

UNIT STUDY BASED ON

THE CATS IN KRASINSKI SQUARE

BOOK BY KAREN HESSE

UNIT AND PRINTABLES BY AMI, CELIA, AND WENDE

Social Studies

Geography: Poland

The story is set in the capital of Poland, Warsaw. Use the printables at the end of this file to learn more about Poland (time, weather, capital city, basic geography, flag, location in the world, etc.).

Occupations for Dogs

This story mentions dogs being used by the Gestapo. What other occupations have dogs had in history?

Hearing dogs for the deaf; they are trained to alert people to a ringing telephone, fire alarm, and other household sounds

Service dogs for the disabled; they can help their partners with many everyday tasks, such as opening doors and turning on lights.

Police dogs that help detect unsafe things (bombs, drugs, etc.)

Seeing-eye dogs that help the blind walk safely avoiding obstacles and oncoming traffic.

Army Scout dogs that warn of danger

Sled dogs in arctic regions

Dogs that herd sheep and cattle

Guard dogs for homes and businesses

Dogs that assist firefighters

A fun read for your younger crew that ties in would be *Officer Buckle and Gloria*. Your students may also enjoy *Five True Dog Stories* by Margaret Davidson. Other books to check out include the Dogs Working for People series by Joanna Foster. Lots of pictures, very brief almost story-like info about different dogs (retrievers, cattle dogs, sheep dogs, show dogs, Seeing Eye dogs, greyhounds,

bloodhounds, police dogs, watch dogs, huskies, circus performing dogs, and dear ole Lassie, the acting dog).

Holocaust

This book can be a gentle introduction to this horrific time period. Use some of the following critical thinking questions to help your child understand more about the Holocaust:

1. Why did the main character burn her Jewish armband?
2. Why is she afraid of a knock on the door in the middle of the night?
3. Who did the cats once belong to?
4. Why does the main character not look like a Jew? Why does she walk her Polish walk?
5. Why is Mira, the sister, all that is left of the family? Where are the main character's mom and dad?

If you want more information for your student regarding the Holocaust, read the author's note and the historical note at the end of the book.

Pet Care

The story states that these cats once belonged to someone; they once ate from crystal dishes. Discuss pet care with your child. What does a pet need? (food, water, love/time). Discuss the similar needs that animals and humans have.

go along books: Usborne First Pets series (the titles included are *Cats and Kittens*, *Dogs and Puppies*, and *Hamsters*)

You may even want to visit a pet shop and let your child learn about pets from the shop owner (call ahead and ask if they will get pets out for your child, etc.). You could also visit your local animal shelter or local veterinarian.

Problem Solving

When Arik tells Mira about the Gestapo, things look really grim for those carrying the food. Ask your student what could have happened? When the main character goes out to walk (and think), she devises a plan as soon as she sees the cats. She could've panicked and ran away. She could've sat in a corner and cried, but she didn't-- she moved to action and saved the lives of many people.

Sometimes we need to think quick! Our situations may not be as complex or scary as the one in this story, but how do we react to the simple everyday things

counts; we should teach our children to be problem-solvers and people who move to action!

Language Arts

Vocabulary

furrowing- to make long, narrow, shallow trenches in; plow

nuzzling- to rub or push against gently with or as if with the nose or snout

satchels- another word for bag or suitcase

groats- an entire kernel of an oat (an oat groat)

smuggle- to bring in or take out illegally (not allowed)

nonsense- matter of little or no importance or usefulness

rubble- irregular fragments or pieces of rock or brick

grateful- thankful

frenzied-temporary madness or wild excitement

Assonance

Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds in a literary work, especially in a poem. You will find these examples (and more) in the story:

"They get by nicely on mice"

"The cats don't need me feedng them"

"Suddenly steam and the scream...passengers stream off"

"...knows of the train...and they'll be waiting at the station"

"We gather the cats into basks"

The human ear loves sound. Stories that are meant to be read aloud (like picture books) and poems are good opportunities to add devices like assonance. The next time your student writes a poem or story, encourage him to use assonance.

Adjectives

An adjective is a word that describes. Ask your student to make a list of words that would describe a cat. Record them in the mini book provided, if desired.

Art

Use of Light

The illustrator uses light in this story with special significance. The girl who tells the story seems to be surrounded in light. The Nazi soldiers and other things in the book are dark. Why would the illustrator choose to illuminate the main character but darken others? (You could also use this for discussion about how we as Christians are to be light...how Jesus was the Light of the World. If someone were to draw Jesus, would they put light around him? Would they put light around you-- are you known as a real Christian?).

Color Palette

Ask your student to identify the colors used in the illustrations. The illustrator chooses to use a lot of earth tones throughout-- oranges, tans, browns, black, and grays. The colors are dull. Why did the illustrator choose dull colors for this story? Why aren't there lots of bright colors? If you are reading all three of the Holocaust books (this one along with *The Harmonica* and *The Butterfly*), compare the colors used in each story. Use printable page, if desired.

Science

Cats

Ask your student --what makes a cat, a cat? Cats have some unique features that aren't common to all animals. In general, house cats have sharp, pointy teeth, retractable claws, padded feet, large ears, whiskers, eyes with vertical pupils, soft fur, and a tail. Learn more about cats by reading the information below and completing the components in the printables section.

