

SECTION  
**4**

# Reading for Understanding

## ▶ Key Ideas

### BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

France prospered as a result of natural resources. The Benelux countries have benefited from their economic union.

### NOW YOU WILL LEARN

Germany's central location helped it to dominate neighboring lands. Germany and the Alpine countries are linked in many ways.

## ▶ Vocabulary

### TERMS & NAMES

**Prussia** the most powerful German state in the Holy Roman Empire

**Adolf Hitler** German head of state from 1933 to 1945

**Berlin Wall** a wall built by East Germany's Communist government to close off East Berlin from West Berlin

**Alpine** having to do with the Alps mountain range

**neutrality** a policy of not taking part in war

### BACKGROUND VOCABULARY

**reunify** to bring something that has been separated back together

### REVIEW

**Holocaust** the systematic murder of Jews and other minorities by the Nazis during World War II

**market economy** an economic system in which the production of goods and services is decided by supply and the demand of consumers

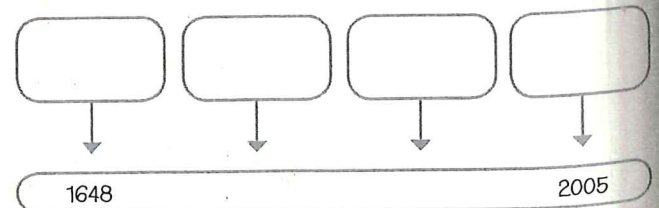
## ▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the time line shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the time line to help you sequence the events that have shaped Germany and the Alpine countries.



See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R6

### SEQUENCE EVENTS



# Germany and the Alpine Countries

## Connecting to Your World

Germany has had a big influence on the United States, and for good reason. In 1990, more Americans reported that their ancestors came from Germany than from any other country. It's no wonder that Americans enjoy eating hot dogs, or frankfurters—a sausage named after Frankfurt, Germany. American children go to kindergarten, a type of school borrowed from Germany. And in December, many Americans decorate trees for the holidays, a German tradition.

## Germany

**KEY QUESTION** How was Germany reshaped after World War II?

German traditions are part of Germany's strong national identity. For a long time, military strength was another aspect of Germany's identity. Germany is a large country centrally located on the European continent. It is well-positioned to dominate other nations and has conquered surrounding lands several times.

**Neuschwanstein Castle** King Ludwig II began building this fairy-tale castle in 1869.



**History** Like Italy, Germany was once a collection of small states instead of a united nation. **Prussia** was the most powerful German state. In 1871, Prussia unified the German states into one nation. Germany was a military power until its defeat in World War I, which weakened its economy and reduced its territory.

Many Germans, frustrated by the poor economy, began to support the fascist Nazi Party. The Nazis promised to make Germany the world power it had once been. In 1933, **Adolf Hitler**, the party's leader, became Germany's head of state. Hitler began a movement to gain more territory for Germany that eventually led to World War II. The war devastated Germany and much of Europe. The Nazis also carried out the **Holocaust**, the systematic murder of millions of Jews and other ethnic minorities.

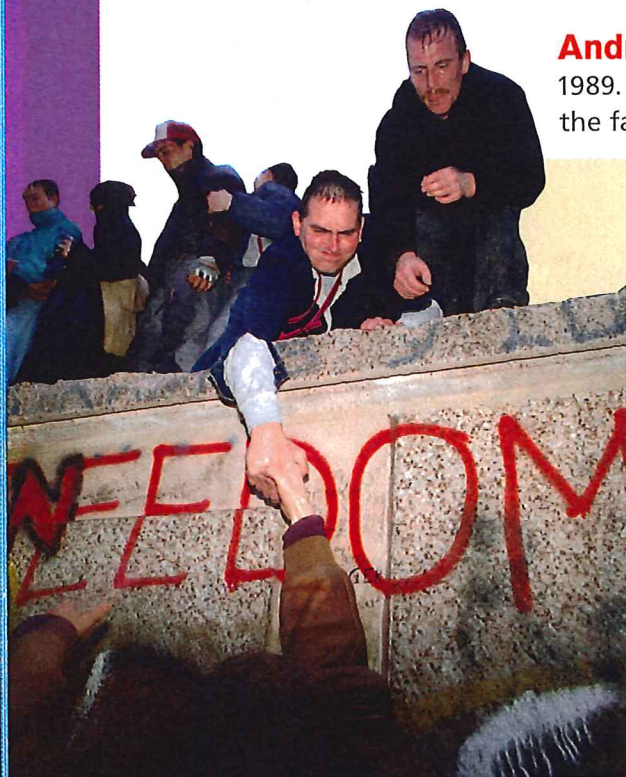
The Allies defeated the Germans and divided Germany into four zones. The United States, France, and Britain merged their zones into the democratic West Germany. The Soviet Union's zone became East Germany, a Communist country. Berlin, located in East Germany, was divided into east and west sides. In 1961, the East German government built the **Berlin Wall** to formally divide the city in two. East Germany's government fell in 1989, and the Berlin Wall came down. In 1990, Germany decided to **reunify**, ending the east-west division.



