



The British Coastline

Coastlines around the world are home to hundreds of different species of wildlife. Each shoreline has its own ecosystem. The British coast is no exception. There are lots of different habitats. These include rocky cliffs, muddy estuaries and sandy beaches. Did you know that nobody in Britain is more than 80 miles from the sea? How amazing is that?

British coastlines are vital for many species. 80% of the gannets in the world breed around the British coast. There are nearly 700 species of seaweed in the world. Most of these can be found on British shores. There are also seals, crabs, starfish, sandhoppers and even dolphins. Over 1,200 different species of animals and plants live on the British coast. You can see just how diverse life is in the shallow waters just off a beach if you've ever walked along a beach and looked into a rock-pool.



There are lots of islands off the coast of Britain. Some of them are quite large. These include the Isle of Wight and Isle of Man. Others are much smaller. This makes measuring the length of the British coastline difficult. It is about 19,491 miles if you include the islands. It is closer to 7,000 miles if you don't. The National Trust is responsible for looking after more than 780 miles of the coast. It costs them around £3,000 for each mile every year to look after it. This involves clearing litter and restoring the coastline to its natural state. They also make sure that there aren't too many buildings spoiling the landscape.

Going to the beach isn't just about seeing the sea or paddling in rock pools. The rocks on the south coast of Britain were once home to dinosaurs. You can often find fossils by picking through the stones. Dorset is one of the best places to go fossil hunting in Britain.

There are dozens of castles and forts dotted around the British coast. Some of these were built thousands of years ago. Tintagel Castle in Cornwall is said to be the birthplace of King Arthur. There's even a cave nearby that many locals think was where Merlin the Wizard lived.

Coastlines are a great place for humans, animals and plants. Things have changed over the years, but there is still lots to see and do. We just have to remember to take care of it.

RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. Find three types of animal that live on the British coast.
2. Where can you see how many different types of animal live in the shallow water?
3. Where is one of the best places to find fossils in Britain?
4. Where was King Arthur said to have been born?
5. How much of the coast does the National Trust look after?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

E At the end of the first paragraph, the author asks the reader a question. What does this make you do as a reader?

V Which word means "a lot of different types"?

Shallow **Mention** **Diverse**

I Why must we remember to look after the coast?

V Find a word that means "making something like it was".

S What kind of work does the National Trust do on the coast?