

Lesson plan

Me and the world

Countries, languages, and landmarks

Today we're going to go on a little journey — not with a plane or a train, but with our minds and imaginations! We're going to learn about the amazing world we live in, full of different countries, languages, and landmarks.

Do you know how many countries there are in the world today? There are 195 countries! Some of these countries are really big — like Russia, which is the largest country in the world. It's so big it covers part of Europe and Asia! Then there's Canada, with huge forests and lots of lakes. China is also very large and has the most people in the world — over 1.4 billion. But not all countries are big. Some are very small. The smallest country in the world is Vatican City, which is inside the city of Rome in Italy. It's so small, you could walk across it in just a few minutes. The Vatican City serves as the administrative centre of the Catholic Church. There's also Monaco, which is smaller than a regular town, and Nauru, a tiny island country in the Pacific Ocean. Even small countries have their own flags, leaders, and cultures — just like the large ones.

Now, let's talk about languages. People in different countries speak different languages. For example, in Germany, people speak German, and in Brazil, they speak Portuguese. In Egypt, they speak Arabic, and in South Korea, they speak Korean. Some countries, like India, have many languages spoken in different regions — over 20 official ones, in fact. And even in our own continent, Europe, we have many languages: like French, Italian, Greek, Dutch, Polish, and of course, English.

Learning other languages helps us understand people from other places and share ideas. Even if we don't speak the same language, we can still learn to communicate. That's called intercultural communication. It means being a good listener, being patient, and respecting differences. For example, a simple smile or a friendly "hello" can mean the same thing in many places — even if the words are different!

Each country also has special places called landmarks. These are buildings, statues, or natural places that are important because of their history and culture. For example, in France, there's the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, which is one of the most famous cathedrals in the world. In China, you'll find the Pagoda of Fogong Temple – the oldest and tallest wooden pagoda. A pagoda is a Buddhist temple. In the United States, there's the Statue of Liberty, a gift from France to America. And in India, there's the beautiful Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple, a Hindu temple and spiritual-cultural campus in Delhi. There you can find 148 life-sized elephant statues.

Landmarks tell us stories — they help us understand what people long ago built, believed in, and cared about. Some landmarks are very old, like the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, built thousands of years ago. Others are newer, but still very important to the people who live near them. They

remind us that even though we live in different places, we all have stories and traditions that matter.

When we learn about different countries, languages, and landmarks, we're learning how to be part of a bigger world. This is called being a global citizen. A global citizen is someone who cares about the whole world. They're curious, kind, and want to understand how other people live. We are also European citizens, because we live in Europe and are part of the European Union. This means we share values like peace, friendship, and working together with other countries in Europe.

Being a global and European citizen means being proud of where we come from but also being excited to learn about others. It means saying, "Your way is different from mine, and that's okay!" It helps us make new friends, solve problems, and build a better future for everyone.

Even if we don't get to travel the world just yet, we can still explore it by learning. Every country, every language, and every landmark tell a story. And you are part of the world's story too.

1. **Theme:** Me and the world: Countries, languages, and landmarks
2. **Grade:** 3rd
3. **Lesson type:** Lesson for acquiring new knowledge
4. **Duration:** 40 min.
5. **Basic terms:** world, country, city, communication, global, society, nation, culture, tolerance, differences, traditions, languages, landmarks.
6. **Pedagogical methods:** storytelling, presentation, discussion, demonstration, dialog, group work, reflection.
7. **Means:** board (interactive or otherwise), flipchart, markers, laptop/computer, multimedia (screen/projector), ppt presentations, cards.

8. Goals:

○ Educational:

The students

- ✓ Indicate the number of countries in the world
- ✓ Discuss the existence of larger and smaller countries
- ✓ Discover similarities/differences in words in different languages
- ✓ Summarize the cultural and historical value of significant landmarks
- ✓ Associate a language and landmark with a specific country
- ✓ Can draw conclusions about cultural differences as enriching

- Formational:

The students

- ✓ Recognize cultural specifics such as different languages
- ✓ Discuss the cultural and historical value of landmarks
- ✓ Systematize cultural specifics
- ✓ Identify cultural differences as natural in a global society

9. Cross-curricular connections: Geography, History

10. Intra-subject connections: with the lesson plans on the themes: Me and the others, Me and society, I support others.

11. Expected results:

- ✓ Students know the number of countries in the world
- ✓ Students identify at least 2 of the largest and the smallest countries
- ✓ Students can list at least 4 different languages
- ✓ Students can describe what a landmark is and why they are historically valuable
- ✓ Students can connect at least 3 famous landmarks with a particular country
- ✓ Students can articulate their thoughts and feelings about traveling to a specific country, a given landmark, a language
- ✓ Students understand that they should respect people, regardless of their cultural differences, such as language, food, clothes, and more.

12. Preparation

- For the teacher: Reading the theoretical base, downloading the presentations, printing the cards, reading the provided words in different languages.

13. Structure of the lesson:

Me and the world: Countries, languages, and landmarks

1. Our world and the countries in it – 195 countries
 - The largest ones: Russia, Canada, China, USA
 - The smallest ones: Vatican City, San Marino, Marshall Islands, Monaco
2. The different languages that people use

- Different countries have different cultures: language, sometimes religion, food, clothes, and more. These differences are enriching and intriguing. We should show respect and care for people, irrespective of the culture they come from.
- Short activity (guess the language/word)
- Presenting Greek (ancient Greek and modern Greek) language, English language, Spanish language, French language, Arabic language.
- Presenting three sentences in different languages.