**ONLINE PRIMARY SOURCE**

To read more eyewitness accounts, go to the Research & Writing Center @ClassZone.com

## ANALYZING Primary Sources



**Andreas Ramos** traveled from Denmark to Germany in 1989. He was one of the five million people in Berlin to witness the fall of the Berlin Wall. Afterwards, he wrote the following.

Everything was out of control. . . . There were fireworks, kites, flags and flags and flags, dogs, children. The wall was finally breaking. . . . I saw an indescribable joy in people's faces: It was the end of the government telling people what not to do, it was the end of the Wall, the war, the East, the West.

Source: Andreas Ramos, *A Personal Account of The Fall of the Berlin Wall*

### DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

What do you think Ramos meant by "it was the end . . . of the East, the West"?

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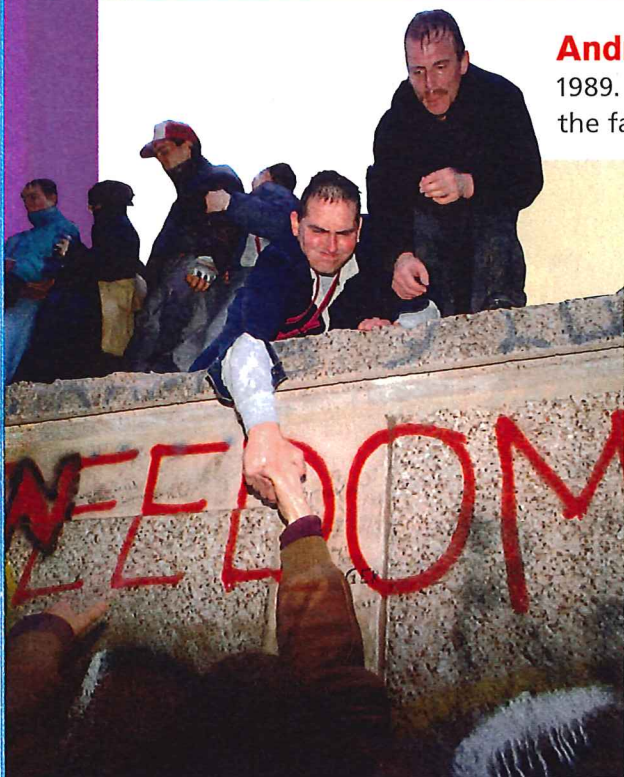
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What do you think Ramos meant by "it was the end . . . of the East, the West"?

**Culture** Germany has the largest population in Western Europe. German is the official language, though different forms of the language are spoken. Catholics and Protestants each account for about one-third of Germany's population. About four percent are Muslims.

Today, approximately 90 percent of Germany's population lives in cities and their surrounding suburbs. Cities offer greater employment opportunities and more varied entertainment. German culture has a strong musical tradition. Some great classical composers, including Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, were German. Richard Wagner wrote spectacular operas based on German myths. With teenagers, American music is popular. Many German pop stars sing in English.

**Government and Economics** Germany is a federal republic—a union of states similar to that of the United States. Germany's president acts as the country's formal chief of state, mainly performing ceremonial duties. The chancellor heads the government. The German people elect the president, but the chancellor is selected by parliament. In 2005, Angela Merkel became Germany's first female chancellor.

Germany has had to overcome some serious economic problems. At the time of reunification, East German industries were outdated. Almost half of East Germany's workers were unemployed. In 1990, East Germany adopted West Germany's currency and **market economy**. The German economy continues to adjust and is getting stronger.

 **EVALUATE** Explain how World War II reshaped Germany.



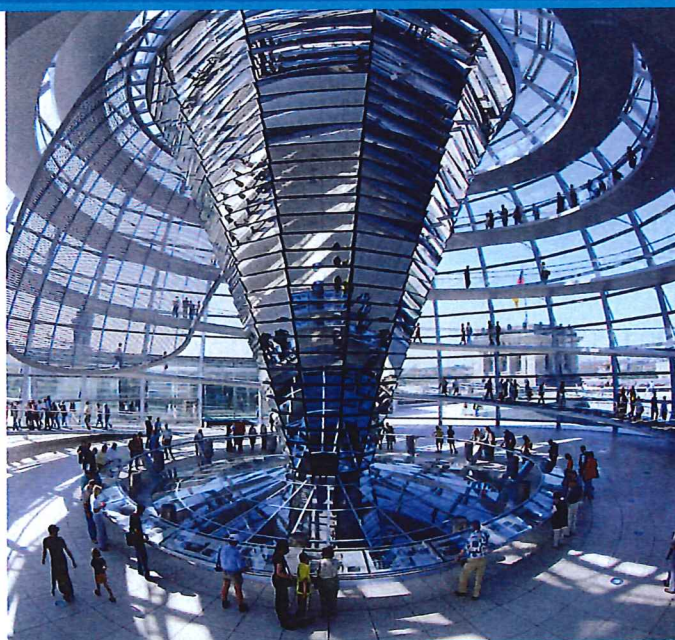
**Angela Merkel** Germany's first female chancellor

