ENGLISH LEARNING FOR CURIOUS MINDS



Episode #646
Edinburgh: The City of Ideas
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Transcript....3
Key vocabulary....21
Language spotlight....28
Quiz....30
Listening Comprehension Multiple Choice Questions....30
True or False....31
Fill in the Blanks....32
Vocabulary Practice....32
Answers....34

Transcript

[00:00:05] Hello, hello, hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English, the show where you can listen to fascinating stories and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:21] I'm Alastair Budge, and today it's the start of another three-part mini-series, this time on three cities that shaped modern Britain.

[00:00:33] In today's episode, we are off to Edinburgh, to find out how a smoky, overcrowded city that had just lost its own parliament became the intellectual capital of the world.

[00:00:46] In part two, we head south to Manchester, the city that invented the modern factory, and then invented the ways of fighting against it.

[00:00:56] And in part three, we sail west to Bristol, the city that opened England's door to the Atlantic, grew rich on the slave trade, and is still arguing about that history today.

[00:01:09] OK then, let's not waste a minute and get right into it.

[00:01:16] As I imagine you will know, Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland.

[00:01:21] It sits on the east coast, on the Firth of Forth, a wide **inlet**[1] of the North Sea, about 650 kilometres north of London.

[1] a narrow area of sea that reaches into the land

[00:01:31] Today it is a city of around half a million people, famous for its castle, its festival, and for being, for many people at least, one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.

[00:01:46] It wasn't always like that.

[00:01:49] In the eighteenth century, travellers approaching Edinburgh would often notice the city before they could properly see it.

[00:01:59] Hanging above it was a thick grey cloud of smoke, rising from thousands of chimneys **crammed**[2] onto a narrow **ridge**[3] of rock.

[00:02:11] The Scots had a nickname for the city: Auld Reekie. In English, Old Smoky.

[00:02:18] And if the smoke didn't announce the city, the smell certainly did.

[00:02:25] Edinburgh in the eighteenth century was one of the most crowded places in Europe.

[00:02:31] Around fifty thousand people lived squeezed into roughly half a square mile, little more than a square kilometre, along one long street running downhill from the castle on its rock to the palace at the bottom.

[00:02:48] The city couldn't grow outwards. There was a defensive wall, a steep-sided rock, and a **foul-smelling**[4] lake blocking the way north.

[2] pushed tightly together into a space that was too small
[3] a long, narrow, raised strip of land
[4] having a very unpleasant smell

[00:02:58] So instead, it grew upwards.

[00:03:02] Edinburgh's **tenement**[5] buildings, great stone towers of flats, rose ten and eleven **storeys**[6] high.

[00:03:10] Some reached up to fifteen **storeys**. For the time, these were some of the tallest residential buildings in the world.

[00:03:20] And inside them, everyone lived stacked on top of everyone else.

[00:03:27] A judge might live on the fourth floor, a **countess**[7] on the fifth, a shoemaker in the basement and a family of **fishwives**[8] up in the attic, all sharing the same dark, **winding**[9] staircase.

[00:03:42] The most desirable flats were in the middle. High enough to escape the stench of the street, and low enough so that you didn't have to climb ten **flights of stairs**[10] to get home.

[00:03:54] And about that stench, that horrible smell.

[5] a large building divided into many flats, often for poorer people
[6] floors or levels of a building
[7] a woman of high noble rank, or the wife of an earl
[8] women who sold fish in the street or at the market
[9] turning and twisting, not straight
[10] sets of stairs between one floor and the next

[00:03:58] The city had no **sewers**[11] **to speak of**[12], so the custom was to empty your waste, of every kind, out of the window and into the street below, at ten o'clock at night, when the town drum had sounded.

[00:04:14] The traditional warning cry was "Gardyloo!", which is thought to come from the French "garde à l'eau!", or "watch out for the water".

[00:04:24] If you were walking below, you had a second or two to react. And of course, "water" was a bit of a **euphemism**[13].

[00:04:33] This, then, was Edinburgh: dark, **cramped**[14], smoky and smelly, **perched**[15] on a rock at the cold northern edge of Europe.

