

## HANDOUT 3.5 B - RISE AND FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL SCRIPT

During the PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 3.5 A on Instructional Resource Disc**) the students should be completing the Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall Questions (**Handout 3.5 C on Instructional Resource Disc**). The italicized sentences in the script are also on the student handout. The students may answer these while viewing each slide. The teacher should ask the students to write down their answers first before a class discussion ensues. As a modification the teacher may provide the students with the script and have them view the slideshow and complete the handout independently.

### 1. Division and Reunification of Germany

*Describe the sculpture.* Once suggestions are exhausted or when a student recognizes it as pieces of a broken chain, explain that the title of the sculpture is called *Berlin*. In 1985 it was unveiled on a main street in West Berlin, West Germany. *Look carefully. What do you think the artists were trying to say?* After suggestions, the teacher should explain that it symbolizes a time of Berlin's separation. The segments loop each other, but do not touch. They are near, yet alone, describing the time of East and West Berlin.

### 2. Germany: A Divided Country 1945-1990

From 1945 until 1990 Germany was a divided country. You couldn't simply travel from Cologne to Berlin, from Munich to Leipzig, or from Hamburg to Rostock. Two German states existed: The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). The division of Germany was the result of the Second World War; West Germany was formed from the former American, French, and British occupied zones, and East Germany was formed from the former Soviet occupied zone. The East German government did not allow its citizens to travel freely. *Why would the government of East Germany not want their citizens to travel to West Germany without special permission?*

### 3. The Building of the Berlin Wall: August 13, 1961

The border between the two Germanys ran from the North at the Baltic Sea to the South in Bavaria. By 1952, East Germany separated the Germanys with barbed wire. Then, on August 13, 1961, the East Germans built a wall surrounding West Berlin so it was separated from the rest of the country, an island within another country. *What materials were used to build the wall? Why do you think the soldiers were there?*

### 4. End of WWII

From 1933 – 1945 Germany was under the rule of Hitler and the National Socialists. Many people were brutally suppressed, persecuted and murdered and a war against many countries was started. The USA, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union joined together and liberated Germany from the dictatorship. After many millions of people suffered and died in the war, Germany surrendered, and the war ended on May 8, 1945. *Describe the signs of devastation you see. Who are the three men, and why are they shaking hands?*

### 5. Occupation Zones

The four allied powers divided Germany among each other and split it into four zones. The former capital, Berlin, was also divided into four sectors. The western part of Berlin, which was controlled by the western powers, was situated within the Soviet Zone. The four powers did not agree over the economic and political future of Germany and over time became enemies. *Name the four Allies.*

### 6. Berlin Airlift (1948-1949)

Between 1948 and 1949 the Soviet Union blocked all land and waterways into West Berlin in order to force out the western powers. But the reaction was the opposite; the western powers increased their engagement in West Berlin and started the famous airlift. (Note: the teacher may refer to the Lesson 3.5 on "Operation Vittles" for greater detail.) *Give reasons why these people are standing where they are and looking at the plane.*

## 7. Two Germanys

During the year of 1949 two German states were founded. One was formed out of the three zones occupied by the western powers. It became West Germany with a democratic government. The other one was formed out of the Soviet zone and became East Germany, with a communist government. *What are some basic differences between these governments? E.g. capitalism vs socialism, freedoms of speech and religion vs government controlled media and promotion of atheism.*

## 8. Leaving East Germany 1951

Between 1949 and 1961 more than 2.5 million people fled East Germany to West Germany. The East German government had taken the property of some; others were against the communist government because they were not allowed to speak freely in public or because of bad living conditions. Every year it became more difficult to cross the inner German border and finally in the 1950s the border was closed. *The sign indicates that the people are leaving the Soviet controlled zone. How do we know that the people plan to be gone a while?*

## 9. Building of the Wall 1961

Finally on August 13, 1961 the building of Berlin Wall was started and the last loophole to leave East Germany was finally closed. The wall surrounding West Berlin was approximately 100 miles long and about 11 feet high. *Which side do you think is the east and west side of the wall? Why? What do you notice about the wall?*

## 10. Germany: Center of the Cold War

At this point the Cold War had begun. *What is a cold war?* Germany became the “touching point” between the United States and the Soviet Union, the superpowers. This was the high time of the so-called Cold War. This means the USA and the Soviet Union were not fighting against each other on a battlefield but built more and more weapons including nuclear bombs in order to be able to win in the case of a real war.

