

# www.newsflashenglish.com

The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 10/01/13

## The Commonwealth

Today, let's talk about the Commonwealth. (Full name - The Commonwealth of Nations). It is a group of 54 independent Member States, most of whom are former British Empire countries. The exceptions are Rwanda and Mozambique.

Like the British Empire once did, the Commonwealth today spans the world. Ninety four per cent of the Commonwealth is in Africa and Asia. It covers nearly one third of the world and has over 2.1 billion people in it. This is almost a third of the world's population...

One of the most populous countries in the Commonwealth is India. The smallest member is Tuvalu, with about 10,000 people. The three largest countries are India, Canada and Australia. Nauru, an island country in Micronesia in the South Pacific, is the newest member.

The Queen is Head of the Commonwealth. In 2012, The Queen celebrated 60 years as its head. In fact, the British royal family unifies the institution.

The GDP of the Commonwealth countries is estimated to be over US\$10 trillion, 65% of which is made up of the UK, Canada, India and Australia. In fact, trade is a very important part of what the Commonwealth is all about.

Members of the Commonwealth can take part in the Commonwealth Games. These are held every four years. Popular sports in Commonwealth countries include cricket, rugby and netball. People mostly drive on the left with English as the common language.

There is also the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting - where Heads of Government including Prime Ministers and Presidents assemble to discuss topical issues.

### SPEAKING

Think of three things you know about the Commonwealth. Go round the room swapping details with others.

### LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

### READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

### SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

**1) The article** – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

**2) The article** - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

**3) Article quiz** - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

#### Student A questions

- 1) What is the full name of the subject?
- 2) Who is its head?
- 3) Name three of its biggest members.
- 4) Where is Nauru?
- 5) What is the GDP of the Commonwealth countries?

#### Student B questions

- 1) What is the common language?
- 2) Name two sports.
- 3) What does biennial mean?
- 4) What side of the road do they mostly drive on?
- 5) Who assembles at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting?

**Category: Economic / Trade / The Commonwealth**  
**Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

The Commonwealth – 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013

**WRITING / SPEAKING**

*In pairs.* On the board write as many words as you can to do with 'The Commonwealth'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

**WRITING / SPEAKING**

**The Commonwealth** - *In pairs* choose three things from the article.

Write them below.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Add** three similar ideas of your own about the subject. Discuss together.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**WRITING / SPEAKING**

Think of three good economic reasons for being in the Commonwealth. Then add how the Commonwealth can develop during the next decade. Finally, add three leaders in the Commonwealth. Write down your thoughts.

**The teacher** will choose some students to read out their work to the class.

**DISCUSSION**

**Student A questions**

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Name three Commonwealth countries.
- 3) Why is trade so important in the Commonwealth?
- 4) Name three island Commonwealth countries.
- 5) Name three Commonwealth leaders.
- 6) Should Britain trade more with the Commonwealth and ditch the EU?
- 7) Why is the Commonwealth so important today?
- 8) Should non ex-British Empire countries be 'in' the Commonwealth?
- 9) Would you like your country to join The Commonwealth?
- 10) Have you learnt anything today?

**SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1**

*In groups.* One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *BBC Asia* TV studio. Today's interview is about: *The Commonwealth*.

- 1) A leader from Australia/New Zealand
- 2) A leader from Canada/India
- 3) A leader from Rwanda/Mozambique
- 4) A leader from Nauru/Maldives

**The teacher** will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

**SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2**

*In pairs.* You are in a coffee shop in your town/city. Start a conversation about: '*The Commonwealth*'. *5 mins.*

**SPEAKING**

*Group* - You are Commonwealth leaders meeting in Sydney. Discuss increased economic trade, the games and Australian food! *5 mins.* **The teacher** will choose some groups to hear their discussions in front of the class.

**SPEAKING - DISCUSSION**

*Allow 10 minutes* – As a class.

Discuss the following...  
The Commonwealth

**The teacher** can moderate the session.

**DISCUSSION**

**Student B questions**

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Which side of the road do they drive on in your country?
- 3) Name three sports in your country.
- 4) Have you ever played rugby, cricket or netball?
- 5) Have you ever been to the Commonwealth Games?
- 6) Would you like to go to the Commonwealth Games?
- 7) Why is the Commonwealth so important to small island countries?
- 8) What advice would you offer leaders in the Commonwealth?
- 9) Has this been a difficult lesson in English for you to understand?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

**GAP FILL: READING**

**The Commonwealth**

Today, let's talk about the Commonwealth. (Full name - The Commonwealth of Nations). It is a group of 54 independent (1)\_\_\_ States, most of whom are former British Empire countries. The (2)\_\_\_ are Rwanda and Mozambique.

Like the British Empire once did, the Commonwealth today (3)\_\_\_ the world. Ninety four per cent of the Commonwealth is in Africa and Asia. It covers nearly one third of the world and has over 2.1 (4)\_\_\_ people in it. This is almost a third of the world's population...

One of the most (5)\_\_\_ countries in the Commonwealth is India. The smallest member is Tuvalu, with about 10,000 people. The three largest countries are India, Canada and Australia. Nauru, an (6)\_\_\_ country in Micronesia in the South Pacific, is the newest member.

The Queen is Head of the Commonwealth. In 2012, The Queen celebrated 60 years as its head. In fact, the British royal family (7)\_\_\_ the (8)\_\_\_.

