

2.4 TWO GERMANYS BECOME ONE

What are some challenges a divided country faces in becoming one country?

<p>C3 Framework Indicator</p>	<p>D2.Geo.2.9-12. Use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics.</p> <p>D2.Geo.5.9-12. Evaluate how political and economic decisions throughout time have influenced cultural and environmental characteristics of various places and regions.</p> <p>D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.</p> <p>D2.His.14.9-12. Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in the past.</p>	
<p>Staging the Compelling Question</p>	<p>Students will review the chronology of political, social, economic, cultural, and international events with regard to the so-called reunification of Germany: the dismantling of the German Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany), and its “absorption” into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or West Germany).</p>	
<p>Supporting Question 1</p>	<p>Supporting Question 2</p>	<p>Supporting Question 3</p>
<p>What were the concrete tasks that had to be completed for East Germany to join West Germany?</p>	<p>Although Germany has been one country since 1990, what differences are there between the states of the former east and those in the former west?</p>	<p>What were the impacts of reunification on individuals?</p>
<p>Formative Performance Task</p>	<p>Formative Performance Task</p>	<p>Formative Performance Task</p>
<p>Within a small group, students will brainstorm which steps had to be taken for reunification to happen in the topic area their group is considering.</p>	<p>In their groups students will examine the current differences in Germany between the former east and the former west using the links listed in the resources.</p>	<p>Students will investigate how the lives of individuals changed due to reunification.</p>
<p>Featured Sources</p>	<p>Featured Sources</p>	<p>Featured Sources</p>
<p>Source A: <i>World History Project</i></p> <p>Source B: <i>FES</i></p>	<p>Source A: <i>The Guardian</i></p> <p>Source B: <i>The Washington Post</i></p>	<p>Source A: <i>Deutsche Welle</i></p> <p>Source B: <i>The New York Times</i></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: What difficulties arose when the people and area of the Confederacy joined into the Union following the end of the American Civil War?</p>	
<p>Taking Informed Action</p>	<p>Understand: There are many countries and regions that are currently divided by political, physical and/or ideological barriers.</p> <p>Assess: Research one country or region that is divided and learn the history behind that division.</p> <p>Act: Locate two news articles that are published in your language from the divided region (one from each side of the conflict). Read the news and jot down notes of what surprises you and which perspectives you encounter that are different from the perspectives portrayed in your country’s media.</p>	

? COMPELLING QUESTION

- What are some challenges a divided country faces in becoming one country?

INQUIRY OVERVIEW

This inquiry focuses on events that have shaped Germany from before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 to long after the official joining of the government in 1990 (known in Germany as “*die Wende*,” which means the pivot or turning point). Students will review the chronology of political, social, economic, cultural, and international events with regard to the so-called reunification of Germany: the dismantling of the German Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany), and its “absorption” into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG or West Germany). Students will investigate differences that still exist between the eastern and western parts of Germany.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Germany was divided by the Allied Powers after World War II, and the different zones were eventually split into two nations. The German government has been reunited since October 3, 1990, and has confronted many challenges. The joining of the two Germanys cannot be described as a merger or even a true reunification. Rather, the East German states were absorbed into West Germany. October 3rd saw the end of the GDR (East Germany), and in accordance with Article 23 of the German Basic Law, each of the five eastern states or *Länder* had to vote to join the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). This process was chosen in preference over the option of an official union of the two nations, since a speedy unification was seen as vital during an economically unstable time.

During the reunification process, and even today, many decades later, Germany has faced economic, political, and social challenges. In 1990, significant measures were taken to absorb East Germany into the Federal Republic of Germany. A lot had to be done on the political side. The German Reunification Treaty had to be signed, tax reforms had to be outlined, and a constitutional merger had to be implemented.

The nation’s economy faced many hurdles. The East German monetary system had to be integrated into the West German monetary system. People in East Germany began using the “West Mark” as their currency. Almost all East German companies were state-owned at that time. Therefore, an entity had to be established to take the helm in the monumental task of privatizing state-run firms. This agency was called the *Treuhandanstalt*. That task was no small feat, and there is much criticism over how the work of privatization was conducted.

Over half of the four million people who worked in East German state-run companies lost their jobs in the process, and many East German companies were taken over by West German corporations. Going from a regulated market system to a free market was another obstacle that East Germans faced during reunification. (See Inquiry 5.1 to learn more about the transition from a command economy to a market economy.)

