

## Russia and the Caucasus

### Section 4



#### MAIN IDEAS

1. Many groups have ruled and influenced the Caucasus during its long history.
2. Today the Caucasus republics are working to improve their economies but struggle with ethnic unrest and conflict.

### Key Places

**Tbilisi** the capital of Georgia

**Yerevan** the capital of Armenia

**Baku** the capital of Azerbaijan, center of a large oil-refining industry

### Section Summary

#### HISTORY

The Caucasus lies in the Caucasus Mountains between the Black and Caspian seas. The region reflects a range of cultural influences and at one time or another has been ruled or invaded by Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks, Mongols, and Russians.

In the early 1800s, Russia took over much of the Caucasus, but the Ottoman Turks held western Armenia. Before and during World War I, hundreds of thousands of Armenians were killed by the Turks. After the war, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia were independent, but became part of the Soviet Union in 1922. They regained independence when the Soviet Union fell in 1991.

**Which groups have controlled the Caucasus?**

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#### THE CAUCASUS TODAY

Although the region has a long history, the Caucasus countries have had to create new governments and economies. Progress has been slowed by ethnic unrest and conflicts. Each country's government has an elected president, an appointed prime minister, and an elected parliament, or legislature.

**Section 4, *continued***

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Georgia is located between the Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea. **Tbilisi** is the capital. About 70 percent of the people are ethnic Georgians and belong to the Georgian Orthodox Church. Georgian is the official language.

Georgia has struggled with unrest and civil war. Georgians forced out their president in 2003.

Georgia's economy is based on services and farming. Other industries include steel, mining, wine, and tourism.

Armenia is a small, landlocked country south of Georgia. **Yerevan** is the capital. Most of the people are Armenian and belong to the Armenian Orthodox Church.

Armenia fought a war with Azerbaijan in the early 1990s. The war involved an ethnic Armenian area of Azerbaijan that is still controlled by Armenian forces today. This conflict has hurt Armenia's economy, but international aid is helping.

Azerbaijan is east of Armenia. The Azeri make up 90 percent of the population and are mostly Muslim. Oil is the most important part of the economy. **Baku**, the capital, is the center of this industry. Problems include corruption, poverty, and refugees as a result of the conflict with Armenia.

**What are Georgia's main industries?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What country was Armenia at war with in the early 1990s?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**What is the most important part of Azerbaijan's economy?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**CHALLENGE ACTIVITY**

**Critical Thinking: Compare and Contrast** Describe the similarities and differences between the Caucasus countries.

## Russia and the Caucasus

### COMPREHENSION AND CRITICAL THINKING

1. under Russia—Government; under Armenia—Economy/Resources
2. Baku, Chechnya
3. Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russia

### SECTION 1

#### Call-Out Boxes

1. Asia and Europe
2. Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan
3. Moscow
4. area known for its earthquakes and active volcanoes
5. the Volga
6. rich soils, timber, metals, precious gems, energy resources

#### Challenge Activity

possible answer—Living in Russia would allow one to explore a unique land, with regions in Europe and in Asia. Seeing such a beautiful land would be exciting, but also saddening because of the effects of pollution. Making a living might be difficult in much of Russia.

### SECTION 2

#### Call-Out Boxes

1. a form of the Greek alphabet which Russians use
2. Ivan the Terrible
3. the Bolsheviks
4. Vladimir Lenin
5. a period of tense rivalry and arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union
6. more than 140 million people

#### Challenge Activity

possible answer—Life would be even harder than it is now, with fewer economic opportunities and fewer freedoms.

### SECTION 3

#### Call-Out Boxes

1. the Federal Assembly
2. the Moscow, St. Petersburg, Volga, and Urals regions
3. on the Gulf of Finland

4. the Volga River
5. long and severe
6. It is the world's longest single rail line.

#### Challenge Activity

possible answer—Siberia because of its wealth of resources and close proximity to Asian markets.

### SECTION 4

#### Call-Out Boxes

1. Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks, Mongols, Russians
2. services and farming
3. Azerbaijan
4. oil

#### Challenge Activity

possible answer—Similarities—governments, economic problems, and ethnic conflicts; Differences—Georgia needs to protect limited farmland and make the most of its mineral resources; Armenia needs to rebuild its industry; Azerbaijan needs to settle disputes with neighboring countries over oil and gas.

## The Eastern Mediterranean

### COMPREHENSION AND CRITICAL THINKING

1. under Lebanon—History; under Israel—People/Culture
2. basalt, kibbutz
3. Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Turkey

### SECTION 1

#### Call-Out Boxes

1. the Dardanelles, the Bosphorus, and the Sea of Marmara
2. the Pontic and the Taurus Mountains
3. dry, Mediterranean climate, desert climate, steppe climate, humid subtropical climate
4. sulfur, mercury, and copper

#### Challenge Activity

Students may say that the best location for farming would be in the coastal areas of Turkey and northern Israel because they have a Mediterranean climate.