

## Russia's Regions and Roles

A compelling case can be made for studying Russia as part of KS3 geography. Quite simply, geography is the study of the world and Russia is the world's largest country!

In this self-contained six-lesson module, students will gain knowledge and understanding of how Russia is a **globally significant** place which is home to a diverse range of **landscapes** and **environments**. In the first few lessons, students will explore Russia's varied physical regions, as defined by their landforms, climate, vegetation and soils. They will analyse enormous **spatial variations**, from hot desert to icy tundra, not forgetting the marine environment of the Arctic Ocean, large parts of which Russia claims ownership over. Students will learn about the role that geological, climatic, ecological and human **processes** have all played and the different **timescales** for the changes that these processes bring to places. For instance, not only will students be made aware of tectonic movements taking place hundreds of millions of years ago, they will also examine how contemporary climate change may be affecting Russian ecosystems.

In later lessons, the emphasis shifts from Russia's regions towards its **role in the world**. Russia has always exerted enormous influence on a planetary scale. Past rulers built a global empire, followed by a soviet super-state. Today, Russia is a so-called 'BRIC' economy and G8 nation. Fossil fuel sales to neighbour countries in Europe, as well as China, provide Russia with wealth, power and influence. As they explore this relationship, students will learn how finite supplies of **natural resources** can result in **global interdependency** between different places. Students will also analyse how Russia's unique story has produced a country whose **population** is hard to categorise, both economically and demographically. According to most economic and social indicators of **development**, Russia is a developed country like the UK or France. However, once students begin to explore the data, they will discover facts that may not fully support this view.

Students will also develop their **geographical skills** while studying this module. They will be immersed in a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams and aerial photographs. In one lesson, they will analyse a range of data gathered through the use of a 'virtual' fieldwork transect across Russia; in another, they will gain spatial awareness using historical maps that chart the changing boundaries of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. They will create and construct charts, choropleth maps and proportional arrows, amongst other techniques.

Finally, students will communicate geographical information through the completion of written KS3 assessments at regular intervals. These have been written by a GCSE chief examiner, with an eye on progression towards GCSE.