**member / institution / spans / island / unifies / populous / exceptions / billion**

The GDP of the Commonwealth countries is estimated to be over US\$10 (1)\_\_\_, 65% of which is made up of the UK, Canada, India and Australia. In fact, trade is a very important part of what the Commonwealth is all about.

Members of the Commonwealth can take part in the Commonwealth Games. These are held every four years. (2)\_\_\_ sports in Commonwealth countries include (3)\_\_\_cricket, rugby and (4)\_\_\_ . People mostly drive on the left with English as the (5)\_\_\_ language.

There is also the (6)\_\_\_ Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting - where Heads of Government including Prime Ministers and Presidents (7)\_\_\_ to (8)\_\_\_ topical issues.

**biennial / common / cricket / popular / netball / discuss / trillion / assemble**

**GAP FILL: GRAMMAR**

**The Commonwealth**

Today, let's talk (1)\_\_\_ the Commonwealth. (Full name - The Commonwealth of Nations). It is a group of 54 independent Member States, (2)\_\_\_ of (3)\_\_\_ are former British Empire countries. The exceptions are Rwanda and Mozambique.

Like the British Empire once did, the Commonwealth today spans the world. Ninety four per cent of the Commonwealth is in Africa and Asia. It covers nearly one third of the world and has (4)\_\_\_ 2.1 billion people in it. (5)\_\_\_ is (6)\_\_\_ a third of the world's population...

One of the (7)\_\_\_ populous countries in the Commonwealth is India. The smallest member is Tuvalu, (8)\_\_\_ about 10,000 people. The three largest countries are India, Canada and Australia. Nauru, an island country in Micronesia in the South Pacific, is the newest member.

The Queen is Head of the Commonwealth. In 2012, The Queen celebrated 60 years as its head. In fact, the British royal family unifies the institution.

**whom / with / most / this / most / almost / over / about**

The GDP (1)\_\_\_ the Commonwealth countries is estimated to be over US\$10 trillion, 65% of which is made up of the UK, Canada, India and Australia. In fact, trade is (2)\_\_\_ very important part of what (3)\_\_\_ Commonwealth is all about.

Members of the Commonwealth (4)\_\_\_ take part in the Commonwealth Games. These are held every four years. Popular sports (5)\_\_\_ Commonwealth countries include cricket, rugby and netball. People mostly drive (6)\_\_\_ the left with English (7)\_\_\_ the common language.

There is also the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting - where Heads of Government including Prime Ministers (8)\_\_\_ Presidents assemble to discuss topical issues.

**and / can / the / of / as / a / on / in**

## GAP FILL: LISTENING

### The Commonwealth

Today, let's talk about \_\_\_\_\_. (Full name - The Commonwealth of Nations). It is a group of 54 independent Member States, most of whom are former British Empire countries. The exceptions are \_\_\_\_\_.

Like the British Empire once did, the Commonwealth today spans the world. Ninety four per cent of the Commonwealth is \_\_\_\_\_. It covers nearly one third of the world and has over 2.1 billion people in it. This is almost a third of the world's population...

One of the most \_\_\_\_\_ in the Commonwealth is India. The smallest member is Tuvalu, with about 10,000 people. The three largest countries are India, Canada and Australia. Nauru, an island country in Micronesia in the South Pacific, \_\_\_\_\_.

The Queen is Head of the Commonwealth. In 2012, The Queen celebrated 60 years as its head. In fact, the \_\_\_\_\_ British \_\_\_\_\_ royal \_\_\_\_\_ family \_\_\_\_\_.

The GDP of the Commonwealth countries is estimated to be over US\$10 trillion, 65% of which is made up of the UK, Canada, India and Australia. In fact, trade is a very \_\_\_\_\_ what the Commonwealth is all about.

Members of the Commonwealth can take part in the \_\_\_\_\_. These are held every four years. Popular sports in Commonwealth countries include cricket, rugby and netball. People mostly drive on the left with English as the common language. There \_\_\_\_\_ Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting - where Heads of Government including Prime Ministers and Presidents assemble to \_\_\_\_\_.

**www.newsflashenglish.com**

Copyright D.J. Robinson 2013 (V1)

## WRITING/SPELLING

### WRITING / SPEAKING

**1) On the board** - *In pairs*, name as many *countries, who are members of the Commonwealth*, as you can! *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

**2) Sentence starters** - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) The Commonwealth \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) The Queen \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) The Commonwealth Games \_\_\_\_\_

**3) Homework** - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **The Commonwealth**. Your email can be read out in class.

### GAP FILL READING

- 1) member
- 2) exceptions
- 3) spans
- 4) billion
- 5) populous
- 6) island
- 7) unifies
- 8) institution

### SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) independent
- 2) Rwanda
- 3) Mozambique
- 4) topical
- 5) population
- 6) populous
- 7) Micronesia
- 8) celebrate
- 9) unifies
- 10) institution

### ANSWERS

- 1) trillion
- 2) popular
- 3) cricket
- 4) netball
- 5) common
- 6) biennial
- 7) assemble
- 8) discuss

### SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

**Pass = 12**

**Good = 15**

**Very good = 18**

**Excellent = 20**

- 11) important
- 12) popular
- 13) countries
- 14) cricket
- 15) discuss
- 16) netball
- 17) common
- 18) language
- 19) biennial
- 20) assemble

The Commonwealth – *10<sup>th</sup> January 2013*