

**Topic: The British Empire (1750-1900)** This second unit in Year 8, about the British Empire, follows on directly from the Industrial Revolution unit, at a time when Britain was growing in terms of its wealth and power. The Empire comprised of territories around the globe which were ruled over Great Britain (or the United Kingdom) for 200 years. The British Empire was the largest empire in world history. At its peak, Britain controlled 23% of the world's land surface. More than 458 million people were brought under British rule during the reign of Queen Victoria. Today most of Britain's former colonies are members of the Commonwealth of Nations but they mostly govern themselves. We will begin by asking ourselves why Britain (and other great powers) built empires (imperialism) during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, before looking at the effects of imperial rule on the colonies (the rulers and the ruled) and then looking at some case studies in more detail, e.g. South Africa and India. Empires are not fashionable today, but were they all bad?



Empire Timeline:		Empire People:	
1600s	East India Company begins setting up trading stations in India	William Beckford	Wealthy sugar plantation owner & slave keeper in Jamaica
1620	The Founding Fathers land at Plymouth Rock in the New World	Britannia	Iconic woman representing <b>British</b> national identity (50p)
1750s+	The British Empire begins to grow rapidly from about this time	Chief Cateswayo	Chief of the Zulus who defeated the British at Isandlwana
1757	Robert Clive and East India Company win the Battle of Plassey	Robert Clive of India	Soldier in the East India Company & Governor of Bengal
1783	America asserts independence and breaks away from British rule	Lord Chelmsford	British General responsible for British defeat at Isandlwana
1769	Captain Cooke maps coast of New Zealand & Eastern Australia	Captain Cooke	Royal Navy captain and explorer – sailed on the <i>Endeavour</i>
1787/88	First Fleet leaves England and arrives in Botany Bay, Australia	Lord Dalhousie	Governor General of India before mutiny - banned <i>suttee</i>
1857	The Indian Mutiny breaks out over the cartridge controversy	Mahatma Ghandi	Led India to independence (1948) using non-violent protest
1858	British Government takes control of India and appoints a Viceroy	Mangal Pandey	Indian <i>sepo</i> y whose execution sparked the Indian Mutiny
1867	Modern Canada is created as a dominion of the British Empire	Nehru	First Prime Minister of independent India, elected in 1948
1889	Cecil Rhodes begins to take over what became Rhodesia in Africa	Cecil Rhodes	British businessman & politician, PM of Cape Colony 1890s
1881	The Zulus defeat the British Army at the Battle of Isandlwana	Horace Smith-Dorrien	Officer in the British Army and a survivor of Isandlwana
1948	India gains independence, followed by break-up of British Empire	Queen Victoria	Ruled Britain in the 1800s when the Empire was at its peak

Empire Key Words:		Empire Key Words:	
Aborigine	An indigenous tribesman or woman of Australia	Import	To buy goods or raw materials from countries overseas
Asigai	Short stabbing spear used by the Zulus in battle	Indigenous	To originally come from a place, i.e. indigenous inhabitants
Cartridge	Short cardboard tube holding bullet & gunpowder	Martini Henri Rifle	Rifle used by British soldiers at Isandlwana – it jammed!
Colony	Territory with settlers living in it - part of an empire	Mutiny	To disobey orders, word often used in the army & navy
Commonwealth	Independent countries from the old British Empire	Plantation	Big farm with slaves growing sugar, rice, tobacco, cotton
Convict	A prisoner transported to work in the colonies	Sepoy	A Indian born soldier of the British Army serving in India
East India Company	British company which took over India in the 1700s	Settler	Person who has settled in a colony of the empire to live
Empire	Group of countries ruled over by one stronger country	Sikh / Sikhism	Religion of the Punjab (India) involved in the Mutiny
Export	To sell goods or raw materials to countries overseas	Union Jack	English, Irish & Scottish flags combined in the flag of Great Britain.
Imperialism	Countries building up their own empires in competition	Zulu	An indigenous tribesman or woman of South Africa

