

THE NETHERLANDS

(lesson on 5th March 2015)

HAVE YOU STUDIED THE NETHERLANDS? If YES, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS COUNTRY?

Borders:

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE NETHERLANDS IS LOCATED?

It is located in north-west of Europe; It faces onto the North Sea to the north and west; Belgium to the south; Germany to the east.

Form of Government: The Netherlands is a parliamentary democracy. This means that all Dutch who have the right to vote can choose who represent them in Parliament. Parliament (also known as the States General) consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Legislation only comes into force after it has been passed by the parliament. However, there is also a monarch, Willem-Alexander Claus George Ferdinand, but we are going to talk about him later.

The Netherlands is one of the six Countries which founded (in 1957) the European Economic Community that later became the European Union.

Its Flag:

WHO CAN TELL US WHAT THE DUTCH FLAG IS LIKE? WHICH COLOURS HAS IT GOT?

It is a horizontal tricolour of blue, white and red.

Three equal horizontal bands of red (top), white and blue

These colours represent the following:

White - peace and honesty

Red - hardiness, bravery, strength & valour

Blue - vigilance, truth and loyalty, perseverance & justice

The name of the country:

DID YOU KNOW THAT CALLING THIS COUNTRY HOLLAND IS WRONG? WHICH IS THE CORRECT NAME?

The Netherlands is often referred to by the name Holland, but this usage is incorrect. Holland is only a province of the kingdom. There are 10 more provinces in The Netherlands.

The Netherlands is also known as "The low country" and it is frequently associated with polders. We quote an English saying "God created the world but the Dutch created their country" which is to explain that the Dutch have worked with polders to take land away from the sea, creating their Country.

We refer to the people as the Dutch and the language they speak is Dutch.

King:

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT THE KING'S DAY?



The 27th of April is the King's day, it is the biggest national event in The Netherlands. Everything and everyone turns orange and celebrates on the King's Day. You will have plenty of music shows, fairs, flea markets and parties throughout the country. Even the Dutch royal family goes on tour to be received by one or more Dutch towns for an entertainment-filled day. Amsterdam is transformed into the nation's biggest orange party town. The Hague has "Koningsnacht" or King's Night with dozens of music performances in the city centre. The town of Utrecht boasts the biggest flea market in the Netherlands.

WHY DID WE REFER TO "ORANGE" when talking about this special day?

Orange is the colour of the Dutch Royal family, which dates back to William of Orange. Therefore the colour "orange" has royal roots in the Netherlands, but today it also symbolizes a broader pride in the country and in being Dutch.

Amsterdam:

DO YOU KNOW WHERE AMSTERDAM IS LOCATED? ARE THERE IMPORTANT TOURIST SIGHTS (MONUMENTS OR MUSEUMS) TO VISIT?

Amsterdam is the most populous city of The Netherlands and according to the Dutch constitution, Amsterdam is the capital of the Netherlands, although the parliament and the Dutch government have had their seat in The Hague since 1588.

Every year a lot of tourists go to Amsterdam to visit some important sights such as the Rijksmuseum (the national museum) dedicated to art and history. It displays about 8,000 objects of art and history.

The Van Gogh Museum dedicated to the works of Vincent van Gogh and his contemporaries. It is located at the Museum Square in South Amsterdam, close to the Rijksmuseum. It opened on 3rd June 1973 and it is home to the largest collection of Van Gogh's paintings and drawings in the world.

Anyway, there are also some funny and peculiar museums. For example, we have the well-known wax museum (this kind of museum is opened in all of the biggest cities in Europe, inspired by Madame Tussaud museum in London. You can take photos with the waxes of all your favourite famous people). If you love football you can go to the famous Amsterdam Arena, as the Amsterdam Football Club Ajax has opened for its fans the possibility of visiting its stadium.

