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# *i Think: Geography*

## EUROPE



**by Sharon Coletti  
and Kendra Corr**

\*\* It is the goal of InspirEd Educators to create instructional materials that are interesting, engaging, and challenging. Our student-centered approach incorporates both content and skills, placing particular emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary development, and critical and creative thinking in the content areas.

Edited by Sharon Coletti

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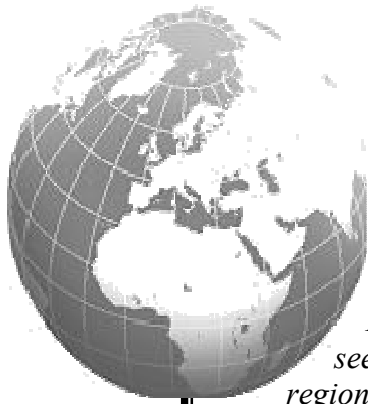
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## It Stands to Region

### Springboard:

Students should read “The World’s Smallest ‘Country’” and follow the directions. (*Answers may vary. Some ideas: it is located in Rome, Italy; is a quiet and prayerful place with many wonderful things to see and do; it’s part of the Italian peninsula and the Catholic world region; movement is on foot, cars, trucks, train, etc. as well as movement of ideas such as art, etc.; interaction could be building, creation of gardens, etc.*)

**Objective:** The student will be able to explain the regions of Europe.

**Materials:** The World’s Smallest ‘Country’ (Springboard handout)  
Europe Map  
Figure out Five (handout)  
Europe Geography (handout – see note below)

### Procedure:

- After discussing the Springboard, reiterate that the five themes allow for geographic study anywhere on earth. Go on to explain that the first five lessons in this unit provide an introduction the five themes of geography; the first one the student(s) will examine is the region of Europe.
- Hand out the map and “Figure out Five.” The student(s) should work individually, in pairs, or small groups to analyze and complete the different ways of looking at Europe by region.
- Have them share their answers and explain. (*Answers may vary widely if justified, but have students compare and contrast the regions they identified with the way many “experts” divide the continent physically:*  
**The British Isles:** islands off the northwestern Europe including the U.K.: England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland  
**The Iberian Peninsula:** Spain and Portugal  
**Western Europe:** mostly described as from France, Belgium Luxembourg  
**Central Europe:** Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, and the tiny nation of Lichtenstein  
**Southern Europe:** the Italian and Green Peninsulas  
**Eastern Europe:** Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Russia  
**Scandinavia:** Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland  
**The Balkans:** countries on the Balkan Peninsula: Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Romania – and some sources include Turkey
- During the discussion, make sure the student(s) understand that regions will vary depending upon the person or organization creating them. Then have the students compare and contrast their ideas with the “experts” regions.
- **NOTE:** Distribute “Europe Geography” for the student(s) to use as a unit organizer to record examples after each lesson that fit the five themes. In addition to the objectives sheet, this makes a wonderful review resource!

## The World's Smallest "Country"



Vatican City is by far the smallest independent "country" in the world. Home to the pope and the center of the Roman Catholic Church, its business is running the Church. Vatican City has everything a small nation needs; it has a government, police, post office, apartments, and a BIG church.

St. Peter's Basilica is the holiest site in the world for Catholics. People come from all over to see the tomb of St. Peter and pray. They also tour the Vatican and its museum filled with art of the great masters and its lovely gardens.

**DIRECTIONS:** The five themes of geography can be used to describe ANYPLACE! Use information from the map and reading to describe Vatican City in terms of each theme.

**LOCATION:** *Where is it exactly and/or compared to other places?*

**PLACE:** *What are its physical and human characteristics?*

**REGION:** *What cultural or physical characteristics does it have in common with other places?*

**MOVEMENT:** *How do goods, people, and ideas get around?*

**HUMAN INTERACTION with the ENVIRONMENT:** *How have people changed the environment, and how does the environment affect people?*

# EUROPE



Courtesy of the Perry Castaneda Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin

# FIGURE OUT FIVE



**DIRECTIONS:** Study the map of Europe to find FIVE regions based on physical features or other characteristics that countries may have in common. Draw lines to show the regions on the map and then make up names for each of the regions and describe them below.

