**The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Nothern Ireland. The land and the people.**

The UK of Creat Britain and Nothern Ireland occupies the territory of the British Isles. It consists of 4 main countries which are England, Scotland, Scotland,Wales and Nothern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Cardiff and Belfast.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Nothern Ireland is the official name of the state which is sometimes referred to as Great Britain or Britain (after it major island), England ( after its major historic part or the British Isles.

The UK is an Island state it is composed of some 5.500 islands, large and small. The two main islands are: Great Britain to the east and Ireland to the west. They are separated by the Irish Sea.

The area of the UK is 244,100 square kms. It is situated off to the northwest coast of Europe between the Atlantic Ocean on the north and the North Sea on the east and is separated from the European continent by the English Channel (or La Manche) and the Straits of Dover (or Pas de Calais).

The population of the UK is over 57 mln people. The UK is inhabited by the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish who constitute the British nation. English is not the only language. Scottish, Welsh and Irish are also used.

The flag of the UK is known as the Union Jack. It has its history. It all began in 1603 when Scotland was joined to England and Wales. The flag is made up of 3 crosses. The upright cross is the Cross of St.Jeorge the patron saint of England. The white diagonal cross is the cross of St.Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. The red diagonal cross is the cross is the cross of St.Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. All of them are on the blue background.

The national anthem is «God Save the Queen». The national currency is pound.

Geographically the island of Great Britain is subdivided into 2 main regions: Lowland Britain and Highland Britain. Lowland Britain comprises southern and eastern England. Highland Britain consists of Scotland, most of Wales, the Pennines (or the Pennine Chain) and the Lake District.

The highest mountain top is Ben Nevis in Scotland. The chief rivers of Great Britain are: the Severn, separating England and Wales, the Thames (the longest and the deepest one). The swiflest flowing river is the Spray. Also the Tweed is famous (the woolen fabric is made here).

There are many lakes in Great Britain. The Lake District is the most beautiful.

The largest are London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol, Leeds, Cardiff.

The capitals are: London in England, Edinburgh in Scotland, Cardiff in Wales and Belfast in Northern Ireland.

Every country has its own national emblem. The red rose is the national emblem of England the thistle is the national emblem of Scotland the daffodils and the leek are the emblems of Wales and the shamrock (a kind of clover) is the emblem of Ireland.