

I/ A few words - Practice reading out loud the following words and try to transcribe them (or some of them)

Allow / acknowledge / opportunities / debt / lowering / hybrid / develop / focus / decade / taught / history / examine / patriot / migrant / monarchy

II/ Read a sentence from its phonetic transcription

- a) 'brɪtənri: 'θɪŋksɪts' spɛʃl ri 'leɪʃnʃɪpwið ə 'mɛrɪkə
- b) kɪŋ tʃɑ:lz θɜ:dz trɪp tu: ə 'mɛrɪkə ɪz tu: kə 'mɛmərəɪt ðə tu: 'hʌndrəd ænd 'fɪftiəθ ,æni 'vɜ:səri ɒv ə 'mɛrɪkəz ,ɪndɪ 'pɛndəns frɒm 'brɪtən.
- c) fɔ:rətɑɪmsɜ: KeɪrgptɒnwiðmɪstərTrʌmp.

III/ Identify the pronunciation of the following words

Jeffrey Epstein
 Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor
 Peter Mandelson.
 The British elite
 Parliament
 Egypt

IV/ Practice reading the transition sentences from Clémentine's presentation

- History and monuments: heroic narratives versus critical history**
- Humanities in higher education: a target because they develop critical thinking**
- The arts as a battlefield for politicians and society: controlling narratives and human experiences**

1. Robinson's article is not only about slavery or Trump.

Indeed, it questions the political role of history itself. Two questions are raised :

→ Who controls the national narrative?

→ What is the difference between history and political mythology (monuments etc...)?

Ultimately, humanities defend complexity against simplistic nationalism.

Thus, History becomes a safeguard against ideological manipulation.

2. However, controlling museums and public memory is not enough (for some politicians).

Political power can also target universities and education.

Why?

Because humanities teach citizens how to think critically.

Thus, attacks against humanities are also attacks against democratic culture itself.

A society unable to critically analyse itself becomes vulnerable to authoritarian tendencies.

3. Finally, the same struggle appears in the artistic sphere.

Beyond history and universities, political power also seeks to influence culture itself.

this is because art builds collective imagination

V/ Choose of the audio / video documents from the file, practice reading and then imitate! Ask for the adequate transcript!

Document 1 - 🎧 Britain rethinks its “special relationship” with America

Seventy years after the Suez crisis, the Middle East brings a new reckoning

The Economist, Apr 23rd 2026 | London and Washington, DC | 6 min read

KING CHARLES III’s trip to America on April 27th-30th is ostensibly to commemorate the 250th anniversary of America’s independence from Britain. It is turning into a mission to help salvage the countries’ “special relationship”, as Winston Churchill called it in 1946. At stake is Britain’s place in the world: should it keep hugging America, or embrace Europe?

The king faces fallout from the scandal around the late Jeffrey Epstein and the sex-trafficker’s connections to the British elite, not least the monarch’s brother, Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor, and a former ambassador to Washington, [Peter Mandelson](#). More pressing is whether the royal charm can bring respite from the bad blood between British and American leaders. Donald Trump has lost patience with Britain over Iran (“When we needed them, they weren’t there”); Sir Keir Starmer has tired of flattering Mr Trump (“I’m not going to yield” to American pressure, he told Parliament this month).

It is the worst rift between the allies since the Suez crisis of 1956, when Britain, France and Israel attacked Egypt to seize the Suez Canal and overthrow its nationalist leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser; American ire forced them to withdraw. Now America has allied with Israel in a war against Iran; European allies are aghast but powerless to stop the turmoil.

For a time Sir Keir got on with Mr Trump. At their meeting in the White House in February 2025 he proffered an invitation for Mr Trump to make an unprecedented second state visit to Britain. In May they reached a deal to reduce Mr Trump’s sharp tariffs. A NATO summit in June passed off well, too, as allies pledged to increase defence spending to 3.5% of GDP by 2035 plus a further 1.5% on defence-related infrastructure. Mr Trump cast himself as NATO’s saviour. At Windsor Castle in September the president waxed lyrical: America and Britain were “like two notes in one chord, or two verses of the same poem”.

