

Rule Britannia

Why did Britain build such a wide empire?

1. Why did Britain want to build an empire?

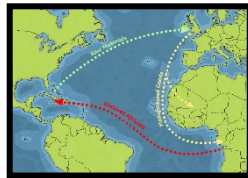
- Britain wanted an empire so they could control the natural resources in the countries they bought into the empire.
- This control allowed them to become economically stronger as goods were imported and exported for profit.
- Politically, it allowed Britain to become more and more powerful and to spread their influence throughout the world.



Significance & Chronology

3. How did the exploitation of enslaved Africans contribute to global trade?

- An enslaved person is someone who has no freedom or rights and is never paid for any work.
- From the 16th century for nearly 300 years, Britain was involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. British companies bought and sold enslaved people and made huge profits selling crops enslaved people worked hard to produce.
- Slavery was becoming less profitable for Britain by 1800. Some historians believe this is another reason why the slave trade was abolished in 1807.



Cause & Consequence

5. How did British naval strength enable the development of the British Empire?

- Life in the Royal Navy was extremely hard, with many unpleasant details such as scurvy, poor food, harsh punishments, and a high likelihood of death. However, it was also well paid and adventurous.
- British men were often forced to serve in the Royal Navy by 'impressment gangs'.
- The rank of 'able seaman' was the top achievement for sailors, and they were characterised by distinctive tattoos, clothing, and fashions.



Cause & Consequence

2. How did global trade benefit the British Empire?

- Scotland was now part of Great Britain under the Act of Union.
- Britain had colonies in Australia, South Africa, India, North America, East Africa, and West Africa. It therefore was able to trade across these countries.
- The effect of street trading took off, particularly in the major cities.



Chronology & Significance

4. Why did Britain build such a wide empire?

- The British Empire emerged out of a desire to protect and expand its growing trade interests around the New World.
- Britain set up colonies in the countries where they traded, such as Africa, America, the Caribbean and India. Some were very small, some covered large territories.
- European trading nations increasingly fought over who controlled trade where, and began to increase their power over their colonies.



Chronology & Significance

6. Assessment task:

Compare pictures from before 1600 and after 1800, giving reasons for the changes.

