

Le Royaume-Uni et ses nations

How can different national identities coexist within one state?

Ce que tu vas savoir faire

Distinguer Angleterre, Grande-Bretagne et Royaume-Uni ; expliquer la dévolution ; parler d'identités sans généraliser.

Axe 6 · The United Kingdom and its nations · Tronc commun · LVB B1 / LVA B2

1 Le cours / Key ideas

Un État, quatre nations

The United Kingdom includes England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Great Britain is the island containing England, Scotland and Wales. The Republic of Ireland is a separate state. British and English are therefore not interchangeable. People may identify with several communities at the same time.

Institutions et dévolution

Devolution transfers powers to institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland while the UK Parliament remains sovereign. The arrangements differ between territories and have changed over time. Devolution is not the same as independence: it changes who makes some decisions within the state.

Union et diversité

Shared institutions, cultural industries and public services can connect people, while languages, histories and political choices express difference. Neither unity nor division explains every experience. Compare positions and contexts; do not assume that all Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish people agree about their future.

2 Repères et exemples culturels

1998-1999 : un repère institutionnel

The Scotland Act, Government of Wales Act and Northern Ireland Act were passed in 1998. Devolved institutions received powers in 1999. These laws did not create identical systems, and later reforms modified the arrangements.

Les mots pour localiser

London: England; Edinburgh: Scotland; Cardiff: Wales; Belfast: Northern Ireland. Dublin is the capital of the Republic of Ireland. A city can represent a political institution without summarising the identity of an entire nation.

Les outils pour comprendre et s'exprimer

The United Kingdom and its nations

3 Vocabulaire utile / Useful vocabulary

a nation : une nation
a state : un État
devolution : transfert de compétences à des institutions territoriales
independence : l'indépendance
a devolved parliament : un parlement doté de compétences transférées
shared institutions : des institutions communes
belonging : le sentiment d'appartenance
to govern : gouverner
to remain part of : rester membre de
a diverse society : une société diverse

4 Définir et nuancer

Relatives : Wales is a nation which has its own devolved parliament. Who pour les personnes ; which pour les choses.

Comparatifs : These arrangements are more complex than they first appear. Pas more complex than.

Quantifieurs : Some people support independence; others prefer the union. Some ne signifie pas tous. Utilise a range of views plutôt qu'une généralisation nationale.

Le piège à éviter

England ≠ Great Britain ≠ the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland appartient au Royaume-Uni ; la République d'Irlande n'en fait pas partie.

5 Méthode et exemple rédigé

Pour un sujet institutionnel : commence par définir les termes, situe les territoires, donne un repère daté, puis explique les points de vue. Vérifie les responsables et chiffres actuels avant de les utiliser : ils changent.

Exemple original à analyser, pas à apprendre par cœur.

The United Kingdom shows that a state can contain several national identities. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have devolved institutions, but their arrangements are not identical. This allows some decisions to be taken closer to the people affected while maintaining common UK institutions. However, devolution does not settle every disagreement about sovereignty or belonging. Some people see it as a useful balance, whereas others favour a different constitutional future. A careful analysis should therefore distinguish institutions from identities: living under the same state does not mean feeling British in the same way. Shared structures and diverse loyalties can coexist, although the balance remains a subject of debate.

À toi de jouer / Practice

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6 Comprendre un texte

Support original écrit pour cette fiche. Situation fictive ; ce n'est pas un article de presse ni un témoignage authentique.

Read the text

During a fictional exchange in Cardiff, a visiting student introduces the whole group as English. Rhys politely explains that he is Welsh and that Cardiff is in Wales, which is part of the United Kingdom. Another student asks whether having a Welsh Parliament means that Wales is an independent country. Rhys distinguishes devolution from independence and explains that powers are divided between institutions. He adds that people do not all describe their identities in the same way. Some feel Welsh and British; others emphasise one identity more strongly. The visitors revise their presentation. Instead of offering a single national portrait, they include a map, an explanation of institutions and several personal voices. They realise that accurate vocabulary can make a conversation more respectful.

Réponds en anglais en reformulant. Appuie tes réponses sur le texte.

1. What geographical mistake does the visitor make?
2. What institutional misunderstanding follows?
3. Why does the group include several personal voices?

7 S'entraîner à la langue

1. Relie avec which : Cardiff is a city. It is the capital of Wales.
2. Corrige : Edinburgh is in England.
3. Complète : Devolution is different ____ independence.

8 Écrire, parler et échanger

Writing. Write 120-150 words for an exchange handbook: explain the difference between England, Great Britain and the UK, then give advice on discussing identities respectfully.

Speaking / interaction. Sur une carte muette, situe les quatre nations et leurs capitales. Explique ensuite en anglais, en une minute, pourquoi devolution et independence ne sont pas synonymes.

Deux niveaux pour progresser

LVB / B1 : vise des idées claires, des phrases reliées et un exemple précis.

LVA / B2 : ajoute une objection, une nuance et des structures variées. Les longueurs et durées proposées sont des entraînements, pas un format officiel d'épreuve.

Corrigés expliqués / Answer key

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9 Compréhension : éléments attendus

1. The visitor calls the entire group English, although Rhys is Welsh and Cardiff is in Wales.
2. The visitor confuses having devolved institutions with being an independent state.
3. Because identities vary; no single speaker can represent how everyone in Wales feels.

10 Langue : réponses et explications

1. Cardiff is a city which is the capital of Wales. Plus naturel : Cardiff, which is the capital of Wales, is a city in the UK.
2. Edinburgh is in Scotland.
3. Devolution is different from independence.

11 Production écrite : une réponse possible

D'autres réponses sont valables si elles respectent le sujet et sont argumentées. Le modèle ci-dessous illustre un objectif B2.

Before visiting the United Kingdom, it is useful to learn a few geographical distinctions. England is one of its four nations, alongside Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Great Britain is the island that contains England, Scotland and Wales. The Republic of Ireland is a separate state, so it should not be confused with Northern Ireland. These distinctions also matter in conversation. Calling everyone English may ignore how people describe themselves. Some people feel both British and Welsh, for example, while others emphasise a different identity. We should listen rather than assume. It is also important to distinguish devolution from independence: devolved institutions make decisions in certain areas within the UK. Accurate words will not answer every political question, but they help us ask better and more respectful ones.

Auto-évaluation avant de refermer la fiche

Je sais expliquer l'axe sans lire le cours ; citer un exemple contextualisé ; employer cinq mots nouveaux ; appliquer le point de langue ; répondre avec une idée, une preuve et une nuance. À l'oral, je parle intelligiblement et je peux réagir à une question.

Références : Programme officiel d'anglais, BO du 29 mai 2025, annexe 4 (application en terminale : rentrée 2026).

Repère culturel : House of Commons Library - Introduction to devolution. Vérification : 20 octobre 2026. Synthèses, supports et exercices originaux.