Alas, the poetry is gone. Mr Trump was irked by European resistance to his wooing of Russia at the expense of Ukraine, and to his renewed demand to annex Greenland, a Danish territory. The war in Iran brought matters to a head. Mr Trump denounced Europeans as “cowards” for restricting the use of their bases and refusing to help reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Britain is hardly the only target of his wrath, but his broadsides carry particular force because of the countries’ historical closeness.

Always more special to Britain than to America, the relationship is being rent by many forces. Britain’s role as a bridge between America and Europe, questionable at the best of times, has collapsed with Brexit. America has wanted to turn from Europe to constrain a rising China. To exacerbate matters, Mr Trump has a contempt for rules and alliances that Britain holds dear. MAGA’s online echo chamber, moreover, portrays Britain as a land of violent crime and rampant Islamism.

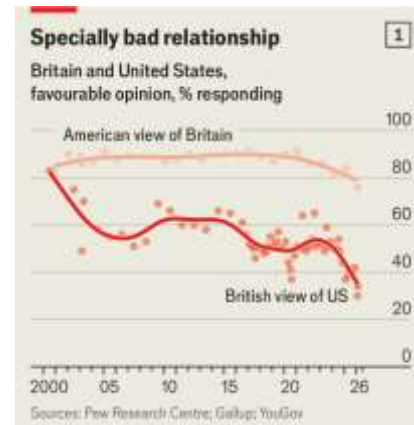


Chart: The Economist

The American and British publics are growing disenchanted. Opinion polls suggest Americans and Britons still held each other in high regard at the turn of the century, with more than 80% of respondents in each country saying they had a favourable view of the other (see chart 1). Americans’ approval of Britain has fallen from 91% to 76% in the past five years. Britons’ opinions have deteriorated more gradually but farther: just 34% now express a positive view of America. Americans and Britons alike give higher ratings to other countries, such as Denmark, France and Japan. American and British views of each other’s most prominent public figures are not exactly flattering either (see chart 2).

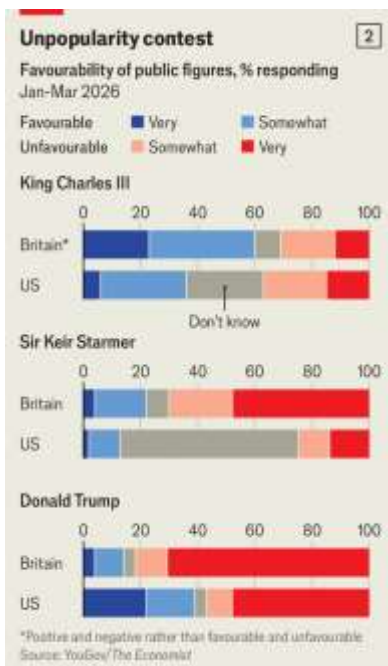


Chart: The Economist

Senior British figures say relations with America are, like the sea, “choppy on the surface but calm below”. Mr Trump and Sir Keir may see political advantage in jabbing at each other, but their subordinates still work well together, not least in military and intelligence matters. One problem for Britain is that Republicans who normally defend allies also tend to be hawkish on Iran and irritated by Europeans’ qualms.

Unarmed to the teeth

A persistent criticism concerns the hollowing out of Britain’s armed forces. Britain boasts a nuclear deterrent, albeit one dependent on [extensive American help](#), along with two aircraft-carriers, F-35 stealth jets, nuclear-powered attack submarines, deployable land forces, top-notch special forces and more. But the reality is less impressive. Britain deployed an armoured division (about 26,000-28,000 troops) as the main formation fighting alongside Americans against Iraq in 1991 and 2003. These days, a senior officer admitted publicly, it would struggle to send even an armoured brigade (3,000-5,000 troops). Air-defence and artillery batteries are woefully short, too.

The aircraft-carriers have had problems with their propeller shafts and are both tied up for maintenance (Mr Trump recently derided them as “toys” compared with America’s). Britain ended its permanent naval presence in the Gulf earlier this year, and struggled to muster a destroyer to help protect Cyprus last month. Just two of seven frigates and one of five active attack submarines are thought to be deployed. The air force’s F-35s lack long-range weapons, such as Storm Shadow cruise missiles used by older Typhoon jets.

