



Crossing the Line

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for World Geography

Target audience – World geography learners

Time required – 15 minutes

Activity	Exploration of the nature and significance of international political boundaries through an investigation of contemporary political boundaries.
Social studies standards	C3:D2.Geo.5.6-8. Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both like and different from other places. C3:D2.Geo.17. Learn how to apply geography to interpret the past. C3:D2.Geo.6.6-8. Explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures.
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define and give examples of physiographic, geometric, and anthropographic boundaries.• Explain the relationship between boundary characteristics and national cohesiveness.

Map URL: <http://esriurl.com/worldGeoInquiry5>

? Ask

What are physiographic boundaries and where are they located?

- Click the link above to launch the map.
- With the Details button underlined, click the button, Show Contents.
- Click the countries north & south of the Pyrenees Mountains.
- ? The Pyrenees Mountains are on the border between which two countries? [*Spain and France*]
- ? Select the bookmark, Europe. Name two other countries where mountain ranges form political boundaries. [*Alps: Italy and Switzerland; Alps: Italy and France; and others*]
- Turn on the two layers, Rivers and Lakes.
- ? Noting where red country boundary lines disappear beneath the blue river lines, name two pairs of countries that share a boundary that is a river. [*Rhine: France and Germany; Danube: Romania and Bulgaria; and others*]

! Acquire

What do geometric boundaries look like and where are they located?

- Geometric boundaries consist of straight lines that do not correspond to physical features on the earth's surface.
- Select the bookmark, Africa.
- ? Looking at the map, name several countries with a shared geometric boundary. [*Egypt and Sudan; Sudan and Chad; Libya and Chad; Niger and Algeria; and others*]

🔍 Explore

Where are anthropographic country boundaries?

- Turn off the three layers, Rivers, Lakes, and Country Boundaries 2016.
- Turn on the layer, Languages.
- Click the Languages layer name, and then below it. Click the Show Legend button.
- ? Name two pairs of countries separated by an anthropographic (societal characteristic) boundary based on language. [*China and Nepal; China and India*]
- Turn off the layer, Languages.
- Turn on the layer, Religions. View its legend.
- ? Name two pairs of countries separated by an anthropographic boundary based on religion. [*Finland and Russia; Ireland and the United Kingdom*]

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Analyze

What countries are most and least culturally diverse?

- Turn on the two layers, Country Boundaries 2016 and Languages.
- Explore countries with the most and fewest language groups represented.
- ? Identify three culturally uniform countries based on language group. *[Answers may include Japan, France, Argentina, Italy, and Hungary.]*
- ? Identify three culturally diverse countries based on language groups. *[Answers may include Canada, Spain, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Syria, Turkey, India, Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Namibia.]*

Act

What type of country boundary changes occurred in the 1990s?

- Political boundaries can split large countries into smaller ones, a small country may combine to form a larger one, and territories of one country may be incorporated into another.
- ? Describe three political boundary changes between 1992 and 2019. (Use the Zoom and Pan tools to get a closer look and the Identify tool to identify countries.) *[Answers will vary but should focus on the changes in Eastern Europe and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).]*
- ? Name two countries that existed in 1992 but do not exist in 2019. *[USSR, Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia]*

SELECT A BOOKMARK

- Click Bookmarks.
- Click a bookmark name to zoom to a map location and scale.

LEGENDS, LAYERS, AND SYMBOLS

- To the left of the map, click Details and then click Content. The Contents pane allows you to turn on and off layer visibility.
- Click the Show Map Legend button. The Legend pane allows you to identify symbols.
- In the map, click symbols for more information that will appear in a pop-up.

Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW? ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to public, private, and home schools. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at <http://www.esri.com/schools>. **THEN TRY THIS...**

- Use the Proximity Analysis tool and create 50-mile buffers on the Religions or Languages layers.
- Use the Country Boundaries 2016 layer to explore the 2016 country borders that fall within the buffers.

TEXT REFERENCES

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in sections of chapters from these middle school texts.

- *World Cultures and Geography* by McDougal Littell
- *My World Geography* by Pearson