

Teaching the European Union through the
Five Themes of Geography
Grade 6-12 North Carolina Standard Course of Study

Using the five themes of geography, students will identify, locate, define, and explore the European Union and its current issues to make world connections.

Time: 2-5 Days

Objectives:

Social Studies- 1.01, 1.02, 2.01, 2.02, 2.03, 3.02, 4.01, 4.02, 5.01, 5.03, 6.01, 7.01, 7.02, goal 8, goal 9, goal 10, 11.03, 11.04, 13.01

Language Arts- 1.03, 2.01, 2.02, 3.03, 4.01, 4.02, 5.01, 6.01

Materials Needed:

Student text with a current map of the European Union (after 2004)

Internet access: <http://ww.unc.edu/depts/europe>

<http://www.eurunion.org>

<http://www.unc.edu/euce/education.htm>

<http://europa.eu/>

The above sites also have print resources available for class research.

Pattern for cube

This lesson is intended as a culminating activity after the completion of the country-by-country study of Europe using the Social Studies text. The instructor will ensure that the concept of an integrated Europe has been introduced (most likely in a one period lecture format) prior to the research questions being presented. The students will be divided into groups by geographic themes. (This is an effective place to differentiate with map/location/globe questions for those with limited writing abilities; and for those who require extension and challenge, assign themes that have global implications that can be connected back to their own experiences for further world connections.) Some groups, like place, will require more students to share the work load. Students will complete research to answer the directive questions and present their findings to the class. This can be done in paper, oral, or power point (integrating technology) format. Each student will then use the information presented in class to complete a paper cube that will illustrate one geographic theme per side and the remaining side can be used to hang the cube and student name.

Assessment can be done on group work, group presentations, individual prisms or the directive questions could be used for short answer responses (if note-taking was heavily emphasized during the presentations).

- I. Region
What factors make the European Union a region?
What other regions of the world have similar unifying factors?
- II. Location
Which countries are in the EU and where are they located?
How does their location affect their membership?
- III. Place
Why was the European Union formed? (History)
How does the European Union work? (Governments)
Who makes up the European Union? (Languages, cultures, religions, political beliefs)
What are the requirements to become a member of the European Union? (Economics)
What are the physical characteristics that had to be considered in forming and maintaining the European Union? (Physical features)
- IV. Movement
How has the formation of the European Union affected the movement of resources, goods, ideas and people? (Economics, security, immigration)
- V. Human-Environmental Interaction
How is the European Union addressing pollution issues?
What is the European Union doing to address its energy needs?
How does the European Union maintain and access its natural resources?

Further questions can be added to any theme to emphasize a current event or highlight a desired topic.

Extensions: Gifted students could use current newspapers or periodicals and identify European Union issues to determine which of the five themes of geography each of the issues relates.

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