 and 5

I took my prisoner to my secret cave on the other side of the island and gave him food and drink. After that, he went to sleep.

He was a fine young man, about 25 years old, tall and well-built, with a kind face and nice smile. […] I decided to give him the name of 'Man Friday', because I first saw him on a Friday.

I began to teach him to speak English, and soon he could say his name, 'Master', and 'Yes' and 'No'. How good it was to hear a man's voice again!

Later that day we went back to my first house. We went carefully along the beach, but there were no boats and no cannibals. […]

Friday was a quick learner and his English got better day by day. He helped me with the goats and with the work in the cornfields, and soon we were good friends. I enjoyed teaching him and, most of all, having a friend to talk to. This was the happiest of all my years on the island.

Friday and I lived together happily for three years. I told him the story of my adventures and about life in England, and he told me about his country and his people. One day we were at the top of the highest hill on the island and we were looking out to sea. It was a very clear day and we could see a long way. Suddenly, Friday began to jump up and down, very excitedly.

'What's the matter?' I asked.

'Look, Master, look!' Friday cried. 'I can see my country. Look over there!' […]

I began to think about escape. Perhaps Friday wanted to go home too. Perhaps together we could get to his country. But what then? Would Friday still be my friend?

3.21 Culture 3

British TV around the world

Selling British TV programmes to countries around the world is an important industry for the UK. It brings in around £1.3 billion a year. The top countries for British TV exports are 1) the USA, 2) Sweden, 3) Denmark, 4) Germany and 5) Norway.

There are two main types of TV export: finished programmes and formats. When countries buy a finished programme, it is ready to broadcast on their own channels. When they buy a format, they are just buying the idea for a programme. They then have to make the programme in their own language and with people and places from their own countries.

Many of the finished programmes are dramas. For example, the historical drama *Downton Abbey* is very popular in many countries. *Midsomer Murders*, a detective drama from 1997, is still a huge favourite around the world. Wildlife documentaries are also an important export.

Popular British formats include several talent shows: *The X Factor* and *Strictly Come Dancing* are two well-known examples. Cookery programmes are very popular too. For example, local versions of *Masterchef* are on TV in more than forty different countries, including India and Iran.

Different TV shows are popular in different countries. For example, the science fiction show *Doctor Who* is very popular in Turkey and many other countries. But when a TV company in Finland bought the programmes, audiences there did not like it at all. They prefer an old police drama called *Heartbeat*, which was popular in the UK twenty years ago and only sells to a few countries.

3.22 Culture 3, Exercises 4 and 5

*Top* *Gear*, a BBC TV programme about cars, is the most popular factual TV programme in the world. Every week, about 350 million people watch it in 170 different countries. In most countries, they watch the British version of the programme, but a few countries bought the format from the BBC and made their own versions. However, this was not always a good decision. Russia and Australia both made their own programmes, following the same format as the British programme, but they were not popular with viewers. In the end, both countries decided to show the original BBC programme instead.

*Top* *Gear* began about forty years ago, in the 1970s. In the early days, it was quite a serious programme with lots of information about new cars. But in 2002, it changed its style completely – and as a result became far more popular and successful. The programme was still about cars, but it also contained a lot of humour. They started filming the show in front of a live audience and the atmosphere was like a party. The programme’s presenters – Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May – became well-known celebrities in the UK and around the world. Although all three presenters are male, a lot of the programme’s viewers – about 40% in fact – are female.

The new version of the programme introduced a character called The Stig – a racing driver who tested new cars. Nobody knew the identity of The Stig because he always wore a racing-driver’s helmet. People wondered if it could be a famous Formula 1 driver and the mystery made the show even more popular.

But the relationship between the three presenters is probably the main reason for the programme’s success. However, in 2015 the main presenter Jeremy Clarkson lost his job. He had an argument with another person who was working on the show, and Clarkson hit him! Richard Hammond and James May also left the show. But that is not the end of *Top* *Gear*. The BBC is now making the show with new presenters.

3.23 Culture 4. Exercises 4 and 5

**Interviewer** Today in our series about the English language we are talking about English as a global language. In the studio with me is professor of linguistics, Edward Higgins. Welcome, Professor Higgins.