Cat Communication

Cats communicate with people in various ways. When they are hungry they say, "meow". When cats are scared, they will cry, hide, hiss, or scream. To show that they like you and that they are friendly, they will rub their fur up against your leg. When a cat is happy it purrs. Does your child know what an arched back, or hair rising off a cat's back mean? That he is angry!

How Do Cats Purr?

Has your child ever wondered how a cat purrs? A cat has little stretchable bands

in its throat. When a cat is happy, relaxed, or satisfied, these bands in his throat vibrate. As the cat breathes, the air carries the sound of the vibrations to your ears. To demonstrate how a cat purrs, perform this experiment. Stretch a rubber band between your thumb and finger. Gently pluck the two strands between your fingers and watch them vibrate. If you gently blow through them you will hear a purring sound.

Cat Eyes

Did your child know that cats are able to see in the dark? The reason they can see in the dark is also the same reason that their eyes seem to glow in the dark. A mirror-like tissue called tapetum lucidum is located behind the retina in the eye of a cat. When light hits it, it reflects light back into the retina. This helps the cat to see better at night, and also causes the appearance of glowing in the dark.

Cat Claws and Paws

Cats have four toes on each of their front paws, and one small toe further up its leg called a dewclaw. Cat claws are made of keratin, the same thing as your fingernails. When a cat wants to scratch, catch food, or protect him or herself, it will extend out its claws. Usually, though, a cat will keep its claws retracted into the pads and fur. Cats like to keep their claws sharpened and they do that by scratching at trees, furniture, or a scratching post. Has your child ever noticed how a cat walks? They swing their paws in front of each other, so they walk in a straight line. This is why cats can walk on narrow ledges or fences. Have your child try to walk like a cat, keeping one foot in front of the other.

Cat Fur

A cat has fur that protects its skin and keeps its body warm. Cats rarely need baths because they are constantly cleaning themselves. They lick their fur with their rough tongues, and they lick their paws and use them like a washcloth. Cats continuously lose their fur, or shed. In wintertime they shed less to keep a warm coat on. Domestic cats will often swallow the hair that they lick, and these hairballs may gag or choke the cat. We can help prevent this from happening by brushing the cat regularly so the loose fur does not accumulate.

Bible

John 15:13

The main character in the story wants to make sure she takes food to her friend, Michal, even though it appears to be a more dangerous area to take food. What would happen to her if she were to get caught? She would be killed. She is willing to risk her life for her friend. The Bible says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13). Who was our example that gave His life for us? Jesus. There is no greater love. How can we show our friends and loved ones that we love them? What kind of sacrifices can we make?

Cooking

Try this Polish recipe!

Pierogi

2 eggs
1/2 cup water
2 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt

Mound flour on kneading board and make a hole in the center. Drop eggs into hold and cut into flour with a knife. Add salt and knead until firm. Let rest for 10 minutes (cover with a bowl). Divide dough in halves and roll thin. Cut circles with a biscuit cutter. Place a small mound of filling (listed below) into one side on each round of dough (don't put too much). Moisten edge with a little water. Fold over and press edges firmly together (make sure they are sealed!). Drop the pierogi into salted boiling water. Cook gently for 3-5 minutes. Lift out of water with a slotted spoon.

Cheese Filling

1 cup cottage cheese
1 teaspoon melted butter
1 egg, beaten
3 tablespoons sugar

3 tablespoons currants

1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

Cream cheese with butter. Add other ingredients and mix well. Fill pierogi. Serve with melted butter and sour cream.

Cabbage and Mushroom Filling

1 small head cabbage

2 cups mushrooms, chopped

2 tablespoons sour cream

1 small onion, chopped

Butter

Salt

Pepper

Quarter cabbage and cook in salted water for 15 minutes. Drain, cool, and chop. Saute onion in butter, add mushrooms, and fry for 5 minutes. Add cabbage and continue to fry for a few minutes. Add sour cream and cool. Fill pierogi.

Mushrooms

1 cup chopped mushroom

1 onion chopped

Salt

Pepper

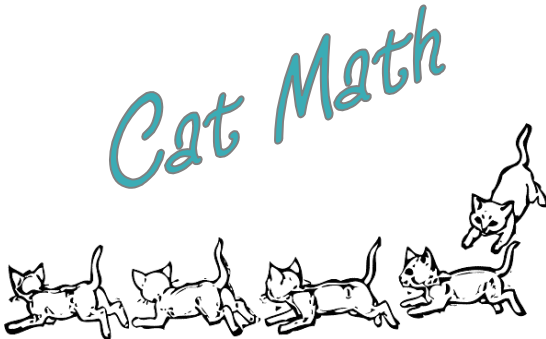
2 egg yolks

butter

Saute onion in butter. Add mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper. Remove and add egg yolks. Stir well. Cool and fill pierogi.

