

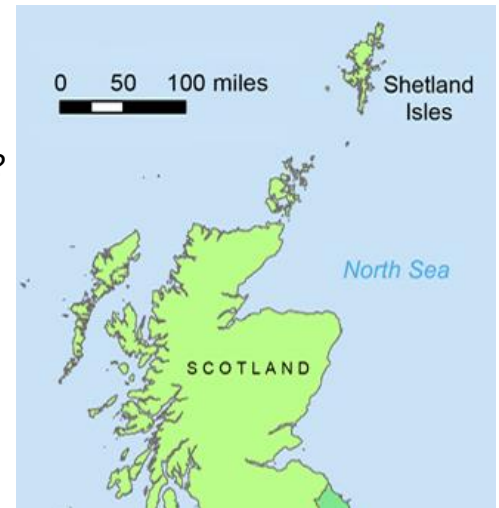
GREAT BRITAIN IN 10 PICTURES

The Shetland Islands

Task 1: INTRODUCTION

Talk to your partner and discuss the following questions:

1. Does your country include any islands?
2. What do you think it is like to live very far from a big city?
3. Does your town/city have a swimming pool?
4. How do you/your classmates travel to school each day?



Task 2: READING

Why must the children in the article fly to a different island each week? Read and find out.

Freyja Parnaby, six, and nine-year-olds Grace Parnaby and Lewis Wright-Stanners regularly travel from the Fair Isle for their swimming lessons. However, each time they travel, they face the possibility their flight home may be cancelled due to bad weather, leaving them stranded. The children, from Fair Isle Primary School, take the 25-minute flight with their headteacher Ruth Stout. She said: "As we don't have a pool on Fair Isle, for the kids to be able to learn to swim we simply have to fly to the nearest pool. "About 50% of our lessons that we plan don't happen as the weather often sees our flights get cancelled at short notice. "It's not the smoothest journey from Fair Isle to Tingwall - in the summer there can be too much fog to fly and in the winter too much wind. So we just have to be flexible. We always over pack, for example, because we can't be sure that if we do make it to the mainland we'll be able to get back."

Fair Isle - home to 60 people - is the most geographically remote inhabited island in the United Kingdom. Fair Isle's pupils and headteacher stay at Anderson High School on Shetland for two or three nights at a time so they can fit in multiple lessons.

Gary Morgan, lead swimming teacher at Clickimin Leisure Complex, said: "It's always a pleasure to teach the children from Fair Isle, especially given the remarkable effort they make to travel to the pool."

Brian Lironi, of Scottish Water, said: "Shetland - and remote islands such as Fair Isle - are surrounded by water so it's so important that children, from a young age, are competent swimmers. We're extremely proud to be supporting the Learn to Swim Framework across Scotland and it's fantastic to see that even when pools aren't always within easy reach, geography is no barrier to learning to swim."

Now read the text again and decide if the following sentences are true or false

1. It is usually sunny in the Shetland islands.
2. It is very rare that a swimming lesson has to be cancelled.
3. Sometimes flights have to be cancelled because it's hard to see.
4. Gary Morgan enjoys teaching the children from Fair Isle.
5. It is important that children who live on islands learn how to swim.

Task 3: VOCABULARY

Find words in the text with the following meanings:

DEFINITION	WORD
often	
stuck in one place	
without much warning	
more than one	
close, nearby	

Write one sentence using each word. Say the sentence to your partner with the target word blanked out. Can they guess the missing word?

Task 4: Research

Research a remote place where people live and find answers to these questions:

What country is your location part of? How many people live there?

What problems are caused for them by living somewhere so far from a city? How do they deal with these problems?

Do you think you would find it easy to live in similar circumstances? What would be hardest?

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Teachers' Notes

This activity has been designed for pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate students to be used before the event as an introduction and a way of getting students interested in the subject.

You may follow up the exercises with a class debate or series of speeches/presentations followed by question and answer sessions or further research into the relevant topics.

Answers are as follows:

Task 2

1. false
2. false
3. true
4. true
5. true

Task 3

DEFINITION	WORD
often	Regularly
stuck in one place	Stranded
without much warning	At short notice
more than one	Multiple
close, nearby	Within easy reach