## 11. Competition...taking over space

The two super powers also competed in the fields of technology and sciences, especially in field of astronautics. In the year 1957 the Soviet Union sent the first satellite into space and in 1961 Yuri Gagarin became the first man in space. 1968 the Americans landed for on the moon for the first time. In 1978 East German Sigmund Jähn became the first German in space. *How many years passed before the US surpassed the Soviets in space? East Germany was a small country compared to the US and Soviet Union. Explain how an East German could find himself in space.*

## 12. Flight to the West

For East Germans it was life threatening to get close to the border between West and East Berlin or between West and East Germany. East German border guards were in watchtowers with rifles watching the border area. Whoever set a foot near the area could be shot. It became known as the “Death Strip”, but still people tried to leave the GDR. *What do you notice about the pictures of the escapes? Describe what you see in the pictures.*

## 13. “Walled In!” Germany’s Inner Border

View the YouTube video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwQsTzGkbiY>, a digital depiction of the building of the wall. *Share what you learned that you did not know or realize before the film.*

## 14. Mödlareuth (Little Berlin)

Not only did Berlin become a divided city, but so did some towns and villages along the German – German border, e.g. Mödlareuth. It was called “Little Berlin” by the Americans. *Describe the differences between the photos of 1949 and 2011.*

## 15. President John F. Kennedy 1963

In 1963 the President of the United States went to West Berlin and gave a speech in support of the West Berliners’ determination to remain free from East German control. Speaking in German, President Kennedy said that he too was a Berliner. *What did these words symbolize to the West Berliners?*

## 16. 2 Different Forms of Government

The governmental systems of the two Germanys were very different. West Germany was a parliamentary democracy different from the political system of the US, but yet similar. Both countries are democracies. East Germany was officially called German Democratic Republic, but in fact it was not democratic. Only one party had the power, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, which controlled the life of the people. For example they tried to decide who was allowed to study, which goods could be produced, and also who was allowed to travel and who was not. *Notice the 4 political party symbols on the left side and the one political party symbol on the right. Decide which represents either government. Explain the reasoning for your decision.*

## 17. East German Secret Police

In East Germany it was dangerous to criticize the leadership of the country or the party. The State Security, called *Stasi*, spied on the people. They could cause a person to lose his job or even end up in prison. *What do you think the photo on the right shows?* (a letter opening machine to read the personal mail of all GDR citizens).

## 18. GDR: A Planned Economy

The GDR was a socialist country, which means that it had a planned economy. The government decided which products could be produced and for what price they could be sold. Consumer goods were not a priority to the government. There was enough food, but there was not a large choice. Some goods were very rare, for instance bananas or oranges. In case they were available, people had to line up for a long time. Certain clothing or other products were also not always available, e.g. children's shoes. You couldn't simply go and buy a car; you had to order it and wait approximately 10 to 15 years! *Give examples of consumer goods.*

## 19. Legal Way to Leave

There was a legal way to leave East Germany. You apply to leave the country, but it could take many years to receive approval. If you were approved, you had to leave the country within a very short time. You could not take all of your belongings or money with you. In many cases people who applied to leave the country were not allowed to leave and were sometimes even put in prison just because they had applied. The East German government was known to force out well-known people who had criticized the government. *Explain why those who had criticized the government might wish to stay rather than be sent out of the country?*

## 20. Attempts to Escape to the West

More than 136 people died along the Berlin Wall because they tried to flee from East to West Germany. Many more were killed along the inner German border. *What might be some of the ways the people would try to escape?*

## 21. Rabbits in the Death Zone

Since no one was allowed in the Death Zone plants and animals were able to grow without endangerment. To symbolize the rabbits that once lived near the Wall, sculptures were laid into the road surface. View the trailer (1:24) of the 2010 Oscar nominated short subject documentary, directed by Bartosz Konopka, *Rabbit a Le Berlin*. This is the untold story of the wild rabbits inhabiting the area between the Berlin Walls. For 28 years, the Death Zone was their sanctuary: plenty of grass, no predators, and guards protecting them from human trespassers. When their population reached several thousand, however, the guards started to remove them. Since the Wall came down, the rabbits have learned how to live in the free world. Make a list describing the events from the perspective of a bunny after viewing the video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEH4DE2uAY>.



