

Greenland today TIMELINE OF THE RECENT HISTORY OF GREENLAND

Part 2

Timeline of the recent history of Greenland

Subject History | Geography
Level medium
Duration 45 minutes

EXERCISE

G

Learning Opportunity

Competences	Detailed description
Social and civic	Knowledge of how population and migration depend on available natural resources, lifestyle and policies for the allocation of resources and services. Overview of the history of Greenland from the 19 th century until now developing an understanding of societal changes.
Math, science, technology	Learn to read and interpret historic graphs of population changes as well as how these changes relate to broader societal changes.
Cultural awareness	Insights into the profound cultural clashes and transformations experienced in places with rapid change of lifestyle and divisions of labour.

Overview

Min.	Topic	Tasks for the pupils	Tasks for the teacher	Material
15	Population growth and distribution	Study the map of population growth and identify periods and suggest explanations for change	Provide the graph G 1 and explain axes, graphs and pie-charts and provide the worksheet G 2	The graph of Greenland population (Graph G 1) and explanations of population dynamics (Worksheet G 2)
15	Overview and event details of Greenland's historic development	Place the four periods and add text and picture cards in the right historic period, discuss impacts	Provide the cards Material G3 and G4) and facilitate discussions of the impacts of events	Historic periods (Material G 3) and text and pictures cards (Material G 4) to be placed on the graph G 1
10	Local differences	Read the stories of two settlements and explain why they develop so differently	Trigger ideas for explanations	Two stories of growth and decline of settlements (Material G 5) and explain differences (Worksheet G 6)

Detailed Description:

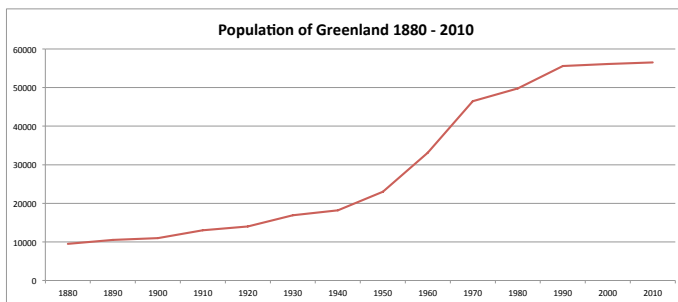
STEP 1

The students are presented with the population graph from 1880 until today (Graph G1, large size). A number of factors are important in explaining these changes such as birth and death rates, culture, environmental risks, health, occupational practices, access to food and migration. In addition, the changing life style and economic basis of society is displayed through the

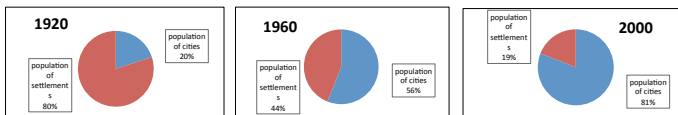
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relative proportion of the population living in the smaller settlements and in the larger cities. Which factors lead to population growth and which might lead to reductions in the size of a population? Pupils are asked to explain the changes in population and to write them down (Worksheet G2).



Distributions between cities (more than 1000 inhabitants) and settlements



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Graph: Development of Population in Greenland

The sequence of this step of the exercise is as follows:

1. Show the chart and discuss which periods of change are demonstrated after identifying the axes and what they measure.
2. Hand out the worksheet G2 to groups of pupils and ask them to provide explanations for population changes as requested in the first part of the worksheet.
3. Discuss with the pupils how their explanations can be used to identify periods in the population growth of Greenland.

STEP 2

The population map shows the phases of development of Greenland. These (four) phases can be characterized in short by:

- The first period (until 1940) is characterised by a dominance of traditional hunting and increasing poverty due to a decline in world demands for the products. High birth rates balanced the risks of traditional hunting and harsh living conditions resulting in a population at a rather stable level. At the end of the period, a slight improvement due to increased food security and health treatment can be observed, though the society is still culturally isolated.
- Growth starts in the second phase (1940-1953) when the isolation is partly lifted during the Second World War where the USA takes over supplying Greenland with food and other important goods, as Greenland was disconnected from Denmark.
- The third phase is initiated by improved food provision and health after WWII following investments from Denmark. This leads to a reduction in the Greenland society's vulnerability. This is the so-called modernization phase (1953-1970), when improved housing and health services as well as an increased number of less risky occupations were provided. It also reflects in-migration of foreign (Danish) workers and professionals.
- The growth of the population is diminishing in the fourth phase (from 1970 and onwards) demonstrating the impact of a cultural change resulting from formal education and new family pattern with fewer children as the norm. It is also the phase of independence, where economic challenges have resulted in out-migration of both foreign workers and Inuit which leads to a stabilization of the population.



Examples of the cards: (Material G4)

Four cards name the different periods (Material G3) and a set of 72 historic text and picture cards explain elements of historical events (Material G4). The pupils place the cards on the graph (Figure G1), discuss how these impact on the population changes and add the answers to Worksheet G2. This can be done by dividing the pupils into smaller groups each given a smaller set of cards to work with. The division of cards can either reflect the different topic areas: society, economy, politics and environment or be done randomly. The point being that the pupils explore and realise the development from different viewpoints.

The exercise follows this sequence:

1. based on the discussion from step 1 the pupils are now provided with the information cards showing the four periods of development in Greenland, which will help them to get a more profound understanding of the development of contemporary Greenland. The four cards (Material G3) should be placed on the graph as group headers.
2. groups of pupils are given some or all of the historic cards that either in text or in pictures show elements that are characteristics of the different phases of development. It is the pupils' task to identify the phase to which each particular card belongs and through the discussion learn about the changes over time. The question to be asked by the pupils is: Which of these events described in text and pictures are characteristic of which period of historical development in Greenland?
3. After the groups of pupils have assigned the cards to the different periods, they present their results in class and exchange insights and explore interrelations. This is supported by the notes the pupils have made in the second part of worksheet G2.

STEP 3

Local differences between settlements range from growth to decline and extinction. Two settlements are chosen for further enquiry. Their situation and development is described in Material G5. They demonstrate the huge difference between different settlements depending on how their infrastructure support is provided.

This step of the exercise entails:

1. Reading the two stories of a settlement declining and another one growing (Material G5).
2. Identifying the reasons for growth and decline of the two settlements and answer the question: What is the relevance of climate, natural conditions, livelihood and infrastructure for the population development? Which other factors play a role?
3. The pupils add their explanations to worksheet G6.

Further data: <http://www.citypopulation.de/Greenland.html>