

# London

Vicky Shipton



## Summary

*London* gives us a wide range of interesting facts and details about the history, people, buildings and cultural activities of one of the world's most famous cities. This magazine-style Pearson English Reader begins with a general knowledge test. Then we learn about London's history; the importance of the River Thames and its development from Roman times to the eleventh century. Later, there is a brief summary of important historical events that have affected London positively or negatively over the last 600 years. We learn about the people of London, and how the nature of its population is changing, about its theatres and museums and about some of the famous people who have made London their home. There are also chapters on shopping and famous landmarks. Throughout the book are fascinating pieces of miscellaneous information about London, ranging from facts about the Cockneys to the origins of the London Underground map. This book will be of great interest not only to students of English who are staying in London, but to all visitors to the city, no matter how short the stay.

**Pages 1–7:** This part starts with a brief history of the River Thames and the bridges that were built across it. The River Thames (Thames is an old word for river) crosses London from west to east. The river has played a very important part in London's history and development over the years. The first bridge across the Thames was made of wood and called London Bridge. Later, in 1209, a stone bridge was built that lasted for 622 years. It was in fact, more than just a bridge, as it had shops and people lived on it. One of the later London Bridges was bought by an American and is now in the state of Arizona, in the United States. Today, there are thirty four bridges, the most famous of which is Tower Bridge, finished in 1894.

We then learn something of London's early history. Julius Caesar and the Romans arrived in 55 BC. They began to build a town to the north of the river which they called Londinium. This steadily grew into an important centre but the town was destroyed in about 60 AD. Queen Boudica led a rebellion against the Romans and burnt Londinium to the ground. The Romans rebuilt the city.

There are buildings and landmarks all over London which survive from many different periods of history. Traces of the original Roman wall (200 AD) can still be seen in a few places. King Edward started building Westminster Abbey, and a palace. William I came from France and he and his son Rufus built many fine buildings. London is also well known for its theatres, which are located in the West End and where one can enjoy the world's most popular musicals. The Globe, located in Southwark, was rebuilt by an American, and it is a replica of the original one, which was home to many Shakespearean performances.

**Pages 8–15:** This section includes information about old and new buildings. The Tower of London, started by William I was a palace and a prison. Henry VIII got Hampton Court from Cardinal Wolsey. King George III bought Buckingham Palace and it is now the London residence of Queen Elizabeth II. The Royal family also owns flats in Kensington Palace, built by William III. New and old buildings stand side by side in London. St Paul's Cathedral and St Stephen's Tower (often mistakenly called Big Ben) represent some of the older buildings, and the Telecom Tower and Canada Tower the new.

The section continues with a description of some well known areas of London. Together with Knightsbridge, Kensington is one of the richest areas of the city, whereas the East End is much less wealthy. Other areas of the city are favoured as places to live and work by different ethnic groups. There are many Chinese people living in Soho and people from India and Pakistan settled in the East End after World War II. People came from the West Indies in the 1950's to live in the Notting Hill area. Every August a famous street party takes place here.

Next is a short list of the good and bad things that have happened in London's history, the most notable being the Great Fire in 1666, the war years between 1939 and 1945 and the reign of Queen Victoria in the nineteenth century when London was the world's richest city.

## London

**Pages 16–24:** This section begins with a description of some of London's most exclusive shops, such as Harrods and Fortnum & Mason. In Harrods shoppers can buy virtually anything from clothes to food to televisions, and Fortnum & Mason sells expensive food and clothes. Then we learn about some of London's eighty markets, Petticoat Lane and Portobello Road being the two most famous. Museums and means of public transport available in London are mentioned. The city has red buses and black taxis but traffic is so heavy that it is usually better to walk around it.

Many famous writers lived in and wrote about the city and its life. Perhaps Charles Dickens, Jane Austen and George Orwell are the most widely known. Another important aspect is sport, with London being home to several internationally known football clubs and the tennis courts at Wimbledon. The book ends with a quote from Dr Johnson, "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life."

### Other facts about London

#### Famous Londoners in entertainment

The following people were all born in London:

**Daniel Radcliffe:** Born 1989 in Fulham, London. Film, television and stage actor.

Best known for playing the wizard, Harry Potter, in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and its sequels.

**David Beckham:** Born 1975 in Leytonstone, London. English footballer. Joined Manchester United as trainee in 1991, making full debut in 1995. First played for England in 1996, becoming captain of the team in 2000. Married to Victoria Adams formerly of the Spice Girls.

**Alfred Hitchcock:** Born 1899 in Leytonstone, London. Died 1980. English director. Best known for the films *Psycho* (1960) and *The Birds* (1963). He appeared briefly in many of his films.

**Elizabeth Taylor:** Born 1932 in Hampstead, London. Hollywood actress. Moved to Los Angeles in 1939. Married a number of times, including twice to Richard Burton. Made several films with him including *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1966).

**Elton John:** Born 1947 in Pinner, London. English pop singer, songwriter and pianist. His album *Elton John* (1970) brought his first solo success. Developed a flamboyant stage image. First Western rock star to play in Moscow.