[00:04:44] It was also about to become the city where much of the modern world was worked out.

[00:04:52] The economics that still shape how governments think. The medicine that became the model for hospitals across the world. The discovery that the Earth is unimaginably old.

[00:05:05] Even Sherlock Holmes.

[11] underground pipes that carry away human waste and dirty water
[12] worth mentioning; of any importance
[13] a polite word used in place of an unpleasant or embarrassing one
[14] uncomfortably small, with too little space
[15] placed high up on the edge or top of something

[00:05:07] All of it has roots in those crowded staircases and closes, the narrow, smelly alleyways of the Old Town.

[00:05:17] To understand how that happened, we need to go back to a national **catastrophe**[16], and remind ourselves of some Scottish, English, and ultimately British, history.

[00:05:29] At the end of the seventeenth century, Scotland shared a king with England but had its own parliament in Edinburgh. Failed harvests and **famine**[17] had left it poor, and it was **shut out of**[18] England's profitable colonies.

[00:05:48] So it planned a colony of its own: Darien, in what is now Panama.

[00:05:56] From there, Scotland hoped to grow rich on trade between the Atlantic and the Pacific.

[00:06:03] **Nobles**[19], **merchants**[20] and ordinary townspeople invested their savings. Somewhere between a fifth and a quarter of Scotland's available investment capital went into the scheme.

[00:06:17] It was a disaster. Disease killed hundreds of colonists, the Spanish attacked, and England refused to help. Within a couple of years, the colony was abandoned.

[16] a terrible event that causes great damage or suffering
[17] a serious lack of food that causes many people to go hungry or die
[18] not allowed to take part in or benefit from
[19] people from the highest social class, with titles
[20] people who bought and sold goods, especially in trade with other countries

[00:06:31] By the way, we did an entire episode on this story, episode number 564. So if you'd like to learn about this amazing story in more depth, that is the episode to listen to.

[00:06:44] But the thing to remember, **as concerns**[21] Edinburgh, is that the losses from this failed **endeavour**[22] helped push Scotland towards union with England, which promised money to **compensate**[23] investors for their losses in the scheme.

[00:07:02] And **sure enough**[24], in 1707, the two countries became Great Britain.

[00:07:09] For Edinburgh, the deal meant losing its role as Scotland's centre of political power.

[00:07:18] Under the Union, the Scottish Parliament **ceased**[25] to exist. There would be one parliament for the whole island, and it would sit four hundred miles away, in London.

[00:07:30] The parliament that met in Edinburgh in the spring of 1707 simply closed its doors. A Scottish parliament would not meet again for almost three hundred years, until 1999.

[00:07:45] There were **riots**[26] in the streets when the terms became known. Ordinary Scots felt their country had been sold.

[00:07:54] The poet Robert Burns put it in a line Scots still quote today. Scotland, he wrote, had been "bought and sold for English gold".

[21] when talking about; as far as something is affected
[22] an attempt to achieve something difficult
[23] pay money to people because they have lost something
[24] as was expected
[25] stopped; came to an end
[26] violent protests by a crowd of people in a public place

[00:08:06] Edinburgh was still a capital city **on paper**[27]. But it was a capital without its own parliament; the centre of power had moved south.

[00:08:16] So what do you do, if you are an ambitious, educated, energetic city, and politics has been taken away from you?

[00:08:27] Edinburgh's answer, over the next fifty years, was ideas.

[00:08:33] The Union had taken Scotland's parliament, but it had left three things in Edinburgh: the Scottish legal system, the Scottish church, and the universities.

[00:08:45] That meant the city remained full of lawyers, ministers, professors and doctors. Educated men with **time on their hands**[28], and, crucially, all living within a few minutes' walk of one another.

[00:09:00] Remember, this was a city where everyone was piled on top of everyone else. There was no **aristocratic**[29] quarter, no separate district for intellectuals. You could not avoid your neighbours even if you wanted to.

[00:09:15] And rather than staying at home in their **cramped** flats, these men met in the city's **taverns**[30] and clubs. They formed societies with names like the Select Society and the Poker Club, where judges argued with professors, and ministers of the church debated with men who doubted the existence of God.

