



# #9969 RUSSIA NEWS STORIES

NOODLEHEAD NETWORK, 2002  
Grade Level: 4-9  
28 mins.

## DESCRIPTION

American teenagers report on location about life in Russia 15 years after the fall of communism. News segments cover Russia's economy, dress, folk art, and religion. Also briefly examines its family life, buildings, educational system, and food. The teens' host families provide additional color and perspective.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### Subject Area: Geography–Human Systems

- Standard: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics
  - ♦ Benchmark: Knows the similarities and differences in characteristics of culture in different regions (e.g., in terms of environment and resources, technology, food, shelter, social organization, beliefs and customs, schooling, what girls and boys are allowed to do) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1 and 2.)

### Subject Area: Geography–Places and Regions

- Standard: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place
  - ♦ Benchmark: Knows the human characteristics of places (e.g., cultural characteristics such as religion, language, politics, technology, family structure, gender; population characteristics; land uses; levels of development) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1, 2, and 4.)
  - ♦ Benchmark: Knows how social, cultural, and economic processes shape the features of places (e.g., resource use, belief systems, modes of transportation and communication; major technological changes such as the agricultural and industrial revolutions; population growth and urbanization) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 2, 3, and 4.)

### Subject Area: World History–Era 9–The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

- Standard: Understands the search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world
  - ♦ Benchmark: Understands rates of economic development and the emergence of different economic systems around the globe (e.g., systems of

## C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

economic management in communist and capitalist countries, as well as the global impact of multinational corporations; the impact of black markets, speculation, and trade in illegal products on national and global markets; patterns of inward, outward, and internal migration in the Middle East and North Africa, types of jobs involved, and the impact of the patterns upon national economies; the rapid economic development of East Asian countries in the late 20th century, and the relatively slow development of Sub-Saharan African countries) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 3.)

### INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To promote cultural understanding of Russia.
2. To compare and contrast different ways of life.
3. To provide current examples of Russia's progress from communism to capitalism.
4. To describe Russian folk arts, education, and family life.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Russia is the largest country in the world, equal to 1.8 times that of the U.S. Russia is the only country in the world that is part of two continents: Europe and Asia.
2. Russia has the largest range of temperatures in the world. It can span -90 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter to +100 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer.
3. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the number of Russians below the poverty line skyrocketed. Now about 40 percent of all Russians are considered below the poverty line.
4. The leading religion in Russia is called Russian Orthodox, with 72 percent of the population worshipping under this church. Other religions include Islam, Catholicism, Protestant, Buddhism, and Judaism.
5. Ninety-eight percent of Russians over the age of 15 are literate.

### VOCABULARY

- |                 |                    |                      |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. architecture | 8. income          | 15. Russian Orthodox |
| 2. babushka     | 9. kremlins        | 16. style            |
| 3. capitalism   | 10. Mafia          | 17. thugs            |
| 4. communism    | 11. outlawed       | 18. traditional      |
| 5. economy      | 12. produce (food) | 19. vendors          |
| 6. folk culture | 13. religion       | 20. wages            |
| 7. frescoes     | 14. restoration    |                      |

### BEFORE SHOWING

1. Locate Russia on a world map or globe. Discuss known information about the climate, landscape, food, people, lifestyle, government, economy, and culture.

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2. Review the fall of the Soviet Union. Discuss communism and compare it to capitalism.

### DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Pause after each section of the video. Discuss the main similarities and differences between Russia and the United States for each section. Discuss cultural differences.

### AFTER SHOWING

#### Discussion Items and Questions

1. What is the most unique feature of Russian architecture? What are these particular buildings known for?
2. What does the inside of a Russian Orthodox Church look like?
3. Describe various types of Russian folk art.
4. How do Russian teenagers seem similar to you and your friends?
5. Why do some Russian kids skip school? Why is that allowed?
6. Describe typical clothing styles in Russia.
7. How much does the average Russian get paid? How does this compare to wages in the U.S? Discuss how your lifestyle would change if your family's income dropped 50 percent.
8. What are three main ways to earn an income in Russia? Why are many Russians bitter about their work and income situation?
9. What accessory do "thugs" and businessmen in Russia have that men in America usually don't? Why is this? What does this say about Russian economy?
10. Most Russians have a *dacha* that they own in the country. Is a *dacha* a luxury summer home or a necessity? Why?
11. Why would most Russians rather live in a tiny apartment instead of a house?
12. Describe the subway in Moscow. Could the Russian government create something of equal magnificence now? Could the U.S.?
13. How is shopping for food in Russia different from shopping for food in the U.S.? How is it the same?
14. Describe typical foods and meals in Russia.
15. Compare Russian Orthodoxy to some of the major religions of the world. What elements are similar and what are different?

#### Applications and Activities

1. Create and complete a two column chart that represents the differences between Russia and the U.S.
2. Write an essay about Russia's movement from communism to capitalism. Support your discussion with examples from the video.
3. Create travel guides or brochures to encourage people to visit Russia. Include the areas that are presented in the video.
4. Research two Soviet leaders and compare them with two post-Soviet leaders and/or leaders in the United States.

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5. Using this video as a model, create a video on another culture, local state, local city, or local school.
6. Investigate foods in Russia. Cook some typical foods, and have a tasting party.
7. Learn more about the various folk arts shown in the video. Share your findings with the class.
8. Invite someone from Russia to present additional information about their culture to the class.
9. Make a digital slide show of various kinds of architecture in Russia.
10. Debate the benefits of Russia converting from communism to capitalism.

### SUMMARY

This video describes daily life in Russia from a kid's perspective. The video is divided into eight segments covering economy, clothes, folk art, religion, family life, buildings, school and food. High school kids reported "on location" in Russia, helped script the narration, and edit the segments that were then broadcast on their local evening news. This format makes it easy to incorporate the tape into your social studies or geography curriculum. You can present an overview of Russia by playing the video right through, or you can focus on specific topics by fast-forwarding to segments of your choice. Seven seconds of black separate each of the segments.

### CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- [China News Stories #3588](#)
- [Families of Russia #10163](#)
- [Ghana News Stories #9968](#)



### World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

#### • THE WORLD FACTBOOK: RUSSIA

Find information and statistics about Russia, including the geography, people, government, economy, transportation, and more.



<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/rs.html>

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- **RUSSIA ON THE WEB**

<http://members.valley.net/~transnat/>

Here's an Internet access to everything Russian, a project of The Transnational Institute, a network of Russian, American, and West European organizations which have been sponsoring East-West exchange programs and annual conferences since 1981. The site provides many links categorized in topic areas with special focus will on Russian society, culture, and religion. Note: Some of the links are to Web sites in Russian.

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- **WELCOME TO THE NEW RUSSIA**

<http://www.geographia.com/russia>

Get information and see pictures of various places in Russia including Moscow, St. Petersburg, Lake Baikal, the Arctic, and the Trans-Siberian Railway. At the bottom of the page are links to history, art and architecture, and other things.



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- **COMMUNISM: THE U.S.S.R.**

<http://members.fortunecity.com/stalinmao/Soviet/index.html>

Explore Soviet communism on this apolitical Web site. Includes the Soviet communist ideology, revolution, civil war, Soviet military, Soviet leaders, and much more.