Print out on paper and cut all pages on solid lines.
Stack with cover on top and staple where indicated.

www.homeschoolshare.com

 <p><i>Cat Math</i></p> <p>Illustration of five cats: four are lying down and one is jumping.</p>	<p>If there are 8 eyes, how many cats all together?</p> <p>___ ÷ ___ = ___</p> <p>___ × ___ = ___</p>
<p>If there are 20 legs, how many cats all together?</p> <p>___ ÷ ___ = ___</p> <p>___ × ___ = ___</p>	<p>If there are 6 tails, how many cats all together?</p> <p>___ ÷ ___ = ___</p> <p>___ × ___ = ___</p>
<p>If there are 10 ears, how many cats all together?</p> <p>___ ÷ ___ = ___</p> <p>___ × ___ = ___</p>	<p>If there are 9 noses, how many cats all together?</p> <p>___ ÷ ___ = ___</p> <p>___ × ___ = ___</p>
<p>If there are ___ ___, how many cats all together?</p> <p>___ ÷ ___ = ___</p> <p>___ × ___ = ___</p>	<p>If there are ___ ___, how many cats all together?</p> <p>___ ÷ ___ = ___</p> <p>___ × ___ = ___</p>

Cut out on solid lines. Fold in half on center dotted line.
Fold both sides on dotted lines in toward center.
Have child record answers under flaps.

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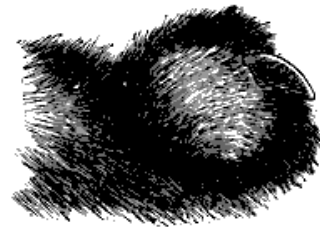
<p>What are you at the end?</p>		 <p>cat</p>	<p>How are clean messes?</p>
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Cut out on sold lines. Fold flaps in towards center on dotted lines.
Have child record answers under flaps.

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When do cats extend
their claws out?



When do cats keep
their claws in?

Clipart courtesy of <http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/>

Cut on solid lines. Fold on dotted lines.
Have child record answers under flaps.

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*Can cats see in
the dark?
Why?*

*Why do cat eyes
seem to glow in
the dark?*

*Cat
Eyes*



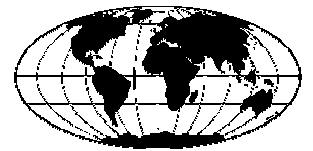
How Cats Say "I'm Hungry"	How Cats Say "I'm Angry"	How Cats Say "I'm Friendly"	How Cats Say "I'm Scared"	How Cats Say "I'm Happy"
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;">  <div style="text-align: right;"> <h2 style="margin: 0;">How Do Cats Communicate?</h2> </div> </div>				

Cut component on dotted lines. Fold on solid lines.
Under flaps, write the ways that cats communicate.

"I'm happy" - purrs
 "I'm scared" – hisses, screams
 "I'm friendly" – rubs against a person
 "I'm angry" – hisses, screams, arches its back
 "I'm hungry" - meows

Is
Poland?

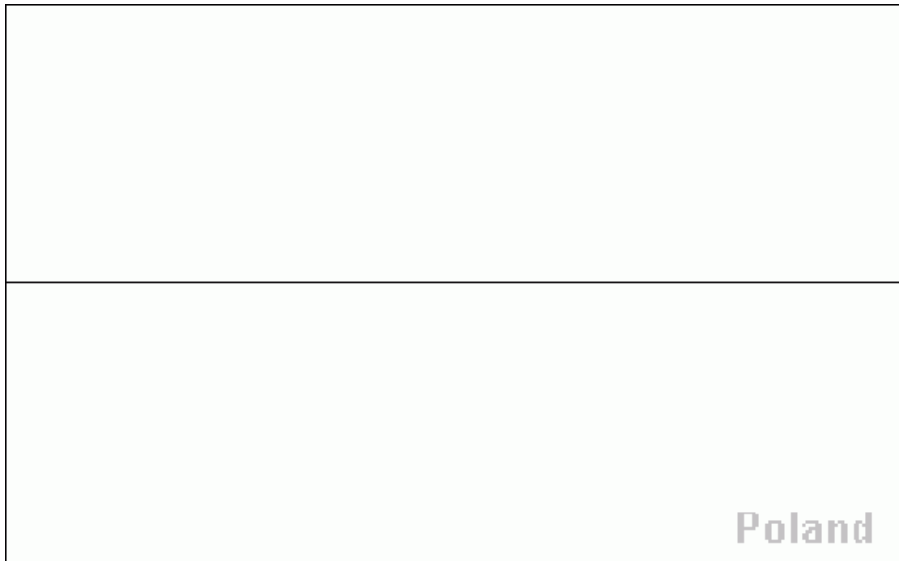
Where
in
the
World. . .

