

2.5 A COUNTRY DIVIDED: THE BERLIN WALL

How do walls protect and divide us?

<p>C3 Framework Indicator</p>	<p>D2.His.3.6-8. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.</p> <p>D2.His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.</p>	
<p>Staging the Compelling Question</p>	<p>Using testimony, images, and video, students will investigate the causes for the building of the Berlin Wall and its fall, as well as examine what life was like as described by children in East Berlin vs. West Berlin.</p>	
<p>Supporting Question 1</p> <p>Why was the Berlin Wall built?</p>	<p>Supporting Question 2</p> <p>What was life like for those living in East and West Germany?</p>	<p>Supporting Question 3</p> <p>Why did the Berlin Wall fall?</p>
<p>Formative Performance Task</p> <p>After viewing a video on the building of the Berlin Wall, students will create a sequence of events diagram to illustrate the events that resulted in the building of the wall.</p>	<p>Formative Performance Task</p> <p>Student groups will read the testimonies and examine the drawings of children who lived in West and East Berlin and, as a group, answer the questions on the handout. As a class, create a Venn diagram of the differences and similarities between East and West Berlin.</p>	<p>Formative Performance Task</p> <p>As a class, view the five short videos listed in the resources. After viewing each video, ask the students to list three words or phrases that are reasons the Berlin Wall fell. Using the words generated, each group will create a word cloud.</p>
<p>Featured Sources</p> <p>Source A: Handout 2.5.1</p> <p>Source B: Handout 2.5.2</p> <p>Source C: Berlin Wall: The Rise And Fall In Pictures</p> <p>Source D: The Wall: A World Divided</p>	<p>Featured Sources</p> <p>Source A: Handout 2.5.3</p> <p>Source B: Handout 2.5.4</p> <p>Source C: Berlin Wall: Photos from the Birth of a Brutal Cold War Symbol</p> <p>Source D: Davey, T. A. (1987). <i>A Generation Divided: German Children and the Berlin Wall</i>. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.</p>	<p>Featured Sources</p> <p>Source A: A Dozen Striking Photos Show How The Berlin Wall Actually Fell In 1989</p> <p>Source B: Rally at Alexanderplatz</p> <p>Source C: The Berlin Wall Opens</p> <p>Source D: East Germans Go West</p> <p>Source E: West Berliners head East</p> <p>Source F: Chipping Away at the Berlin Wall Souvenir</p>
<p>Summative Performance Task</p>	<p>Argument: Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question, using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical or contemporary sources while acknowledging competing views.</p> <p>Extension 1: View excerpts from the Transatlantic Outreach Program’s video, The German History Scavenger Hunt, to learn about a person who successfully escaped and helped others escape. Research the escape of others.</p> <p>Extension 2: Research other walls that were constructed to keep people in and to keep people out, and prepare a presentation to share with classmates.</p>	
<p>Taking Informed Action</p>	<p>Understand: People create psychological boundaries against other people.</p> <p>Assess: Are there individuals and/or groups in your school or community that are separated from others because of who they are or what they do?</p> <p>Act: Join a school or community organization that provides outreach to individuals who are separated from the general community.</p>	

? COMPELLING QUESTION

- How do walls protect and divide us?

INQUIRY OVERVIEW

Using testimony, images, and video, students will investigate the causes for the building of the Berlin Wall and its fall, as well as examine what life was like as described by children in East Berlin and West Berlin.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

The conclusion of World War II in Europe saw the onset of what became known as the Cold War. Europe and the world became separated ideologically by the powers of the West, primarily the United States and its Allies on one side, and the East or the Eastern Bloc, primarily the Soviet Union and its satellite states, on the other. Despite being united as Allies against the Axis powers during WWII, the Soviet Union and the United States disagreed about political and economic philosophy and the configuration of the postwar world, while occupying most of Europe. The consolidation of the occupied areas of western Germany by the French, British, and Americans resulted in the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), whereas the eastern zone, occupied by the Soviets, became the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The capital city of Germany—Berlin—was also divided into east and west zones.



In July 1952, on Stalin's orders, East German Communist Party General Walter Ulbricht initiated an intensification of Sovietization. The resulting harsh living conditions caused thousands to flee from the East. This mass emigration led to a "brain drain," the flight of qualified workers.

By 1958, despite the political crises and heightened tensions between the FRG and the GDR, the border between East and West Berlin still remained somewhat permeable. Residents from the East were able to hold jobs in the West and could visit friends and family there. However, between 1949 and 1961, more than 2.5 million East Germans fled to the West. Some resettled in West Berlin and most quickly completed the political step they had taken by making themselves part of the West German economy.

To stem the flow of refugees from the GDR through Berlin, the East German government had long sought Russian authorization to cut off all access to West Berlin.

