British History Practice

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. Which king ordered the land survey recorded in Domesday Book?
   A. William I
   B. Henry II
   C. Edward I
   D. Richard III
   Correct answer: A. William I
   William I ordered the survey. It recorded landholdings and other information for much of England in the late eleventh century.

2. Which palace has the Great Hall that Henry VIII had built after taking over Thomas Wolsey’s residence?
   A. Buckingham Palace
   B. Kensington Palace
   C. Hampton Court Palace
   D. Palace of Holyroodhouse
   Correct answer: C. Hampton Court Palace
   Henry VIII took over Hampton Court from Cardinal Wolsey. Work on the present Great Hall began there in 1532.

3. Which Tudor succeeded Mary I on the English throne in 1558?
   A. Edward VI
   B. Elizabeth I
   C. Henry VIII
   D. Henry VII
   Correct answer: B. Elizabeth I
   Elizabeth I succeeded her half-sister Mary I in 1558. Elizabeth was the last Tudor monarch of England.

4. Which Scottish thinker wrote The Wealth of Nations, published in 1776?
   A. Robert Burns
   B. David Hume
   C. James Hutton
   D. Adam Smith
   Correct answer: D. Adam Smith
   Adam Smith wrote The Wealth of Nations, a study of economic activity and the sources of national prosperity.

5. Which publicly funded health service began operating in England in July 1948?

A. The Royal Mail
B. The National Health Service
C. British Railways
D. The British Library

Correct answer: B. The National Health Service
The National Health Service began in 1948. It brought hospital, general practice, and other health services into a publicly funded system.

6. An English document from 1603 names James I. A Scottish document from the same year names James VI. How are the two monarchs related?

A. They are the same person, using different regnal numbers in England and Scotland.
B. They are brothers, each ruling a separate kingdom.
C. James I is the father of James VI.
D. James VI succeeded James I as monarch of both kingdoms later that year.

Correct answer: A. They are the same person, using different regnal numbers in England and Scotland.
James was already James VI of Scotland when he inherited the English throne as James I in 1603. Scotland and England continued to have separate parliaments.

7. Harley MS 4353 in the British Library includes a copy of the Laws of Hywel Dda. What historical subject can it help a researcher study?

A. The founding of the Scottish parish school system
B. The creation of the Parliament of Great Britain
C. The introduction of the first postage stamps
D. The legal traditions of medieval Wales

Correct answer: D. The legal traditions of medieval Wales
The Laws of Hywel Dda preserve a system of native Welsh law. This surviving manuscript is a later copy of a legal tradition associated with the Welsh ruler Hywel Dda.

8. A visitor in 1851 attends the Great Exhibition inside the new Crystal Palace. Where in London does the visitor go?

A. Greenwich Park
B. Regent’s Park
C. Hyde Park
D. St. James’s Park

Correct answer: C. Hyde Park
The Crystal Palace was built in Hyde Park for the 1851 Great Exhibition. It housed displays of materials, machines, and manufactured goods from Britain and abroad.

9. A letter sent in 1840 carries a Penny Black stamp. What was the stamp designed to show?

A. The sender had prepaid a penny of postage.
B. The recipient owed a penny for the paper used in the letter.
C. The local post office had inspected the contents.
D. The letter had been sent to Parliament for registration.

Correct answer: A. The sender had prepaid a penny of postage.
The Penny Black was an adhesive postage stamp. Affixing it to a letter showed a penny of postage had been paid in advance.

10. Under the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act, which kind of local body was to be elected in Scottish parishes and burghs to oversee public schools?

A. A committee of Parliament
B. A university senate
C. A national museum board
D. A school board

Correct answer: D. A school board
The 1872 act provided for elections to local school boards. It assigned these boards responsibility for public schools in parishes and burghs.

11. In a fictional summary of an English proposal after the Bill of Rights of 1689, the Crown plans to collect a new tax by royal authority alone. Which question tests whether the proposal fits the provision on raising money?

A. Has the Crown told the local courts where to store the money?
B. Is the tax to be collected in a town with a royal charter?
C. Has Parliament granted authority to collect the tax?
D. Has the proposed tax been discussed at a public meeting?

Correct answer: C. Has Parliament granted authority to collect the tax?
The English Bill of Rights declared that raising money for the Crown by royal prerogative without a grant from Parliament was illegal. Parliamentary authorization is the relevant evidence in this example.

12. A fictional exhibit label claims that the 1707 union merged Scotland’s courts with England’s because it created one Parliament of Great Britain. Which correction follows from Article XIX of the Articles of Union?

A. Scotland and England shared a civil court but kept their old parliaments.
B. The Parliament was shared, and Scotland retained its Court of Session.
C. The Court of Session became the civil court for all of Great Britain.
D. Scotland abolished the Court of Session when the new Parliament began.

Correct answer: B. The Parliament was shared, and Scotland retained its Court of Session.
The union created one Parliament for Great Britain. Article XIX provided for the Court of Session to continue in Scotland, so the political union preserved that Scottish institution.

13. A timeline has a union act dated 1800 and gives January 1, 1801, as the start of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. What explains those different dates?

A. Ireland joined Great Britain in 1800 and the act ended the union at the start of 1801.
B. The union began in 1800 and Parliament passed the act after it had taken effect.
C. The act joined England and Scotland in 1800 and their old parliaments returned in 1801.
D. The act was passed in 1800 and the union took effect at the start of 1801.

Correct answer: D. The act was passed in 1800 and the union took effect at the start of 1801.
The union legislation was enacted in 1800. Its terms took effect on January 1, 1801, when Great Britain and Ireland became one United Kingdom.

14. A fictional British woman is 25 and meets all the voting requirements other than the age rule. Which comparison fits the parliamentary voting rules introduced in 1918 and 1928?

A. The 1918 rules exclude her by age, and the 1928 rules allow her to vote.
B. The 1918 rules allow her to vote, and the 1928 rules exclude her by age.
C. Both sets of rules exclude her until she reaches 30.
D. Both sets of rules allow her to vote because she is over 21.

Correct answer: A. The 1918 rules exclude her by age, and the 1928 rules allow her to vote.
The 1918 reform extended the vote to some women aged 30 or older. The Equal Franchise Act of 1928 put women and men on equal voting terms from age 21.

15. A fictional note on devolution under the Scotland Act 1998 describes two proposals. One changes what Scottish schools teach. The other sets the United Kingdom’s diplomatic policy toward another country. Which division of responsibilities fits?

A. Both school education and UK foreign affairs are reserved at UK level.
B. Both school education and UK foreign affairs are devolved to Scotland.
C. Scottish school education is devolved, and UK foreign affairs are reserved.
D. Scottish school education is reserved, and UK foreign affairs are devolved.

Correct answer: C. Scottish school education is devolved, and UK foreign affairs are reserved.
The Scottish Parliament has powers over school education in Scotland. Foreign affairs remain the responsibility of the UK institutions under the devolution settlement.