

READING
THE BRITISH CLIMATE

the 8th form II term

The popular belief that it rains all the time in Britain is simply not true. In fact, London gets no more rain in a year than most other European cities. The amount of rain that falls on a town in Britain depends on where it is. Generally speaking, the further west you go, the more rain you get.

The climate of Great Britain is mild and temperate due to the influence of the Gulf Stream. That means that it is never too hot or too cold. Snow is a regular feature of the higher areas only. Usually the temperature is between 5 below zero and 23 above zero. The driest period is from March to June and the wettest months are from October to January. It seldom snows heavily in winter, frost is rare. January and February are usually the coldest months; July and August are the warmest ones. Sometimes the wind brings whirlwinds or hurricanes. Droughts are rare.

The bad reputation of Britain's climate is due to its changeability. There is a saying that Britain doesn't have a climate, it only has weather. But English weather is never the same two days running. One day it rains, the next day it may be sunny and then it may be cold again. It may not rain very much altogether, but you can never be sure of a dry day. There can be cool days in July and some quite warm days in January.

So, we may say that the British climate has three main features: it is mild, humid, and changeable. This humid and mild climate is good for plants and flowers. That's why Great Britain is such a green country, with long rich grass for the cattle and sheep, and beautiful lawns in the gardens.

I. True/False

1. It is rainy all the time in Great Britain.
2. The amount of rain that falls on a town depends on where it is.
3. The climate of Great Britain is mild and temperate.
4. It often snows in the lower areas.
5. It is very dry from March to July.
6. British climate often changes.

II. Choose the correct answer.

1. Does London get more rain than most other European cities?

- a) Yes b) No c) not mentioned

2. Where is it rainier?

- a) in the east b) in the west c) in the centre

3. Does it snow heavily in winter?

- a) No b) Yes c) not mentioned

4. What are the coldest months?

- a) December c) June e) August b) January d) October f) July

5. What brings whirlwinds or hurricanes?

- a) the Gulf Stream b) climate c) winds

6. What is the British climate good for?

- a) resorting b) growing plants c) hiking