

1.1 MAPPING GERMANY



FOCUS QUESTION:

- How does a physical-political map of a country provide insight into the interactions between humans and their physical environment?

STANDARD #3 PEOPLE, PLACES AND ENVIRONMENTS.

LESSON OVERVIEW:

Using an atlas with a physical-political map of Germany and a blank outline map, the students should locate and label Germany's bordering countries, major water and landforms, and major cities. This map project will serve as a convenient reference for the rest of the students' study of Germany.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Germany (or officially, The Federal Republic of Germany) is situated in the heart of Europe surrounded by the North Sea, Denmark, and the Baltic Sea on the north; by Poland and the Czech Republic on the east; by Austria and Switzerland on the south; and by France, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands on the west.

Germany has a short coastline on the North and Baltic seas. The northern part of the country is mostly flat; the terrain is hilly in central and southern Germany. The Alps run along the border with Austria; the rugged Black Forest lies in the southwest; the Bohemian Forest is along the Czech border. Major rivers include the Rhine in the west, the Danube in the south, the Elbe and Weser in the center, and the Oder in the east. In area, it is the sixth largest country in Europe. Its territory encompasses roughly 357,000 square kilometers or 137,858 square miles. As of the mid-1990s, about 37 percent of the country's area was arable; 17 percent consisted of meadows and pastures; 30 percent was forests and woodlands; and 16 percent was devoted to other uses.



Politically, Germany is a parliamentary federal republic of sixteen states or *Länder*. The territory of former East Germany (divided into five new *Länder* in 1990) constitutes almost one-third of united Germany's territory and one-fifth of its population. In 1990, Berlin became the capital of Germany once again and in 1999 it became the official seat of government. Other major German cities are Munich, Hamburg, Bremen, Hanover, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Stuttgart and Dusseldorf.

After reunification in 1990, Germany became a founding member of the European Union (EU). Among the nations of the EU, it has the largest population (approximately 82 million people), the world's fourth largest economy, and is one of the largest exporters of goods to other parts of the world.

Source: FACTS ABOUT GERMANY. Retrieved 10/29/11 from <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/en/home1.html>



TIME:

1-2 Class Period(s)

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

- Atlas (with a political-physical map of Germany) or Internet access to a map of Germany
- Blank Outline Map of Germany for each student (**Handout 1.1 A on Resource Disc**)
- Map Fill-In Instruction Sheet for each student (**Handout 1.1 B on Resource Disc**)
- Markers or colored pencils

PROCEDURE:



DAY 1:

- **Anticipatory Set:** Using a wall map or an online map of Europe projected on the board, the teacher should show the students the location of Germany and then ask them to identify the nine nations which are Germany's neighbors. The teacher should then project a *blank* map of Europe and ask the students to recall Germany's neighbors. The teacher should write the nations' names on the map and the students should follow along on their own outline maps of Germany within Europe (**Handout 1.1 A on Resource Disc**).
- Once the nations are listed, the teacher should hand out the atlas (or project an online atlas) and instruct the students on their individual maps to locate, color and label the water, landforms and cities in Germany, which are listed on the instruction sheet.

WHOLE GROUP REFLECTION:



- To close the lesson, the teacher should ask the students to examine their completed maps and speculate about the patterns of human settlement based on the topography. What issues might arise from these human-environmental relationships? For example, why are there fewer major cities located in mountainous areas? What man-made settlements might be located in these areas?

MODIFICATIONS:

- For special needs students, the teacher might provide a completed map and ask the students to highlight the geographic features, etc. required in the map assignment.
- Depending on the class composition, the teacher may assign this map exercise as an independent rather than a whole class activity.

EXTENSIONS:

- The map completed in this lesson will become the first entry in a student's personal Geo-German Atlas. This may be expanded throughout the ensuing chapters and lessons with other geographic tools created along the learning journey (i.e. graphs, charts, climate data, photos, maps, tourist hot spots, river trips, train tours, cultural highlights, historical places). The teacher should give each student a manila folder and have each student decorate the cover with illustrations depicting Germany.
- In addition to the students completing individual maps, the teacher may secure a mural map and have the students complete a large map that could be hung on the classroom wall and used as a reference throughout their study of Germany.
- Students may research the origin of German towns (Baden Baden, Bad Bocklet, Bad Kissingen) as examples of human environmental relationships (in this case towns with natural springs becoming health spas).