**Professor** Thank you.

**Interviewer** So, can you tell us how English became a global language?

**Professor** Yes. Well, English spread around the world during the 18th and 19th centuries. At that time, Britain was a very powerful country and it had a large empire. English became the most important language in countries like Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and a second language in countries such as Pakistan and India. It also became the first language in the USA.

**Interviewer** And of course the USA is now the most powerful country in the world.

**Professor** Yes, so English continues to be very important. The enormous influence of American culture since 1945 means that English is now more than ever a global language.

**Interviewer** How important is the influence of technology?

**Professor** Very important. English is already the language of popular culture, films and TV, and of science, business, aviation and tourism. It has now also become the language of the internet; about 55% of the world’s websites are in English and experts estimate that 80% of all emails are in English too.

**Interviewer** Just how many English speakers are there?

**Professor** That depends on how you count them! But there are about 335 million people who use English as their first language. In addition, there are about 430 million people who speak it as their second language, in countries like India, South Africa and the West Indies.

**Interviewer** And a lot of people learn English as a foreign language too, don’t they?

**Professor** Yes, about 750 million people learn English as a foreign language in over 100 countries.

**Interviewer** So how many speakers is that in total?

**Professor** About 1.5 billion speakers world-wide.

**Interviewer** Wow. That’s a lot of people. I guess not everyone is happy about how widespread and how important English is becoming?

**Professor** That’s right. Some people think English is too powerful. They see English as a threat to their own language. In Britain for example, Welsh has only five hundred thousand speakers. Can it survive alongside English, which has 60 million? Maybe not. And people in other countries don’t like all the words that their languages borrow from English. Some French people for example object to words like ‘weekend’ and ‘blog’ and ‘email’.

**Interviewer** Will English continue to be the most important language in the world?

**Professor** Probably, but the power of the USA may decline and China and India might become the next superpowers. In one hundred years from now, it’s possible that we will all need to speak Chinese or Hindi! Nobody really knows.

3.24 Culture 5

Anita Roddick

Anita Perilli was born in 1942 in Littlehampton, a seaside town in the south of England. Her parents were from Italy and ran a café. After leaving school, she trained as an English teacher, but before finding a job, she decided to travel round the world, working in a number of different countries. When she got back to Britain, her mother introduced her to a young Scottish man called Gordon Roddick. They fell in love immediately and got married. Together, they opened a restaurant and a small hotel in Anita’s home town. They had two daughters and moved to Brighton, also on the south coast.

It was there in 1976 that Anita Roddick opened the first Body Shop store. Her husband was travelling in South America and she needed to earn money to support her young family. She wanted to sell cosmetics and skin-care products that were natural and not tested on animals. She also recycled the bottles that contained her products: customers could bring them back to the shop and refill them. ‘Businesses have the power to do good,’ she said. She opened a second shop six months later and by 1991, there were seven hundred Body Shop stores. By 2004, the Body Shop had over two thousand stores with 71 million customers in 51 countries.

Anita Roddick was passionate about social and environmental issues. She gave money to many charities, including Greenpeace and Amnesty International, and she campaigned for them too. She joined anti-globalisation protests and was very critical of big oil companies that did not invest in renewable energy.

Towards the end of her life, she sold Body Shop to the world’s largest cosmetics company, L’Oréal. Many of her customers felt betrayed. But she gave away most of her money to charities. She died in 2007 at the age of 64.

3.25 Culture 5, Exercises 4 and 5

Richard Branson was born in London in 1950. He didn’t do very well at school and left when he was sixteen. His head teacher said to him, ‘You will either end up in prison or become a millionaire.’ One of these came true: Branson is now the sixth richest person in Britain.

After leaving school, Branson started a student magazine, called *Student*. He used the magazine to start his next business, a mail-order record company. He advertised pop records in the magazine and sold them for much less than the music shops charged. He called his company ‘Virgin’. Soon he was able to open his first music shop in London. He then decided to not only sell records but also to produce them. He built a recording studio and had an instant hit with Mike Oldfield’s *Tubular* *Bells*. He attracted lots of new young musicians and groups, especially punk bands like the Sex Pistols. Bigger bands like the Rolling Stones and Genesis followed, and Virgin Records became one of the biggest record companies in the UK.

But Branson was looking for new challenges. In the early 90s, he sold his record company and started an airline, Virgin Atlantic, which flies from the UK to destinations all over the world. He also started a train company in 1993 and a mobile phone company in 1999.