On August 13, 1961, GDR soldiers and labor crews began erecting fence posts and barbed wire along the border separating the Soviet and western sectors of the city, laying the foundation of what would be the Berlin Wall. All streets connecting the eastern and western sectors of the city were blocked, subway lines that crossed the border were closed, and telephone service between the two sectors was abruptly cut off. During the remainder of August, an additional 25,605 East Germans managed to escape through remaining gaps in the Wall. Soon after, soldiers were given orders to shoot at refugees trying to flee. Between August 1961 and November 1989, at least eighty-one people were killed trying to escape; another 5,000 made it to the West and about as many tried, but failed. No longer divided merely by the metaphorical "Iron Curtain," Berlin, Germany, and Europe were now divided by a reinforced cement wall. West Berlin was now more than ever an island within the surrounding German Democratic Republic (GDR).

By the 1980s, the Berlin Wall stood 13 feet high (about 4 meters) and extended 43 kilometers (roughly 27 miles) within the city. Another 112 kilometers (approximately 70 miles) of fortified barriers, known as the “outer ring,” encircled the city, enclosing Berlin. Along much of the eastern side of the inner-city wall ran a broad “death strip” surrounded by a smaller wall and electrified wire fence. The only points of passage along the wall were eleven closely guarded openings, the most famous being “Checkpoint Charlie,” which was initially designated for military and diplomatic traffic.

Two separate systems of government, economics, and life developed until 1989 when a peaceful revolution of the people in the East resulted in the demolition of the Berlin Wall.

Germany has been reunited since October 3, 1990. Technically, Germany was not “re-unified”; in reality, the German Democratic Republic was dissolved and the people and area of East Germany became part of the Federal Republic of Germany. The process of integration, with a few exceptions, was that of the institutions and style of life of the East being replaced rapidly by that of the West.

 **TIME:** Two to three 45-minute classes

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- Why Was the Berlin Wall Built? (**Handout 2.5.1**)
- Why Was the Berlin Wall Built? Answer Key (**Handout 2.5.2**)
- The Children of West and East Berlin (**Handout 2.5.3**)
- The Children of West and East Berlin Questions (**Handout 2.5.4**)
- Berlin Wall: The Rise and Fall in Pictures. (2019, November 9). <https://www.cnn.com/2019/11/09/europe/gallery/berlin-wall-rise-fall-grm-intl/index.html>.
- Cosgrove, B. (2020, January 17). Berlin Wall: Photos from the Birth of a Brutal Cold War Symbol. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.life.com/history/berlin-wall-photos-early-days-cold-war-symbol/>.
- Creatly. (2019, May 21). Sequence Graphic Organizer. <https://creately.com/usage/sequence-charts-graphic-organizers/>.
- Davey, T. A. (1987). *A Generation Divided: German Children and the Berlin Wall*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Miller, R. (2019, November 8). A Dozen Striking Photos Show How the Berlin Wall Actually Fell in 1989. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2019/11/08/berlin-wall-photos-show-fall-november-9-1989-30-anniversary/2516328001/>.
- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). Rally at Alexanderplatz – History of the Berlin Wall and Its Fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/rally-at-alexanderplatz-725/>. (0:36)
- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). The Berlin Wall Opens – History of the Berlin Wall and Its Fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/the-berlin-wall-opens-726/>. (2:03)
- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). East Germans Go West – History of the Berlin Wall and Its fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/east-germans-go-west-729/>. (0:57)
- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). West Berliners Head East – History of the Berlin Wall and Its Fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/west-berliners-head-east-731/>. (0:49)
- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). Chipping Away at the Berlin Wall Souvenir – History of the Berlin Wall and Its Fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/chipping-away-at-the-berlin-wall-souvenir-733/>. (1:52)
- Stange, E. (n.d.). The Wall: A World Divided. Retrieved March 29, 2021, from <https://vimeo.com/110165265>.
- Transatlantic Outreach Program. *The German History Scavenger Hunt*. YouTube, Apr. 21, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ut2PTQptXpg>.
- Zeitzeugen Büro. (2021). *Contemporary Witnesses*. Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung. <https://www.zeitzeugenbuero.de/index.php?id=english>.



INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

Share a map of the neighborhood or city in which students live. Ask: What kind of boundaries exist? (School boundaries, neighborhoods, etc.) Are they natural or human-made?

Next, display a map of the same area with a line indicating a new border. As a class discuss how this new border would impact them—places they couldn't go such a school, or parents to work, people they would be separated from, and so forth.

? SUPPORTING QUESTION 1

Why was the Berlin Wall built?

► Formative Performance Task

Assign each student a question from **Handout 2.5.1**. As a class, watch the Vimeo video *The Wall: A World Divided* starting at 3 minutes through 9:50, two times. During the first viewing, tell students not to attempt to answer their assigned question, but rather to watch the segment to become familiar with the content. During the second viewing, tell students to listen for the answer to their assigned question.

As a class, use the information gathered using **Handout 2.5.1** to create a sequence of events diagram to illustrate the events that resulted in the building of the wall. Discuss the cause and effect of the events.

Teachers may also wish to share and discuss the first six images in the CNN picture gallery. Ask students to examine each picture, noting what they see and how they think the inhabitants of East and West Berlin felt.

