

Knowledge organiser: How did the British Empire Impact the World?

Topic Summary:

In this unit, students will study the impact of the British Empire on the World. Students will explore a number of different case studies to gain a better understanding of what the consequences of British Rule on indigenous communities at the time of colonisation, and how those peoples are still effected now. Student will study the controversial legacy of the British Empire and decide how it should be remembered in Modern day Britain

Key Dates:

1607 – The first permanent British colony was established in North America. It was named Jamestown after English King James I

1770 – Captain Cook set sail for and landed 'The Voyager' in Australia. He claimed the land for Britain and called it 'New South Wales'

August 1833 – Abolition of slavery Act was passed in Britain, making the buying and selling of enslave people illegal across the British Empire

15th August 1947 – After years of protest and contributions to WW1 and WW2, India became an independent country

1757-1858 – The East India Company ruled over India, having taken land through trading stations and exploitation

4th July 1776 – After years of fighting, America gained independence from the British Empire

15th November 1884 - The Berlin conference took place where European leaders divided up areas of Africa. This would become known as the 'Scramble for Africa'

1957 – The Gold coast became the first British colony in Africa to gain it's independence. It was renamed Ghana

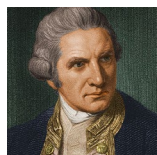
Key People:

Mohandas Ghandi



Mohandas Ghandi was an Indian Lawyer and key leader of the Indian independence movement in the twentieth century. He was known for promoting peaceful resistance and was instrumental in freeing India from British rule.

Captain James Cook



Captain Cook was a British explorer and coloniser who set sail on the HMS Endeavour. He is credited with the 'discovery' of Australia and claimed much of the land for Britain once his ship had landed at Botany Bay

Oba Nogbaisi



Oba Nogbasi was the King of the Kingdom of Benin during the British raid in 1897. He tried to defend Benin from the British but was overthrown and banished from his kingdom. The British stole many precious bronzes.

Queen Victoria



In 1877, British Queen Victoria declared herself the 'Empress of India' played a pivotal role in the British Empire's expansion during the 19th century, symbolising its global power and overseeing its colonial reach at the height of its imperial dominance.

Vocabulary:

British Empire	<i>A vast collection of countries and territories around the world that were controlled by Britain, from the 16th to the 20th century</i>
Interpretation	<i>A historian's opinion of past events, based on the sources they have used and their own perspective</i>
Colonisation	<i>When a country takes control of another land, often by settling there, using its resources, and ruling over its people</i>
East India Company	<i>a British trading company that controlled trade and had a lot of power in India from the 1600s to the 1800s</i>
Partition	<i>The division of British India into two separate countries, India and Pakistan, in 1947</i>
Transportation	<i>The practice of sending prisoners from Britain to Australia from the 1700s where they were forced to work and build colonies</i>
Scramble for Africa	<i>The period in the late 1800s when European countries rushed to take control of African lands and resources</i>
Heritage	<i>The traditions, culture, history, and things passed down from previous generations that shape who we are today</i>
Legacy	<i>Something that is passed on from the past, such as ideas, attitudes or traditions, that continue to influence people today</i>
Consequence	<i>The result or outcome of an action, which can be either good or bad, short term or long term depending on what was done</i>

Core Knowledge:


