

- Nick:** This is London and behind me are the Houses of Parliament. Parts of these buildings are more than nine hundred years old. This is where the laws of the UK are debated and created.
- The United Kingdom is actually made up of four different countries; England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each nation has its own culture and heritage.
- The population of England is around fifty million people. The English are known for drinking tea, The Queen and talking about the weather.
- But what are we really like?
- Priest:** The English are a tolerant people.
- Woman 1:** They're just enchanting.
- Woman 2:** The English people are very nice.
- Woman 3:** They're so polite and so friendly.
- Nick:** Scotland is in the North of Britain. Just over five million people live there.
- It's been part of the UK since 1707. Edinburgh is the capital city and home to the Scottish Parliament. The Parliament building is a work of art in itself!
- Scotland has some unique customs: wearing tartan kilts ... playing the bagpipes ... and tossing the caber, a very large post.
- For over sixty years, the Edinburgh Festival has celebrated art, theatre and culture.
- Wales is on the Western edge of Britain.
- It also used to be a separate country but has been part of the UK for over four hundred years.
- Nearly three million people live in Wales.
- One of its symbols is a red dragon, found on the national flag. The Welsh parliament is in the capital city, Cardiff. The Welsh are proud to have their language and twenty per cent of the people speak Cymraeg. Most signs are in English and Welsh.
- Singing is an important tradition in Wales. People working in coal mines in Wales originally formed male-only choirs, they are still popular today.
- Old Welsh Man:** Well I joined the choir because I met a couple of students – Welsh boys – they brought me here – love singing – I'm in the choir.
- Young Welsh Man:** The choir sings in Welsh so you have to be willing to try and pronounce the language but you definitely don't have to be Welsh to be a member of the choir.
- Nick:** Northern Ireland is also part of the United Kingdom. The country is home to just under two million people. The capital is Belfast and for many years, Northern Ireland was a place of conflict.
- This beautiful country was considered a dangerous place to visit. The troubles lasted until recent years when the peace process brought both sides together. Now, both sides share power in the Northern Ireland assembly.
- The flag most often used for Northern Ireland shows the red hand; a symbol with a long history in this part of Ireland and a crown which shows links to the rest of the UK.
- The culture in Northern Ireland is rich in myth and legend.
- One story says that the rocks forming the Giant's Causeway were thrown there by an Irish giant during a fight with a Scottish giant. Irish dancing is popular in Northern and Southern Ireland and has been exported around the world.
- Irish Dancer:** Irish dancing is special because you have to have good posture, arms by your side and crossed feet. I love Irish dancing because it's great exercise and a lot of fun.
- Nick:** The four countries of the UK have different traditions. But those differences are also strengths and make the UK what it is today.