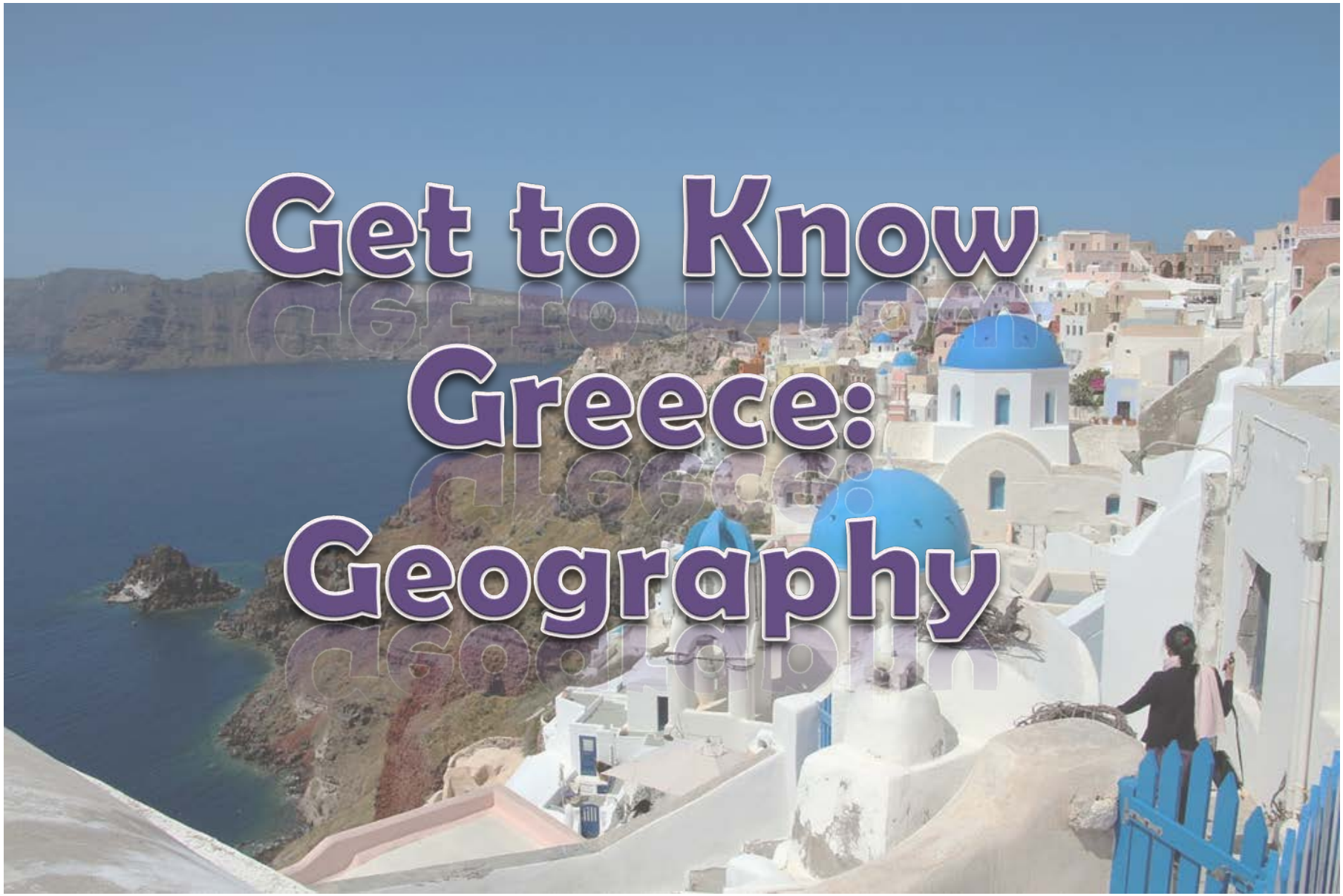
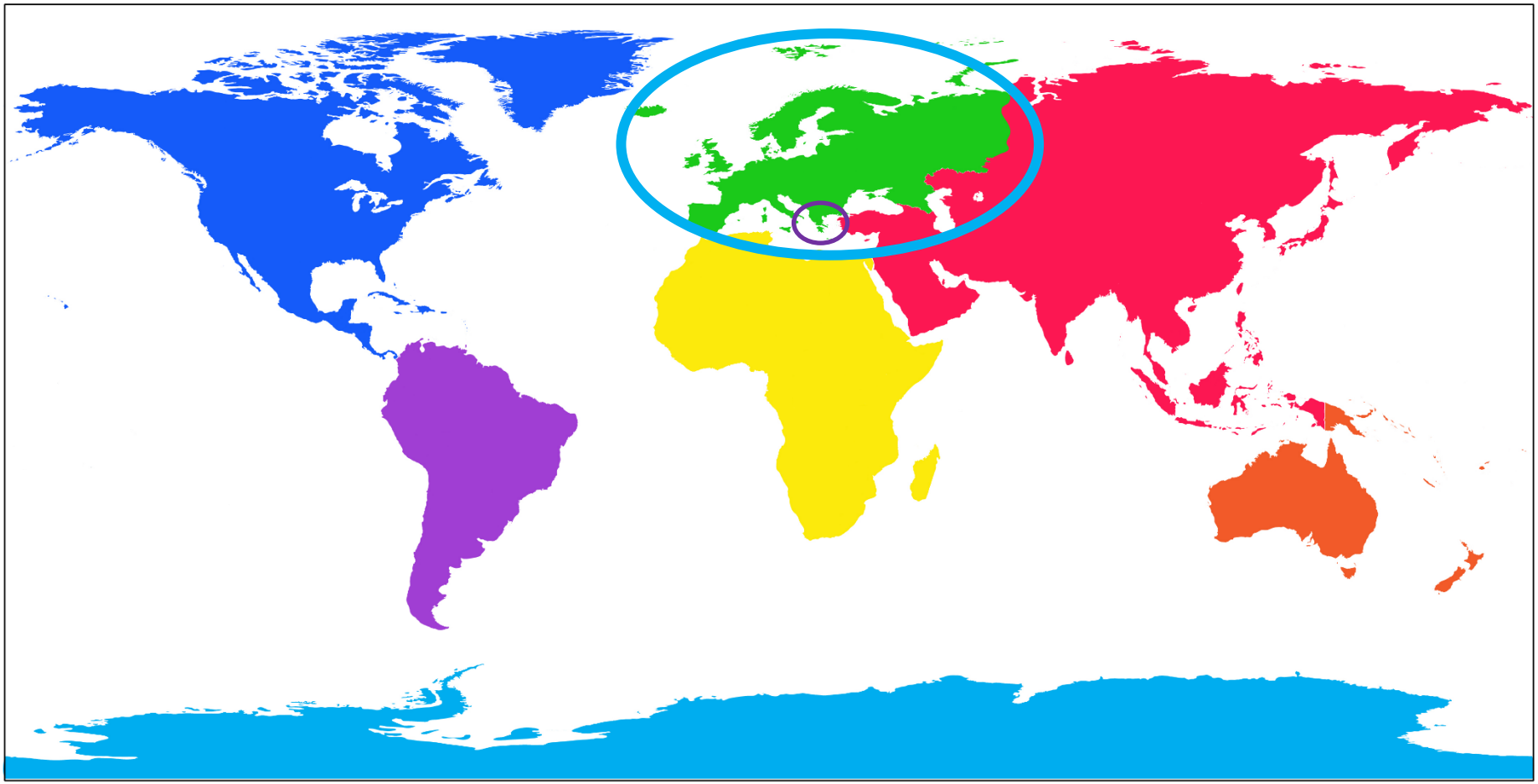

