**British Colonialism Reading Questions**

Read the web page below and answer the following questions:

[British colonialism and imperialism explained - History Skills](https://www.historyskills.com/classroom/modern-history/mod-british-colonialism-reading/)

1. What is the difference between colonisation and imperialism?

Colonisation is the process of taking ownership of another land for another country's own use, generally referring to the physical occupation of a territory. Imperialism is the use of political, economic, and military power to extend a nation's authority by establishing control over other territories. It can refer to both occupation and economic domination.

1. Which countries apart from Britain relied upon imperialism and colonisation to expand their empires in the early modern period?

France, Spain, the Netherlands, and Portugal also relied upon imperialism and colonisation for their empire expansion.

1. What percentage of the world's population and land surface did the British Empire control at its peak in the 19th century?

At its peak in the 19th century, the British Empire controlled a quarter of the world's population and a third of its land surface.

1. What were the primary motivations behind the early voyages of British colonialism?

The early voyages of British colonialism were primarily motivated by a desire for wealth and prestige, a wish to spread Christianity, and a strategic advantage over rival European powers.

1. What were the main commodities the British were interested in during their early explorations?

The British were specifically interested in commodities and cash crops like tobacco, sugar, and spices.

1. What was the 'White Man's Burden'?

The 'White Man's Burden' was a belief among the British that it was their responsibility to spread their culture, which they considered superior, to all other peoples.

1. What role did slavery play in the economy during the era of British colonialism and imperialism?

During the era of British colonialism and imperialism, slavery was an important part of the economy. Slaves were brought from Africa to work on plantations in the Americas and the Caribbean, and in other parts of the world including India and Southeast Asia.

1. When was the slave trade abolished, and when was slavery itself made illegal in British colonies?

The slave trade was abolished in 1807, but slavery itself continued to exist in British colonies until it was finally made illegal in 1833.

1. How did the Industrial Revolution transform Britain?

The Industrial Revolution led to a dramatic increase in the production of goods, transforming Britain from a primarily agrarian society into an industrial powerhouse. It caused a rapid increase in Britain's population and wealth and prompted many people to move from rural areas into cities to work in factories.

1. What were some major British colonies?

Major British colonies included regions in North America like Virginia, Newfoundland, New England, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, Canada, Australia, and India.

1. What events led to the American War of Independence?

The process of colonisation and imperialism created social and military tensions in the 13 North American colonies. Strict imperial controls led to tension between the colonists and the British government, which resulted in the American War of Independence.

1. What were the results of the American War of Independence?

After eight years of fighting, the American colonies were victorious and the United States of America was established.

1. What are some criticisms of British colonialism and imperialism?

Critics argue that British colonialism and imperialism led to exploitation, racism, and underdevelopment in the colonies. It imposed Western values and ideas on colonised peoples, and in Britain, it resulted in the growth of a wealthy elite, while the majority of the population remained poor.

1. When did the British Empire officially come to an end?

The British Empire officially came to an end in the mid-20th century.

1. What are some legacies of British colonialism and imperialism?

The legacy of British colonialism and imperialism is evident in the creation of modern nation-states based on British colonial boundaries, conflict over territories, and the influence of British language, culture, and institutions in many former colonies.

1. How does the English language reflect the legacy of British imperialism?

Even after the decline of the British Empire, the English language remains one of the most important international languages in trade and business, reflecting the legacy of British imperialism.

**Paragraph Writing**

Based upon what you have learnt in your readings, answer the question below in paragraph format (Topic Sentence, Explanation, Evidence, Concluding Sentence):

*What were the* [*causes and consequences*](https://www.historyskills.com/historical-knowledge/causes-and-consequences/) *of British colonialism?*