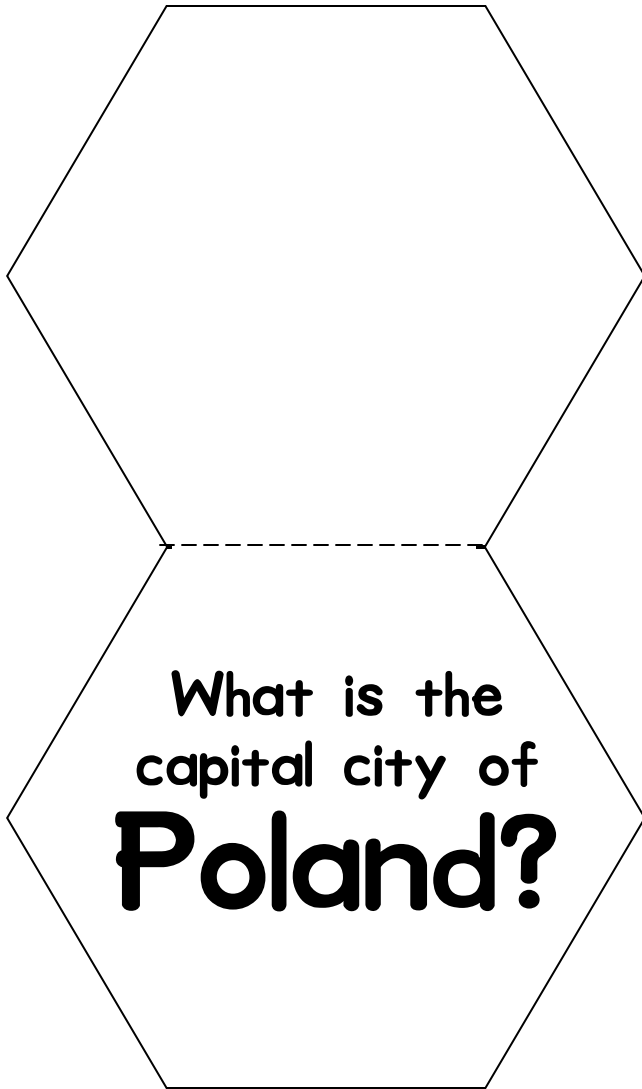


What continent is Poland on?

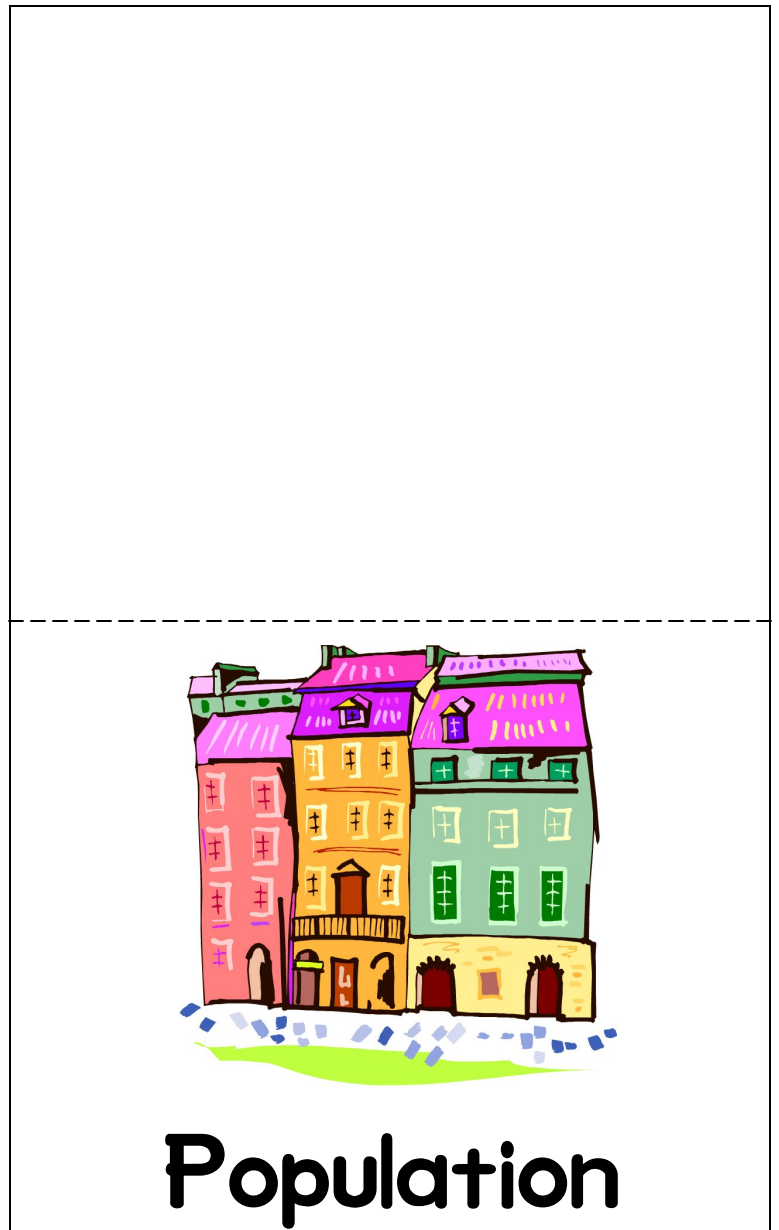
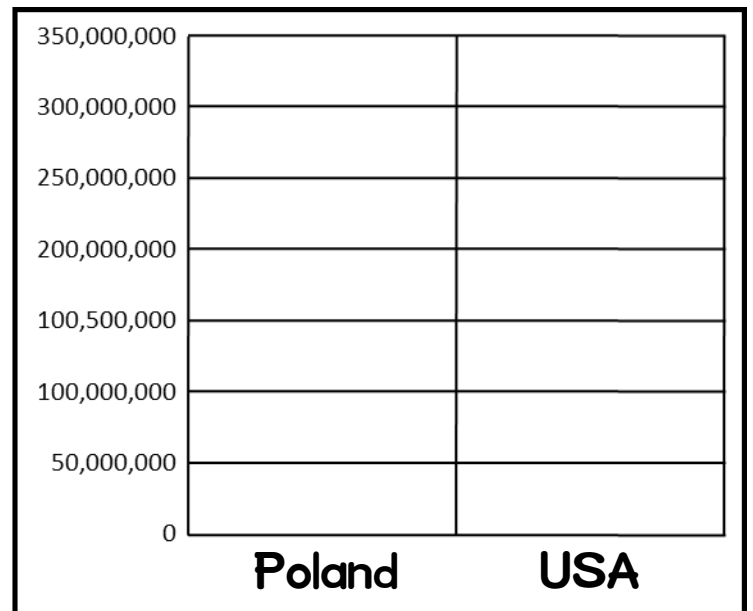
Find Poland on the map and color it in.