Insiders admit that British forces “are naked” when not fighting together with American ones, whose might has hidden many of Britain’s gaps. They note that equipment programmes are underfunded by £28bn (\$38bn), even before new requirements from last year’s strategic defence review (SDR) are added. A ten-year defence-investment plan, promised last autumn, has yet to be published, prompting George Robertson, a former NATO secretary-general and co-author of the SDR, to denounce “corrosive complacency”. These days the Trump administration refers to Israel, not Britain, as America’s “model ally”.

Co-operation in intelligence is more equal. In Ukraine, Britain has been willing to take more risk than America in sending officers to liaise with Ukrainian ones, gaining better insight on the fighting. Britain is part of the “Five Eyes” intelligence partnership (with America, Australia, Canada and New Zealand). But this, too, is being questioned. Britain stopped sharing intelligence on Latin American drug gangs when America started to sink alleged drug-running boats with missiles. Mark Dubowitz of the Foundation for Defence of Democracies, a hawkish American think-tank, provocatively suggested America should give up on Five Eyes in favour of a new pact with Israel, Poland, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, Japan and South Korea.

Britain is thus being forced to reconsider the lessons it drew from Suez. Whereas France decided an untrustworthy America must be kept at arm’s length, Britain resolved not to be parted from America again. Britain long had the better of the argument. But now France looks vindicated and Britain dangerously exposed.

Peter Ricketts, a former British national security adviser, argues that Britain must “rebalance its relationship” with America by moving closer to fellow Europeans. Some officials still hope that, as happened after Suez, America will turn back to its British friend. Yet even a more sympathetic successor to Mr Trump will expect Europeans to do a lot more to defend the Atlantic as America turns to the Pacific.

Vladimir Putin ended Britain’s long peacetime dividend. Mr Trump is scuppering notions of its special place in the world. He will courteously welcome the king, but has made it plain that he sees Britain as a much diminished power. ■

Document 2 - Sense and Sensibility, Ang Lee, 1995 – The Will

Your son is arrived from London.

- Father ...

- John ...

You will see in my will the estate of Norland was left to me in a way -- that prevents me from dividing it between my two families. Norland, in its entirety, is therefore yours by law. And I am happy for you and Fanny. But your stepmother, my wife and daughters are left only 500 a year. Barely enough to live on. Nothing for the girls' dowries.

You must help them.

- Of course.

- You must promise to do this.

- I promise, Father. I promise.

1'53" -Help them? What do you mean help them?

- Dearest, I mean to give them 3,000. The interest will be an extra income. Such a gift could certainly discharge my promise to my father.

- Without question. More than amply.

- One had rather... on such occasions... do too much than too little. Of course, he did not stipulate a particular sum.

What do you say to 1,500, then?

What brother would do half so much for his real sisters. Let alone half-blood?

- They can expect more.

- Well, they're not knowing what they expect. The question is what can you afford?

- A hundred pounds a year to their mothers while she lives would be more advisable. It is better than parting with 1,500 all at once.

- But if she should she live longer than 15 years, we'd be completely taken in.. People always live forever when there is an annuity to be paid them.

- Twenty pounds now and then, and that will amply discharge my promise, you're quite right.

- Indeed. Although to say the truth I'm convinced within myself that your father had no idea of giving them money.

- They will have 500 a year amongst them...

- And what on earth could four women want for more than that? Their housekeeping will be nothing at all! They'll have no carriage, no horses, hardly any servants and they'll keep no company. And you can see how comfortable they would be. They'd be much more able to give you something.

Document 3 – Sense and Sensibility, Ang Lee, The New Mistress of the house

Starting at 1'20''

ELINOR

Margaret, are you there? Please come down. John and Fanny will be here soon.

MARGARET (V.O.)

Why are they coming to live at Norland? They already have a house in London.

ELINOR

Because houses go from father to son, dearest not from father to daughter. It is the law.

ELINOR

If you come inside, we could play with your atlas.

MARGARET (V.O.)

It's not my atlas any more. It's their atlas.

ELINOR

As you know, we are looking for a new home. When we leave we shall be able to retain only Thomas and Betsy.

ELINOR

We are very sorry to have to leave

you all. But we are certain you will find the new Mrs Dashwood a fair and generous mistress.

ELINOR

How is Mrs Ferrars?

FANNY

My mother is always in excellent health, thank you. My brother Robert is in town with her this season and quite the most popular bachelor in London! He has his own barouche.

ELINOR

You have two brothers, have you not?

