

Capitalizing on Geography Contributed by Judy Ware

Overview: Students investigate why cities are located where they are by speculating on the location of Russian cities as Judy reveals geographical information about the region.

Suggested Grade Level: 7th Grade

Class Length: 90 minutes

Connection with Curriculum Standards and Skills:

Standard 1: How to Use Maps and Other Geographic Representations, Tools, and Technologies to Acquire, Process, and Report Information From a Spatial Perspective

Standard 2: How to Use Mental Maps to Organize Information About People, Places, and Environments in a Spatial Context

Standard 3: How to Analyze the Spatial Organization of People, Places, and Environments on Earth's Surface

Standard 4: The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places

Standard 11: The Patterns and Networks of Economic Interdependence on Earth's Surface

Standard 12: The Processes, Patterns, and Functions of Human Settlement

Inquiry Question:

Where would you choose to locate a city?

Materials Needed: Atlas with physiographic, land use, population, and major transportation routes of Russia
Maps of Russia
Overhead projector
Markers

Procedure:

Where should cities be located? To help answer this question, the teacher will use a series of transparencies adding physiographic and political features such as: bodies of warm and cold water, rivers, mountains, marshes, forests, steppes, and dots representing cities. None of these features need to be labeled initially. The teacher may ask the students – either individually or in groups – to sketch the map. The teacher will then ask the students why these features should be considered when choosing a site for a city. The reasons can be listed on the board or on the transparencies.

What other information may be relevant in deciding where to locate a city? Would cultural and historical importance of a particular place have a bearing on the decision? The teacher may discuss or give a reading on this information. Wars, religion, and cultural institutions may all have influences on the decision.

The teacher will reveal the location of cities in Russia on the overhead projector and compare these locations to the students' locations.

The class will discuss the factors that are important in order for a city to be successful and explore St. Petersburg in the context of Russian history and geography. To summarize what they have learned, before class' end, the teacher can have students fill in a transparency of Russia with the geographic features and places they have discussed in the lesson.