3. Famous landmarks

- Presenting the term “landmarks” and specifying the concept of landmarks
- Presenting historical landmarks: Greece – Acropolis of Athens; United States – Statue of Liberty; France – Cathedral of Notre-Dame; China – Pagoda of Fogong Temple; Egypt – Pyramids of Giza; India – Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple; Italy – Colosseum.
- Activity: a game to connect the landmark to the country

4. Reflection and discussion

- Posing several reflective questions and engaging the students in a discussion on the subject.

14. Structure, content and timeline

1. Introduction (13 min.)

- Teacher activity:

- Actualization of prior knowledge on the subject: How many countries do you know of? What countries can you name? (3 min.)

- Introduction of new information and terms: the number of all countries in the world, the larger ones and several of the smallest ones; different languages and landmarks (theoretical frame). 5 min.

- Short presentation, showing the world map, and outlining 4 of the largest (Russia, Canada, China, USA) and 4 of the smallest countries (Vatican City, San Marino, Marshall Islands, Monaco); focusing on the fact that the countries are different, but in all of them live people with shared values, emotions, feelings. (5 min.)

- Student activity:

- Participation in the dialog, taking notice of the presentation, asking questions, active listening.
- Methods and tools:
 - Methods: dialog, presentation, storytelling
 - Tools: interactive board or a screen/multimedia, laptop/computer, board, marker
- 2. Stating the theme of the lesson: Me and the world: Different countries – languages and landmarks (22 min.)
- Teacher activity:
 - Different countries have various cultures. These differences are enriching and intriguing. We should show respect and care for people, irrespective of the culture they come from. (1 min.)
 - Highlighting several languages: Greek (ancient Greek and modern Greek) language, English language, Spanish language, French language, Arabic language. Writing on the board of a few words in different languages: Can you guess the language and/or the word?
 - ✓ The teacher writes on the board (or shows on a screen) the following words, one by one, so the students can guess the language and/or the meaning of the word: amigo (Spanish – friend); good (English – καλός); famille (French – family); رحال (Arabic – traveling); αγάπη (Greek – love); rispetto (Italian – respect). (5 min.)
 - Except for languages, among each country's most valuable symbols and cultural elements are their landmarks. A landmark is an object (statue, monument, church, or other) that has a historical value and is recognizable, can be associated with a given country. Landmarks tell the story of the people, the nation, and the development of the culture. (1 min.)
 - Presentation of several historical landmarks: Greece – Acropolis of Athens; United States – Statue of Liberty; France – Cathedral of Notre-Dame; China – Pagoda of Fogong Temple; Egypt – Pyramids of Giza; India – Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple; Itali – Colosseum. (5 min.)
 - Activity: (10 min.)

- ✓ The teacher divides the class in small groups (3-4 children) and gives each group a mixed set of cards: landmark names and country names (the ones from the presentation).
- ✓ The students have a few minutes to match the landmark cards with the country name cards.
- ✓ The group which finishes first receives the title “Landmark masters”
- ✓ The teacher goes briefly through the correct answers.
- Student activity:
 - Participation in the dialog, taking notice of the presentation, asking questions, active listening, participation in the activities.
- Methods and tools:
 - Methods: dialog, presentation, storytelling, demonstration, group work.
 - Tools: interactive board or a screen, laptop/computer, board, marker
- 3. Reflection and discussion (5 min.)
- Teacher activity:
 - Posing questions for a discussion:
 - ✓ “Which country would you like to visit and why?”
 - ✓ “Have you been to another country? Would you like to share fun/interesting experience?”
 - ✓ “What’s something people around the world have in common?”
 - ✓ “Which languages sound interesting to you?”
 - ✓ “Which is your favourite landmark?”
 - ✓ “Can we say that the world is our shared home?”
 - Engaging the students with prompts:
 - ✓ “I like Italy very much”
 - ✓ “I would travel to Spain”
 - ✓ “From the landmarks that we saw today – which ones do you want to see in person?”
 - Answering questions and clarifying information
- Student activity:
 - Engaging in the discussion

- Reflection on their ideas and emotions on the subject
- Methods and tools:
 - Methods: reflection, discussion, active listening
 - Tools: possible use for a board/flipchart and a marker – to write down interesting ideas and suggestions.

15. Variations:

- One or more of the activities could be adapted, removed, shortened.
- A virtual tour of a museum could be performed, with options here: <https://artsandculture.google.com/project/street-view>
- A culture-related game/s could be played, with available options here: <https://artsandculture.google.com/play> and here: <https://culpeer-digital.eu/interactive-cultural-online-games.php>

16. Fun facts (from Birtles, K., 2023); <https://www.trafalgartour.com/real-word/facts-about-europe/>):

- ✓ The Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris is the most visited landmark in Europe, with almost 14 million people visiting yearly.
- ✓ There are more than 200 languages spoken in Europe.
- ✓ Island doesn't have mosquitos.
- ✓ Norway knighted a penguin. More than once. Scotland's Edinburgh Zoo is home to a knighted penguin named Brigadier Sir Nils Olav III.
- ✓ There are 10 villages across Denmark, Sweden and Norway that have names just one single letter long. Most are named "Å", meaning "small brook or river" in Scandinavian languages, while one village is named "Ö" meaning "island" in Swedish.