You can also visit the Torture Museum, that shows some of the most horrid inventions to torture and execute people

The Hague:

The Hague is the capital city of the province South Holland and the third largest city of the Netherlands and the seat of the Dutch Parliament.

The famous artist Maurits Cornelio Escher comes from this town. He was a graphic artist who lived in The Hague in the '900s. He was really able on drawing impossible situations and illusions. So nowadays we have the "Escher in the Palace", that is a permanent exhibitions in a palace owned by the Royal family, located in the heart of The Hague.

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT IT BEFORE?

10 things to visit in The Netherlands:

The Delta Project or Delta Works are a series of constructions built between 1950 and 1997 in the provinces of Zeeland and South Holland to protect large areas of land from the sea. The works consist of dams, sluices, locks, dikes, and storm surge barriers. They have been declared one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The Vrijthof is the best-known city square in Maastricht, a city in the southern most part of the Netherlands. It features the massive Saint Servatius Church and Saint Jan's Cathedral. The Vrijthof regularly hosts large festivals at various times throughout the year, including autumn and winter festivals.

We'd like to remind you that Maastricht is well known for the Treaty signed there on 7th February 1992 when for the first time the European Union was used and it implied some changes in the organization that had been named the European Economic Community until that time.

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam is the largest and most prestigious museum for art and history in the Netherlands. It has a large collection of paintings from the Dutch Golden Age including works by Vermeer and Rembrandt. Since 2013, the museum has been renovated, but the major masterpieces are still on show.

More than 1.000 old windmills still exist in the Netherlands. The largest concentration of Dutch windmills can be found near the village of **Kinderdijk ("Children's dike")**. To drain the excess water from the polders, which are situated below sea-levels, 19 windmills were built around 1740. They have been well preserved to the present day and are now popular tourist attractions in the Netherlands.

The Hoge Veluwe National Park is one of the largest continuous nature reserves in the Netherlands, consisting of heathlands, sand dunes, and woodlands. The Kröller-Müller Museum with its collection of paintings by Vincent van Gogh is located within the park. Bicycles are available for free to visitors of the Hoge Veluwe, with much of the area being inaccessible by car.

Keukenhof Gardens is the world's largest flower garden, and actually a promotion for the Dutch flower industry. Approximately seven million flower bulbs are planted annually in the park with not only tulips, but also hyacinths, daffodils and other spring flowers on display. The gardens are open from the last week in March to mid-May. Keukenhof is one of the most visited tourist attractions in the Netherlands.

The City Hall in Delft is a Renaissance style building on the Market square across from the Nieuwe Kerk (New Church). Originally designed by the Dutch architect Hendrick de Keyser, it was heavily changed over the centuries and was restored in the 20th century to its Renaissance appearance.

The West Frisian Islands, or Waddeneilanden in Dutch, are a chain of islands in the North Sea off the Dutch coast. They continue further east as the German East Frisian Islands.

The islands separate the North Sea from the shallow Wadden Sea, with tidal mud flats. Under the supervision of licensed guides, several islands can be reached by walking on the mudflats during low tides. On the islands, cycling is the most favourable way to move around.

Leiden is known as the oldest university in the Netherlands, the birthplace of Rembrandt and its beautiful canals. The two branches of the Old Rhine enter Leiden on the east and unite in the city centre, which also contains several smaller canals. The old centre of Leiden is one of the largest 17th century town centers in the Netherlands, second only to Amsterdam.

Amsterdam began building its famous **canals** in the 17th century during the Dutch Golden Age. The three main canals, Herengracht, Prinsengracht, and Keizersgracht form concentric belts around the city, known as the grachtengordel. Today there are over 100 km (60 miles) of canals and 1,500 bridges. Alongside the main canals are 1550 monumental buildings.

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by BIANCA and LUCIA

Form 2[^] G 2014 – 2015





Form 2[^] D Middle School “INNOCENZO da IMOLA”
During the lesson on The Netherlands given by Bianca and Lucia on 5th March 2015

