

Lesson Plan: Russian Alphabet Soup!

CURRICULUM FOCUS:
Russian Language, World Culture

GRADE LEVEL:
7-12

Overview

The modern Russian alphabet is a variant of the Cyrillic alphabet and contains 33 letters. To non-native speakers, it may look intimidating, but it's actually quite easy to learn! In this activity, students will compare Russian and English letters and their sounds. They will then use this knowledge to fill out a worksheet identifying American geographical locations by their Russian language cognates.

Objectives

Student will be able to:

- Identify all 33 letters of the Russian alphabet;
- Pronounce 33 letters of the Russian alphabet;
- Use the Russian alphabet to spell out American geographical locations.

Adaptations

This lesson can be used for younger grades as well, although the teacher will need to be more active about helping with the spelling of American geographical places.

Useful Resources

Comic Strip: *Learn to Read*

Russian in 15 Minutes, by Peter Starr Northrop and Eric Estrada

<http://ryanestrada.com.tumblr.com/post/97607943779/learn-to-read-russian-in-15-minutes-i-did-this>

Materials

All materials are inclusive in this lesson plan.

Activities

Begin by giving an overview of the Russian alphabet (provided on page 2). Show students the chart of the Russian alphabet and its equivalent English letters and sounds. Sound out all 33 letters of the alphabet together. Explain what "cognates" are and give examples (from attached worksheet). Ask students to fill in worksheet using the Russian alphabet chart as a key.

Vocabulary

Cyrilic: Adjective describing the alphabet used by a number of Slavic languages (examples: Russian, Bulgarian, Serbian) and some non-Slavic languages of Central Asia (example: Tajik).

Cognate: In linguistics, cognates are two words that have a common etymological origin, meaning they share roots ("night" in English and "nuit" in French, for example). A cognate can also mean a word, that while spelled differently, sounds and means the same as a word in another language. For example, the Russian word "Америка" means the same and is pronounced the same as the English word "America."

Evaluation

Assessment of the student's capability of identifying Russian alphabet letters will be determined by how many answers they get correct on the attached worksheet.

Worksheet Answer Key: 1. Kansas; 2. Washington; 3. Montana; 4. Kentucky; 5. Kansas City; 6. Boston; 7. Cincinnati; 8. Chicago; 9. Arkansas; 10. Nebraska; 11. San Francisco; 12. Los Angeles; 13. Utah; 14. Philadelphia; 15. California; 16. Missouri; 17. New York; 18. Michigan; 19. Colorado; 20. Mississippi.

Russian Alphabet Chart

Many letters in the Russian alphabet are pronounced the same as letters in the English alphabet, while some are entirely unique sounds. There are even some letters in the Russian alphabet that make no sound at all -- rather they indicate how the letter before them should be pronounced. Follow the chart and pronounce as many of the Russian letters as you can out loud!

* Indicates no comparable English letter.

Russian Letter	English Letter	English Pronunciation	Russian Letter	English Letter	English Pronunciation	Russian Letter	English Letter	English Pronunciation
А	A	ah	Й	Y	yih	У	*	oo
Б	B	beh	К	K	kah	Ф	F	effe
В	V	veh	Л	L	elle	Х	*	kh
Г	G	geh	М	M	em	Ц	*	ts
Д	D	deh	Н	N	en	Ч	*	ch
Е	E	yeh	О	O	oh	Ш	*	sh
Ё	*	yoh	П	P	peh	Щ	*	shch
Ж	J	zheh	Р	R	err	Ъ	*	hard sign
З	Z	zeh	С	S	ess	Ы	*	oi
И	I	ee	Т	T	teh	Ь	*	soft sign
						Э	*	eh
						Ю	*	you
						Я	*	ya

Worksheet: Russian Alphabet Soup!

Имя (Name): _____

The following are all states and cities in the United States, only they are written in Russian. Can you translate? Fill out the answers using the Russian Alphabet Chart.

Example: АМЕРИКА = America

1. КАНЗАС

11. САН ФРАНЦИСКО

2. ВАШИНГТОН

12. ЛОС АНДЖЕЛЕС

3. МОНТАНА

13. ЮТА

4. КЕНТУКИ

14. ФИЛАДЕЛЬФИЯ

5. КАНЗАС СИТИ

15. КАЛИФОРНИЯ

6. БОСТОН

16. МИССУРИ

7. ЦИНЦИННАТИ

17. НЬЮ ЙОРК

8. ЧИКАГО

18. МИЧИГАН

9. АРКАНЗАС

19. КОЛОРАДО

10. НЕБРАСКА

20. МИССИСИПИ