Branson not only likes business challenges; he also likes personal challenges and has tried to break a number of world records. In 1986, he sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in record time and in 1991 he made the fastest crossing of the Pacific Ocean in a hot-air balloon. His average speed was 394 kilometres per hour!

Branson’s most recent business is Virgin Galactic, a space tourism company. Watch this space!

3.26 Culture 6

Alcatraz is a small, rocky island in San Francisco Bay in the USA. It is 2.4 km from the shore and the sea around the island is very dangerous. The water is very cold and there are fast, strong currents. In the 19th century, the American government realised it was the ideal place to put dangerous prisoners, because it is very difficult to reach and even more difficult to escape from. So they built a prison on the island and from the 1930s to the 1960s it was the toughest prison in the USA. Over 1,500 prisoners stayed on the island, including America’s most violent bank robbers and murderers. The most famous prisoner was the gangster Al Capone. But the prison was never full and it was very expensive to run, so the government finally decided to close it. Alcatraz became a museum and is now one of San Francisco’s most popular tourist attractions, with more than one and a half million visitors a year.

3.27 Culture 6, Exercises 5 and 6

**Interviewer** So, here we are inside Alcatraz. I’m with Danny Bergman, who works at the museum and shows people round. Hi Danny.

**Curator** Hello. And welcome to Alcatraz!

**Interviewer** Thanks. I’m looking forward to the tour!

**Curator** Well, the first thing I’ll show you is a prison cell. Come this way. Here we are. This is a typical cell.

**Interviewer** Wow, it’s so small!

**Curator** Yes, it’s 2.7 metres long and 1.5 metres wide. The prisoners could stretch their arms out and touch both walls, like this.

**Interviewer** Oh, yes.

**Curator** Each cell had a bed with one blanket, a desk, a toilet and a small washbasin. Each prisoner had his own cell. Black prisoners stayed in cells in a different block.

**Interviewer** What did the prisoners do all day?

**Curator** They got up at 6.30, had breakfast at 7, then tidied their cells. If they were lucky, and behaved well, they were allowed to work, from 7.30. If not, they had to stay in their cells. Lunch was at 11.20 and then they worked again until 4.25. The guards locked the cell doors at 5 o’clock and turned off the lights at 9.30.

**Interviewer** It doesn’t sound like fun!

**Curator** No, it wasn’t. There was a library, though, with 15,000 books and prisoners could borrow three books at a time. The average prisoner read about 85 books a year. They could also play musical instruments for an hour a day in the canteen, if they wanted to.

**Interviewer** Could they go outside?

**Curator** Only at weekends, for a maximum of five hours. They could play baseball in the recreation yard.

**Interviewer** And what about visitors?

**Curator** Each prisoner could have one visitor a month.

**Interviewer** Those are very tough rules!

**Curator** Yes, they are. And if they broke the rules, the punishments were very harsh.

**Interviewer** Did any prisoners escape?

**Curator** Thirty-six men tried to escape, including two who tried to escape twice. The guards recaptured twenty-three men, including two who successfully managed to leave the island and reach the city. The guards shot and killed six others during their escape, and two prisoners drowned trying to swim across the bay.

**Interviewer** That makes ... 31. What about the other five?

**Curator** Nobody knows what happened to them. Have you heard of the famous Hollywood film *Escape from Alcatraz*?

**Interviewer** The Clint Eastwood film? Yes.

**Curator** Well, that film tells their story. The five men planned a very clever and detailed escape over seven months. They disappeared one night and were never seen again. The FBI looked for them but never found them.

**Interviewer** What do you think happened?

**Curator** I don’t know. They probably drowned, but it’s nice to think that maybe they got away!

3.28 Culture 7

Wall Street

Wall Street is a street in New York City’s financial district. People also use Wall Street to mean the whole financial district. The Dutch gave the street its name. They built a wall there to protect the area from the British in the 17th century.

Wall Street is one of the main financial centres in the world, together with London, Hong Kong and Tokyo. The New York Stock Exchange opens every morning at 9.30 a.m. and closes at 4 p.m. The signal for opening and closing is a bell and they often invite a celebrity to ring it.

In the early part of the 20th century, Wall Street was the centre of the financial world. Millions of people wanted to invest money in the New York Stock Exchange because it was doing so well. Their money grew and grew and investors became rich. It seemed too good to be true – and it was.

