



# Borders, boundaries, and barriers

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for Human Geography

Audience – Human geography

Time required – 15 minutes

**Activity** Identify major boundaries, borders, and barriers around the world.

**APHG Benchmarks** APHG: IV.B2. Evaluate the nature & function of boundaries including types.  
APHG: IV.B1. Explain the concepts of political power and territoriality.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Students will learn examples of boundaries, borders, and barriers around the world that exhibit the organization of the earth's surface as identified through political geography.

**Map URL:** <http://esriurl.com/humanGeoInquiry9>

## ? Ask

### Why are boundaries important?

- Click the map URL above to launch the map.
- Zoom and pan the map to see the entire world.
- ? What types of boundaries are on the earth? [*Boundaries can be natural, cultural, geometric, or superimposed.*]
- ? Why do boundaries exist? [*Boundaries divide land, establish territoriality, and so on.*]

## ↓ Acquire

### What are examples of the different types of boundaries on the earth?

- With the Details button underlined, click the button, Show Contents of Map (Content).
- Check the box to the left of the layer name, World Administrative Divisions.
- ? Zoom in to the continent of Europe.
- ? What types of boundaries can be seen? [*Administrative boundaries, including province, county, and oblast.*]
- Click a few administrative units to view the data.
- Hover the mouse over the layer name, World Administrative Divisions. Click the three dots and select the option, Transparency. Set transparency to 50%.
- ? Where do you see geometric boundaries? [*Northern Poland with Kaliningrad (a part of Russia)*]
- ? Where do you see physical boundaries? [*Danube River between Hungary and Slovakia*]

## 🔍 Explore

### Are borders just boundaries?

- Disputed boundaries are often shown with dotted lines or notes on the map itself.
- ? On which boundaries do countries disagree? [*United Arab Emirates and Oman, Western Sahara and Morocco, Pakistan and India in Kashmir*]
- Filter the data in the World Administrative Divisions layer. (See Tooltip on page 2.)
- Build the following query from the drop-down lists: Disputed Is 1. Ensure that Unique is chosen for the third drop-down list.
- Click Apply Filter. If results do not appear, ensure that the map is zoomed in enough that the layer name appears in dark text.
- ? What changed on the map? [*Only places with disputes are shaded.*]
- ? Where are most of the disputed boundaries of the world located? [*Africa and Asia, and some in Europe.*]
- ? Why? [*Instability, territorial disputes, and resource disputes.*]
- Turn off the layer, World Administrative Divisions.

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## Analyze

### What other types of boundaries and borders exist on the earth?

- Click the button, Basemap. Select the basemap, Imagery with Labels.
- Click the button, Bookmark. Select The Great Wall of China.
- ? What barrier do you see? How was this boundary useful for the time when it was built? [*The Great Wall of China slowed invading northern parties.*]
- Click the Republic of Chile bookmark.
- ? What type of border can be found here? [*The Andes Mountains create a physical boundary.*]
- Observe the border of Chile with Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina.
- ? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this border? [*Its length, physical features, trade opportunities, and natural resources result in certain advantages and disadvantages.*]
- Click the North and South Korea bookmark.
- ? What type of boundary is between these two countries? [*This boundary is superimposed.*]

## Act

### How can borders change?

- Investigate the boundary of Western Sahara and Morocco.
- ? What would happen if Morocco controlled the area region? [*Conflict, increased territory, and so on.*]
- ? What natural, cultural, or political factors can affect boundaries? [*Changing physical features, conflict, and territoriality.*]
- ? How have trade and globalization affected borders and boundaries of countries around the world? [*Opportunities for interaction, trade zones, and open borders.*]

### FILTER

- Filter is only available for certain map layers.
- In the Details pane, press button, Show Contents of Map.
- Hover the mouse over layer name, click the button, Filter.
- Set the filter parameters.

### BOOKMARKS

- Click the button, Bookmarks.
- Choose a bookmark name to zoom to a specified map location and scale.

## Next Steps

**DID YOU KNOW?** ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to U.S. public, private, and home schools as a part of the White House ConnectED Initiative. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at <http://connected.esri.com>.

### THEN TRY THIS...

- Create a story map focused on a border currently being disputed that was not discussed in this lesson.
- Investigate other examples of boundaries, such as the Rio Grande between the United States and Mexico, Ukraine and Russia, or another area.

## TEXT REFERENCES

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in sections of chapters from these texts.

- *The Human Mosaic: A Thematic Introduction to Cultural Geography* by W.H. Freeman & Co. – Chapter 6
- *An Introduction to Human Geography* by Pearson – Chapter 8
- *Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture* by Wiley Press – Chapter 8