

Y8 Knowledge Organiser - Term 4 - The British Empire



Overall enquiry question: **How do historians have constructive conversations about the British Empire?**

Enquiry 1 (overview):
Why did Britain build an Empire?

Enquiry 2 (Australia):
What was the impact of colonisation on the Aboriginal population of Australia?

Enquiry 3 (India):
Why does it matter what we call the Indian Rebellion of 1857?

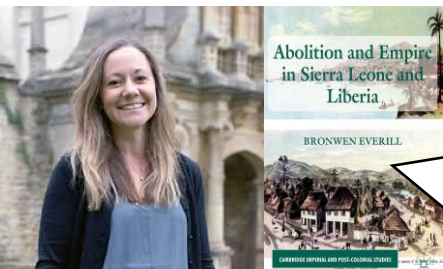
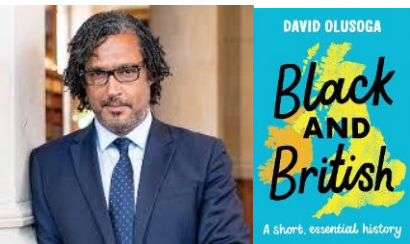
Enquiry 4 (The Scramble for Africa):
Why are statues of Cecil Rhodes coming down?

Map of the British Empire



"Two different things can be true at the same time....the debates about whether the Empire was good or bad are a monologue. But we need to engage in a dialogue".

David Olusoga, Professor of Public History at the University of Manchester.

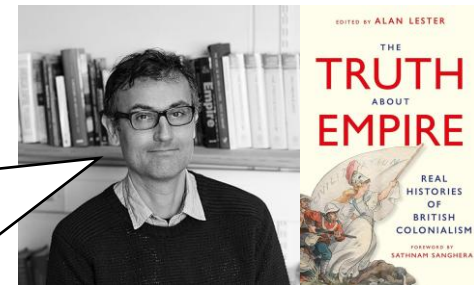


"History is not one story – it's a sort of negotiation, a debate. What historians do is look at the past from lots of different angles, because there isn't just one narrative".

Bronwen Everill, Director of African Studies and lecturer in History at Gonville & Caius College, University of Cambridge

"It comes down to the questions we ask, the sources we use to answer them, and how we interpret those answers... we come to them with open minds and an agenda driven by curiosity".

Alan Lester, Professor of Historical Geography at the University of Sussex



Y8 Key Words - Term 4 - The British Empire



Term	Definition
Aboriginal [Ab-or-idge-in-al]	Someone who inhabited (lived in) a land before the arrival of colonists.
Act [Act]	A law that has been voted on and agreed on by Parliament, then given Royal Assent.
Anglicise [Ang-li-size]	The process by which something or someone (usually a word) is made more English. Usually applied to language or culture.
Annexation [An-nex-a-tion]	Taking over and adding territory to the rule of a country.
Caste system [Cast]	The class structure in Hindu society based on ritual purity and social status; it is hereditary (determined by birth). An 'outcaste' has therefore been ejected from their Hindu caste for violation of its customs / rules.
Civilising [Siv-il-ize-ing]	The British belief that they were improving the daily life and culture of indigenous (native, original) people by ruling them.
Colonies [col-on-ees]	Countries within an empire, that are ruled by another country
Colonise [col-on-ize]	To send settlers to a place and establish control over it.
Commonwealth [Com-on-wealth]	An international organisation consisting of Britain's ex-colonies (with the exception of the USA). Britain is also a member.
Culture [Cult-chur]	The beliefs, values, attitudes, shared by a group of people living in a community/country.
Custom [Cus-tom]	A traditional and widely accepted way of behaving or doing something that is specific to a particular society, place, or time.
Doctrine of Lapse [Doc-trin of Lapss]	Policy of the East India Company where they annexed (took over) Indian land if its Prince died with no direct heir.
Duties [Due-tees]	A kind of tax levied by a state. Tax is charged on individuals, wealth, services and sales, whereas duties are charged on goods.
East India Company (EIC)	Company that controlled India on behalf of the British government from 1773 until 1843. It had its own private army.
Empire [Emp-eye-a]	A group of countries or colonies that have been conquered and are ruled by a foreign power.
Evangelical [Eev-van-gel-ick-cal]	A strict Protestant who seeks to convert others to the Christian faith, through public preaching and missionary work.
Immigrant [Im-mig-grant]	People who move into a country
Imperialism [Imp-peer-ree-al]	The economic and political control of other countries
Independence [Ind-di-pend-ance]	Eventually colonies demanded this, also known as "self-rule"; i.e. free from interference by other countries.
Indigenous [Ind-dig-gin-ous]	Originating from a particular place; native
Inferior [In-fear-ee-or]	Lower than others; opposite of superior
Lee Enfield Rifle	A rifle used throughout the British Empire in the 19 th and early 20 th Century. The end of the cartridge had to be bitten off and lubricated, then loaded into the barrel of the gun.
Missionaries [Mish-tion-air-ees]	Christians who believed it was their God-given duty to travel to British colonies and convert the native people to Christianity.