[27] officially, though not really in practice
[28] free time with nothing much to do
[29] belonging to the highest social class
[30] old-fashioned pubs where people drank and met

[00:09:39] Out of this **cramped**, **argumentative**[31], hard-drinking little world came one of the greatest bursts of intellectual activity in human history: the Scottish **Enlightenment**[32].

[00:09:53] The novelist Tobias Smollett, writing in 1771, called Edinburgh "a **hotbed**[33] of genius", a place where brilliance seemed to grow as easily as plants in a heated greenhouse.

[00:10:08] So who were the people behind this burst of ideas?

[00:10:13] Perhaps the most famous was David Hume, a philosopher who questioned almost everything his society **took for granted**[34]: miracles, religion, even the idea that we can ever truly know anything at all.

[00:10:28] Today, philosophers regularly rank him among the greatest thinkers who ever lived.

[00:10:34] He also sounded like a lot of fun to be around; he was, **by every account**[35], cheerful, kind, enormously fat, and one of the best-loved men in Edinburgh. He liked cooking, he liked card games, and he liked good company.

[31] liking to argue and disagree
[32] the 18th-century movement that valued reason, science and new ideas
[33] a place where a lot of a particular activity happens
[34] believed to be true without questioning it
[35] according to everyone who has described him

[00:10:51] One of his closest friends was a quiet, **absent-minded**[36] professor called Adam Smith.

[00:10:59] In 1776, Smith published a book called An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.

[00:11:09] It asked a simple question: what actually makes a country rich?

[00:11:16] His answers, about markets, trade, and the **division of labour**[37], became the foundation of modern economics. Almost every economic argument you hear today, from any side of politics, is in some way a conversation with Adam Smith.

[00:11:34] We also have an episode on him, by the way, it's episode 427.

[00:11:39] Then there was James Hutton, who was a farmer with an **obsession**[38] with rocks.

[00:11:46] At the time, many educated Europeans believed the Earth was around six thousand years old, a figure calculated by adding up the generations in the Bible.

[00:11:58] Logical enough, I guess, if that is your main point of reference.

[36] tending to forget things or not notice what is happening
[37] the way work is split into small, separate tasks done by different people
[38] an interest so strong that it fills someone's mind

[00:12:03] Hutton looked at Scotland's rocks and saw something that didn't fit. Layers of stone that had been **laid down**[39], **tilted**[40], **worn away**[41] and buried under new layers. Processes so slow that they must have taken millions upon millions of years.

[00:12:24] In June 1788, he took two friends by boat along the coast east of Edinburgh, to a rocky point called Siccar Point.

[00:12:36] There, at the water's edge, two completely different sets of rock layers meet. One set stands almost **vertical**[42]. The other lies nearly flat on top of it.

[00:12:51] For that to happen, the first rocks had to form, be pushed upright, be **worn down**[43] by the sea, and then be slowly buried under new layers of sand.

[00:13:04] You cannot do all of that in six thousand years. Hutton's companions understood, staring at that grey rock, that they were looking at evidence of a past almost too vast to imagine.

[00:13:19] One of them later wrote that "the mind seemed to grow giddy by looking so far into the **abyss**[44] of time".

[00:13:28] In other words, staring at that much time **made his head spin**[45].

[39] formed slowly in layers over time
[40] moved so that one side is higher than the other
[41] slowly made smaller or thinner by water, wind or use
[42] standing straight up, at a right angle to the ground
[43] made smaller or flatter little by little
[44] something so deep that it seems to have no bottom
[45] made him feel confused and dizzy

[00:13:35] Hutton's own conclusion about the age of the Earth became one of the most famous sentences in the history of science: "no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end". In plain English: no sign of a start, and no sign of an end.

[00:13:54] He had discovered what we now call **deep time**[46], and it opened all sorts of new doors to explain the natural world. Without it, Charles Darwin's theory of evolution would have been unthinkable, because evolution needs vast stretches of time to work.

