

## 3.5 RISE AND FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL



### FOCUS QUESTIONS:

- How does the political climate of an area affect the movement of the people?
- How are the lives of people affected?
- What are ways people adjust, adapt, or challenge such conditions?

### STANDARD #2 TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE.

#### LESSON OVERVIEW:

This lesson includes a PowerPoint that will provide students with an overview of events between Germany's division and its reunification, e.g., allied occupation, building of the Berlin Wall, and the reunification of Germany. Students will also gain an understanding of the lives of the people in the former East and West Germany before and after the Berlin Wall.

#### TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The conclusion of World War II in Europe saw the onset of what became known as the Cold War. Europe and the world became separated ideologically by the powers of the west, primarily the United States and its allies, and the east or the Communist Bloc, primarily the Soviet Union and its satellite states. Despite being Allies against the Axis powers, the Soviet Union and the United States disagreed about political philosophy and the configuration of the post-war world while occupying most of Europe. The consolidation of the occupied areas of western Germany by the French, British and the Americans resulted in the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany, whereas the eastern zone, occupied by the Soviets, became the German Democratic Republic. The capital city of Germany – Berlin – was also divided into east and west. The central location of the two Germanys often resulted in their pivotal roles in the Cold War. The building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 symbolized the division of Germany. Two separate systems of government, economics and life developed until 1989 when a peaceful revolution of the people in the east resulted in the demolition of the Berlin Wall.



“The fall of the Berlin Wall on 11/9/89 unleashed forces that ultimately liberated all the captive peoples of the Soviet Empire. But it actually did so much more. It tipped the balance of power across the world toward those advocating democratic, consensual, free-market-oriented governance, and away from those advocating authoritarian rule with centrally planned economies.” – Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat* (2005)

Germany has been reunited since October 3, 1990. Technically, Germany was actually not “re-unified;” in reality, the German Democratic Republic was dis-

solved and the people and area of eastern Germany became part of the Federal Republic of Germany. The process of integration, with a few exceptions, was one of the institutions and style of life of the east being replaced rapidly by that of the west.

### TIME:

3 (45-minute Class Periods)



### INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

- Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 3.5 A on Resource Disc**)
- Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall Script (**Handout 3.5 B on Resource Disc**)
- Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall Questions (**Handout 3.5 C on Resource Disc**)
- Triarama Handout (**Handout 3.5 D on Resource Disc**)
- *The Wall Came Down* Handout (**Handout 3.5 E on Resource Disc**)
- “Endangered Species” Article from *Der Spiegel* (**Handout 3.5 F on Resource Disc**)

### PROCEDURE:



#### DAY 1:

- **Anticipatory Set:** The teacher should ask students if they have traveled outside of the United States, outside of their state, and/or outside of their town to visit family and friends. The students should share their responses. The teacher should then ask them to imagine that one day the leaders in power limit their freedom to travel to those same places without permission and in the end construct a physical barrier that restricts their activities. What thoughts/feelings immediately come to mind? The students should share their concerns. The teacher should explain to students that this is what happened to the East German people.
- The teacher should project the Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 3.5 A on Resource Disc**), which depicts the end of World War II, the building of the Berlin Wall, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the reunification of Germany. Reviewing the Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall Script (**Handout 3.5 B on Resource Disc**) will assist the teacher with the presentation. The teacher should distribute the Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall Questions (**Handout 3.5 C on Resource Disc**) to the students and review the directions. Students will fill in the answers during the presentation. The handout may be used as notes for activities later in the lesson.

#### DAY 2:

The teacher should have the students choose one of the following ELA/Social Studies activities to complete. This will allow them to decide which activity would interest them most and provide them with the opportunity to work independently investigating and reflecting on what they have learned.

- **Choice 1:** Triarama Handout (**Handout 3.5 D on Resource Disc**): This activity is for the students who enjoy drawing, writing and creating visual images to explain ideas and concepts. It is especially for students who are interested in reviewing the details surrounding the Berlin Wall in greater depth. As indicated on the handout, students should refer to information provided on the site for the exhibition: “*A Concrete Curtain: The Life and Death of the Berlin Wall*” ([http://www.memorial.fr/mur\\_de\\_berlin/gb/berlin.htm](http://www.memorial.fr/mur_de_berlin/gb/berlin.htm)). Once they have researched the Berlin Wall, they will then create a triarama using construction paper. On one panel the students will draw and color a symbol for the period of the Berlin Wall, on the second panel the students will draw and color a symbol representing the fall of the Berlin Wall, and on the remaining panel, the students should write 6-8 sentences answering either 1) How is a reunified Germany different than a divided Germany? or 2) How have the actions of governments effected the lives of the German people? Students may draw or glue pictures representing modern Germany on the outside of the 3 panels. Once completed the students may present their triarama to the class and place it on display.



