

Reading Listening

1 SCANNING Quickly read about the BBC poll on the Greatest Britons. Find the names of:

- a military leader
- a writer
- a scientist
- an engineer
- a political leader
- royalty

2 a Words2know Check the words in blue below. You have two minutes to read and match the descriptions, 1–8, to the people in the text. Who finished first?

- 1 *Darwin* developed the theory of Evolution.
- 2 _____ led the British army against the king.
- 3 _____ died in a car crash.
- 4 _____ killed his/her cousin.
- 5 _____ designed important bridges.
- 6 _____ wrote plays and poetry.
- 7 _____ discovered the law of gravity.
- 8 _____ wanted peace.

b *121* Listen and check your answers.

3 Read about the winner of the BBC poll. Do you know who it is? Check your answer on page 124.

1 ??? (1874–1965)

1 BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

He came from a famous aristocratic family and became a Member of Parliament at the age of twenty-six. He led Britain through the difficult years of the Second World War and inspired ordinary people with his great speeches. British people today remember him for this – and for his famous wit!

4 *121* Listen to more information about the winner. Tick (✓) true and cross (✗) false.

- 1 He was a very good pupil at school.
- 2 He stayed with the same political party all his life.
- 3 Not everyone was happy when he became Prime Minister.
- 4 He won a Nobel Prize for peace after the war.
- 5 He didn't have very healthy habits.
- 6 He retired at the age of sixty-one.
- 7 His funeral was quiet and private.

Vocabulary Speaking

Personal characteristics

5 Look at the Words2know from the text that describe people. Write them in the correct column in the table.

Positive characteristics Negative characteristics
successful brutal

Words2know *121*

successful brutal talented violent intelligent
determined brave cruel weak glamorous
popular friendly sympathetic brilliant

6 WORD RACE How many adjectives can you add to the lists in exercise 5 in two minutes?

7 Choose three adjectives in exercises 5 and 6 to describe:

- a famous person you like (e.g. a musician)
- someone in your family
- yourself

My mother is very friendly and sympathetic. I'm talented, popular and modest!

8 a Imagine there is a poll to find the greatest men/women in your country's history. In pairs, think of four people from the list below. Explain why they were great, using the Phrases2know.

actor sports person king/queen
scientist writer/artist musician composer
president philosopher prime minister

Phrases2know *121*

Talking about famous people

a brilliant (artist)
the best (footballer) in the world
wrote/composed ...
the greatest (scientist) in our history
was the first person to ...
invented/discovered ...
won ...
led the country when ...

How about Bartok? He was a brilliant ...
I think Galileo was a great Italian because he ...

b With the class, make a list of the ten best candidates. Vote for the winner.

The BBC recently did a poll to find the 'Greatest Britons'. There were TV programmes about the candidates and over a million people voted. These were the top ten.

10 OLIVER CROMWELL (1599–1658)

A successful but brutal military leader. Cromwell led the British parliament and army against King Charles I and executed the king in 1649. Britain was a republic until 1659.

9 HORATIO NELSON (1758–1805)

Defeated Napoleon in the battle of Trafalgar and died in the battle.

A famous statue of Nelson stands in Trafalgar Square in London.

8 JOHN LENNON (1940–1980)

Talented songwriter, peace campaigner and member of The Beatles. His music and ideas inspired millions of people. A violent fan, Mark Chapman, shot him in New York.

7 ELIZABETH I (1553–1603)

Queen of England for forty-five years. She was extremely intelligent, determined and brave but she was also cruel (she executed her cousin, Mary Queen of Scots). In a famous speech she said: 'I may have the body of a weak and feeble woman but I have the heart and mind of a king.' Elizabeth never married.

6 SIR ISAAC NEWTON (1643–1727)

One of the greatest scientists and mathematicians in history. People say he discovered the law of gravity when an apple fell on his head!

5 WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616)

The greatest writer in the English language. He wrote about thirty-eight plays, including Hamlet and Macbeth, and hundreds of poems. But some people say Shakespeare didn't write the plays himself.

4 CHARLES DARWIN (1809–1882)

Naturalist. He developed the theory of evolution, and in 1859 he wrote his famous work, *On the Origin of Species*. In his lifetime, many people were unhappy about his ideas and even now, some people do not believe them.

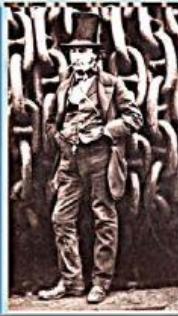
3 DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES (1961–1997)

Glamorous mother of Princes William and Harry. Diana was very popular in her lifetime because she was friendly and sympathetic to ordinary people, especially the sick and the poor. She died in a car crash aged just thirty-six.

2 ISAMBARD KINGDOM BRUNEL (1806–1859)

A brilliant engineer. He designed and built many important railways, ships and bridges. He was a surprising Number 2, as he was not very famous before the BBC programme!

1 ???



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