



Unit 1 Family names

International cultural knowledge The origin of British family names

- 1 Napisz trzy nazwiska brytyjskie, jakie znasz. Spróbuj zgadnąć ich pochodzenie.

Jackson – I think Jackson is 'the son of Jack'.

- 2 Przeczytaj tekst o pochodzeniu brytyjskich nazwisk. Wymień wszystkie cztery sposoby tworzenia nazwisk w nim omówione.

1 *They explain who the person's father or grandfather was.*

2

3

4

WORD BOOSTER

Dopasuj wyrazy 1–4 do definicji a–d.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1 generation | a from Scotland |
| 2 Scottish | b an area of green land, often with animals |
| 3 field | c a group of people who are born/live around the same time |
| 4 seashore | d land next to the sea |

- 3 Przeczytaj ponownie tekst i odpowiedz na pytania 1–6.

1 What is a surname?

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2 Where is the surname Macdonald from originally and what does it mean?

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3 Where does the family name Smith come from?

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4 What does a carpenter do?

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5 What does it mean if your surname is Reid?

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6 What is funny about the surname of the authors of *A Student's Guide to the Seashore*?

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The origin of British family names

Some people think that names aren't important. They're probably right, but they *can* be very interesting. Take British surnames, for example. A surname is a name that you and your family all have, and that you pass from one generation to another.

When we start to look at the meaning of different surnames, we soon discover that many of them answer one of these basic questions:

- a) **Who is this person's father or grandfather?**

This gives us British surnames like Peters or Peterson. There are many surnames which begin with Mc or Mac, for example McCartney or Macdonald. This has a Scottish origin and also means 'son of', the same as O' in Ireland, like the surnames O'Connor or O'Brien.

- b) **Where is this person from?**

Some people have a country for their surname, for example England. Field, House, Lake and Hill are all common family names in Britain too. In fact, some experts think that 50% of all surnames come from some type of geographic description.

- c) **What is this person's job?**

The very common surname Smith (five million people in the world have got this surname!) comes from 'blacksmith', the traditional job of making objects such as horseshoes from metal. Baker (someone who makes bread), Shepherd (someone who looks after sheep) and Carpenter (someone who works with wood) are all common British surnames.

- d) **What is special about this person?**

If your surname is Small, there's probably a small person in your family's history. If your surname is Armstrong, then somebody in your family's past probably had strong arms. And the surname Reid comes from the word red, so you probably had a family member with red hair or a red face.

When you start to investigate, you soon find that British surnames can be really interesting. And when you discover that there is a book called *A Student's Guide to the Seashore* by John and Susan Fish, you soon see that they can be funny too!

- 4 Napisz dwa polskie nazwiska (ale nie swoje!). Następnie spróbuj zgadnąć ich pochodzenie – czy jest to jedno z tych wymienionych w tekście powyżej?

1 Surname
Possible origin

2 Surname
Possible origin

- 5 Czy podoba ci się twoje nazwisko? Dlaczego tak/Dlaczego nie? Czy znasz jego pochodzenie?

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