

History Term 1: What is the legacy of the British Empire?

Year 8 Term 1



(1) Why did Britain build an empire?

Social:

- Britain wanted to spread the religion of Christianity around the world, they believed Britain were superior to other ethnicities and religions,

Political:

- Britain was imperialistic, they wanted to expand their power across the world by having an empire.

Economic:

- To develop trade routes to increase Britain's wealth. Sell more products that were being made in the Industrial Revolution.

Empire	A large group of countries ruled over by a single monarch or state.
Imperialism	A policy of extending a country's power and influence by developing an empire.

(2) Britain in India.

- Britain slowly increased their control in India from **1601 to 1947**.
- After India gained independence in **1947** the country was partitioned by Britain
- into two different countries— **Pakistan and India**.
- Pakistan had a mainly Muslim population and India had a mainly Sikh and Hindu population.
- The division of India led to 13 million people becoming refugees and large scale violence.



Partition	To divide something into sections.
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(3) How did Britain change society in Australia?

- British people started settling in Australia from **1770**.
- Captain James Cook voyaged to Australia and named the land British, calling it **New South Wales**.
- People already lived in Australia, they are called **Indigenous people**.
- Britain's arrival killed **70%** of indigenous people in some areas, from diseases such as smallpox
- Britain used Australia as a penal colony, a place to send prisoners.

Penal	Relating to punishment of offenders.
Indigenous	People who already live in a country before it is colonised and made part of an empire.

(4) How did the British empire impact Africa?

- In the Medieval period and before Britain colonised Africa it was one of the richest counties in the world.
- Mansa Musa was the king of the Mali Empire in 1312 to 1337.
- Britain became involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade with West Africa and America in 1560s.
- Britain colonised Africa for wealth and to spread Christianity.
- The trade of human beings was abolished in 1833.



(5) How did Britain deal with the crisis in Ireland?

- Ireland was part of Britain's empire since the Tudors.
- In 1845 Ireland experienced a famine, caused by potato blite.
- British support was not good enough. For example, Robert peel sent corn but there was not enough mills in Ireland to make it into bread.
- 25% of Irish either died or emigrated to America dur to the famine and Britain's lack of support.
- The Irish Catholics in Ireland faced persecution, for example being removed from their homes.



Robert Peel	The Prime Minister of the UK 1834-35 and 1841-46.
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(6) Should the UK return the Benin Bronzes?

- Benin is a place in West Africa now called Nigeria.
- Between 1880 and 1900 almost all of Africa was carved up and divided by European countries for their empire.
- Following the Benin Massacre in **1897** the British took valuable Benin Bronze masks.
- The masks belong to the Oba and represent power and authority.
- 2022: German government returns their two Benin Bronzes.



Massacre	The brutal murder of many people.
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