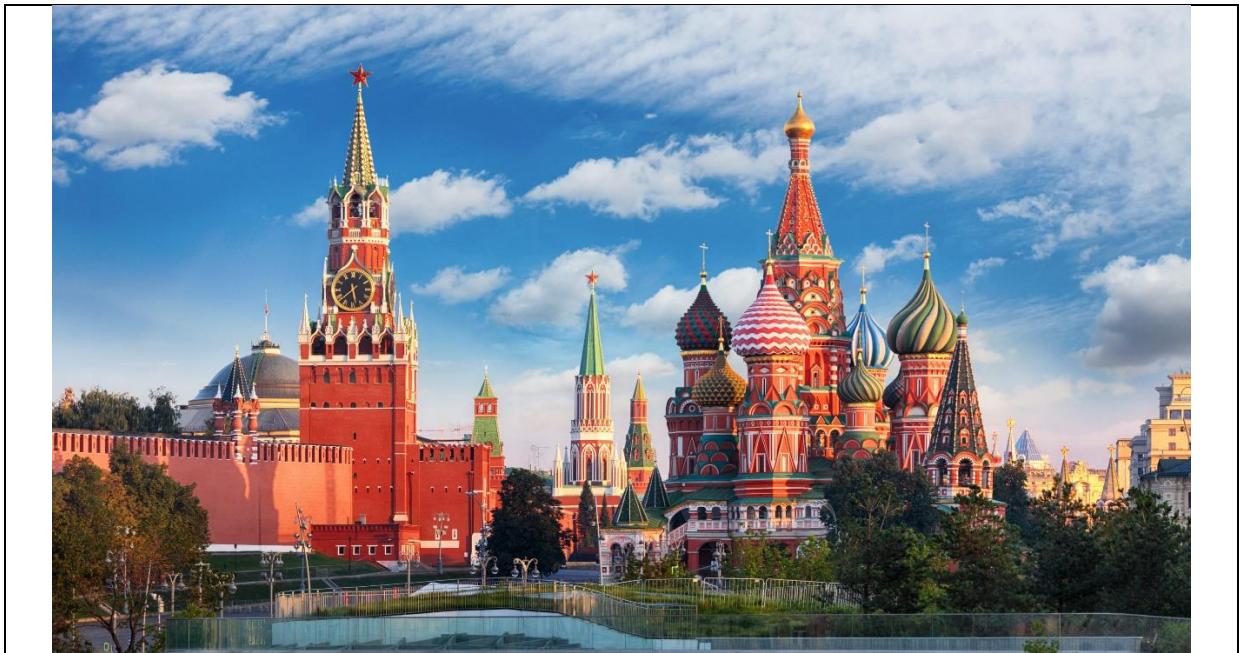


Name: _____

Geography

Homework Booklet



Year 9

Term 2: Russia

Homework 1	Learn keywords	Due date:	Completed?
Homework 2	Guided Reading Activity	Due date:	Completed?
Homework 3	Prepare for knowledge test	Due date:	Completed?

Geography Homework Tasks Term 1

Homework 1 - Learn the keywords below for a mini test at the start of next lesson. You could read through the words, write them out, create a match up activity or get someone to test you.

Keywords

Communism - where a country's government controls everything. Individual people can't own property by themselves because everything is shared. The goal is to try to make life fair and equal for everyone.

Geopolitics - is the study of how things like a country's land, climate, and natural resources all affect its government and economy.

Governance - the process by which a country or region is run.

Human Development Index (HDI) - the measure of a country's development using 3 aspects: health, education and standard of living.

Permafrost - a permanently frozen layer of ground. Permafrost usually remains at or below 0°C for at least two years.

Steppe - a plain without trees. The world's largest steppe, sometimes called The Great Steppe, is in Russia.

Superpower - a large country with a large population, strong economy, great military power, and great political and cultural influence.

Transnational Corporation (TNC) - companies that operate in more than one country.

