

## Lesson Plan

# Europe and Eurasia

**Length**

Two 45-minute periods

**Grade Level**

High School

## Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to describe the history of Europe and Eurasia alongside the political, social, and economic systems that characterize the region.
- Students will understand that Russia has played a powerful and evolving role in the region.

[Europe and Eurasia: The Essentials](#)[Worksheets](#)

## Homework

- Students will read the timeline from Europe and Eurasia and complete the attached worksheet.

## Class One

1. **(5 minutes) Debrief Homework:** Have students share their homework responses in small groups.
2. **(10 minutes) Warm Up:** Give students the attached blank map of Europe. Have students work in small groups to label as many countries, cities, geographical landmarks, etc., as possible. When students have finished, show this map labeled with European country names and ask students the following questions to activate prior knowledge.
  1. What differences do you notice between your group's map and the completed map? How would you explain the difference between the two?
  2. Referencing the map, what comes to mind when you think of Europe and Eurasia? What do you associate with the region in terms of language, food, religion, climate, government, etc?
  3. What major historical events have taken place in the region?
  4. What major current events are currently taking place in the region?
  5. What questions do you have about Europe and Eurasia?
3. **(20 minutes) Group Work:** Have students use their assigned section from Regions of the World: Europe and Eurasia to complete the corresponding section of the attached worksheet. When finished, students will share and write down other students' takeaways to complete their worksheets. Assign students to the following groups based on sections from Regions of the World: Europe and Eurasia:
  - National Politics
  - Regional Politics
  - Economics
  - People and Society
4. **(10 minutes) Discussion:** Lead a discussion that highlights positive trends in the region as well as some of the challenges that the region faces. Use the following questions as guidance.

- What are some positive trends seen in European and Eurasian countries?
  - How are European and Eurasian countries working to improve the quality of life of their citizens?
  - What are some challenges that Europe and Eurasia face?
  - How are governments responding to these challenges?
5. Transition the class to tomorrow's topic by asking students to consider the significant role that regional organizations such as NATO and the European Union play in Europe and Eurasia.

## Homework

- Have students use notes from class to briefly respond to the following: What benefits do regional organizations such as NATO and the European Union bring to European countries? What challenges? How and why did the role of NATO shift after 1991?

## Class Two

1. **(5 minutes) Debrief Homework:** Have students share their reflections from last night's homework in groups.
2. **(20 minutes) Worksheet:** Have students read the Tensions with Russia section from the "What is NATO?" CFR Backgrounder and address the following questions on the attached worksheet.
  - What benefits do countries gain by joining NATO?
  - How has NATO membership expanded since 1991?
  - Why does Russia feel threatened by NATO expansion?
  - How has Russia responded to the perceived threat from NATO expansion?
  - In what ways does NATO unify Europe and Eurasia? In what ways does it bring tension to Europe and Eurasia?
3. **(15 minutes) NATO Expansion:** Emphasize the ways that NATO both unifies and brings tension to Europe. Considering the examples of Georgia and Ukraine, ask students whether or not they would join NATO as a non-NATO member country in Europe. Have students stand on either side of the classroom depending on their response. Once in position, ask students to explain their response. Use the following questions to guide discussions:
  - Who might benefit from your proposed plan of action? Who might suffer?
  - What are the pros and cons of NATO membership?
4. **(5 minutes) Introduce the homework:** a written reflection to the prompt on the worksheet: How should the United States respond to Russian tensions over NATO? Review the sections in the timeline and Regional Politics that students could refer back to as they write.

## Homework

- Have students complete a written reflection on U.S. foreign policy using the following prompt from the worksheet: How should the United States respond to Russian tensions over NATO?