New Nation-States

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES	GRADES

GRADES

8th

Students will investigate countries of the former Soviet Union, record data, and determine which of five countries (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Russia) has the greatest opportunity for future success. Students will obtain and analyze geographic information from on-line maps. Students will define what makes a country successful using economic and geographic data. They will compose an essay using well-chosen facts citing evidence to support their analysis using precise language. This inquiry lesson may be modified to include other countries as well as other world regions.

TIME

2 classes

REQUIRED MATERIALS

✓ Computer Internet access with projector
✓ Computer Internet access for students
✓ Textbook, such as *Geography Alive! Regions and People*, Chapter 18
✓ Handouts: "New Nation-States Information"; "New Nation-States Directions"; "New Nation-States Essay"

Students will be able to...
- Describe the physical and human characteristics of a country that makes it more successful.
- Interpret data using geospatial tools.
- Analyze economic and geographic data to make a prediction.
- Compose an essay responding to an inquiry question.

MINNESOTA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS

Standard 1. People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.
8.3.1.1.1 Obtain and analyze geographic information from a variety of print and electronic sources to investigate places or answer specific geographic questions; provide rationale for its use.
8.3.1.2.1 Formulate questions about topics in geography; pose possible answers; use geospatial technology to analyze problems and make decisions within a spatial context.

Standard 3. Places have physical characteristics (such as climate, topography and vegetation) and human characteristics (such as culture, population, political and economic systems).
8.3.2.3.1 Use appropriate geographic tools to analyze and explain the distribution of physical and human characteristics of places.

Standard 4. Economic systems differ in the ways that they address the three basic economic issues of allocation, production and distribution to meet society's broad economic goals.
8.2.3.4.1 Identify factors which affect economic growth (percentage changes in real Gross Domestic Product—real GDP) and lead to a different standard of living in different countries.

Opening

Students respond to pre-assessment questions about standard of living characteristics developed by the teacher using Kahoot.com at https://getkahoot.com/

Discuss what "success" would be for a country. Share one of several indexes (listed in Website Resources) to identify country rankings according to several categories. Ask students what data should be investigated to determine if a country is "successful". Students record what "success" for a country means and what data would reflect a country's "success" in their notebooks.

Development

Divide students into five groups, each with a different country, in order to collect data about one country and present findings to peers. Provide each member of the group with the handouts, "New Nation-States Directions" and "New Nation-States Information", and explain that they are to work together to complete the chart for their country. Students may also read about their country in their textbook, adding additional information to their chart.

Students predict whether their country has a high possibility of success, moderate possibility of success, or low possibility of success with 2 reasons for success (advantages) and 2 reasons not for success (disadvantages). Students record this information in their notebooks.

The teacher may jigsaw the groups so information on all the countries is shared and all students have a completed chart for all five countries. Alternatively, groups may present their information to the class with their prediction on how successful their country might be along with reasons.

Students individually predict and record in their notebooks the most successful country of the five based on the collected data; they should be prepared to define a "successful country". Students then complete a think-pair-share answering the question: Which country has the best chance of success? Students think and record their responses individually before sharing with a partner and finally contributing to the class. Next, a class discussion occurs to define "success" for a country.

Closure

Students predict which country is most likely to succeed by writing an essay explaining: "Which nation-state is most likely to succeed?" Use the handout, "New Nation-States Essay" to explain the assignment and the rubric. Students should begin by defining "success" for a country. Then students should predict the country using at least two pieces of data to support their statement. Next, students should identify the country's disadvantages to move toward success. Students should compare the advantages and disadvantages for success with two other countries. An introduction and conclusion complete the five-paragraph essay.

Assessment

"New Nation-States Information" Handout

Class discussion

"New Nation-States Essay"

Pre-assessment at Kahoot.com
https://getkahoot.com/
Classroom-based response system to teacher-designed questions

"Rankings 2014" at Prosperity Index Table Rankings, Legatum Prosperity Index
http://www.prosperity.com/#!/
This website ranks countries by factors including Economy, Education, and Health

"Table 1: Human Development Index and Its Components" at United Nations
http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-1-human-development-index-and-its-components
This website ranks countries by factors including Education, Health, and Income

"My Map" at ArcGIS, ESRI
http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1
This website has multiple features and maps for students to access

"World Population Data Sheet: 2014 World Population Interactive Map" at Population Reference Bureau
http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2014/2014-world-population-data-sheet/world-map.aspx#map/world/population/2014
This website provides an interactive map and chart with a variety of population data on countries

"Data" using the Interactive Map at The World Bank
http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.DNST/countries?display=map
This website provides an interactive map with a large variety of data on countries

"World Factbook" at CIA
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/
This website includes extensive data on countries of the world in a primarily textual format

Nation-States Directions

Follow the steps below to collect and record data for your country on the chart, "New Nation-States Information":

1. Begin with "Location". Use ArcGIS and the Basemap at http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1 and zoom to your country. Determine the following:
- What opportunities does this country have to use water transportation?
- If there are rivers, do they pass through accessible or inaccessible places?
- What physical features stand out?