Cut out shutter book and map on solid lines.
Fold shutter book on dotted lines so that words
are on cover. Glue map into book under shutters.

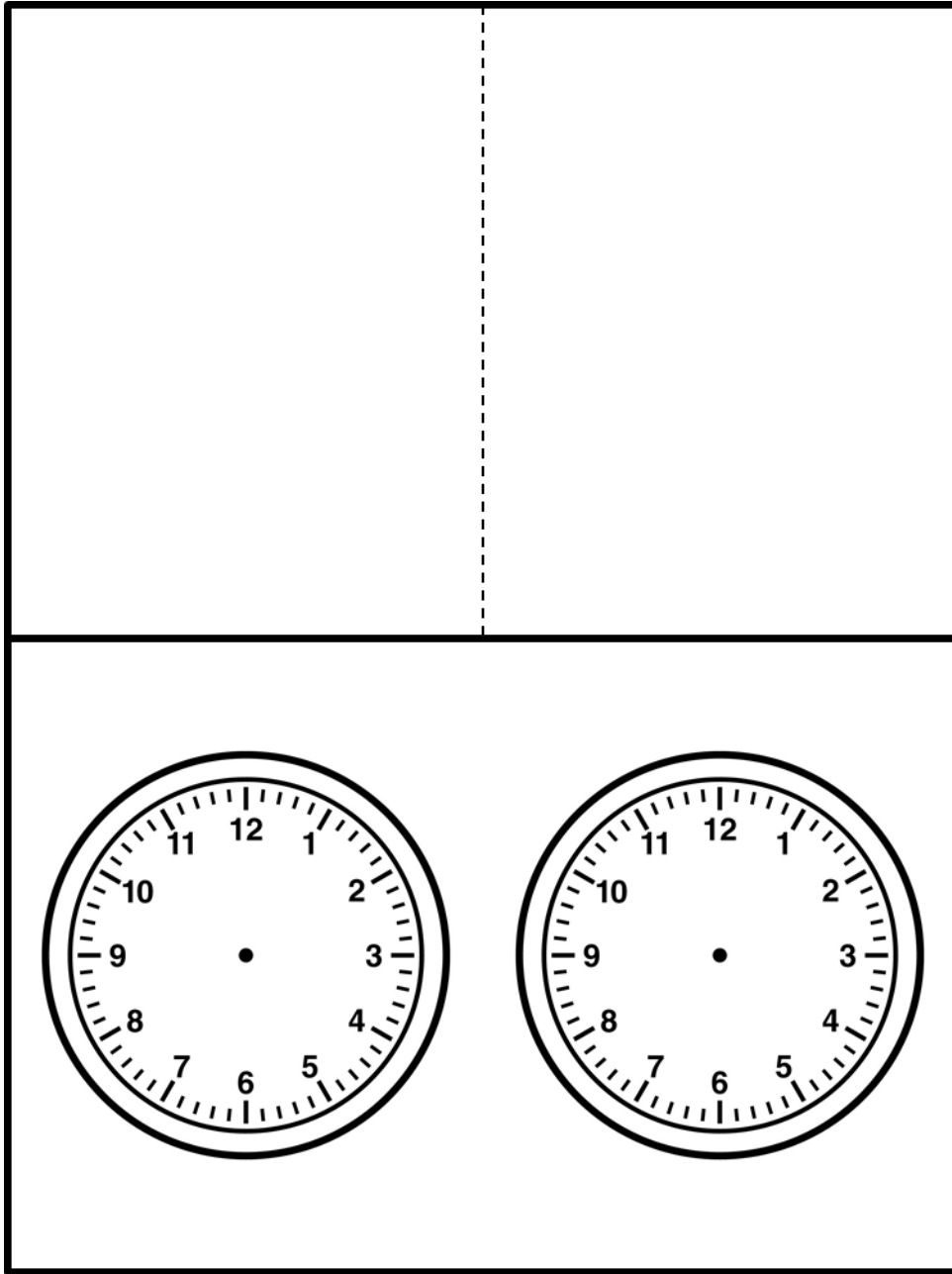




You can find the current country populations at [this website](#).



