

Oliver Cromwell (B2)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. What do you know about the English Civil War? (*What caused it? When did it take place? etc.*)
2. Has there ever been a civil war in your country? If so, when? What was it about?
3. Have you ever heard of Oliver Cromwell? If so, what do you know about his religious beliefs?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Oliver Cromwell was a wealthy landowner.
2. He became a Puritan in 1640.
3. King Charles I and his wife were both Protestants.
4. After joining the army, Cromwell was rapidly promoted to Lord General.
5. He was responsible for thousands of deaths in Ireland.
6. King Charles was executed in 1647.
7. Cromwell ruled for about 5 years.
8. Soon after his death, a statue of him was placed outside Parliament.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why was Oliver Cromwell unique among the rulers of Britain?
2. What problems were there in the Church of England in the middle of the 17th century?
3. What did Parliament and King Charles disagree on?
4. Why was Cromwell popular with his troops?
5. What was King Charles found guilty of?
6. What precautions did his executioner take? Why?
7. Why wasn't England a real republic while Cromwell was in power?
8. What happened to Cromwell's body after his death?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. A _____ is an officer who commands a platoon of around thirty soldiers.
2. At first we didn't recognise Sam because he'd shaved off his _____.
3. The democratically-elected president was overthrown in a _____ coup led by army officers.
4. Jim took care of the accounts and his wife dealt with the day-to-day _____ of the company.
5. In the 1970s, Afro hairstyles were fashionable and many people wore curly _____.
6. The feud went on for years as each clan tried to _____ the death of a family member.

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 1)

Read the text and decide which word in brackets best fits each gap.

Being a Puritan, Oliver Cromwell believed that everybody should lead their lives according to the teachings of the Bible. ¹ _____ amusement at all was frowned upon. All the theatres and many taverns were obliged to ² _____ down and the majority of sports were banned.

On Sunday, no work could be carried out. Even going for a walk was forbidden, ³ _____ it was to go to church. Children caught ⁴ _____ football were beaten.

Saints' Feast days were abolished and replaced by a monthly day of fasting, on ⁵ _____ no food at all was eaten. Cromwell even changed Christmas! People were supposed to concentrate on the birth of Christ rather ⁶ _____ on eating and drinking. Soldiers patrolled the streets of cities and seized any food that was ⁷ _____ cooked for a Christmas celebration. It's hardly surprising that Cromwell ⁸ _____ up being hated by most of the population of Britain.

F – Write about it

Write about a dictator or authoritarian leader of the past. Mention:

- what country he/she led and when;
- how he/she came to power;
- what happened during the dictatorship;
- how/his her dictatorship ended;
- how he/she is judged today.

Answers

B – Listen and answer

1. F – He was a modest farmer. 2. F – He was already a devout Puritan when he entered Parliament in 1640. 3. Charles was a Protestant but his wife was a Catholic. 4. T 5. T 6. F – He was captured in 1647 (and executed in 1649). 7. T 8. F – The statue was erected in 1899, over 200 years after his death.

C – Read and answer

1. He was the only non-royal ever to rule the country./He ruled over a republic, not a kingdom.
2. There were religious differences which led to violence. 3. They disagreed on the running of the country. Parliament wanted to control the powers of the king. King Charles believed he had a divine right to rule. 4. He was able to instil self-belief in them and he looked after them like a mother.
5. He was found guilty of tyranny and treason. 6. He wore a wig and a false beard to protect his identity. 7. Because Cromwell ruled with many of the powers of a king. 8. Cromwell was buried in Westminster Abbey in 1658, but in 1661 his body was removed and hanged.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. lieutenant 2. beard 3. bloody 4. running 5. wigs 6. avenge

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. Any 2. close/shut 3. unless 4. playing 5. which 6. than 7. being 8. ended/ finished.