**Hugh Grant:** Born 1960 in Hammersmith, London. English actor. Achieved success and fame with *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994). Later successful films include *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), *Notting Hill* (1999) and *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001).

**Keira Knightley:** Born 1985 in Teddington, London. English actress. Became well known after the film *Bend it like Beckham*, followed by *Love Actually* (2003) and *Pirates of the Caribbean* (2003) with Johnny Depp and Orlando Bloom. More recently starred in *King Arthur* (2004).

### Ten films set in London

*101 Dalmatians / 28 Days After / About a Boy / Bend it Like Beckham / Bridget Jones Diary / Notting Hill / Oliver Twist / Scrooge / Mary Poppins / Match Point*

## Discussion activities

### Before reading

- Discuss:** Write the word *London* on the board. Ask students to write down the first five things they think of when they see that word. Then put students into pairs. Have they thought of the same five things? Discuss the lists with the rest of the class.

### Pages 1–7

#### Before reading

- Predict:** Ask students what they would like to know about London. Then ask them to read the titles of the chapters in the index and decide if the information they want might be in the book and if so, in which chapter. Make a note of the questions to research which have not been answered after they have read the book.

#### While reading (At the end of p. 1)

- Game:** Put students in groups of three or four. Tell them they are going to do a world capital cities quiz. Allow the students to confer with each other after each question and before they write their answer. The questions are: *Where is the Eiffel Tower? What is the capital of Australia? Which city is the biggest: Stockholm, Bangkok or Madrid? Jakarta is the capital of which country? What is the capital of Pakistan? What is the only capital city that begins with the letter Q? In which capital is the White House? In which capital is the River Nile? Lisbon is the capital of which country? In which capital city is Piccadilly Circus?*

# London

## After reading

- 4 Write and guess:** Put students in pairs and ask them to choose a short paragraph from pages 1–7. Tell them to write it again, making five changes to words in the text. Students then read out their paragraphs to the other students, who have to identify the mistakes.
- 5 Role play:** Ask students to imagine what these people would say and talk in pairs.  
 Student A: *You are Queen Boudica. You want the Romans to leave London. Say why.*  
 Student B: *You are a Roman officer. You want the Romans to stay in London. Say why.*

## Pages 8–15

### Before reading

- 6 Pair work:** Put students into pairs and ask them to name one old building and one new building in their city or town. Ask them to compare the two. *What are they used for? Are they big or small? Do people work in them? Are they beautiful or ugly? Do you like the buildings?*

### While reading

- 7 Discussion:** (p. 10 after, 'More than 25% of the people of London were not born there,') In small groups have the students discuss the good and bad things that can happen when people from many different countries live in the same city.

### After reading

- 8 Pair work:** Write the following words on the board: *toilet, flats, Soho, twenty minutes, fire, bell.* Have the students talk and write sentences in pairs using the information from pages 8–15.
- 9 Pair work:** Students choose three places from pages 8–15 that they would like to visit. Put students into pairs, and ask them to plan a day out in London together. They must agree on the same three places and give their reasons for wanting to visit the places they choose.

## Pages 16–24

### Before reading

- 10 Discuss:** Write the following words on the board: *shops, museums, transport, sports, literature.* Ask students to discuss what they know about these things in London.

### While reading

- 11 Research:** (p. 16 after 'Harrods sells everything for everybody,') Tell the students that they each have £2,000 to spend in Harrods. Ask them to look at the Harrods Internet site. They then make a list of all the things they want to buy and their prices. The students then tell the rest of the class what they bought and why they bought it.

- 12 Role play:** (at the end of page 23) Put the students in pairs and ask them each to choose four of the authors on pages 22 and 23. They then take turns playing the role of each author and interviewing. *When were you born? What do/did you write about? What book/books have you written?* Encourage students to ask other questions about the authors' lives if they know more or if they are able to do some research first. Then ask the students to discuss which of the authors they would like to read and why.
- 13 Predict:** (at the beginning of p. 24) Put the following words on the board: *football, rugby, basketball, hockey, cricket, baseball, tennis, golf.* Ask the students if they know any other sports and write these on the board. Then ask the students to predict if these sports are popular in London and will be mentioned on page 24. Then put the students in small groups to discuss which of the sports are popular in their country and which they like playing or watching.

### After reading

- 14 Write and ask:** Write 'Who made a map for the London Underground?' on the board and elicit the answer (Henry Beck). Ask students to write another question about something from pages 16–24. Check their work as they do this. Now have students stand up and mingle, asking and answering each other's questions.
- 15 Circle a number to show what you think was the most interesting part of the book. 1 is very interesting and 5 is not interesting. Talk to a friend. Do you think the same?**

The Thames	1	2	3	4	5
The story begins.	1	2	3	4	5
London Theatre	1	2	3	4	5
Kings and Queens in London	1	2	3	4	5
East and West	1	2	3	4	5
London's Ups and Downs	1	2	3	4	5
Old and New	1	2	3	4	5
Shop, Shop, Shop!	1	2	3	4	5
Museums	1	2	3	4	5
Black Taxis, Red Buses	1	2	3	4	5
London between the Pages	1	2	3	4	5
Sports	1	2	3	4	5