The Wall Street Crash began on 24 October 1929. The value of investments started to fall and soon everybody wanted to get their money back. Investors panicked and the situation got worse. The New York Stock Exchange lost 89% of its value very quickly and caused the worst global depression in history.

3.29 Culture 7, Exercises 5 and 6

The Great Depression began at the end of the 1920s and lasted until the end of the 1930s. It was the worst depression in history and it began with the Wall Street Crash of October 1929. During that crash, the stock exchange fell by 89% and many investors lost all of their money. But why did that have such a bad effect on the rest of the country? After all, most ordinary people had nothing to do with Wall Street and no money to invest anyway. Why did they suffer when the stock market fell?

Basically, when the Wall Street Crash happened, the whole nation lost confidence in the country’s economy. Banks did not want to lend money to people who needed it and people with money did not want to keep it in banks. As a result, more than half of the 25,000 banks in the USA went out of business.

People were very anxious about the economic situation so they were careful with their money. They didn’t spend much. So shops went out of business and people lost their jobs. Factories began to close down and more people became unemployed. In 1930, 4 million Americans were looking for work but could not find it. A year later, the number was 6 million. Because there were not enough jobs, many people could not afford to pay the rent for their homes. In America’s towns and cities, there were more and more homeless people.

The President, Herbert Hoover, did not want to take any action. He believed that the situation would get better soon by itself. But he was wrong – it got worse. Much worse. By 1932, about 15 million people – that’s 25% of the working population – could not find a job.

In 1932, the American people elected a new president: Franklin D Roosevelt. He decided that he needed to help the economy out of depression, and he did this by spending huge amounts of government money on big projects. He used these projects to give work to millions of unemployed people. And he often spoke to the American people over the radio, trying to improve confidence. His efforts did help the economy – but in fact the start of the Second World War in 1939 helped much more. Finally the factories and workers were busy again. By 1940, unemployment was down to 10% – remember, it had been around 25% in 1932. But it took until 1954 for the New York Stock Exchange to reach the same level as before the Wall Street Crash of October 1929.

3.30 Culture 8

Sherlock Holmes: fact file

The author of the Sherlock Holmes stories was Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930). He was born in Scotland and studied medicine at Edinburgh University. He worked as a doctor but in his spare time he wrote detective stories.

He wrote the first Sherlock Holmes story in 1887. His detective hero lives at 221b Baker Street in London.

Holmes is tall and thin, with a long, sharp face. He usually wears a deerstalker hat, smokes a pipe or cigarettes, and carries a magnifying glass. He is extremely intelligent and is a brilliant violinist.

Holmes’s assistant is Dr Watson, an ex-army officer. Watson is less intelligent than Holmes. In one Sherlock Holmes film, when Watson asks Holmes how he solved a crime, Holmes’s famous reply is ‘Elementary, my dear Watson!’

Holmes’s greatest enemy is Professor Moriarty. At the end of one story, they both die. But Doyle’s fans were so upset that he had to bring Holmes back to life in another story!

3.31 Culture 8, Exercises 4 and 6

**Interviewer** Today on *Film Review*, I’m talking to Mark Jackson about the famous detective, Sherlock Holmes. First of all, Mark, can you tell us how many film and TV adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories there are?

**Critic** There are hundreds. No one knows exactly because some have been lost. But the first was a short film made in 1900. Lots were made in the 1920s, and it hasn’t stopped since. At least seventy-eight different actors have played the character of Sherlock Homes in films and TV dramas.

**Interviewer** Wow, that’s amazing.

**Critic** Yes, no other fictional character has appeared so often on cinema and TV screens.

**Interviewer** Why is that? What is it about the stories that is so appealing?

**Critic** I think it’s the character of Holmes. The stories themselves are not that brilliant – they're good, they're clever, but there are better detective stories. It’s really the character of Holmes that is unique and fascinating.

**Interviewer** In what way?

**Critic** Well, he’s a very complex character. He's extremely intelligent – he believes that no one is as intelligent as himself, except perhaps his great enemy, Professor Moriarty.

**Interviewer** So, arrogant and vain too.

**Critic** Yes, arrogant and vain. And he doesn’t care what other people think of him. But he’s also very imaginative, very observant and also very brave.