FANNY

Indeed, yes. Edward is the eldest Mamma quite depends upon him. He is traveling up from Plymouth shortly and will break his journey here.

JOHN

(to MRS DASHWOOD)

If that is agreeable to you, of course.

MRS DASHWOOD

My dear John this is your home now.

Document 4 – An excerpt from The Day After Tomorrow, Roland Emmerich, 2004

Dr. Jack Hall: What we have found locked in these ice cores is evidence of a cataclysmic climate shift which occurred around 10,000 years ago. The concentration of these natural greenhouse gases in the ice cores indicates that runaway warming pushed the planet into an ice age which lasted two centuries.

Respondent 1: [as translated] I'm confused. I thought you were talking about global warming, not an ice age.

Dr. Jack Hall: Yes, it is a paradox, but global warming can trigger a cooling trend. Let me explain. The northern hemisphere owes its temperate climate to the North Atlantic current. Heat from the sun arrives at the equator and is carried north by the ocean. But global warming is melting the polar ice caps and disrupting this flow. Eventually, it will shut down. And when that occurs, there goes our warm climate.

Respondent 2: Excuse me. When do you think this could happen, Professor?

Dr. Jack Hall: I don't know. Maybe in a hundred years. Maybe in a thousand. But what I do know is that if we do not act soon, it is our children and our grandchildren who will have to pay the price.

Vice President Becker: And who's going to pay the price of the Kyoto Accord? It would cost the world's economy hundreds of billions of dollars.

Dr. Jack Hall: With all due respect, Mr. Vice President, the cost of doing nothing could be even higher. Our climate is fragile. At the rate we're burning fossil fuels and polluting the environment, the ice caps will soon disappear.

Vice President Becker: Professor Hall, our economy is every bit as fragile as the environment. Perhaps you should keep that in mind before making sensationalist claims.

Dr. Jack Hall: Well, the last chunk of ice that broke off was about the size of the state of Rhode Island. Some people might call that pretty sensational.

Document 5 – Hillary Clinton – 4th World Conference for Women Speech, 5 September 1995, Beijing, China

Read the whole transcript of that speech while watching her [HERE](#)

Starting at 14'29''

If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights once and for all. Let us not forget that among those rights are the right to speak freely -- and the right to be heard.

Women must enjoy the rights to participate fully in the social and political lives of their countries, if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure. It is indefensible that many women in nongovernmental organizations who wished to participate in this conference have not been able to attend -- or have been prohibited from fully taking part.

Let me be clear. Freedom means the right of people to assemble, organize, and debate openly. It means respecting the views of those who may disagree with the views of their governments. It means not taking citizens away from their loved ones and jailing them, mistreating them, or denying them their freedom or dignity because of the peaceful expression of their ideas and opinions.

In my country, we recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of Women's Suffrage. It took 150 years after the signing of our Declaration of Independence for women to win the right to vote. It took 72 years of organized struggle, before that happened, on the part of many courageous women and men. It was one of America's most divisive philosophical wars. But it was a bloodless war. Suffrage was achieved without a shot being fired.

Document 6 – Balancing Acts

By Simon Armitage, Poet Laureate

The rocks are something else, grandstanding here
with their temple chic and their stage names,
flaunting their alien shapes.
Fluted manhattans, melted castles, monster fossils,
one gyroscopes on a stone spur,
others trumpet their warped anvils and weird mushrooms
over the valleys below and as far as the coast.
Of course the horizon doesn't exist but here it is,
a scattered henge, massive chunks of ballast
holding the centuries down, keeping the planet in place.
Counterweights to the mad contraptions
of cities and towns, a jittery mind
can lean into these blocks
and sense the still centre of things thinking solidly back.
The afternoon sunbathes on south-facing slabs.

And the moor is something again –
the sky's garden, turfed roof of the hill.
Of course the horizon is only a trick of the light
but here it is, rolled out
and chamfered into the clouds at both sides, a snug fit.
It's raining now and the paths are streaming or frothing
or puddled with dark brew but so what;
away from the manic circuitry of the world
a person striding this off-grid weather-farm
is laundered and reset by buffeting winds
and sudden light; the jumbled mind
can feel itself grounded, earthed.

Look, a micro-moth carries both rocks and moor
across the papery scales of its wings.