Tsar - a supreme ruler that has great power or authority.

Tundra - a large, barren region with no trees, where the climate is cold and windy with little rainfall.

Homework 2 – Complete the guided reading activity below.

You may wish to write your answers out on paper, so you have more space.

Homework 3 – Use the knowledge organiser at the end of this booklet to revise, for a knowledge test next lesson. You could highlight the key information, create revision cue cards or get somebody to test you.

5 Why is the flat land to the west of Russia a problem?

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6 What does the word geopolitics mean?

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9 What does the US national security adviser warn about?

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1 What is the reason given for Russia's invasion of Ukraine?

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2 What type of landscapes surround Russia?

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3 What protects Russia along its border with China??

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4 What connects Russia to its neighbours Ukraine and Poland?

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Are we really prisoners of geography?

A wave of bestselling authors claim that global affairs are still ultimately governed by the immutable facts of geography – mountains, oceans, rivers, resources. But the world has changed more than they realise.

by [Daniel Immerwahr](#)

Russia's war in Ukraine has involved many surprises. The largest, however, is that it happened at all. Last year, Russia was at peace and enmeshed in a complex global economy. Would it really ever trade this – and threaten nuclear war – just to expand its already vast territory? Despite the many warnings, including from Vladimir Putin himself, the invasion still came as a shock.

But it wasn't a shock to the journalist Tim Marshall. On the first page of his 2015 blockbuster book, *Prisoners of Geography*, Marshall invited readers to contemplate Russia's topography. A ring of mountains and he surrounds it. Its border with China is protected by mountain ranges, and it is separated from Iran and Turkey by the Caucasus. Between Russia and western Europe stand the Balkans, Carpathians and Alps, which form another wall. Or, they nearly do. To the north of those mountains, a flat corridor – the Great European Plain – connects Russia to its well-armed western neighbours via Ukraine and Poland. On it, you can take a bicycle from Paris to Moscow.

You can also drive a tank. Marshall noted how this gap in Russia's natural fortifications has repeatedly exposed it to attacks. "Putin has no choice", Marshall concluded: "He must at least attempt to control the flatlands to the west." When Putin did precisely that, invading a Ukraine he could no longer control by quieter means, Marshall greeted it with weary understanding, deploring the war yet finding it unsurprising. The map "imprisons" leaders, he had written, "giving them fewer choices and less room to manoeuvre than you might think".

There is a name for Marshall's line of thinking: geopolitics. Although the term is often used loosely to mean "international relations", it refers more precisely to the view that geography – mountains, land bridges, water tables – governs world affairs. Ideas, laws and culture are interesting, geopoliticians argue, but to truly understand politics you must look hard at maps. And when you do, the world reveals itself to be a zero-sum contest in which every neighbour is a potential rival, and success depends on controlling territory, as in the boardgame Risk. In its cynical view of human motives, geopolitics resembles Marxism, just with topography replacing class struggle as the engine of history.

Facing a newly hostile environment, leaders are pulling old strategy guides off the shelf. "Geopolitics are back, and back with a vengeance, after this holiday from history we took in the so-called post-cold war period," US national security adviser HR McMaster warned in 2017. This outlook openly guides Russian thinking with Putin citing "geopolitical realities" in explaining his Ukraine invasion. Elsewhere, as faith in an open, trade-based international system falters, map-reading pundits such as Marshall, Robert Kaplan, Ian Morris, George Friedman and Peter Zeihan are advancing on to bestseller lists.

Hearing the rumormongers ply their trade, you wonder if anything has changed since the 13th-century world of Genghis Khan, where strategy was a matter of open steppes and mountain barriers. Geopolitical thinking is unabashedly grim, and it regards hopes for peace, justice and rights with scepticism. The question, however, is not whether it's bleak, but whether it's right. Past decades have brought major technological, intellectual and institutional changes. But are we still, as Marshall contends, "prisoners of geography"?