## CONNECT Government & Culture

**The Reichstag** When East and West Germany reunited in 1990, they chose Berlin as their capital. In 1999, the German legislature began meeting in Berlin's renovated Reichstag building (shown at right). The building's prominent glass dome contains a ramp leading to an observation platform. It is a symbol of the people being able to raise themselves above their leaders, who meet in the chamber below.

### CRITICAL THINKING

**Make Inferences** What else could the Reichstag building symbolize about Germany and its government?



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## The Alpine Countries

**KEY QUESTION** How has Austrian history been tied to war?

Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein are **Alpine** countries, named for the Alps Mountains common to all three. The Alpine countries have historic and cultural ties to Germany. All three, like Germany, once were part of the Holy Roman Empire. All three share a common border with Germany. They also share the German language.

**Austria** Austria was once a powerful nation. In 1804, Austria became an empire. For a time, it was the leader of the German states. But in 1866, Austria lost a war with Prussia. The next year, it joined a dual monarchy with Hungary. The two countries cooperated in foreign affairs but had separate governments. Then, Austria fought on the losing side in World War I. Following its defeat, Austria separated from Hungary. After World War II, the nation adopted a policy of **neutrality**, meaning that it does not participate in military conflicts.

Almost all Austrians speak German, and the majority are Roman Catholics. Although most Austrians live in cities or towns, they still manage to enjoy the outdoors. Austria, about three-fourths of which is covered by mountains, is a nation of skiers. The Austrian Alps offer nearly perfect conditions for this winter sport. In the summer, the scenic beauty of the Alps attracts many hikers and backpackers.

After World War II, Austria became a federal republic with both a president and a chancellor. Austria belongs to the European Union. One of its major industries is iron and steel production. Tourism also plays a major role in Austria's economy. Many people visit the mountainous country to ski, hike, and admire the scenery.

**Skiing** Like the other Alpine countries, many tourists visit Austria to ski its many slopes. Tourism is a billion-euro industry for Austria. **What are the economic disadvantages of a seasonal industry?**





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German, French, and Italian are Switzerland's official languages. Liechtenstein's official language is German. Switzerland has a mix of Catholics and Protestants, while most Liechtensteiners are Catholic. Switzerland is famous for the high-quality chocolate and watches it produces. Liechtenstein is known for its postage stamps, which are prized by collectors all over the world. Both countries are popular tourist destinations because of their beautiful Alpine landscapes. Both have reputations as centers of international finance. Tiny Liechtenstein uses Swiss money.

Switzerland is a federal republic, like Austria and Germany. The Swiss government is very democratic. The Swiss can vote to change laws passed by their legislature. Liechtenstein is a constitutional monarchy ruled by a prince. It also has a prime minister and parliament.



**Swiss Watches** The intricate works of many Swiss watches are still made and repaired by hand.

**SUMMARIZE** Explain how Austrian history has been tied to war.

## Section 4 Assessment

**ONLINE QUIZ**  
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### TERMS & NAMES

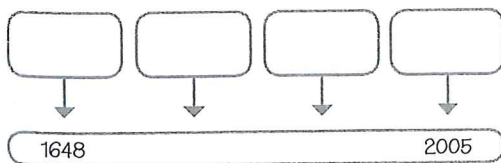
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- Adolf Hitler
- Berlin Wall
- Alpine
- neutrality

### USE YOUR READING NOTES

**2. Sequence Events** Use your completed time line to answer the following question:

What significant event occurred in Germany in 1961?



### KEY IDEAS

3. What role has geographic location played in Germany's rise to power?
4. How did Prussia's actions strengthen the German states?
5. What do the Alpine countries have in common?

### CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Make Inferences** What did the fall of the Berlin Wall symbolize for Germany?
7. **Draw Conclusions** How have the Alps helped shape the cultures and economies of the Alpine countries?
8. **CONNECT to Today** Why would it be important for the Alpine countries to maintain good relations with Germany?
9. **TECHNOLOGY** **Prepare an Oral Presentation** Choose one of Germany's many famous musicians—Bach, Beethoven, or Brahms—and do research to create a short biography of his life. Choose one of his songs to play during your presentation.

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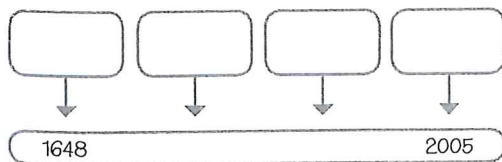
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