[00:14:15] And it wasn't just philosophy and science, ideas and theory; Edinburgh's medical school grew into the finest in the English-speaking world.

[00:14:26] Medicine at this time was still half science, half **superstition**[47]: **humours**[48], **blood-letting**[49] and so on.

[00:14:35] Edinburgh's innovation was to teach it systematically: lectures, **dissections**[50], and training at the patient's bedside in a proper teaching hospital.

[00:14:48] Students crossed the Atlantic from the American colonies to train there, then carried Edinburgh's methods home with them and built their own medical schools on the same model.

[46] the extremely long history of the Earth, measured in millions of years
[47] a belief that is not based on reason or science
[48] four body fluids once thought to control a person's health and character
[49] the old medical practice of taking blood from a sick person
[50] cutting up dead bodies to study them

[00:14:59] The first edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica was written and printed in Edinburgh, starting in 1768. It was **nothing less than**[51] an attempt to gather all human knowledge into a single work.

[00:15:15] Word of all this spread far beyond Scotland.

[00:15:19] Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers, visited twice, and became friends with Hume, Smith and half the professors in the city. He later wrote that his six weeks in Scotland had been "six weeks of the densest happiness I have met with in any part of my life".

[00:15:40] Even Voltaire, the great French writer, admitted, in his slightly **mocking**[52] way, that Europe now looked to Scotland for ideas on everything from poetry to gardening.

[00:15:53] Fifty years earlier, Edinburgh had been the **humiliated**[53] capital of a country badly damaged by a failed colony.

[00:16:01] Now it was being compared to ancient Athens.

[00:16:06] There was just one problem. The city itself was still a medieval **slum**[54].

[51] used to stress how big or important something is
[52] laughing at someone or something in an unkind way
[53] made to feel ashamed and lose respect
[54] a very poor, crowded and dirty area of a city

[00:16:14] The philosophers might have been discussing how human beings and society could be improved without limit, but they were doing it in **taverns** down muddy alleyways, **dodging**[55] falling **sewage**[56] on the way home.

[00:16:29] While these ideas were developing, the city itself was changing. By the 1750s, its leaders **had had enough**[57]. Edinburgh, they decided, needed a home **worthy**[58] of its new reputation.

[00:16:46] In 1766, the town council announced a competition to design an entirely new town, on open farmland across the valley to the north.

[00:16:58] Several designs were submitted. The winner was an unknown local architect called James Craig. He was twenty-six years old.

[00:17:09] His plan was everything the Old Town was not. Instead of a **tangle**[59] of dark closes, there would be a simple, rational grid: three grand **parallel**[60] streets, with an elegant square at each end, wide enough for light and air and **carriages**[61].

[00:17:30] Even the street names were a statement of loyalty to the new Britain. George Street, for the king. Hanover Street, for his royal family. Princes Street, for his sons.

[55] moving quickly to avoid being hit by something
[56] waste from toilets and dirty water
[57] could not accept the situation any longer
[58] good enough to deserve something
[59] a confused, untidy mass of things twisted together
[60] running side by side, always the same distance apart
[61] vehicles with wheels, pulled by horses

[00:17:43] The stinking lake below the castle was drained, and a great bridge was **thrown across**[62] the valley to connect the old city with the new.

[00:17:54] And across that bridge, over the following decades, walked the entire Edinburgh **establishment**[63].

[00:18:02] Lawyers, professors, **merchants** and **aristocrats**[64] moved into the new **terraced**[65] houses. David Hume was among the early residents, moving there in 1771.

[00:18:15] The New Town was, and still is, one of the most beautiful pieces of city planning in Europe. Together with the Old Town, it is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

[00:18:27] But the move came with a cost.

[00:18:31] When the wealthy crossed the bridge, they took their money with them. The Old Town, now abandoned by the rich, slowly rotted into one of the worst **slums**[66] in Britain. Those same tall **tenements**[67] that had once housed **countesses**[68] and judges filled up with the desperately poor.