<p>Lesson 1:</p> <p>How Did Britain build it's Empire?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The building of Britain's empire did not happened over night. The first World explorers from Britain set sail as early as the 1500s, with land still being claimed for the Empire during the 1870s.• Britain built it's empire through a number of different ways: Trade, conflict & violence, settler colonialism and exploration. There was very little care or understanding given to the indigenous people of this places who's land was stole, and often lost their lives or heritage as a result
<p>Lesson 2:</p> <p>Why have historian's opinions of the British Empire changed over time?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The history of the British empire is a controversial one, with many historians disagreeing over how it should be remembered.• Some historians take a traditional approach to this history and celebrate the wealth and power the empire brought for Britain. Other have revised this opinion and instead are more critical of the consequences colonialism had on indigenous communities around the World• Interpretations of the empire have changed over time, with ore sources becoming available to historians
<p>Lesson 3:</p> <p>How did the British Empire impact indigenous Americans?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first English ships arrived in North America in 1583 and claimed large areas of land for England. Over time more people set sail for the 'New World' and by 1775, the British population I America was well over 2 million• This had a number of different impacts on the indigenous communities. This had consequences on different factors: Social, economic, trade and environmental• When North America won their independence from England in 1783, indigenous Americans were not included in this and were referred to as 'merciless, Indian savages'
<p>Lesson 4:</p> <p>What were the consequences of British rule for India?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unlike other countries that became part of the British Empire, India was not initially invaded by the British government themselves. Instead, it was European trading companies that first took an interest in the valuable natural resources India had to offer and, over time, took control over large areas of India• The British made a number of significant changes to India during the period of rule, but these changes mainly benefitted the British colonisers who moved there. For example, Revisionist historians such as Shashi Tharoor argue that that the roads and railways were only built to allow British traders to move their goods more quickly.



Core Knowledge:

<p>Lesson 5:</p> <p>How did the impact of British rule lead to Indian independence?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first War of Indian Independence began in 1857, after years of poor treatment by the British led a group of Sepoys to rebel in 1857 and violent conflict spread across the region. Despite great attempts for victory, the Indian soldiers were defeated and punished severely. There were also many examples passive resistance to British Rule. Mahatma Ghandi spent his life peacefully fighting for freedom in India and played a massive part in helping India to successfully become independent from Britain in 1947
<p>Lesson 6:</p> <p>How did transportation impact Aboriginal Australians?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the 26th January 1788, the Endeavor landed on the East Coast of Australia. Upon arrival, Cook claimed the land for Britain. This began a process of transportation of convicts to Australia. To relieve Britain's overcrowded prison, convicts were shipped to the new colonies in Australia to fulfil the sentences and build new communities. This had detrimental impact on the land and indigenous aboriginal people of Australia. Many of these consequences are still felt by Aboriginal people today.
<p>Lesson 7:</p> <p>'What were the consequences of the Scramble for Africa?'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1870, 10% of the continent of Africa was occupied by European colonies. By 1900 however (just 30 years later), European nations controlled over 90% of the continent of Africa – this is referred to as 'The Scramble for Africa' African people fought fiercely at times to defend their lands from European colonisers, but often the European invaders who had significantly more advance weaponry, wiped out the African forces One of the key consequences of this was the loss of heritage and history as a result of British soldiers stealing important goods from villages they raided. For example the Benin bronzes that were looted in 1897 and are still yet to be returned
<p>Lesson 8:</p> <p>What is the legacy of the British Empire?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the British Empire has 'ended', it's legacy still exists within Britain and in many of the countries that were previously colonised. The legacy of the British Empire is a controversial one. During it's peak, the British Empire was the most powerful in the World and Britain became incredibly wealthy as a result and it was celebrated across Britain. This is rarely the case in modern Britain The legacy of the British empire can be seen all over the country, in the language we speak, the buildings we visit, the names of the streets that we walk down and the incredible diversity of the population

What do historians say?

Name of scholarship	Description
<p>'Empireland' by Sathnam Sanghera</p> 	<p><i>Sanghera explores the enduring legacy of the British Empire, examining its impact on both the colonisers and the colonised, while reflecting on issues of race, identity, and the complexities of modern British society.</i></p>
<p>'Inglorious Empire' by Shashi Tharoor</p> 	<p><i>Tharoor critically examines the detrimental impact of British colonial rule on India, arguing that the empire's legacy of exploitation and oppression has left deep scars on the nation's social, economic, and cultural fabric.</i></p>
<p>'Black and British: A forgotten History' by David Olusoga</p> 	<p><i>Olusoga writes a comprehensive exploration of the history of Black people in Britain, shedding light on their significant yet often overlooked contributions to British society, as well as the complex legacies of racism and colonialism</i></p>

How can I find out more?

BBC Bitesize – The British Empire: An Overview



BBC Bitesize - The End of the British Empire



BBC Teach – What legacy has the British Empire left behind?