**Interviewer** And he has a dark side to his character, doesn’t he?

**Critic** Yes. He’s very unemotional, very cold. He’s quite unsympathetic. He can’t understand other people’s feelings. And he doesn’t understand women at all. Dr Watson describes him in one of the stories as ‘a brain without a heart’ and ‘more a machine than a man’.

**Interviewer** Does he have hobbies or other interests?

**Critic** He plays the violin. But he gets bored and depressed very easily. And when he’s feeling down, he sometimes goes to bed and sleeps all day!

**Interviewer** So like many popular heroes he has lots of faults.

**Critic** Yes, in that way he is very human.

**Interviewer** There are two recent TV adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories, a British one and an American one.

**Critic** Yes, and the interesting thing is that the stories are set in the present day. So there’s the BBC drama called *Sherlock*, starring Benedict Cumberbatch. They use some of the original stories but they have added lots of humour. Then there’s an American show called *Elementary*. It’s set in New York, and it stars Jonny Lee Miller as Holmes and Lucy Liu as Watson.

**Interviewer** Lucy Liu? A woman! That’s different!

**Critic** Yes, but it works, I think.

**Interviewer** And it’s set in New York. So is Holmes American?

**Critic** No, Miller plays him as British. But Miller has changed Holmes’s character a bit. Miller’s Holmes is very scruffy, whereas in the original stories Holmes is very well-dressed. And in the TV series Holmes has girlfriends.

**Interviewer** Really? Is Watson his girlfriend?

**Critic** No, not Watson. That would be too far from the original story and make them very different characters.

**Interviewer** Do you think there will ever be a female Holmes?

**Critic** People have accepted a female Watson, so yeah, why not? I think it’s bound to happen some time.

3.32 Culture 9

During the 1930s, German military power was increasing. Its neighbours – in particular, Poland and France – were becoming more and more worried about the danger of an invasion. In Poland, a team of brilliant young mathematicians worked hard to break Germany’s military codes. It was difficult because the Germans used a complex machine called Enigma to send and receive their codes. But by 1938, the Polish team could understand 75% of Germany’s secret messages. This was mainly thanks to an invention by Marian Rejewski called the *bomba* *kryptologiczna*. However, that year, the Germans changed their Enigma machines and made the codes far more difficult to break. As World War II began, the Polish team shared their ideas about Enigma with British and French code-breakers.

A team of code-breakers – men and women – worked at a secret location in the south of England: Bletchley Park. They included Alan Turing, a mathematician with an interest in computing. At Bletchley Park, he designed an early form of computer which they called the Bombe. (It was based on the *bomba* *kryptologicdzna*.) They used it to help break complex codes. Compared to today’s computers, the Bombe was huge and not very powerful. But at the time, it was some of the most advanced technology in the world. It made the work of the code-breakers much faster.

Marian Rejewski worked as a code-breaker in Britain during the war. In 1946, he returned to Poland and worked as an accountant. He kept his code-breaking work secret from everybody until 1967! But today, his is celebrated each year at Bletchley Park.

3.33 Culture 9, Exercises 5 and 6

Ada Lovelace was born in 1815 into a rich family. She was the daughter of the British aristocrat and famous poet, Lord Byron. However, she did not grow up with him. She was brought up by her mother, who made sure that Ada had a very good education. She was particularly good at maths and science, and took a keen interest in the scientific inventions and discoveries of her day.

At that time, a British mathematician called Charles Babbage was working on a machine for doing complex calculations. He called his machine a Difference Engine. He began to build the machine, but he did not finish it because he had a better idea. He called his new idea the Analytical Engine, and it was better because it had a kind of memory. In fact, he didn’t finish building this one either. Babbage never really finished anything!

Ada Lovelace met Charles Babbage and the two became friends. Ada began working with Babbage and because she was a brilliant mathematician, she understood how important his ideas were. She realised that it was possible to write programs for the Analytical Engine. Because it had a memory, it could do complex calculations, step-by-step. In a scientific paper, she described how to do this and gave an example. Because the machine was never built, the example was never tested. Nevertheless, most computer scientists see Ada Lovelace’s work as the first computer program in the world – and it was written years before the first computer existed!

Ada Lovelace died in 1852 at the age of 36. The importance of her work was not realised for another hundred years. But today, she is seen as an important figure in the history of science. A modern computer programming language is named after her – Ada. And every October, Ada Lovelace Day celebrates the role of women in science, technology, maths and engineering.