**REGION # 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**REGION # 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**REGION # 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**REGION # 4:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**REGION # 5:** \_\_\_\_\_

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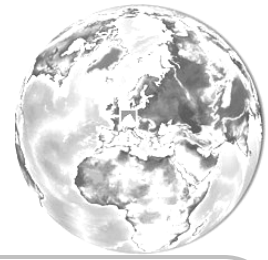
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# Europe Geography



**DIRECTIONS:** During your study of Europe, record examples of each theme of geography on the organizer below:

**REGION:**

**LOCATION:**

**HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION:**

**PLACE:**

**MOVEMENT:**

## EXTREME Land Mass



### Springboard:

Students should read the “\_\_\_” handout and answer the questions.

**Objective:** The student will be able to use absolute and relative location to identify places in Russia.

**Materials:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Springboard handout)  
Use the Map (optional handout)  
Mixed Matched (card cut-outs)

**Terms to know:**

- tundra** - vast, treeless area with permanently frozen subsoil
- steppes** - vast, dry, grass-covered plains
- absolute location** - description of a place in terms of degrees latitude and longitude
- relative location** - description of a place in terms of other places or landmarks
- archipelago** - chain of islands

### Procedure:

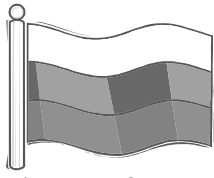
- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will examine Russia to identify places there based on their absolute and relative locations* (review terms).
- Distribute the “Use the Map” handout and the “Mixed Matched” cards. The student(s) should work individually, in pairs, or small groups to sort the cards into pairs matching the absolute and relative locations of places and labeling the card pairs with the place they both describe. The map handout could be used to identify places or if computer access is available, the enlargeable map @ [www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/russia.94.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/russia.94.jpg) would be easier to read.



- Have the student(s) share their pairs and solutions. (*Suggested answers are:*

Vladivostok	Southernmost port – Sea of Japan	42° N, 132° E
Ulan Ude	On the road to Mongolia	50° N, 95° E
New Siberia Is.	Islands – Laptev and E. Siberian Sea	75° N, 140° E
Dikson	Northernmost town	72° N, 82° E
Moscow	All roads and rails lead to this city	55° N, 40° E
Pechora	Town on the Pechora River	65° N, 55° E
Rostov	Town – Volga River meets the sea	48° N, 40° E
St. Petersburg	Port city on the Baltic Sea	60° N, 30° E
Provideniya	Nearest town to the U.S.	64° N, 185° E
Franz Josef Land	Coldest Islands in northern Arctic	80+° N, 45-65° E
Kuril Islands	Archipelago northeast of Japan	50° N, 155° E
Khabarovsk	Railroad town – Chinese border	58° N, 140° E

- For lesson closure or for homework have the student(s) add examples from this lesson to the “Europe Geography” organizer.



With a land area of 6.6 million square miles, Russia is the world's largest country. The nation is so big that it spans 11 time zones. Though most of this vast land actually lies on the continent of Asia, its population is concentrated west of the Ural Mountains in Europe. In fact  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Russia's people live in the European part of the country.

Since Russia is so large, it is not surprising that it would have a variety of landforms and climates. Most of Russia lies above  $50^{\circ}$  N. latitude like the northern areas of Canada, so Russia's climate is very cold. In fact about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of its land is inside the Arctic Circle. A large region of northern and central Russia, called Siberia, is mainly tundra, forests, and lakes. The tundra is a vast plain on which the ground is frozen throughout the year. While Siberia is rich in natural resources, its cold climate makes it **inhospitable to residents**.

Russia has several mountain ranges. Besides the Urals in the west, which divide the continents of Europe and Asia, the Caucasus cross the southwestern corner of Russia, the Sayan Mountains and the Yablonovy Mountains are in the south, and the Cherskogo and Verkhoyanskiy Ranges are in the east. The Northern European Plain covers most of European Russia.

