**Great Britain**The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is situated on the British Isles. The British Isles consist of two large islands, Great Britain and Ireland, and above five thousand small islands. Their total area is over 315 000 square kilometers. The United Kingdom is made up of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast respectively.

The British isles are separated from the European continent by the North Sea and the English Channel. The western coast of Great Britain is washed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea. The surface of the British Isles varies very much. The north of Scotland is mountainous and is called Highlands, while the south, which has beautiful valleys and plains, is called Lowlands. The north and west of England are mountainous, but all the rest - east, center and southeast - is a vast plain. Mountains are not very high. Ben Nevis is the highest mountain. (1343 m.)

There are a lot of rivers in GB, but they are not very long. The Severn is the longest river, while the Thames is the deepest and the most important one.

The UK is one of the world’s smallest countries. The population of the country is over 87 million and about 80% of it is urban. The UK is highly developed industrial country. It’s known as one of world’s largest producers and exporters of machinery, electronics, textile, aircraft and navigation equipment. The UK is constitutional monarchy. In law, the Head of State is the Queen, but in practice, the Queen reigns, but does not rule. The country is ruled by the elected government with the Prime Minister at the head. The British Parliament consists of two chambers: the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

There are three main political parties in Great Britain: the Labour, the Conservative and the Liberal parties. The Liberal party is the ruling party nowadays.

**Political System of Great Britain**

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a constitutional monarchy. Britain does not have a written constitution. Parliament is the most important authority in Britain.

The monarch serves formally as head of state. The present sovereign is Queen Elizabeth II (the second).

The House of Commons consists of Members of Parliament. General elections are held every five years. Ail citizens aged 18 have the right to vote.

There are few political parties in Britain. The main ones are: the Conservative Party, the Labour Party.

Each political party puts up one candidate for each constituency. The one who wins the most votes is MP for that area.

The party which wins the most seats in Parliament forms the Government; its leader becomes the Prime Minister.

The functions of the House of Commons are legislation and scrutiny of government activities. The House of Commons is presided over by the Speaker.

The House of Lords is presided by the Lord Chancellor. The House of Lords has no real power.

It's in the House of Commons that new bills are introduced and debated.

Parliament is responsible for British national policy. Local governments are responsible for organizing of education, police and many others.

1. monarch [‘mɔnək] — монарх

2. monarchy — монархия

3.constitution — конституция

4.constitutional monarchy — конституционная монархия

5.democracy — демократия

6. parliamentary republic — парламентская республика

1. parliamentary democracy — парламентарная демократия
2. ceremonial function — церемониальная функция
3. sign the bills — подписывать законопроекты
4. majority seats — большинство мест
5. elected — избираемый
6. a bill = a proposed law — законопроект
7. lawmakers — законодатели
8. legislative branch of power [‘leʤɪslətɪv]– законодательная власть
9. executive branch of power [ɪg’zekjutɪv] – исполнительная власть
10. to vote/ voting — голосовать / голосование
11. to elect/ election — избирать / выборы
12. carry out some policy — проводить политику
13. run the country — управлять страной

### System of Education in the United Kingdom

The quality of a country's future life, commercially, industrially and intellectually, depends on the quality of its [education system](http://www.learnenglishbest.com/education-in-the-united-kingdom.html). The state in the United Kingdom provides a full range of free schooling. Those parents who prefer to send their children to private [educational institutions](http://www.learnenglishbest.com/education-in-the-great-britain.html), are free to do so. There are about 2500 fee-paying, or public schools in the country.

State schooling in the UK is not as centralized as in most European countries. Firstly, there is no prescribed curriculum. Secondly, the types of schools available and the age ranges for which they cater vary in different parts of the country. Local Educational Authorities are responsible for [education](http://www.learnenglishbest.com/topic-higher-education-in-great-britain.html) in each area. At any state school no tuition fees are payable. State schooling in the UK is funded by the government and the local rates.

Schooling is voluntary under the age of five, and compulsory from 5 to 16. Generally, primary education in the UK takes place in infant schools (for ages 5-7) and junior schools (for ages 8—11); secondary education takes place in secondary schools. Pupils can stay at school voluntarily for up to three years longer. Until 1964 children took an 'eleven plus exam' at the age of 11 and were 'streamed' according to the results of the exam for education in different types of secondary schools. Grammar schools provided a mainly academic course for the top 20 %, technical schools specialized in technical studies, modern schools provided a general education with a practical bias. In 1965 non-selective comprehensive schools were introduced, though the old system still exists.

Having completed a compulsory education, 16 year-olds may start work, remain at school or study at a Further Education college. At schools and colleges they can take the school-leaving General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams — in a range of subjects. Other students prefer to pursue work-based training such as General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), which provide skills and knowledge some in vocational areas such as business, engineering, etc. Having completed GCSEs most students usually specialize in three to four subjects leading to General Certificate of Education (GCE) A Levels. Others can take higher grade GNVQs.

Many students then move towards higher education training at universities, colleges and institutes offering studies at degree level and higher. The most common degree courses, which usually take three years to complete are the Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BSc), [Bachelor of Education](http://www.learnenglishbest.com/topic-higher-education-in-great-britain.html) (BEd), Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) and Bachelor of Laws (LLB). Master degrees for those undertaking further study include the Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc), Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Master of Laws (LLM). Then there are research-based postgraduate courses leading to the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD/DPhil).

These academic qualifications involve thousands of courses at more than 180 higher educational establishments in Britain. The most famous British universities are, of course, [Oxford](http://www.learnenglishbest.com/oxford-the-university-town.html) and [Cambridge](http://www.learnenglishbest.com/topic-cambridge-kembridzh.html) called 'Oxbridge' and famous for their academic excellence.

**Translate the following sentences into English - Переведите следующие предложения на английский**

1. В Великобритании государство предоставляет весь спектр образовательных возможностей: платные частные школы и бесплатные государственные школы различных типов.
2. В государственных школах Великобритании нет обязательной программы, они финансируются правительством или из местных налогов.
3. Начальное образование делится на начальную школу и младшую школу, средние школы делятся на грамматические, технические, современные школы и неселективные общеобразовательные школы.
4. После завершения обязательного образования в 16 лет ученик может остаться в школе, пойти работать или пойти в колледж для дальнейшего обучения.
5. Высшее образование включает курсы, ведущие к степени бакалавра искусств, наук, образования, инженерных наук или юриспруденции.
6. Ученики средней школы сдают экзамены на Общий сертификат о среднем образовании в 16 лет и экзамены повышенного уровня в 18, если они остаются в школе.
7. Исследовательские курсы, подводящие к получению степеней выше бакалавра, могут привести к степеням магистра философии или доктора философии.
8. Те, кто продолжает образование, получают степень магистра искусств, наук, управления бизнесом или юриспруденции.
9. The state in the United Kingdom provides a full range of educational facilities — fee-paying public schools, and free state schools of different types.
10. State schools in the UK have no prescribed curriculum and are funded by the government and the local rates.
11. Primary education is divided into infant schools and junior schools; secondary schools are divided into grammar, technical, modern and non-selective comprehensive schools.
12. After completing compulsory education at 16, a pupil can stay at school, work or go to a Further Education College.
13. Higher education training includes courses leading to the Bachelor of Arts, Science, Education, Engineering or Laws degree.
14. Pupils of a secondary school take General Certificate of Education exams at 16 and A-level exams at 18 (if they remain at school).
15. Research-based postgraduate courses lead to the Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy.
16. Those undertaking further study get the Master of Arts, Science, Business Administration or Laws degree.