- **Choice 2: *The Wall Came Down* Handout (Handout 3.5 E on Resource Disc).** This activity is for the students who enjoy expressing themselves creatively. The purpose of a diamante-antonym poem is to show the differences between two opposite topics; this format lends itself when writing about the time when the Berlin Wall was up and when the Berlin Wall was down.

ELA knowledge of parts of speech and vocabulary is required. For this poem, students will also use their social studies knowledge to describe events before and after the Berlin Wall. Using this poetic form, students will be able to compare and contrast the time when the Berlin Wall was up versus the Berlin Wall being removed. First students will read the poem from *The Wall Came Down* Handout (**Handout 3.5 E on Resource Disc**) and answer the listed questions. Then students will create their own diamante-antonym poem according to the provided formula. As a modification, students may use another shape that relates to the poem's theme rather than use a diamond shape. All poems should be mounted on construction paper. Students may choose to decorate the edge around the poem with appropriate symbols depicting the theme.

Once completed the students may present their poems to the class and place them on display.

### DAY 3:

Students may present their projects.

### WHOLE GROUP REFLECTIONS:

- In small groups students may share what they have learned about Germany specifically and in general about the will and determination of people.
- The teacher should facilitate a discussion of the question: Why were both the 1961-Rise and 1989-Fall of the Berlin Wall turning points in history?

### MODIFICATIONS:

- The students may view the PowerPoint (using the Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall Script) and complete the handout independently.
- Students may work in pairs to write a diamante-antonym poem. One student could choose one of the words for the pairs.
- Another short follow-up for the anticipatory set might be to show the Transatlantic Outreach Program's DVD *Field Trip to Berlin* as it sets the context and stage for the fall of the Berlin Wall. It is accompanied by an Instructional Guide with "Before, During, and After Viewing" instructional strategies and materials.

### EXTENSIONS:

- The teacher may assign the students to write a journal that includes important events starting with the end of World War II, the building of the Berlin Wall, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the reunification of Germany. Their task is to pretend to be a German child who is 10 at the end of WWII. They should retell his/her life during these times as either an East or West Berliner. They should be conscious of their age, which changes with the times.
- The teacher may wish to show the 1982 movie, *Night Crossing*. It is based on the true story of a family living in East Germany in 1979, who decides to escape using a hot air balloon. Life under the surveillance of the Stasi in a communist regime is clearly depicted.
- You are there! After viewing 2-3 YouTube clips to hear the reports that were broadcast during the fall of the Berlin Wall, the students should pretend that they are reporters for an online newspaper, and must send in their eyewitness report of the developing situation.

ABC News Peter Jennings reporting, Nov. 9, 1989: *The Berlin Wall Falls* (3:20 min.)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnCPdLlUgvo>



ABC News Ted Koppel reporting, *Nov. 9, 1989: Beyond the Brandenburg Gate* (7:45 min.)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9Q\\_Nm\\_4cRA&feature=relmfu](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9Q_Nm_4cRA&feature=relmfu)

NBC News Tom Brokaw reporting, *The Berlin Wall Falls 1989 NBC Coverage Pt1* (6:23 min)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fK1MwhEDjHg>

ABC News Reporting, *Fall of the Berlin Wall* (2:56 min)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnYXbJ\\_bcLc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnYXbJ_bcLc)



- *Ostalgie* - After reunification many of the East German products were no longer produced. As time passed, people began to have a feeling of nostalgia, “Ostalgie,” for items such as foods, perfumes, and cars. These products may not have been made of the highest quality, but they brought back happy memories for some people. The students should read the Trabant Article from *Der Spiegel* (**Handout 3.5 F on Resource Disc**) about the East German car, the Trabant, and write a persuasive essay to one of the major German car manufacturers (e.g. Mercedes, BMW, Audi, Volkswagen, Porsche, Opel) to convince them to re-manufacture the Trabant.
- Teachers may wish to continue the theme “walls” by using the suggested picture books. The teacher could read them orally or have students read them in small groups. After reading the teacher could lead a discussion about the positive and negative attributes of walls throughout history and today.
  - *The Wall* by Peter Sis
  - *Talking Walls* by Margy Burns Knight
  - *Talking Walls The Stories Continue* by Margy Burns Knight
  - *The Wall* by Eve Bunting

**Source:**

Friedman, Thomas, L. (2005). *The World is Flat*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.