[62] built quickly across a gap
[63] the powerful and important people who control a society
[64] people from the highest social class
[65] built in a row, with each house joined to the next
[66] very poor, crowded and dirty areas of a city
[67] large buildings divided into many flats, often for poorer people
[68] women of high noble rank

[00:18:53] The old city had forced every class of society up the same staircases, into the same conversations. In the New Town, a gentleman could pass his entire week without ever meeting anyone below his own **rank**[69].

[00:19:10] And this golden age wouldn't last forever; it started to fade towards the end of the eighteenth century. Hume died in 1776, Smith in 1790.

[00:19:24] By the middle of the nineteenth century, the centre of British intellectual life had moved elsewhere.

[00:19:31] But Edinburgh's influence had already spread far beyond Scotland, through its books, its students and their ideas.

[00:19:40] And the city kept producing surprises long after its **Enlightenment** had ended.

[00:19:46] A century later, a young medical student at Edinburgh sat in the lectures of a surgeon called Dr Joseph Bell. Bell liked to **astonish**[70] his students by **diagnosing**[71] patients before they had said a word, reading their profession and their habits from their hands, their walk and their clothes.

[69] position or level in society
[70] surprise very greatly
[71] identifying what illness someone has

[00:20:10] That student's name was Arthur Conan Doyle. When he later invented a detective called Sherlock Holmes, he knew exactly who he was describing. "It is most certainly to you that I owe Sherlock Holmes", he later wrote to Bell.

[00:20:28] Edinburgh has kept its reputation as a city of culture, too.

[00:20:33] Since 1947, it has hosted the Edinburgh Festival and its Fringe, which has become the world's largest arts festival.

[00:20:42] Today, more than three hundred years after the Union, Edinburgh has its parliament back. Scotland's politicians once again argue on the Royal Mile, a few minutes' walk from where Hume and Smith are buried.

[00:20:59] If you have been to Edinburgh, and you've been lucky enough to have had a dry, sunny day, you will know that it is one of the great cities of Britain, perhaps even the world.

[00:21:11] It is no longer smoky, no longer smelly, and fortunately, you need not worry about listening out for shouts of "Gardyloo!"

[00:21:21] OK, then, that is it for today's episode, the first part of our three-part mini-series on three cities that shaped modern Britain.

[00:21:30] Next up we'll be moving to Manchester, the shock city of the Industrial Revolution, where the modern factory, the modern city and modern protests were all invented at more or less the same time.

[00:21:42] And in part three, we'll head south to Bristol, from the first English **voyage**[72] to North America to a trade in human beings whose **legacy**[73] the city is still **wrestling with**[74] today.

[00:21:54] We also have episodes on the Darién Scheme, which is episode number 564, on Adam Smith, which is episode number 427, so you can really do a **binge**[75] listen on the story of Scotland. You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds by Leonardo English.

[00:22:13] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]

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[72] a long journey by sea
[73] something from the past that still has an effect today
[74] trying hard to deal with a difficult problem
[75] doing a lot of something in a short time

Key vocabulary

Word	Definition
Inlet	a narrow area of sea that reaches into the land
Crammed	pushed tightly together into a space that was too small
Ridge	a long, narrow, raised strip of land
Foul-smelling	having a very unpleasant smell
Tenement	a large building divided into many flats, often for poorer people
Storeys	floors or levels of a building
Countess	a woman of high noble rank, or the wife of an earl
Fishwives	women who sold fish in the street or at the market
Winding	turning and twisting, not straight
Flights of stairs	sets of stairs between one floor and the next

Sewers	underground pipes that carry away human waste and dirty water
To speak of	worth mentioning; of any importance
Euphemism	a polite word used in place of an unpleasant or embarrassing one
Cramped	uncomfortably small, with too little space
Perched	placed high up on the edge or top of something
Catastrophe	a terrible event that causes great damage or suffering
Famine	a serious lack of food that causes many people to go hungry or die
Shut out of	not allowed to take part in or benefit from
Nobles	people from the highest social class, with titles
Merchants	people who bought and sold goods, especially in trade with other countries
As concerns	when talking about; as far as something is affected
Endeavour	an attempt to achieve something difficult