Cut book out as one piece. Fold in half. Open. Cut slit to form to flaps. Cut out cover pieces and paste them to the fronts of the flaps. In the blank, write the name of your city. Complete the clocks to show the current times (corresponding to the cities on the flaps).

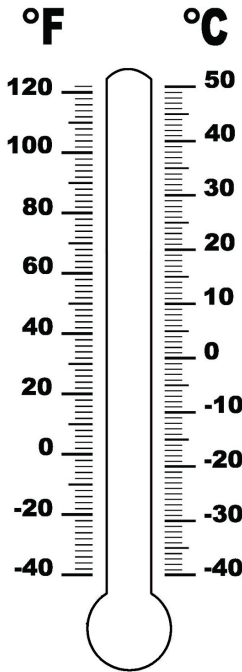


**What
time is
it in
Warsaw?**

**What
time is
it in
_____?**

Weather Comparison

My City

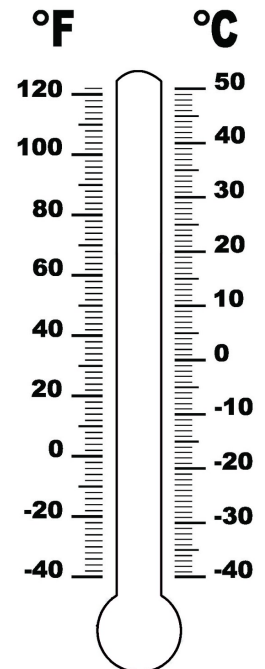


Weather Conditions

Poland



Weather Conditions



Use a [globe or map](#) to help you complete this minit book. Cut on solid lines. Fold on dotted lines, like a pamphlet.

Geography of Poland



On what continent is
Poland located?

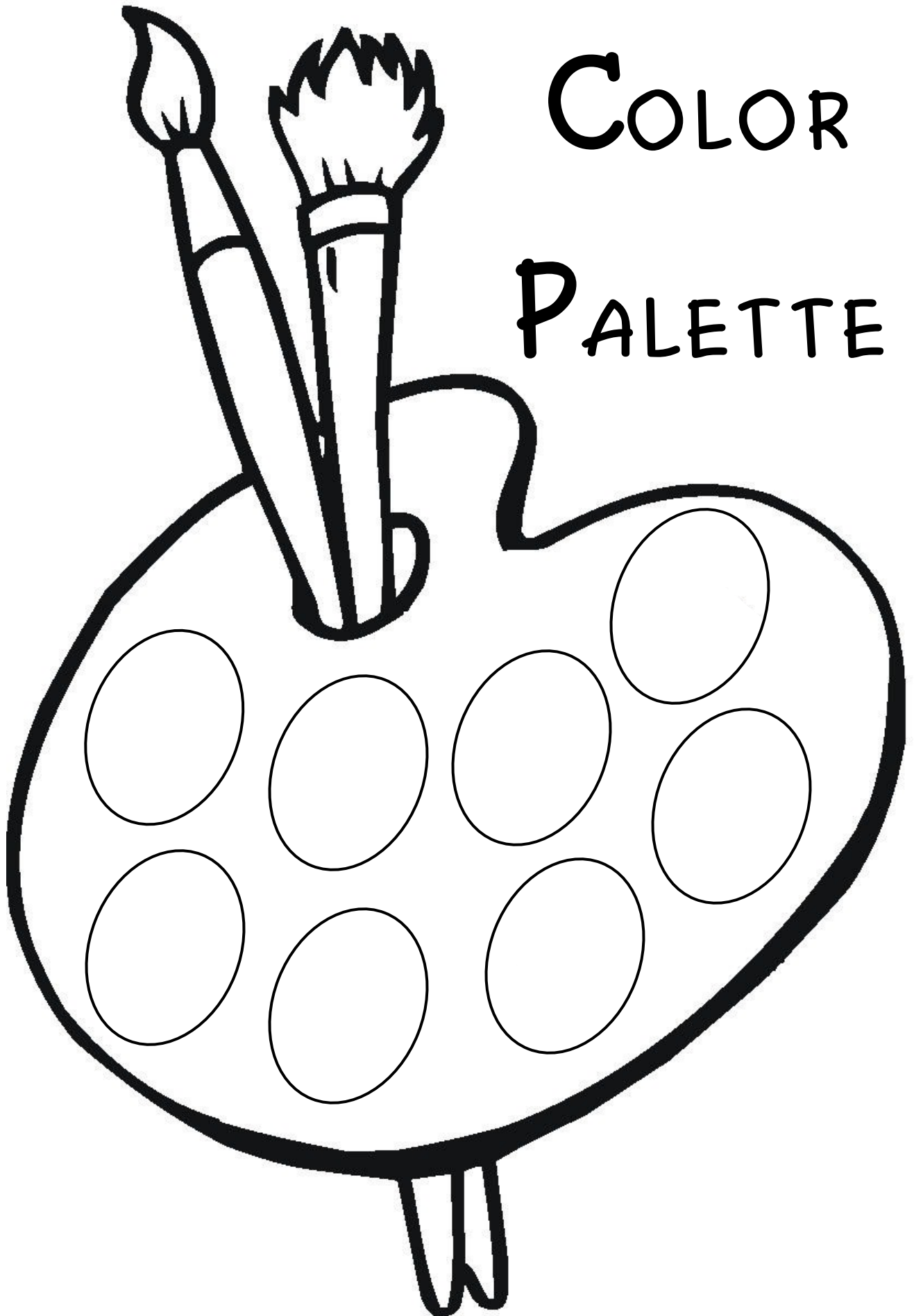
What countries are
bordering Poland?