## 22. The Cold War Ended...Gorbachev

During the mid 1980s the relations between the two superpowers improved. An important event was when Michael Gorbachev became the leader of the Soviet Union. He introduced a new policy, the policy of "Glasnost" (transparency) and "Perestroika" (change). Because of the changes in the Soviet Union the people in East Germany became hopeful that changes were also possible in the GDR. This gave them new courage to give their opinions openly. *Predict the changes that might occur for the people.*

**23. Ronald Reagan at the Berlin Wall**

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1987, US President Ronald Reagan spoke in front of the Berlin Wall. *What do you think his goal was?*

**24. Hungary Opened Borders to the West**

When Hungary reopened its border, thousands of GDR citizens fled through Hungary into Austria to West Germany. *Describe the signs that indicate that the people appear rushed and in a hurry. Why reasons would they have to be in a hurry?*

**25. Monday Demonstrations in Leipzig “We Are the People”**

During the year of 1989 more and more East German citizens demanded more freedoms. Every Monday people prayed for peace in the St. Nicolai Church of Leipzig. Demonstrations grew from these prayer sessions. During the fall of 1989 more and more people in many other East German cities began to demonstrate on the streets and demand free elections and the freedom of travel. *Discuss the events that have occurred earlier that have helped this movement to gain momentum.*

**26. November 9, 1989, Opening of the Wall**

In November 1989 the GDR government finally decided to allow travel to the West. This new travel regulation should have been published on November 10<sup>th</sup>, but because of a mistake a government spokesman announced it during the evening of November 9<sup>th</sup>. In reaction to this announcement, that night thousands of people went to the different checkpoints in Berlin and demanded to be let through. In the end the border was opened and the Wall fell. This night became a huge party. Strangers from the East and West hugged each other, sang, danced, and climbed on the wall. *Describe the feelings that a West and East German may have felt on this night.*

**27. Wall as a Souvenir**

During the next days and month many people went out with hammers and broke pieces out of the wall and took them home as souvenirs. Most of the wall has been demolished and today only a few meters are still standing as a memorial for the division of Germany. *Explain how a German might feel if given an original piece of the Wall.*

**28. Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> (1990) a Public Holiday Commemorating Reunification**

Without the Wall the communist dictatorship couldn't survive. As a result the first free elections were held in the GDR. More and more people of the GDR wanted to unite with West Germany. On October 3, 1990, East Germany joined West Germany. Since that day Germany is one country with 16 federal states, called *Länder*. The “Day of German Unification” is the German National Day, a public holiday celebrated on October 3<sup>rd</sup> each year. *Give some reasons explaining why the people of the GDR would wish to join West Germany.*

**29. Reunified Germany**

One of the issues confronting a reunified Germany was how to blend elements of two countries with separate though similar cultures. *Ampelmann* was the icon on East German traffic lights. Although not mandated by law as the formal icon, the East German figure has been popularly accepted. Both East and West Germany had their own versions of the popular children's TV character, *Sandmännchen*. After discussion it was determined that the East German figure would be the only figure of the pop culture image. These are 2 examples where the East German culture prevailed. But for a few exceptions, everything else was replaced by the West German system. *Give one reason why the East German Ampelmann might be so popular as a traffic light icon.*

**30. Brandenburg Gate-a symbol of separation and unity of Germany**

One symbol of the reunited Germany is the Brandenburg Gate. For centuries it was located within the death strip between West and East Berlin, but today it's freely accessible again and many happy celebrations take place there every year. You can also find it on the back of some of the German euro coins. *List the memories that may come to mind when a German looks at the Brandenburg Gate.*