2. Next, investigate "Streets". Use ArcGIS and the "Streets" Basemap at http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1
- Determine the quantity of roads.
- Identify the destination of roads.

3. Then, investigate "Population". Go to the Population Reference Bureau and its Interactive Map at http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2014/2014-world-population-data-sheet/world-map.aspx#map/world/population/2014. Determine the following:
- Population. Record the current population figure in millions.
- Go to Births & Deaths to find Infant Mortality Rate. Zoom to your region and hover over your country. Note how infant mortality rate has changed from first year to last year listed.
- Life Expectancy. Use the figure for "All". Zoom to your region and hover over your country. Note how life expectancy has changed from first year to last year listed.
- Income. The data is income per person in U.S. dollars.

4. Investigate other data using the World Bank and its Interactive Map at http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.DNST/countries?display=map. Zoom to your country and change the legend from "shaded" to "points". Hover over your country's dot. The upper right identifies the data.
- Population Density. Record the figure.
- Change the "Featured Indicators" on the left to "Agriculture & Rural Development". Go to Arable Land and record the percentage.
- Change the "Featured Indicators" on the left to "Education". Go to Literacy Rate, Adult Total and record the percentage.
- Change the "Featured Indicators" on the left to "Poverty". Scroll to "Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines" to record the percentage of the population living in poverty.

5. Finally, investigate the population's access to water using the World Bank and its Interactive Map at http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.H2O.SAFE.ZS?display=map. Zoom to your country and change the legend from "shaded" to "points". Hover over your country's dot. The upper right identifies the data for Improved Water Source (% of population with access).

6. Last, identify the 3 primary natural resources of the country by going to the CIA World Factbook at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/. Click on the region your country is located; then click on your country. Go to "Geography" and scroll to Natural Resources. Record the first 3 natural resources listed, which are the country's primary resources.

New Nation-States Essay
"Which nation-state is most likely to succeed?"

Your task is to write an essay predicting which of five former Soviet Union countries will be the most successful. You will begin by defining "success" for a country. Then you will predict which country is most likely to succeed using at least 2 pieces of data to support your statements. You will also compare these advantages with the same data from at least 2 other countries. Even though you predict success for this country, what disadvantages does it have? You will identify the country's disadvantages for success with at least 2 pieces of data to support your statement. Compare the disadvantages to the same data from at least 2 other countries.

Complete the following outline to assist you in completing the essay.

Outline

I. Define success

II. Predict successful country

   A. Supporting data #1

   B. Supporting data #2

   C. Compare these 2 pieces of data with 2 other countries
      1. Country #1

      2. Country #2

III. Identify why the country you predicted may not be successful

   A. Supporting data #1

   B. Supporting data #2

   C. Compare these 2 pieces of data with 2 other countries
      1. Country #1

      2. Country #2

Write a brief introduction identifying which country will be most successful:

Write a brief conclusion why the evidence you presented justifies your prediction:

Write an essay with all the above parts, each in its own paragraph.

Rubric for Essay   Total _____ /16 points

	0	1	2
Definition of success	Not defined	Defined partially	Defined completely
Prediction	No prediction	Prediction supported with 1 piece of data	Prediction supported with 2 or more pieces of data
Comparison of advantages	No comparison to other countries	Compared to 1 other country	Compared to 2 other countries
Disadvantages	No disadvantages mentioned	1 disadvantage with supporting data	2 disadvantages with supporting data
Comparison of disadvantages	No comparison to other countries	Compared to 1 other country	Compared to 2 other countries
Clarity of expression	Ideas present, but poorly organized and hard to understand	Organized, but only partially understandable	Well organized and clearly understandable
Mechanics *(spelling, capitalization, grammar, punctuation)*	6 or more errors	3 – 5 errors	1 – 2 errors
Introduction and Conclusion	One or both missing	Limited explanations show little thought	Brief explanations complete and show thought