► Resources

- Why Was The Berlin Wall Built? (**Handout 2.5.1**)
- Why Was the Berlin Wall Built? Answer Key (**Handout 2.5.2**)
- Berlin Wall: The Rise and Fall in Pictures. (2019, November 9). <https://www.cnn.com/2019/11/09/europe/gallery/berlin-wall-rise-fall-grm-intl/index.html>.
- Creatly. (2019, May 21). Sequence Graphic Organizer. <https://creately.com/usage/sequence-charts-graphic-organizers/>.
- Stange, E. (n.d.). *The Wall: A World Divided*. Retrieved March 29, 2021, from <https://vimeo.com/110165265>. (3–9:50 minutes)

? SUPPORTING QUESTION 2

What was life like for those living in East and West Germany?

► Formative Performance Task

To provide some understanding of the effects of the wall, as a class, view the images from the resources of the construction and earliest days of the wall (Berlin Wall: Photos from the Birth of a Brutal Cold War Symbol).

Next, divide the class into small groups. Have each group read the testimonies and examine the drawings of children who lived in West and East Berlin on **Handout 2.5.3**, and, as a group, answer the questions on **Handout 2.5.4**.

Then as a class, create a Venn diagram of the differences and similarities between East and West Berlin.

► Resources

- The Children of West and East Berlin (**Handout 2.5.3**)
- The Children of West and East Berlin Questions (**Handout 2.5.4**)
- Cosgrove, B. (2020, January 17). Berlin Wall: Photos from the Birth of a Brutal Cold War Symbol. <https://www.life.com/history/berlin-wall-photos-early-days-cold-war-symbol/>.
- Davey, T. A. (1987). *A Generation Divided: German Children and the Berlin Wall*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

❓ SUPPORTING QUESTION 3

Why did the Berlin Wall fall?

► Formative Performance Task

As a class, view the five short videos listed in resources. After viewing each video, ask student to list three words or phrases that are reasons the Wall fell.

Divide the class into small groups. Using the words generated after viewing the videos, each group will create a word cloud using an online program such as the one listed in resources. Share the word clouds. Are there any similarities? Surprises?

To provide more visual context, teachers may wish to share the Fall of the Wall photos (twelve images). Students may wish to add to their word cloud as they view the picture gallery.

► Resources

- Miller, R. (2019, November 8). A Dozen Striking Photos Show How the Berlin Wall Actually Fell in 1989. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2019/11/08/berlin-wall-photos-show-fall-november-9-1989-30-anniversary/2516328001/>.
- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). Rally at Alexanderplatz – History of the Berlin Wall and Its Fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/rally-at-alexanderplatz-725/>. (0:36)
- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). The Berlin Wall Opens – History of the Berlin Wall and Its Fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/the-berlin-wall-opens-726/>. (2:03)
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- Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (rbb). West Berliners head East – History of the Berlin Wall and Its Fall. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://www.the-berlin-wall.com/videos/west-berliners-head-east-731/>. (0:49)
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✔️ SUMMATIVE PERFORMANCE TASK

How do walls protect and divide us?

Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from contemporary sources while acknowledging competing views.

⊕ EXTENSION (OPTIONAL) TASK 1

During the Berlin Wall's existence, many people attempted to escape from the East to the West. View the following excerpts from the Transatlantic Outreach Program's video, *The German History Scavenger Hunt*, to learn about a person who successfully escaped and helped others escape. (12:00: "The Berlin Wall—it separated East and West Berlin in the Cold War" to 12:53: "...who risked his life crossing the death strip.") and (17:03: "And if you take care of your country, you might receive this in Germany..." to 19:26: "with a two-pound hammer and to make it look like a robbery.") Research the escape of others from the East to the West and share what you learn with your classmates.

► Resources

- Transatlantic Outreach Program. *The German History Scavenger Hunt*. YouTube, Apr. 21, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ut2PTQptXpg>.
- Zeitzeugen Büro. (2021). *Contemporary Witnesses*. Bundesstiftung Aufarbeitung. <https://www.zeitzeugenbuero.de/index.php?id=english>.

✚ EXTENSION (OPTIONAL) TASK 2

Throughout history, walls have been constructed to keep people in and to keep people out. Research some of these walls and prepare a presentation to share with classmates that shows the wall's location, explains who built the wall and why, how it affected people's lives, and other points of interest. Possible walls include the Great Wall of China, the wall at the U.S.-Mexico border, the West Bank Wall, the Peace Lines/Walls in Ireland, and Hadrian's Wall.

★ TAKING INFORMED ACTION

Understand: People create psychological boundaries against other people.

Assess: Are there individuals and/or groups in your school or community that are separated from others because of who they are or what they do?

Act: Join a school or community organization that provides outreach to individuals who are separated from the general community.

CONCEPTS LIST

- Allies
- Axis
- German Democratic Republic (GDR)
- Berlin Wall
- Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)
- Emigration
- Boundaries
- Sovietization
- Cold War
- Soviet Union
- Refugee
- Communism
- East Germany
- West Germany