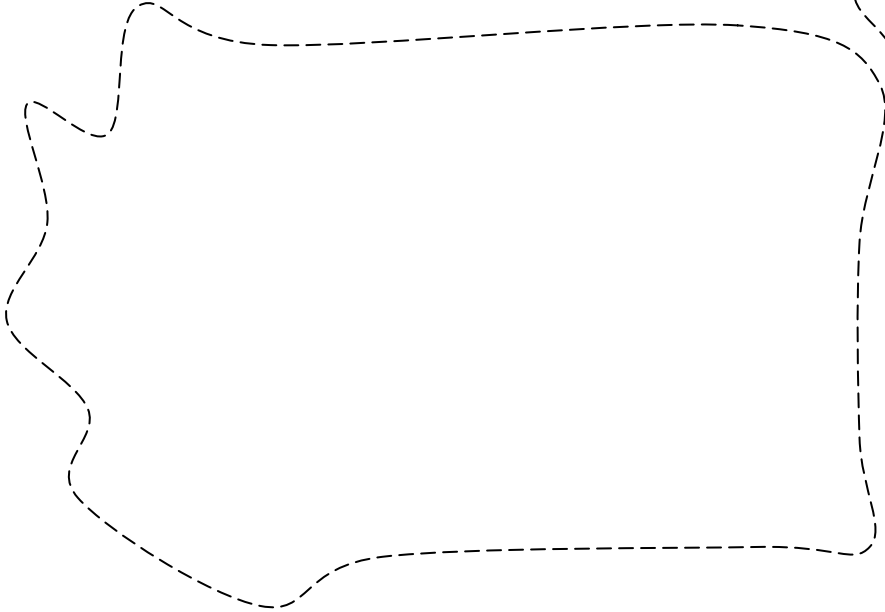
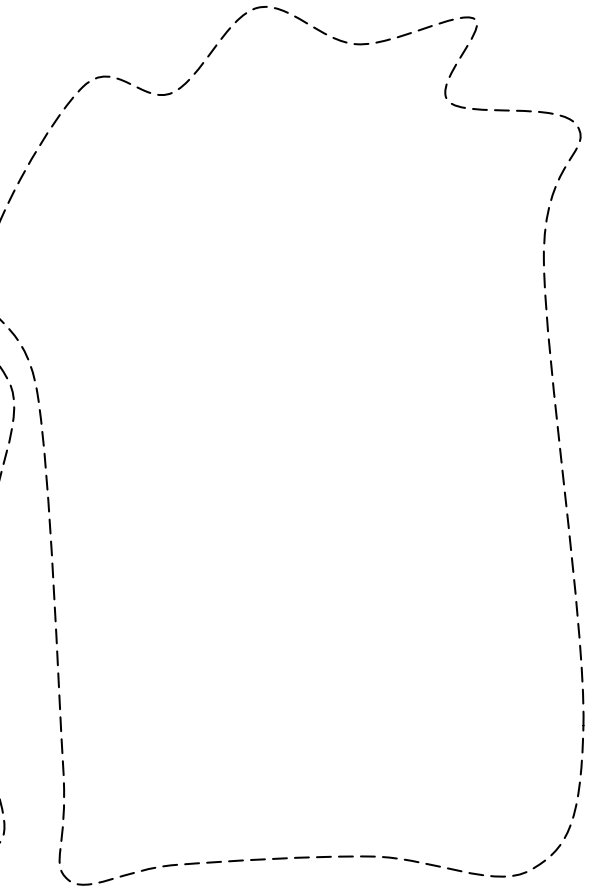
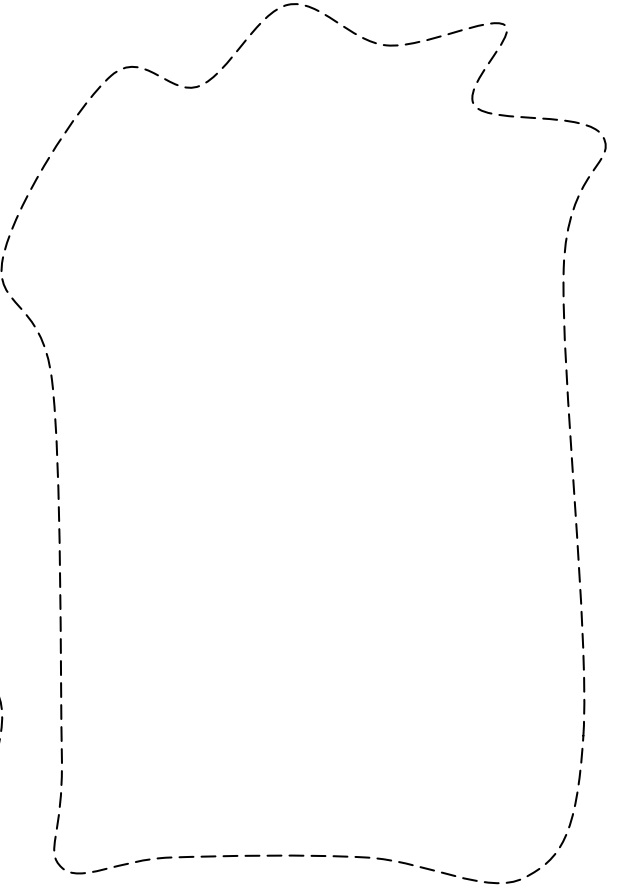
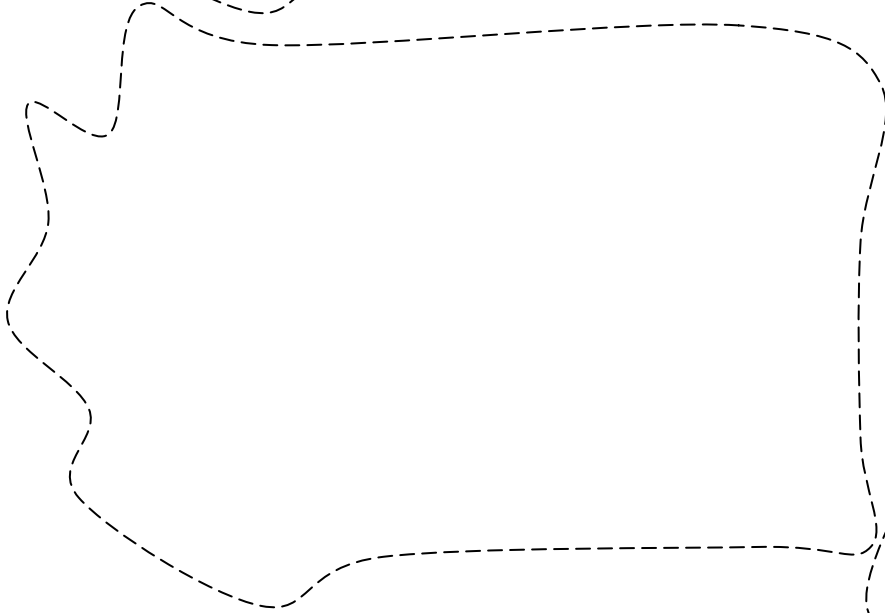
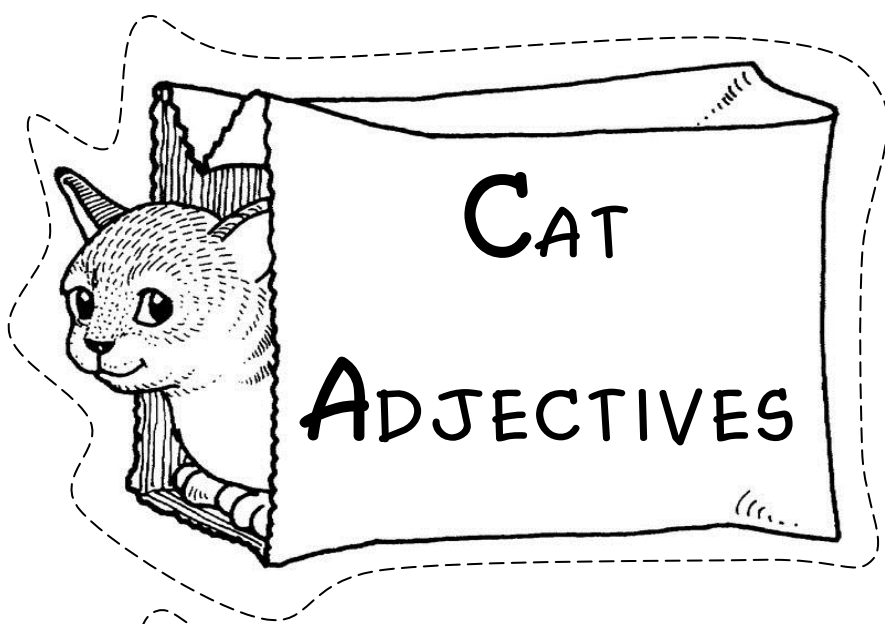
What mountain ranges
are found in Poland?

What body of water
borders Poland?

Name two rivers
found in Poland.

COLOR PALETTE





Instructions: Cut on the solid lines. Write in definitions. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on the left side.

DOG
OCCUPATIONS



SLED
DOG



POLICE
DOG



GUARD
DOG



SEEING EYE
DOG



DOGS
THAT HERD
SHEEP



ARMY
SCOUT DOG



DOGS
HELPING
FIREFIGHTERS