Term	Definition
Monopoly [mon-op-pol-ee]	Control over a certain trade in a certain area. E.g. the EIC had a monopoly over trade in India.
Mughal [Moo-gal]	A member of the Muslim dynasty and empire which ruled much of India from 1500. The collapse of the Mughal Empire from the 1700s created a power vacuum, filled by the EIC.
Mutiny [Mew-tin-ee]	An open rebellion (and refusal to obey) against authorities, especially by soldiers or sailors against their officers.
Native [Nate-tiv]	Someone who inhabited (lived in) a land before the arrival of colonists.
Nomadic [No-mad-ick]	A way of life; moving from place to place
Outcast [Out-cast]	'Out of caste'; person who has been rejected by their society or social group. An 'outcaste' is someone who has been ejected from their Hindu caste for violation of its customs / rules.
Orientalism [Ore-ree-ent-tal-ism]	Style, artefacts, or traits considered characteristic of the peoples and cultures of Asia.
Parliament [Parl-lee-a-ment]	The group of people who discuss and make laws
Penal [Pee-nal]	Relating to, used for, or prescribing the punishment of offenders under the legal system.
Princely state [Prince-lee]	Divisions of the Indian subcontinent ruled by local rulers (Princes), either Muslim or Hindu.
Queen Victoria	British monarch from 1837-1901 who presided over expansion of the British Empire
Raj [Raaj]	Indian for 'rule' or 'government'; British sovereignty in India.
Rebellion [Reb-bel-lee-on]	Where a group of people rise up against their ruler(s).
Reparations [Rep-par-a-tions]	Compensation; money to make up for wrongdoing in the past (often paid after war)
Sepoy [See-poy]	Indian soldier trained and employed by the East India Company
Social Darwinism [So-shal Dar-win-ism]	Racist misunderstanding of Darwin's theory of evolution, that some races are more 'evolved' than others. This is a racism. It was believed by Europeans in the 19 th century.
Superior [Soup-ear-ree-a]	Opposite of inferior; belief that some are more important/higher in status than others.
Suttee/Sati [Sut-tee]	Sati; Hindu tradition of self-immolation (burning alive) by widows, representing the sanctity of the marriage bond.
Thagi [Thug-ee]	Thugi / Thuggee; those who practised highway robbery and ritual murder in the service of the Hindu goddess Kali. Victims were released into their next life. 'Thug' used in Britain.
Trade [Trade]	Buying and selling goods.
Transportation [Trans-port-a-tion]	The shipping of criminals from Britain to Australia, where they worked as slave labour for a specified time.
Westernisation [West-ster-n-ize-za-tion]	Assimilation of/absorbing Western culture; the social process of becoming familiar with or converting to the customs and practices of Western civilization.
'The White Man's Burden'	Originally a poem by Rudyard Kipling but symbolised the European racism and their justification for building empires, especially during the 'Scramble for Africa'