

Name _____

Date _____

Religions of Europe

Read the following passage with your partner. Underline any unfamiliar terms. Write any questions you may have in the margins. Then use the maps Country Borders in Europe and Dominant Religions of Europe to answer the questions.

Religion united Europeans of diverse backgrounds who were Christians. But three distinct sects have competed for centuries within the majority Christian religion. A line through the Balkan Peninsula illustrates the split. This split was between Roman Catholics in the west and Orthodox Christians in the east in the year 1054. Another major split occurred about 500 years later. This split was between southern Europeans and northern Europeans. Christians in the north—including the English, Scandinavians, and some Germans—broke away from Roman Catholicism to create the Protestant faith.

Traditionally, the religion of Islam has dominated only a few areas of Europe near Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. But today, Muslim communities throughout Europe are growing through immigration and a high birthrate. Islam is the religion of less than five percent of Europe's population. But in a few countries, such as France, numbers of Muslims are on the rise. As a result, conflicts over the different practices and beliefs of Christianity and Islam are more and more a part of political life.

Questions

1. Shade the countries on your Country Borders in Europe map where more than one religion is dominant. If you completed Lesson 6, Activity 2, use your completed Country Borders in Europe map from that activity and use a different color to shade dominant religions.

2. Which regions of Europe appear to have the most diversity in terms of religion? Which have the least? Explain.
