

# What do you know about Northern Ireland?



**A listening lesson for B2 learners about growing up in Northern Ireland.**

**Step 1:** Listen to your teacher read a text about Northern Ireland. Take notes.

**Step 2:** Answer these T/F questions.

1. Northern Ireland is part of the UK.
2. It's a very green country.
3. Derry is the biggest city.
4. The Troubles ended in the 1980s.
5. About 2 million people live there.



## Lead in – a quiz – the text

*Northern Ireland is a country on the island of Ireland, and it has been part of the United Kingdom since 1920, after a civil war. The other countries that make up the UK are England, Scotland and Wales. It is different from the Republic of Ireland, a completely separate and independent country. Northern Ireland is known for its green countryside, beautiful coasts, and interesting places like the Giant's Causeway and Belfast, where the Titanic was built. The biggest city is Belfast, but there are other important cities like Derry and Lisburn too. A difficult time in Northern Ireland's history was called 'The Troubles', starting in the late 1960s. This was a period of violence, political disagreement and society was divided. The Good Friday peace agreement ended this conflict in 1998. The country is known for friendly people and for having a unique culture within the UK, with its own music and stories, for example. About 2 million people live there.*

# Listening 1 - ordering

You will listen to a woman called Geraldine answering the following questions.

Listen and number the questions in the order that you hear them.

Number	Question
	A. Is your region famous for having a special accent?
	B. What would you say were the major changes in your area from when you were a little girl to when you were in your thirties, when you left?
	C. Tell me a little bit about where you're from.
	D. Did you lose anybody you loved in the "Troubles"?
	E. I was going to ask you <u>what your area</u> is famous for...
	G. What's it like now?
	F. Would you say there was any special food associated with where you are from?

# Listening 1 – ordering - answers

You will listen to a woman called Geraldine answering the following questions.

Listen and number the questions in the order that you hear them.

Number	Question
<b>7</b>	A. Is your region famous for having a special accent?
<b>2</b>	B. What would you say were the major changes in your area from when you were a little girl to when you were in your thirties, when you left?
<b>1</b>	C. Tell me a little bit about where you're from.
<b>3</b>	D. Did you lose anybody you loved in the "Troubles"?
<b>4</b>	E. I was going to ask you <u>what your area</u> is famous for...
<b>5</b>	G. What's it like now?
<b>6</b>	F. Would you say there was any special food associated with where you are from?

# Listening 2 – note-taking

Listen again.  
What are Geraldine's  
answers?  
Take notes.

Compare with a  
partner.

Number	Question
	A. Is your region famous for having a special accent?
	B. What would you say were the major changes in your area from when you were a little girl to when you were in your thirties, when you left?
	C. Tell me a little bit about where you're from.
	D. Did you lose anybody you loved in the "Troubles"?
	E. I was going to ask you <u>what your area</u> is famous for...
	G. What's it like now?
	F. Would you say there was any special food associated with where you are from?

## React to the listening

Now read the script and think about these questions.

- *What do you think was most difficult for Geraldine growing up in Belfast?*
- *Geraldine doesn't live there now. How do you think she feels when she goes home?*
- *Imagine you're the interviewer. What five new questions would you like to ask Geraldine?*

**Interviewer:** Tell me a little bit about where you're from.

**Geraldine:** I'm from a place in Belfast: Northern Ireland called Glenard. It was Glenard up until 1970. The Protestants burnt down old Ardoyne leading from the Cromwell Road and then Glenard became New Ardoyne – still is New Ardoyne, so it is.

**Interviewer:** What would you say were the major changes in your area from when you were a little girl to when you were in your thirties, when you left?

**Geraldine:** It was the troubles. It was the troubles of 1969, because we were brought up to believe that everyone was the same no matter what religion you were. But when the troubles happened, it was just **devastating**. We lost our freedom. You know, we couldn't go where we wanted to go. We were confined to the areas that you lived in and that went on for many years.

