

Teaching notes

Split the class into four groups to give a presentation on each country.

Further research could be done online or from textbooks to supplement the information here.

Students should fill in the relevant information for their group's country onto the table, and then make notes while listening to the presentations given by other groups.

Feedback on conclusions as to why Britain gave up its empire could be given at the end.

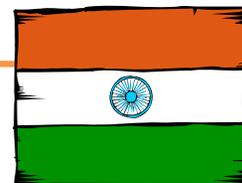
Case Study I – India

From the early 20th century, the Indian Congress Party put pressure on the British to give more power to the Indian people. In the 1920s, Mohandas Gandhi started his campaign of civil disobedience which he called 'satyagraha' or 'truth force'. Gandhi was very popular amongst poor Indians and was known as Mahatma ('Great Soul'). In the 1920s he built up the Indian National Congress and led strikes and protest marches, including a boycott of British goods. In 1922 Gandhi's activities brought him a six year prison sentence but he only served two years. In 1930 he led the famous 'salt march'; a 400km march to the coast of Gujarat to protest against British taxes on salt. He and thousands of protesters broke the law by making their own salt from seawater. At times the civil disobedience ended in violence and Gandhi had to call it off several times. Some peaceful protesters were beaten to death by guards as they tried to occupy a salt factory.

Under pressure from supporters of Gandhi's campaign across the world, the British government released Gandhi from prison in 1931 and invited him to talks with other Indian leaders. In 1935 they allowed Indians to elect their own local governments. Progress was interrupted by the outbreak of World War Two in 1939.

During the war thousands of Indians fought and died for Britain. The British promised to grant independence as soon as possible after the war ended. Talks took place between Britain, Congress and the Muslim League. The Muslim League, led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, wanted an independent Muslim state.

The British government feared the growth of riots against them, and between Indian communities. After the war, the new Labour government owed huge debts to the USA, and was worried about the growing costs of ruling India. In February 1947 they sent a new viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, to organise the British departure from India. British rule ended on 15 August 1947, with the formation of two new independent nations; India and Pakistan.



Case Study 2: Kenya

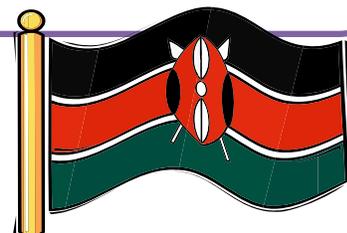
British Rule in Kenya

The British set up a protectorate in Kenya in 1895 and it then became a colony in 1920. Local people were made to grow cash crops (coffee) to be exported. This new type of farming was managed by European settlers. White settlers were given more rights than Africans who were controlled by strict laws. From 1904, native reserves (areas of land) were created, dividing Africans along ethnic lines and creating room for the white settlers. A system of identity cards was brought in to restrict people's movement. The Legislative Council (Legco), set up in 1907 to give white people more control over their community, had no representation from people of other races.

The Independence Movement

African people began to resist the taking of their land for the Kenya-Uganda railway line for the white settlers. From the early 1920s, Africans formed different associations to argue their case. The British government banned some of these associations. Still, Kenyans fought for Britain during World War Two. Later, there was a more organized, violent uprising in central Kenya called Mau Mau. Kenya was put in a state of emergency from 1952-1959, with British and African troops fighting the Mau Mau rebels. 4,686 rebels were killed.

However, under pressure, the government allowed the formation of political parties in the late 1950s. Africans were allowed to enter the Legco (Council). Two main parties, the Kenya African National Union (Kanu) and the Kenya African Democratic Union (Kadu), started up in 1960. The British wanted to hand over power to 'moderate' Africans, in order to stop further violence. KANU, led by Jomo Kenyatta, formed a government shortly before Kenya became independent on 12th December 1963.



Case Study 3: Jamaica

Jamaica under British rule

The native people of Jamaica are the Arawak and Taino tribes who originally came from South America. In 1492 Christopher Columbus landed on the island and made it a territory of Spain. The English captured Jamaica in 1655, forcing the Spanish to leave. Many African slaves escaped into the hilly, mountainous areas of the island.

Under British rule, Jamaica became one of the world's leading sugar exporting nations. The sugar was harvested by enslaved Africans until the end of the slave trade in 1807, when the British began to import Indian and Chinese workers.

The end of British rule

The end of slavery and the decision to make Jamaica an official British colony in 1834 meant that the number of local people with education and better jobs grew. However, their rights were limited by British rule. In 1914 Marcus Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). In the 1930s the sugar and the dock workers started to organise themselves in opposition to the government. By the mid-1940s the Jamaicans gained a little local political control. In 1938 the first political party, the People's National Party (PNP), was set up. The first election was held in 1944, with all adults voting. Many Jamaicans volunteered to join the British armed forces in World War Two. Thousands took up the invitation to fill job shortages in Britain after the War. In 1958 Jamaica became part of the Federation of the West Indies, a group of British colonies. Jamaica gained its independence on 6th August 1962. The country is now a member of the British Commonwealth.



Case Study 4: Ghana

Britain gradually gained more power in the Ashanti kingdom of West Africa from 1896. In 1902 it became a British colony, known as the Gold Coast. In 1957, the Gold Coast became Ghana, and was the first black African nation to break from colonialism. This was an example for the whole continent of Africa. Ghana was first to gain independence, partly because of the tireless campaigning led by Nkrumah, but also because Britain was struggling for money after World War Two.

The British had ruled indirectly and peacefully in Ghana, with the support of local chiefs. However, opposition to British rule began to form during the 1920s and continued to grow throughout the 1930s and 1940s. About 65,000 soldiers from the Gold Coast had fought alongside the British in World War Two and had come home to poverty and unemployment, not at all what had been promised. In 1945 African leaders, including Dr Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, had been to a conference about shared African ideas in Manchester, England. They were inspired by the move towards independence in India. Back in Ghana in 1948 police opened fire in Accra on a group of former soldiers who were peacefully carrying a petition to the Governor. Three Africans were killed, with twelve more dying in the riots that followed. In 1949, the Convention People's Party (CPP), led by Kwame Nkrumah organised workers and farmers for the first time in a mass movement for independence.

In 1951, the British government allowed general elections. Nkrumah's party won the elections and he was released from prison to lead the Colony's first African government as Prime Minister. Independence was declared on 6th March 1957. Ghana became a republic on 1st July 1960 with Nkrumah becoming the first President.

In a famous speech in 1960, the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan showed his support for independence in Africa, declaring, 'The wind of change is blowing through the continent ... the growth of national consciousness is a political fact and we must take account of it.'



Why did Britain give up its empire?

Listen to each group's presentation and write down the information in the correct boxes in note form.

	India	Ghana	Jamaica	Kenya
Why were people unhappy with British rule?				
What was the country's involvement in World War Two?				
What kinds of protests were used against the British?				

Using the information above, write a concluding paragraph to sum up why Britain gave up its empire.