With the revelation of the disastrous economic and ecological legacy left behind by the GDR regime, work quickly began to rebuild the East German infrastructure and economy. Although billions of Euro were spent on rebuilding the East (*Aufbau Ost*) inequities still remain until today. Political issues like immigration laws, xenophobia, and the definition of citizenship are deeply tied to a sense of national identity. Fighting unemployment in former East Germany (in 2016 it was 8.5 %, as opposed to 5.6 % in the West) remains one of the main challenges dividing the country today. Nonetheless, there is a lot of progress testifying to



the potential of former East Germany, such as Germany's eighth chancellor, Angela Merkel, and the eleventh president (since reunification), Joachim Gauck, who grew up in East Germany. In addition, former East Germans peacefully brought about the end of a dictatorship (*friedliche Revolution* / Peaceful Revolution), the only example of a successful democratic revolution to take place in German history. (See Inquiry 2.3 for a lesson on the "Peaceful Revolution").

The initial positive outlook many East Germans expressed early on in the reunification process had to do with the hope of obtaining a higher standard of living after becoming part of the Federal Republic of Germany. Many East Germans were excited about the prospect of more choices in their everyday lives (a larger selection of products and services available), as well as the freedom of travel, among other things. However, some East Germans have expressed that they were disillusioned by the promises made by West German politicians. Many insist that inequality between the former East and the former West persists even today in various parts of life.

► Further background information

- "2+4 Talks and the Reunification of Germany." Official website of the *US Department of State*, Archive, 20 January 2001-2009, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/pcw/108224.htm>.
- "German Reunification." Official website of the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 1 January 1990, https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/declassified_136311.htm.
- "German reunification—a short history." *YouTube*, uploaded by DW Documentary, 13 January 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNAXfWCwDsw>.
- Nees, G. *Germany: Unraveling an Enigma*. Boston, Intercultural Press, Inc., 2000.

 **TIME:** 4–5 45 minute periods

CONCEPTS LIST

- Division
- Reunification
- German Democratic Republic (GDR)
- Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)
- Berlin Wall
- Dissolution
- *Bundesländer*
- Accession
- Treaties
- Dialogue
- Reconstruction

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- "2+4 Talks and the Reunification of Germany." Official website of the *US Department of State*, Archive, 20 January 2001-2009, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/pcw/108224.htm>.
- Connolly, Kate. "German reunification 25 years on: how different are east and west really." *The Guardian*, 2 October 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/02/german-reunification-25-years-on-how-different-are-east-and-west-really>.
- "German Unification - A Nation Divided." *Zeit Online*, October-November 2014, <https://www.zeit.de/feature/german-unification-a-nation-divided>.
- "German Reunification." Official website of the *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 1 January 1990, https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/declassified_136311.htm.
- "German reunification—a short history." *YouTube*, uploaded by DW Documentary, 13 January 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNAXfWCwDsw>.
- Hamann, Greta. "Being a German born in 1989." *Deutsche Welle*, 7 November 2014, <https://www.dw.com/en/being-a-german-born-in-1989/a-18023201>.
- Nees, G. *Germany: Unraveling an Enigma*. Boston, Intercultural Press, Inc., 2000.
- Noack, Rick. "Germany reunited 26 years ago, but some divisions are still strong." *The Washington Post*, 3 October 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/10/03/germany-reunited-26-years-ago-but-some-divisions-are-still-strong/?utm_term=.b9583937abe1.

- “Reunification of Germany.” *World History Project*, 3 October 1990, <https://worldhistoryproject.org/1990/10/3/reunification-of-germany>.
- Sielaff, Ruediger. “Germany: Impact of Unification on Political and Economic Structures.” *FES*, Korea-Deutsche Society of Economics and Management, 31 May 1991, http://www.fes-korea.org/media/German%20Unification/Germany_Impact%20of%20Unification%20on%20Political%20and%20Economic%20Shellip.pdf. PDF download.
- Smale, Alison. “In a United Germany the Scars of the East-West Divide Have Faded.” *The New York Times*, 2 October 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/02/world/europe/germany-unification-anniversary.html>.
- “The Fall of the Wall and German Reunification.” *Deutschland.de*, 13 August 2012, <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/politics/germany-europe/the-fall-of-the-wall-and-german-reunification>.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

Imagine that your school is to be consolidated with another school. List what changes would allow for a successful school merger (for example: faculty, sports teams, mascots, course offerings). Discuss which areas students believe would be the easiest to combine and those that might cause difficulties, providing reasons for these. Next, consider how this process might be different if the two schools had unequal access to resources.

