

Northern England – history, economy and culture

Despite its past as Britain's industrial centre dominated by coal mines and steel factories (mercilessly described in Charles Dickens's novel "Hard Times") the north of England abounds in areas of outstanding natural beauty, among them various National Parks and stretches of protected coastline.

Moreover, the North takes pride in its numerous architectural monuments which bear witness to over two thousand years of history – from Celtic stone circles in the Lake District to various relics of Britain's Roman past and impressive abbey ruins of the Middle Ages.

As for literature, generations of readers have been delighted by the poems of the Lakes' poet William Wordsworth and the Yorkshire based novels of the Bronte sisters. Another author who spent part of her working life in the North West is Beatrix Potter. Children all over Britain – and beyond – love her stories about the adventures of "Peter Rabbit" and his friends.

Economically, the second half of the 20th century has seen the steady decline of certain key industries in the North, among them steel and coal. Films like "Brassed off", "The Full Monty" or "Billy Elliot" highlight the hardships the workers and their families have suffered in this process.

Topics:

1. Hadrian's Wall as a major tourist attraction of the North
2. The Yorkshire Dales National Park
3. Bringing Cumbria's Celtic heritage to life
4. Abbey ruins of Yorkshire – conservation and management
5. Whitby, Bram Stoker and the Gothic movement
6. Liverpool FC and the Hillsborough disaster
7. Beatrix Potter and the National Trust in the Lake District
8. Grace Darling – a 19th century celebrity
9. Charles Dickens's "Hard Times" as an Industrial Novel
10. "The Full Monty" and the decline of Sheffield's steel industry
11. "Billy Elliot" and the miners' strike of 1984

Please note that this seminar will be held in English and that you will have to write your seminar paper in English, too. Please be also aware that most or even of the literature you will need to read or check for your paper will be available in the English language only.