**Interviewer:** Did you lose anybody you loved in the troubles?

**Geraldine:** Oh God, **everybody lost somebody**. Yeah there was cousin – he was killed in a bomb blast. And there were friends, just down the street that were shot by the British Army. And then my young nephew, his best friend, he was **riddled** by a passing car full of **Protestants**....oh year. It was **dreadful**.



**Interviewer:** I was going to ask you what your area is famous for?

**Geraldine:** Well unfortunately, that would be what it's famous for. Prior to that '69, it was the loveliest community. We had neighbours, you know. Everybody had their keys in the door. You know, you just came home, your key was there, you'd turn the key, you know. My mum, God rest her – she was a single parent really, and she worked day and night. So the oldest sister, she took over the house. It was a lovely community; the neighbours were wonderful. Everybody knew everybody. But that's all gone now.

**Interviewer:** What's it like now?

**Geraldine:** Funnily enough, I was there in March because I go home every **Saint Paddy's**. My sister and my best mate, we always go away on Saint Paddy's for two or three days. But Ardoyne now is these big **gaudy** terrace houses. Everybody just lives in their own wee house. Nobody bothers with anybody.

**Interviewer:** Would you say there was any special food associated with where you are from?

**Geraldine:** Oh God, aye. We're famous for the Irish **stew** – fantastic. Interesting thing is that growing up as kids, you always knew there was a bit of money in the house because with the champ we used to get. If there was no money, you only got the champ, which was potatoes and scallions, spring onions. If there was a bit of money, you got a bit of meat. The Irish stew and the champ.

**Interviewer:** Is your region famous for having a special accent?

**Geraldine:** Well, I have to be honest. Anyone I've met say they love the accent. I personally this it's awful, I think it's very flat, but hey.

## React to the listening

Now discuss the questions with a partner.

- *What do you think was most difficult for Geraldine growing up in Belfast?*
- *Geraldine doesn't live there now. How do you think she feels when she goes home?*
- *Imagine you're the interviewer. What five new questions would you like to ask Geraldine?*

# Vocabulary

Look at the words and phrases in **bold** in the script. Work in pairs. Use the context to guess the meanings.

*But when the troubles happened, it was just **devastating**. We lost our freedom.*

*Oh God, everybody **lost** somebody.*

*...he was **riddled** by a passing car full of **Protestants**. It was **dreadful**.*

*I go home every **Saint Paddy's**.*

*We're famous for the Irish **stew** – fantastic. ....potatoes and scallions....a bit of meat...*

# Vocabulary - answers

Look at the words and phrases in **bold** in the script. Work in pairs. Use the context to guess the meanings.

terrible

*But when the troubles happened, it was just **devastating**. We lost our freedom.*

Everyone knew someone who died

*Oh God, everybody **lost** somebody.*

covered in bullets

Protestantism is a religion

terrible

*...he was **riddled** by a passing car full of **Protestants**. It was **dreadful**.*

Saint Patrick's day is a national holiday

*I go home every **Saint Paddy's**.*

*We're famous for the Irish **stew** – fantastic. ....potatoes and scallions....a bit of meat...*

Meat and vegetables cooked slowly in liquid

# Reflect

- What will you remember from this lesson?
- What did you learn about your listening skills today?

# Extension

## – Plan a 2-day trip to Northern Ireland

### Step 1:

Work in groups. Choose 2 places each to find out about.

What can you see in these places? Where are they? Would you like to go?

1. Saint Patrick's parade
2. Gobbins cliff path
3. Murals of Belfast
4. Belsonic music festival
5. Titanic museum
6. Ardoyne
7. Giant's Causeway
8. Dunluce Castle
9. The Dark Hedges



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# Extension

## – Plan a 2-day trip to Northern Ireland

### Step 2:

Work in groups. Decide on your itinerary.

<b>Day 1 morning</b>	<b>Day 2 morning</b>
<b>Day 1 afternoon/evening</b>	<b>Day 2 afternoon/evening</b>

### Step 3:

Present your itinerary to the class.