10 How does Putin explain his invasion of Ukraine?

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11 Who are the key authors of books about maps and geopolitics?

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12 What do you think Marshall means by the term 'prisoners of geography'?

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7 What does the author Marshall argue really governs world affairs?

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8 What does the author Marshall believe success depends on?

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Geography Knowledge Organiser: Y9 Russia

Keywords

Communism - a war between citizens of the same country.

Geopolitics - a change in global or regional climate patterns, largely due to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.

Governance - a disagreement caused by an actual or perceived difference in needs, values and interests between people and countries. It does not necessarily mean fighting.

Human Development Index (HDI) - The movement of a person or people from one country, locality, place of residence, to settle in another.

Permafrost - attacking, robbing and holding hostage ships, crew and passengers in return for ransom money.

Steppe - a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.

Superpower - the consumption of a resource faster than it can be replenished.

Transnational Corporation (TNC) - the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, for political aims.

Tsar - a formal legally binding agreement about an issue between countries.

Tundra - armed conflict between different countries or different groups within a country.

Key concept #1

Why isn't Russia a superpower anymore?

1991 saw the collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of the Russian Federation. Compare the differences of the two, below:

	Former USSR	Russia
Geography	22.4 million km ² Largest land mass on Earth (ranked 1 st)	17 million km ² Largest country in the world (ranked 1 st)
Population	286.7 million (ranked 3 rd)	144.1 million (ranked 9 th)
Resources	Produced 27.58 million barrels of oil in 1980 (ranked 2 nd)	Produced 10.5 million barrels of oil in 2021 (ranked 3 rd)
Economy	GDP £2.39 trillion (2 nd highest in the world)	GDP £1.33 trillion (11 th highest in the world)
Military	3.7 million soldiers / £113 billion (ranked 1 st)	1 million soldiers / £54 billion (ranked 2 nd)
Diplomacy	Alies included most eastern European countries and Asian countries	Former USSR countries China and India (although they do not support the conflict in Ukraine)
Identity	Communist country	Democratic country but tightly controlled

Case Study #1

Russian Tundra biome?

- The tundra is found in the north of Russia, mostly above the Arctic Circle. The temperatures can range from -40°C to 18°C. It is the coldest biome and has low amounts of precipitation.
- Trees do not grow in the tundra because the ground is permanently frozen 25-100cm down.
- In winter the tundra is frozen and dark, but in summer the sun melts the snow and top layer of permafrost.
- During the summer the tundra is covered with marshes, lakes, bogs and streams.
- Animals that live in the Tundra include foxes, polar bears, grizzly bears, reindeer and ermine.

Key concept #2

How developed is Russia?

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a measure of how developed a country is based on GDP (money per person), life expectancy and education. Compare Russia with other countries below:

	UK	Russia	Lesotho
GDP Per Capita	48,000	14,000	5,100
Expected years of education	17.5	11	11.5
Life Expectancy	84	73	54.5

8 marker example (WASOLL)

'The geographical location of Russia is both a blessing and a curse'. Discuss this statement.

It can be argued that Russia's location is a blessing because it borders Poland and therefore has a narrow corridor into which Russia could drive its armed forces if necessary and thus prevent an enemy from advancing towards Moscow. This shows that the geography of Russia protects it from attack. Furthermore, Russia contains the world's largest natural gas reserves, second largest coal reserves and eight largest oil reserves. This shows that its location is a blessing because these resources are wanted by everyone in the world making Russia very powerful and potentially very rich.

However, on the other hand, Russia's geography is a curse because many of their resources are located in the region of Siberia which is a harsh land, freezing for months on end, with vast forests, poor soil for farming and large stretches of swampland. This makes access to their resources very difficult.

In conclusion, I think the geographical location of Russia is a real curse, especially due to its size which makes it hard to govern and control and is the main reason that Russia is no longer a superpower.