

BRITISH STEREOTYPES: TRUE OR FALSE



When we think about different countries, we often have stereotypes about them. But what is a stereotype? A stereotype is an idea or belief people have about a group of people that may not always be true. Stereotypes can be about many things, like how people look, act, or what they like. For example, if someone thinks all people from a certain country act the same way, that is a stereotype.

One common stereotype about British people is that they love to talk about the weather. Social anthropologist Kate Fox says this is partly true because the weather in the UK changes a lot, but it's also because talking about the weather is an ice-breaker, especially with people you don't know.

Another stereotype is that Britons drink a lot of tea. The UK is the third-largest tea-drinking nation after Turkey and Ireland, but a recent survey showed that many Britons now prefer coffee. According to Coco Khan from *The Guardian*, this is likely because younger people, like Millennials and Gen-Z, now like coffee and herbal teas more than traditional tea.

People also say that British people are very polite and always say "please" and "sorry." It's true that British people say "sorry" a lot – they apologise eight times a day on average! But, as in any country, manners can be different.

In conclusion, stereotypes can be interesting, but they are not always correct. While some British stereotypes have a bit of truth, they don't represent everyone in the UK. Remember: people are different, and everyone has their own habits and likes.

EXERCISES

1. Read the text, then choose the correct answer.

1. What is a stereotype?
 - a. A fact about a group of people.
 - b. An idea or belief about a group of people that may not always be true.
 - c. A law that applies to a group of people.
2. Why do British people often talk about the weather, according to Kate Fox?
 - a. Because they don't know what else to talk about.
 - b. Because the weather in the UK is very boring.
 - c. Because the weather changes a lot, and it's a good way to start a conversation.
3. What has changed about the British habit of drinking tea, according to the article?
 - a. People in the UK now drink less tea than people in Turkey and Ireland.
 - b. Younger people in the UK now prefer coffee and herbal teas over traditional tea.
 - c. The UK is no longer one of the top tea-drinking nations.
4. How often do British people say "sorry," according to the text?
 - a. Once a day.
 - b. Five times a day.
 - c. Eight times a day.
5. What is the main idea of the article?
 - a. Stereotypes about British people are always true.
 - b. Stereotypes can be interesting but are not always accurate.
 - c. British people love tea and the weather.

2. Match each word from the list with its correct definition.

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|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Ice-breaker | a. To say you are sorry for something you have done. |
| 2. Briton | b. The way a person behaves toward others, especially showing politeness and respect. |
| 3. Survey | c. Something you say or do to make people feel more comfortable and start a conversation, especially when you don't know each other well. |
| 4. Apologise | d. A set of questions that you ask people to find out what they think or do. |
| 5. Manners | e. A person who is from Britain (England, Scotland, or Wales). |

3. In pairs, ask and answer the following questions.

1. Do you know any stereotypes about your country? How do they make you feel?
2. Do you think stereotypes can be harmful? Why or why not?

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SOLUZIONI

1. 1-b / 2-c / 3-b / 4-c / 2-b
2. 1-c / 2-e / 3-d / 4-a / 5-b