Get to Know
Greece:
Geography



Greece is located on the continent of Europe. It is in the South Central portion of the continent.

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Surrounding Water

Greece is a peninsula which means it is surrounded on three sides by water. Those three seas are the Mediterranean Sea, the Ionian Sea, and the Aegean Sea.

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Greece has four neighbors. They are Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey. Italy is also very close to Greece. It is just across the Ionian Sea.

Neighboring Countries

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Islands

Greece is made up of thousands of islands. Although numbers vary, it is often said that there are 3000 islands in Greece, but that people only live on 227 of them.

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Eighty percent (80%) of Greece is mountainous, but there were two mountains that were more important than any others during ancient times.

▲1 Mt. Olympus was considered the home of the Gods.

▲2 Mt. Parnassus was located outside of Delphi where the Oracle of Delphi resided. It was also sacred to the God, Apollo.

Fun fact: The Vikos Gorge ▼3 is the third deepest gorge in the world.

Mountains

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Climate

Most of Greece has a Mediterranean climate.

- **Hot, dry summers**
- **Cool, wet winters**

Northern Greece has an Alpine climate, also called a mountainous climate.

- **Temperatures are always cool or cold**
- **There is often rain or snow**

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Agriculture

Between Mt. Olympus and Mt. Parnassus there is a large central plain in Greece that is good for growing crops.

Grains, vegetables, herbs, and orchards all exist in this area, but Greece is most known for their olives and grapes.

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City-States of Ancient Greece

Athens:
This was the wealthiest and most powerful city-state. It was the birthplace of democracy and was home to over 250,000 people. Athenians valued theater, philosophy, art, & education.

Sparta:
Sparta was the main competitor to Athens. They valued bravery, toughness, and conquest. Boys began military training at the age of seven, men lived in military barracks even when married, and women were the farmers back at home.

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Today's Major Cities of Greece

Athens:
Athens is the capital of Greece and is the largest city in the entire country by far. Despite being around for more than 3400 years, Athens is a modern metropolis.

Thessaloniki:
With a population half the size of Athens, Thessaloniki is the second largest city in Greece. It is famous for its beaches, hip nightlife, and huge ports.

Patras:
On Peloponessus, Patras is the third largest metropolitan area. It is home to many colleges.

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The Flag of Greece

The cross represents Eastern Orthodox Christianity, the official religion of the nation.

Although some say the blue and white represent the sea and sky, the nine horizontal stripes have been said to stand for the 9 syllables in the Greek phrase "Freedom or Death", the 9 letters in the Greek word "Freedom", or the 9 Muses from Greek mythology.

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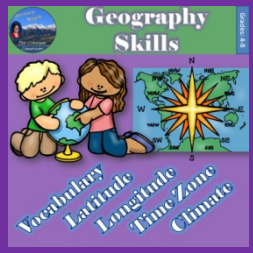
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