Russia is rich in natural resources including oil, natural gas, a variety of minerals, and lumber. The steppe region in the southwest has rich land used for farming crops such as wheat, barley, oats, potatoes, and sunflowers.

A good choice for a title for this passage would be

- A. "The Largest Land."
- B. "West of the Urals."
- C. "The Frozen Tundra."
- D. "Rich in Resources."

The phrase "inhospitable to residents" means

- A. the area has many natural resources.
- B. people would not want to live there.
- C. Siberia is a vast, permafrost plain.
- D.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Russia's people are there.

Which sentence explains why Russia is included in a unit about Europe?

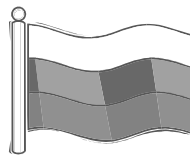
- A. The vast amount of Russian land lies within Asia.
- B. Most Russians live west of the Ural Mountains.
- C. A fourth of Russia is inside the Arctic Circle.
- D. Much of Russia is inhospitable to residents.

Based upon information in the passage, which mountains are **MOST LIKELY** located on the continent of Europe?

- A. Caucasus
- B. Sayan
- C. Yablonovy
- D. Cherskogo

Tundra : Siberia ::

- A. Asia : Europe
- B. Europe : people
- C. Farmland : steppes
- D. Russia : Arctic Circle



**Answers and Explanations**

With a land area of 6.6 million square miles, Russia is the world’s largest country. The nation is so big that it spans 11 time zones. Though most of this vast land actually lies on the continent of Asia, its population is concentrated west of the Ural Mountains in Europe. In fact  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Russia’s people live in the European part of the country.

Since Russia is so large, it is not surprising that it would have a variety of landforms and climates. Most of Russia lies above 50° N. latitude like the northern areas of Canada, so Russia’s climate is very cold. In fact about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of its land is inside the Arctic Circle. A large region of northern and central Russia, called Siberia, is mainly tundra, forests, and lakes. The tundra is a vast plain on which the ground is frozen throughout the year. While Siberia is rich in natural resources, its cold climate makes it **inhospitable to residents**.

Russia has several mountain ranges. Besides the Urals in the west, which divide the continents of Europe and Asia, the Caucasus cross the southwestern corner of Russia, the Sayan Mountains and the Yablonovy Mountains are in the south, and the Cherskogo and Verkhoyanskiy Ranges are in the east. The Northern European Plain covers most of European Russia.

Russia is rich in natural resources including oil, natural gas, a variety of minerals, and lumber. The steppe region in the southwest has rich land used for farming crops such as wheat, barley, oats, potatoes, and sunflowers.

A good choice for a title for this passage would be

- A. “The Largest Land.” \*
- B. “West of the Urals.”
- C. “The Frozen Tundra.”
- D. “Rich in Resources.”

*(A is the most general answer given. The other choices are details in the passage.)*

The phrase “inhospitable to residents” means

- A. the area has many natural resources.
- B. people would not want to live there.\*
- C. Siberia is a vast, permafrost plain.
- D.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Russia’s people are there.

*(A through C refer to Siberia, but only B refers to “residents.” D is about residents but not in Siberia.)*

Which sentence explains why Russia is included in unit study of Europe?

- A. The vast amount of Russian land lies within Asia.
- B. Most Russians live west of the Ural Mountains. \*
- C. A fourth of Russia is inside the Arctic Circle.
- D. Much of Russia is inhospitable to residents.

*(Though much of Russia is in Asia, most Russians live in Europe. Choices C and D are irrelevant.)*

Based upon information in the passage, which mountains are MOST LIKELY located on the continent of Europe?

- A. Caucasus \*
- B. Sayan
- C. Yablonovy
- D. Cherskogo

*(The Caucasus are in southWESTern Russia, and Europe is WEST of the Ural Mountains.)*

Tundra : Siberia ::

- A. Asia : Europe
- B. Europe : people
- C. Farmland : steppes \*
- D. Russia : Arctic Circle

*(Have students create a sentence to explain the first part of the analogy. “Tundra is (land) in Siberia.” The answer that can also correctly complete that sentence is C. D is somewhat true, but Russia is mostly NOT in the Arctic Circle.)*

# USE THE MAP