Compensate	pay money to people because they have lost something
Sure enough	as was expected
Ceased	stopped; came to an end
Riots	violent protests by a crowd of people in a public place
On paper	officially, though not really in practice
Time on their hands	free time with nothing much to do
Aristocratic	belonging to the highest social class
Taverns	old-fashioned pubs where people drank and met
Argumentative	liking to argue and disagree
Enlightenment	the 18th-century movement that valued reason, science and new ideas
Hotbed	a place where a lot of a particular activity happens

Took for granted	believed to be true without questioning it
By every account	according to everyone who has described him
Absent-minded	tending to forget things or not notice what is happening
Division of labour	the way work is split into small, separate tasks done by different people
Obsession	an interest so strong that it fills someone's mind
Laid down	formed slowly in layers over time
Tilted	moved so that one side is higher than the other
Worn away	slowly made smaller or thinner by water, wind or use
Vertical	standing straight up, at a right angle to the ground
Worn down	made smaller or flatter little by little
Abyss	something so deep that it seems to have no bottom
Made his head spin	made him feel confused and dizzy

Deep time	the extremely long history of the Earth, measured in millions of years
Superstition	a belief that is not based on reason or science
Humours	four body fluids once thought to control a person's health and character
Blood-letting	the old medical practice of taking blood from a sick person
Dissections	cutting up dead bodies to study them
Nothing less than	used to stress how big or important something is
Mocking	laughing at someone or something in an unkind way
Humiliated	made to feel ashamed and lose respect
Slum	a very poor, crowded and dirty area of a city
Dodging	moving quickly to avoid being hit by something
Sewage	waste from toilets and dirty water
Had had enough	could not accept the situation any longer

Worthy	good enough to deserve something
Tangle	a confused, untidy mass of things twisted together
Parallel	running side by side, always the same distance apart
Carriages	vehicles with wheels, pulled by horses
Thrown across	built quickly across a gap
Establishment	the powerful and important people who control a society
Aristocrats	people from the highest social class
Terraced	built in a row, with each house joined to the next
Slums	very poor, crowded and dirty areas of a city
Tenements	large buildings divided into many flats, often for poorer people
Countesses	women of high noble rank

Rank	position or level in society
Astonish	surprise very greatly
Diagnosing	identifying what illness someone has
Voyage	a long journey by sea
Legacy	something from the past that still has an effect today
Wrestling with	trying hard to deal with a difficult problem
Binge	doing a lot of something in a short time

Language spotlight

1. To speak of

- **Meaning**: Used after a negative to say that something exists only in a very small amount, or not at all.
- **Synonyms**: worth mentioning, significant, of note
- **Antonyms**: negligible, insignificant, trivial
- **Examples**:
    - The village has no shops **to speak of**, so we drive into town every Saturday.
    - We had no rain **to speak of** all summer, and the garden suffered.

2. On paper

- **Meaning**: Officially or in theory, but not necessarily in reality.
- **Synonyms**: in theory, officially, nominally
- **Antonyms**: in practice, in reality, in fact
- **Examples**:
    - **On paper**, the new phone is better than the old one, but most people find it harder to use.
    - She was the manager **on paper**, but her assistant made all the real decisions.

3. Take something for granted

- **Meaning**: To believe something is true, or will always be there, without thinking about it or questioning it.
- **Synonyms**: assume, presume, accept without question
- **Antonyms**: question, doubt, appreciate
- **Examples**:

- We **take** clean water **for granted** until the pipes freeze in winter.
- He had always **taken** his parents' support **for granted**.

4. Make your head spin

- **Meaning**: To make you feel confused or dizzy because something is so big, fast or complicated.
- **Synonyms**: bewilder, overwhelm, baffle
- **Antonyms**: calm, reassure, make sense
- **Examples**:
  - The number of forms we had to fill in **made my head spin**.
  - The speed of the changes at work is **making everyone's head spin**.

5. Wrestle with

- **Meaning**: To try hard to deal with or understand a difficult problem or decision.
- **Synonyms**: struggle with, grapple with, battle with
- **Antonyms**: ignore, avoid, sidestep
- **Examples**:
  - She **wrestled with** the decision for weeks before accepting the job.
  - Many towns are still **wrestling with** the effects of the factory closures.

