

Types of States Activity

Unit 5 - Political Geography / AP Human Geography

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*Applicable to any AP Human Geography class

Objective

Students will learn about:

1. the dynamics of the Ukraine/Russia conflict
2. the size, shape, and population distributions of current states previously under Soviet rule
3. ethnic, religious, and linguistic distributions of former Soviet states
4. different types of states in the former Soviet Union - from multi-state nations to nation-states, from stateless nations to multi-ethnic states
5. the historical background of central Asian states

Introduction

Russia & Ukraine video

- Show the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJAKCV8bw9E>
- Have students *Think/Pair/Share* the following questions
 - What does the video say about the relationship between Ukraine and Russia?
 - How does the situation in Ukraine relate to concepts we've discussed in the AP Human Geography political unit like the Russian near abroad, MacKinder's Heartland Theory, autonomous states, multi-state nations, multinational states, etc.?

True Size Mapping Activity

1. In groups of 2-4, have students visit: <https://thetruesize.com>
2. Have students choose 3 of the following states, type them into the top left search bar, and drag these countries over the United States: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.
3. Have students research the population size and population distributions of their 3 chosen countries (states), and compare these to the United States.
4. Share out these results as a class, and discuss any notable shapes (morphology): compact, large, elongated, perforated, fragmented, prorupted, microstate, exclave, enclave, landlocked.

Modification: True Size Mapping Activity

In groups of 2, have students visit: <https://thetruesize.com>

1. Students will choose any 2 countries in Europe, Central Asia, or East Asia. Encourage them to select 2 countries distant from one another.
2. Students will drag their selected countries over to the United States and discuss how they map onto the American landmass.
3. Instruct students to research the population size of their chosen countries using the CIA World Factbook website listed in the resource section.
4. Share out these results as a class

Extension: True Size Mapping Activity

In groups of 2, have students visit: <https://thetruesize.com>

1. Have students choose 2 of the following states, type them into the top left search bar, and drag these countries over the United States: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.
2. Guide students to the CIA World Factbook website listed in the resource section.
3. Students should compare their 2 chosen countries to the United States using the following metrics: population size, size of landmass, religious practices, ethnic groups, languages spoken, median age, infant mortality rate, total fertility rate, life expectancy rates, and literacy rate.
4. Share out these results as a class
 - a. Discuss how chosen states compare along various standards with the United States
 - b. Discuss any notable shapes (morphology): compact, large, elongated, perforated, fragmented, prorupted, microstate, exclave, enclave, landlocked.

Types of States Classwork & Presentations

- **Group Assignment** Break the class into 15 different groups, each assigned one of the following states: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.
- **Group Research** Have each group research and create a presentation addressing their assigned state.
- **Types of States** Each presentation should explore:
 - The ethnic, religious, and linguistic **distributions** within their state
 - The **geographic features** which have allowed or prohibited settlement

- The **types of state** (political unit), ethnicities, and nations (peoples), comprising or found within their state, including:
 - **Quasi-States:** Quasi-states have established the apparatus of a state, but they do not have widespread recognition from the international community (ex: South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh).
Nation-states: the term applies if a nation's homeland corresponds to a state's territory (Denmark, Japan and Poland).
 - **Stateless nations:** a stateless nation is a cultural unit (a people) that has no country (Kurds, Palestinians).
 - **Multinational states:** countries with more than one ethnic/cultural group (United States)
 - **Multistate nations:** when a nation stretches across borders and across states (The Basques of Spain and France, The Kurds)
 - **Autonomous region:** autonomy is having a degree of freedom from external authority. Some countries have granted autonomy to regions (Kazan Oblast, Basque country, Québec province)
- A brief historical synopsis linked to its current political status

Modification: For World Geography, in groups of 2-3, students should:

- Choose any country within Europe, Central Asia, or East Asia
- Research and prepare a presentation on the following aspects of their chosen country
 - Population
 - Size of landmass
 - Geographic orientation: rivers, mountains, borders
 - Religions practiced
 - Languages spoken
 - Important cultural features

Extension: Student presentations should explore the following factors for their chosen country:

- Population pyramids: how it's changed over time and future projections
- Application of the World Systems Theory: examples of core, periphery, and semi-periphery processes occurring today
- Application of the Demographic Transition Model: which stage of the DTM and what factors support this claim
- Migrations inflows and outflows over the last century
- Cultural landscapes: the imprint of cultural, religious, and economic influences on the physical landscape
- Borders: choose any 1 border and describe what it reveals about the region.

Resources

The following resources may be helpful to students

- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>
- <https://www.nato.int/>
- <http://harriman.columbia.edu/>
- <https://www.rferl.org/>
- <https://thediplomat.com/>
- <https://www.fpri.org/research/eurasia/>
- <http://populationeducation.org/>
- <https://www.populationpyramid.net/world/2017/>
- <http://www.global-migration.info/>
- <https://www.iom.int/world-migration>
- <https://www.thoughtco.com/demographic-transition-geography-1434497>
- <http://metrocosm.com/disputed-territories-map.html>

TEKS Standards

WG.3 Geography. The student understands how physical processes shape patterns in the physical environment.

WG.4 Geography. The student understands the patterns and characteristics of major landforms, climates, and ecosystems of Earth and the interrelated processes that produce them.

WG.5 Geography. The student understands how political, economic, and social processes shape cultural patterns and characteristics in various places and regions.

WG.6 Geography. The student understands the types, patterns, and processes of settlement.

WG.7 Geography. The student understands the growth, distribution, movement, and characteristics of world population.

WG.8 Geography. The student understands how people, places, and environments are connected and interdependent.

WG.9 Geography. The student understands the concept of region as an area of Earth's surface with related geographic characteristics.

WG.17 Culture. The student understands the distribution, patterns, and characteristics of different cultures.

WG.18 Culture. The student understands how the components of culture affect the way people live and shape the characteristics of regions.

WG.21 The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology.

WG.22 The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms.