**Course:** British Civilization

**Lesson One/ Part one:** The History of Britain

**Semester:** 3

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**Introduction**

* Britain was part of the European continent until the end of the last Ice Age.
* Big regions of Britain were covered in ice with freezing weather followed by a warmer season.
* Nearly10.000 years ago, this last Ice Age came to its end.
* As a result, sea levels increased and thus Britain became separated from the continent of Europe right before 6000BC.
* This separation from the European continent affect the social and economic life and even politically.
* The history of the Island and its cultural and political division have been

Influenced by various external invasions (Romans and Germans).

Great Britain it is composed of three countries (England, Wales and Scotland).

* The term England comes from the Germanic tribes (Anglo-Saxons).
* Wales is a term applied by the English, means ‘strangers’ or ‘foreigners’.
* Wales was occupied by England in the late of the 13th century is became a part of UK in the 16th century because of it poverty and hilly land unlike England and Scotland.
* Scotland remained a separated state through the middle Ages and into the down of the 18th century.
* England and Ireland were much more exposed to invasion by sea than Scotland and Wales because of the conjunction of good harbors and fertile lowland with relative ease of transportation.

English +Wales=1542

English + Wales + Scotland = 1707

English+ Wales+ Scotland +Ireland= 1801

English +Wales +Scotland +Northern Ireland=1922

(Ireland is divided into two parts because of the Civil War)

1. **Early Settlements (Prehistory to ca. 450BC)**
* The first evidence of human life is a few stone tools dating back to the Ice Age.
* 20.000 years before Christ, the prehistoric people of Britain (pre-celtic) were the dark Iberians who lived during the Bronze Age.
* In fact, many inhabitants lived in Britain about 750,000 years ago.
* Britain was inhabited by small groups of hunters, fishers and gatherers (they gathered food like berries, nuts and fruits).
* Afterwards about 3000BC Neolithic (New Stone Age) people, who crossed the sea from Europe, settled down who used to keep animals. Grow corn corps (farming is thought to have arrived in Britain by Europeans) and made pottery.
* The most significant physical dregs of Britons are the Great stone or megalithic circles which laid out across south and east Britain.
* There are more than 900 stone Age circles in the British Isles, but there are two most famous ones:
	+ - * 1. **Stonehenge** (2.8 km long and 128 m wide)
* One of the most famous prehistoric monuments in the world.
* It is located in Wiltshire England.
* It was built over 4500 years ago (date back to about 3000BC).
* It is estimated that it took over 30 million hour of labour to build.
* It was built in separate stages over a period of more than a thousand year.
* Some of the stones used in its construction were brought from as far away as 150 Miles, indicating that the people built it had an impressive knowledge of engineering and transportation.
	+ - * 1. **Avebury** (larger than Stonehenge)
* It was built around the same time of building Stonehenge or a little earlier.
* It is located about 32Km to the North Wiltshire.
* Originally it contained 98 large stone but only 27 are still standing forming a UNISCO world heritage site.

Exercise: Please, write an essay talking about the purpose of building Stonehenge and Avebury.

**References:**

Burns, William. *A brief history of Great Britain*. Infobase Holdings, Inc, 2021.

Dargie, Richard. *A History of Britain*. Arcturus Publishing, 2009.

McDowall, David. "An illustrated history of Britain." (No Title) (1989).