End this task by projecting the image of Berlin taken from the International Space Station found at *Zeit Online*, <https://www.zeit.de/feature/german-unification-a-nation-divided>. Ask students to examine the picture and discuss what they see and what this image says about the reunification of Germany.



? SUPPORTING QUESTION #1

What were the concrete tasks that had to be completed for East Germany to join West Germany?

► Formative Performance Task

Consider the various realms that were involved when East Germany became part of the Federal Republic of Germany. Within a small group, students will brainstorm which steps had to be taken for reunification to happen in the topic area their group is considering (federal states, economics, politics, healthcare, education, social services, state-run companies, cultural organizations, postal service, transportation, military, etc.). Use the resources below to verify and expand their task lists.

► Resources

- “Reunification of Germany.” *World History Project*, 3 October 1990, <https://worldhistoryproject.org/1990/10/3/reunification-of-germany>.
- Sielaff, Ruediger. “Germany: Impact of Unification on Political and Economic Structures.” *FES*, Korea-Deutsche Society of Economics and Management, 31 May 1991, http://www.fes-korea.org/media/German%20Unification/Germany_Impact%20of%20Unification%20on%20Political%20and%20Economic%20Shellip.pdf. PDF download.



❓ SUPPORTING QUESTION #2

Although Germany has been one country since 1990, what differences are there between the states of the former east and those in the former West?

➤ Formative Performance Task

In their groups students will examine the current differences in Germany between the former East and the former West using the links listed in the resources. Groups should choose 4 or 5 categories from the list below so that answers are varied. Groups should create visual representations that illustrate the commonalities and lingering differences between East and West for each category. Students should be ready to share their findings with the class with evidentiary support for their observations.

- demographics
- income
- disposable income
- political climate
- language
- flu vaccination
- childcare
- unemployment rate
- anti-refugee violence
- migration
- trash production
- size of farms
- recreational vehicles
- gun ownership
- household appliances
- vacation destinations
- number of children per woman
- sports/soccer clubs

***Note:** Be sure to consider that there has been quite a lot of movement throughout Germany since the fall of the Wall. You might initially think that East Germans were abandoning their home states for a life in the West, but actually many (opportunistic) westerners made their way east and found affordable real estate and leadership roles in companies and universities in the “new” German states.

➤ Resources

- Connolly, Kate. “German reunification 25 years on: how different are east and west really.” *The Guardian*, 2 October 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/02/german-reunification-25-years-on-how-different-are-east-and-west-really>.
- Noack, Rick. “Germany reunited 26 years ago, but some divisions are still strong.” *The Washington Post*, 3 October 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/10/03/germany-reunited-26-years-ago-but-some-divisions-are-still-strong/?utm_term=.b9583937abe1.



❓ SUPPORTING QUESTION #3

What were the impacts of reunification on individuals?

➤ Formative Performance Task

Now that each group has considered the economic, social, and political impacts of Germany’s reunification, they should take a look at some personal stories. They will investigate how the lives of individuals changed due to reunification. They should use the resources below, or find their own interviews, to write a paragraph about how reunification impacted one person. Tell students to take into consideration the individuals age, where they grew up, and their work.

➤ Resources

- Hamann, Greta. “Being a German born in 1989.” *Deutsche Welle*, 7 November 2014, <https://www.dw.com/en/being-a-german-born-in-1989/a-18023201>.
- Smale, Alison. “In a United Germany the Scars of the East-West Divide Have Faded.” *The New York Times*, 2 October 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/02/world/europe/germany-unification-anniversary.html>.



✓ SUMMATIVE PERFORMANCE TASK***What are some challenges a divided country faces in becoming one country?***

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.

⊕ EXTENSION (OPTIONAL) TASK

Examine the post-Civil War Reconstruction period in the United States (1865-1877). What difficulties arose when the people and area of the Confederacy joined into the Union following the end of the war? How do these circumstances compare with those experienced during the reunification of Germany?

★ TAKING INFORMED ACTION

UNDERSTAND There are many countries and regions that are currently divided by political, physical and/or ideological barriers. Examples include: Ireland and Northern Ireland, Western Sahara, North Korea and South Korea, Israel and Palestine, etc.

ASSESS Research one country or region that is divided and learn the history behind that division.

ACT Locate two news articles, one from each side of the divided region/country, that are published in a language you understand. Read the news and jot down notes of what surprises you and which perspectives you encounter that are different from the perspectives portrayed in the media you usually access. Share your insights with your classmates, particularly if what you learned is related to the division and/or potential for future reunification.