

Card A

The USA

The year is 1950

Capital: Washington D.C.

Population: 155 million

Average salary: \$2,992.00

The year is 2005

Capital: Washington D.C.

Population: 299 million

Average salary: \$26,000.00

Russia

The USSR

The year is 1950

Capital: _____

Population: _____

Average salary: _____

Russia

The year is 2005

Capital: _____

Population: _____

Average salary: _____

Questions about the USSR in 1950

1. _____?
2. _____?
3. _____?

Questions about Russia in 2005

4. _____?
5. _____?
6. _____?

Card B

Russia

The USSR

The year is 1950

Capital: Moscow

Population: 181 million

Average salary: \$308.00

Russia

The year is 2005

Capital: Moscow

Population: 143 million

Average salary: \$3,696.00

The USA

The year is 1950

✂ Capital: _____

Population: _____

Average salary: _____

The year is 2005

✂ Capital: _____

Population: _____

Average salary: _____

Questions about the USA in 1950

1. _____?

2. _____?

3. _____?

Questions about the USA in 2005

4. _____?

5. _____?

6. _____?

The USA and Russia: Then and Now

Activity

Information gap

Aim

To compare Russia and the USA in 1950 and 2005, focusing on population and average salary

Interaction

Pairs

Language focus

Question forms; saying numbers

Skills focus

Listening; speaking

Preparation

Photocopy one card for each student

Time

15 minutes

Procedure

NB: This activity works well after students have been studying the Cold War.

1 Divide the class into pairs. Ask them to decide who is going to be Student A and who will be Student B. Explain that they are

going to read some key facts about the USA and Russia and compare the two countries in 1950 and in 2005.

2 Hand out card A to student A and card B to student B. Tell each student that they have information about either the USA or Russia. They need to find out from their partner the capital city, population and average salary of the other country.

3 Ask students to read their card individually then write questions using the information given on the card. For example, student A would write: 'What was the capital of Russia in 1950?' Student B would write: 'What was the capital of the USA in 1950?'

4 Students then ask their partner the questions. Monitor and be ready to give assistance if students have difficulties saying the numbers.

5 After students have asked and answered the questions ask them to discuss their findings together. Write these discussion questions on the board:

- Why do you think the population has grown in the USA, but decreased in Russia?
- Why do you think Americans earn so much more money than Russians?