

THE ABCs OF EUROPE

RECOMMENDED GRADES: K-2



TIME NEEDED: 30-45 MINUTES

Description

Students focus on letters of the alphabet in order to locate countries, cities, and physical features.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- identify countries, cities, and physical features of Europe
- recognize capital alphabet letters

Materials

- ABCs of Europe Cards (25)
(Note: There is no card for the letter *Q*. See extensions for the letter *Q*.)

Preparation

- Review the ABC cards and acquaint yourself with the countries, cities, and physical features. The chart below lists all the locations found on the ABC cards.

Tips/Modifications

Tip

- This teacher-led activity can serve as an introduction to the Giant Map.

Modifications for K-1

- Throughout the activity, model the process of naming the alphabet letters and the country names. This will encourage students to learn/review alphabet letters and expand their vocabulary with country names.
- Partner with a class of upper elementary students. The older students can assist the younger students as they complete the activities.

Rules



Have students remove shoes before walking on the map.

Countries	Cities	Physical Features
Finland	Dublin, Ireland	Alps
Germany	London, UK	Black Sea
Hungary	Paris, France	Caspian Sea
Ireland	Tallinn, Estonia	English Channel
Norway	Venice, Italy	Jutland Peninsula
Russia	Warsaw, Poland	Kola Peninsula
Spain	Xanthi, Greece	Mediterranean Sea
	Yalta, Ukraine	Ocean (Atlantic)
	Zermatt, Switzerland	Ural Mountains

DIRECTIONS

1. Invite students to sit on the border on the southern edge of the map (facing Europe from Africa). Give one ABC Card to each student.

Show students the title of the map, Europe, and have them name the first alphabet letter of the word. Tell students they will be looking for items on the map that begin with the letter on their cards. Some cards are the names of countries, some are the names of cities, and some are the names of physical features, such as mountains, seas, or peninsulas.

Share with students this definition of physical feature:

A physical feature is a natural feature of Earth’s surface, including landforms, bodies of water, climate, natural vegetation, and soil of the earth; a naturally occurring geographic characteristic.

2. Ask students if they think they may have a card with the name of a country. (Hint: Country cards have a red border.) Invite students with country cards to come onto the map, three at a time. Help students find their countries on the map and have them sit in their countries, holding their cards.

3. When all students with country cards are on the map, ask students sitting on the edge of the map if they can remember a letter OR a country that was just located. If they can correctly identify a letter or country, the student sitting in that country may put his or her card on the country. Then the student may go and sit on the yellow border next to the person who identified their alphabet letter or country.
4. When all country cards are on the map, repeat the activity with cities (blue border cards) and then with physical features (green border cards). Make sure each child gets a turn to sit on the map.
5. To complete the activity, ask all students to return to and sit near their original alphabet card on the map. Call out the letters in order (or all mixed up). Have each student point out the location of their letter, read their card (with assistance if needed), and bring the card to you. The student should return to sit on the edge of the map after handing in his or her card. The activity is over when all the cards are collected.

EXTENDING THE LEARNING

Tip

There are no countries, cities, or physical features labeled on this map that begin with the letter *Q*. However, students may be interested to know there is a city named Quimper in the Brittany region of France.

➤ Ask:

- *Can you find a country, city, or physical feature that starts with the same letter as your first name? As your last name?*
- *Can you spell your name by finding alphabet cards on the map?*
- *Can you find an alphabet card that is located in water on the map? How do you know it is water?*
- *Can you find an alphabet card that is in a large country? A small country?*
- *Can you find a different country, city, physical feature, or region that starts with your alphabet letter?*