Quiz

Listening Comprehension Multiple Choice Questions

1. Why did Edinburgh's buildings grow so tall in the eighteenth century?

a) Wealthy families wanted views of the castle

b) The city could not spread outwards because of a wall, a rock and a lake

c) The town council ordered all new homes to have ten floors

d) Builders wanted to escape the noise of the street

2. According to the episode, how did the Darien scheme help lead to the Union with England?

a) Scotland won great wealth from it and wanted to share it with England

b) England promised to protect the colony if Scotland joined it

c) Its failure left investors with heavy losses, and the Union promised money to compensate them

d) The Spanish forced Scotland to join England after the colony was attacked

3. What did James Hutton conclude from the rocks at Siccar Point?

a) The Earth must be much, much older than six thousand years

b) The sea level had risen suddenly in recent times

c) The Bible's account of the Earth's age was correct

d) The rocks had been moved there by people

4. What made Edinburgh's medical school different from older ways of teaching medicine?

a) It refused to take students from abroad

b) It taught only the theory of the four humours

c) It was run by the church rather than the university

d) It taught medicine systematically, with lectures, dissections and training at the patient's bedside

5. What was one cost of the move to the New Town?

a) The castle had to be knocked down

b) The Old Town was abandoned by the rich and became one of the worst slums in Britain

c) Hume and Smith left Edinburgh for London

d) The university was closed for many years

True or False

6. In the eighteenth century, people of different social classes often lived in the same tenement building. (True/False)

7. A Scottish parliament met again in Edinburgh only a few years after the Union of 1707. (True/False)

8. David Hume was a quiet and unpopular man who rarely saw his friends. (True/False)

9. The first edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica was written and printed in Edinburgh. (True/False)

10. The New Town was designed by a famous architect from London. (True/False)

Fill in the Blanks

11. The city had no sewers to _____ of, so the custom was to empty your waste, of every kind, out of the window and into the street below.

12. Edinburgh was still a capital city on _____.

13. Educated men with time on their _____, and, crucially, all living within a few minutes' walk of one another.

14. In other words, staring at that much time made his head ____.

15. By the 1750s, its leaders had had _____.

Vocabulary Practice

16. In the podcast, what does "**euphemism**" mean when Alastair says "water" was a bit of one?

a) A polite word used in place of an unpleasant one

b) A word borrowed from French

c) A word that is shouted as a warning

d) A word that has lost its meaning

17. What does "**hotbed**" mean in Tobias Smollett's description of Edinburgh?

a) A warm and comfortable home

b) A place of great danger

c) A place where a lot of a particular activity happens

d) A heated greenhouse for plants

18. In the podcast, what does "**absent-minded**" mean when it describes Adam Smith?

a) Often away from home

b) Rude and unfriendly

c) Very intelligent

d) Tending to forget things or not notice what is happening

19. What does "**dodging**" mean in "**dodging** falling sewage on the way home"?

a) Cleaning

b) Moving quickly to avoid being hit by something

c) Complaining loudly about

d) Slipping on

20. In the podcast, what does "**establishment**" mean in "the entire Edinburgh **establishment**"?

a) A large shop or business

b) The founding of the city

c) The powerful and important people who control a society

d) The town council's offices

Answers

1. b) The city could not spread outwards because of a wall, a rock and a lake
2. c) Its failure left investors with heavy losses, and the Union promised money to compensate them
3. a) The Earth must be much, much older than six thousand years
4. d) It taught medicine systematically, with lectures, dissections and training at the patient's bedside
5. b) The Old Town was abandoned by the rich and became one of the worst slums in Britain
6. True
7. False
8. False
9. True
10. False
11. speak
12. paper
13. hands
14. spin
15. enough
16. a) A polite word used in place of an unpleasant one

17. c) A place where a lot of a particular activity happens

18. d) Tending to forget things or not notice what is happening

19. b) Moving quickly to avoid being hit by something

20. c) The powerful and important people who control a society