



# **Oklahoma Alliance for Geographic Education**

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## **THE POLITICAL PUZZLE OF MODERN EUROPE**

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# THE POLITICAL PUZZLE OF MODERN EUROPE

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**Grade Level:** 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

## **Purpose/Overview:**

Students will locate the European nations of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy on a map of Europe.

Students will identify the capital cities of these nations on a map.

Students will analyze the types of government systems that each of these countries has and organize these types of governments on a compare-and-contrast chart.

## **National Geography Standards from Geography for Life**

### **Geographic Elements & Standards:**

The Uses of Geography

18: How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future

## **Oklahoma C3 Standards:**

### **Grade 7 World Geography: Eastern Hemisphere**

## **Literacy Skills Standard 1: The student will develop and demonstrate Common Core Social Studies reading literacy skills.**

C. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

## **Content Standard 4: The student will analyze the world's peoples and cultures in the context of the human systems in the Eastern Hemisphere.**

5. Compare and contrast the major political systems of representative governments (democracy, republic, and constitutional monarchy) and authoritarian systems (dictatorship and absolute monarchy) including the role of the citizen in the selection of government officials, lawmaking, and the liberties guaranteed under different forms of government.

**Geographic Themes:** Location, Place, and Human-Environment Interaction

## **Objectives:**

Students will:

1. Identify the shapes of and locate on a map several specific European countries.
2. Label the capitals of these specific European countries as well.

3. Determine the types of government systems these European countries use today by analyzing a chart of European Union political systems.
4. Examine the similarities and differences between the types of governments and organize these details in a compare-and-contrast chart.
5. Create a color-coded European map of the types of government of the selected countries.
6. Apply the knowledge learned from the compare-and-contrast government chart to examine the potential pros and cons of having the different types of governments by each other.

**Materials:**

Internet access

Computer and LCD projector (or equivalent)

European Union Types of Government *Compare & Contrast* Chart

European Political Puzzle Information worksheet (a copy for each group)

Outline Map of Europe with labels

Outline Map of Europe without labels (a copy for each student)

Poster board/Post-It Note Presentation Paper

Nystrom Classroom Atlases or equivalent

White Tissue Paper

Colored Pencils

5"x7" Note Cards

Pencil

**Time Frame:** 3 class periods

**Procedures:*****Day 1***

1. Divide students into groups of 3-5 and assign each group one of the following types of government: democracy, dictatorship, republic, absolute monarchy, and constitutional monarchy.
2. Allow each group 10-15 minutes to create a diagram of how their assigned form of government works on a piece of large Post-It Note presentation paper or poster board. Each group will use provided information from *World Book Encyclopedia* or comparable resource to analyze its assigned form of government.
3. Have one member of each group present the information discovered on the assigned form of government. Discuss each type of government and ask students to identify any countries in the world that they think would fit into one of these categories.
4. Identify what the European Union is, when it came into existence, and show which countries are a part of this group as a blank outline map of Europe is displayed on the projector.
5. Distribute the European Union Types of Government *Compare-and-Contrast* chart.
6. Complete the chart based on the information each group presented on each type of government.
7. Compare these types of government with the type of government we have in the United States of America.

### *Day 2*

1. Review the 5 types of government discussed the day before in class. Have students identify and review what the European Union is and when it came into existence.
2. Distribute copies of the Outline Map of Europe without labels and have students locate in pencil the following countries and their capitals: the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy. Explain that these are the 4 countries we will specifically focus on in this lesson. Do this first WITHOUT the use of the classroom atlas to discover the prior knowledge of the students. Allow 2-3 minutes to complete.
3. Then hand out the Nystrom Classroom Atlases and have students use them to compare and correct if necessary the locations of the countries and their capitals on their maps.
4. Display the Outline Map of Europe with labels on the class projector for students to use while checking their maps.
5. Display a Physical map of Europe to compare and discuss their locations and geographic similarities and differences.
6. Have students get back with their group from Day 1 and assign one of the 4 European countries being discussed (United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy) to each group.
7. Distribute the "European Political Puzzle Information" worksheet and allow 5-10 minutes for the groups to identify the information on the chart regarding their country. Use the information from the "Wikipedia – List of European Union member states by political system" web page (see Resources) to complete this worksheet.
8. Allow the remainder of the class period for the groups to report and discuss the information discovered regarding each of the 4 European countries. Then have students record the type of government each of the 4 countries discussed has today on the "European Union Political Puzzle Chart – The Different Types of Government."

