EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

© Brain Wrinkles

STANDARDS:

SS6G10 Describe selected cultural characteristics of Europe.

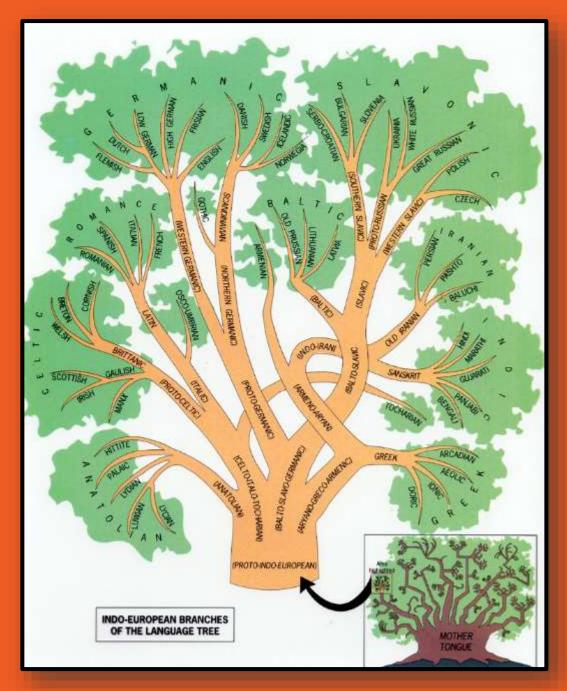
a. Describe the diversity of languages spoken within Europe.



- Europe is full of diverse languages.
 - There are over twenty major languages in Europe.
 - Some examples include English, Spanish, Italian, and French.
- Even though they are different, many European languages have the same roots—the early Indo-European language.



- The term "Indo-European" refers to the ancient people who lived in Central Asia over 5,000 years ago.
- Indo-European tribes migrated into Europe and settled throughout the continent.
- Over thousands of years, their language changed and developed into the many languages spoken in Europe today.



- Languages on the same branch are closely related.
- The major branches in Europe are Romance, Germanic, and Slavic.



- The Germanic language family has the most native speakers.
 - Most live in northwest and central Europe
- English & German are part of this family.
 - About 20% of Europeans speak one of these two languages.
- Most Europeans learn English as a 2nd language in their schools.
- Other examples include Danish, Dutch, and Swedish.





- The Romance language family includes French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian.
- Most speakers live in the south and west of Europe.
- These languages come from Latin, the language of the ancient Roman Empire.
 - Romance Languages



- The Slavic language family is mostly found in central and eastern Europe.
- This family includes Russian, as well as Polish, Czech, Ukrainian, and Croatian.
- These languages are written with a Cyrillic alphabet.



Many European countries have more than one official language.

- This is a part of life in many countries due to the ethnic background of the people living there.
- Also, many countries share borders and people move back and forth across them.
- About 400 million people in the world speak English because it is often the choice for a 2nd language.
 - Over 1/2 of all Europeans speak English.



© Brain Wrinkles



Having speakers of so many different languages in one area can be a problem.

• Language barriers make it difficult to live, work, and trade with people who cannot communicate with each other.

So...

- Schoolchildren learn 1 or 2 other languages besides their own.
- European Union has 23 "official" languages to make sure that people can understand laws and decisions made by the government.