### *Day 3*

1. Distribute a Nystrom Classroom Atlas, tissue paper and colored pencils to each student.
2. Ask students to trace the political map of Europe from the Nystrom Atlas with a BLACK colored pencil.
3. Transfer this outline onto a 5"x7" notecard using the tissue paper copy as the template. Be sure to label the name and capital of each country on the postcard as well.
4. Have students color the specific countries discussed according to the type of government they have today on the map. Be sure to have similar countries colored the same on the map and labeled in the legend.  
***Democracy – PURPLE, Dictatorship – ORANGE, Republic – BLUE, Absolute Monarchy – RED, Constitutional Monarchy – GREEN***
5. Instruct students to color the remainder of the countries in Europe ***YELLOW*** so the main countries examined in this lesson will show up better on the map.
6. On the opposite side of the notecard, instruct students to organize the information regarding the three types of government discussed. Tell them to create a detailed description of the types of government each of these countries has as well as a detailed description explaining what the European Union is. They must color coordinate the description side with the map side.

**Assessment Options:**

Have students choose one of the specified countries studied in the lesson and design a poster in pictures depicting the country, its capital, its national government building, and the type of government this country has today. The only words allowed on the poster are the names of the country, the capital, and the actual type of government. No other words can be on the poster.

**Extension and Enrichment:**

Create a PowerPoint presentation regarding the different types of political parties in the specified European countries. Expand the lesson to include other members of the European Union and countries that are not currently members.

**Connections:** Government, History

**Resources:**

European Political Parties & Groups in the European Parliament

<http://www.euractiv.com/parties>

Encyclopedia Britannica – European Union (EU)

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/196399/European-Union-EU>

Physical map of Europe

<http://geology.com/world/europe-physical-map.shtml>

Wikipedia – List of European Union member states by political system

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_European\\_Union\\_member\\_states\\_by\\_political\\_system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_European_Union_member_states_by_political_system)

Wikipedia – Politics of the European Union

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics\\_of\\_the\\_European\\_Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_the_European_Union)

Wikipedia – Table of political parties in Europe

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Table\\_of\\_political\\_parties\\_in\\_Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Table_of_political_parties_in_Europe)

Education Place (source of Outline Maps of Europe)

<http://www.eduplace.com/ss/maps/europe.html>

**The European Union Types of Government**  
*Compare & Contrast Chart*

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*How is each government ALIKE?*

Democracy

Republic

Dictatorship

Absolute Monarchy

Constitutional Monarchy

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*How is each government DIFFERENT?*

Democracy

Republic

Dictatorship

Absolute Monarchy

Constitutional Monarchy

## **The European Political Puzzle Information Worksheet**

1. Name of Country\_\_\_\_\_
2. Capital of Country \_\_\_\_\_
3. Type of government \_\_\_\_\_
4. Name for the Head of State \_\_\_\_\_
5. Name for the Head of Government \_\_\_\_\_

## **The European Union Political Puzzle Chart**

### **Different Types of Government**

1. France

- a. Type of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Head of State \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Head of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Parliamentary Model \_\_\_\_\_

2. Germany

- a. Type of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Head of State \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Head of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Parliamentary Model \_\_\_\_\_

3. Italy

- a. Type of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Head of State \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Head of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Parliamentary Model \_\_\_\_\_

4. United Kingdom

- a. Type of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Head of State \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Head of Government \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Parliamentary Model \_\_\_\_\_