### Guided Reading: The Russian Empire

**Section 2**

#### A. Determining Main Ideas
As you read about the Byzantine culture that developed in Russia, take notes to answer the questions in the boxes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. What ties linked Kiev to Byzantium?</th>
<th>2. How did Vladimir and his son Yaroslav contribute to the power of Kiev?</th>
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<td>3. What factors brought about Kiev’s decline?</td>
<td>4. How did the Mongols treat the Russian people?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. What were some effects of Mongol rule on Russia?</td>
<td>6. What events marked the beginning of an independent Russian Empire?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### B. Summarizing
On the back of this paper, identify each person or group in the early history of Russia.

- Slavs
- Vladimir
- Alexander Nevsky
- Ivan III

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*Byzantines, Russians, and Turks Interact* 23
In 1480, Moscow, the strongest of the Russian states, freed itself from Mongol rule. Moscow’s Prince Ivan III, who called himself “czar,” the Russian version of Caesar, wanted to make Moscow a capital city fit for an emperor.

The center of the city was a walled citadel, or fortress, known as the Kremlin. The term kremlin refers to the walled central section of any city or town. Ivan had the old triangular wall around the Kremlin torn down and a massive new wall, 60 feet high and 15 feet thick, built in its place. The wall was adorned with 20 towers. Within the Kremlin, Ivan built a palace for himself, a second palace for the head of the Russian Church, and three great churches that faced onto a central square.

Moscow became the capital of a new and aggressive empire and Ivan became the first czar of a united Russian nation. Hundreds of years later, the Kremlin would became synonymous with the government of the Soviet Union. It would house the Soviet parliament and Communist party conventions.
During the sixth and seventh centuries, Scandinavian traders transported goods to and from Constantinople. They traveled through an area of present-day Russia so frequently that communities and a primitive government began to form. These Scandinavians even coined the word Russia. They may have gotten it from the Greek word for red, which was the hair color of many of these Viking traders.

Around 855, a Danish man named Rurik became the first Russian king and Kiev became the center of early Russia. A descendant of Rurik, Vladimir I, who ruled from 980 to 1015, converted early Russia to Christianity. Although Kiev's proximity and contact with Byzantium is largely responsible for the conversion to Christianity, one account states that Vladimir chose Christianity over Islam because he could not accept a religion that rejected alcohol.

Kievan Russia declined in the 12th century because of internal problems and the Mongol invasions. Around 1300, the Orthodox Church chose Moscow as its center. As a result, Moscow, originally a region of Russia, began to emerge as an important city.
Interpreting Text and Visuals

1. How did the location of Kiev contribute to its rise as the center of early Russia? 

2. What river borders the eastern end of Russia around 1505? 

3. At its longest point, how far across is Kievan Russia at about 1000? Moscow about 1505? 

4. How many miles would a trader beginning in Novgorod and traveling to Constantinople have to go via the Dnieper River and the Black Sea? 

5. Name the body of water that borders Kievan Russia. 

6. Describe the most likely route that a Scandinavian trader would have used to get to Constantinople. 

7. What geographical feature(s) made the location of Moscow so valuable? Why? 

8. Compare Moscow of 1505 to Moscow of 1300. How did the region change?
Vladimir and his retinue entered the city, and he sent messages to the emperors Basil and Constantine, saying, “Behold, I have captured your glorious city. I have also heard that you have an unwedded sister. Unless you give her to me in marriage, I shall deal with your own city as I have with Kherson.” When the emperors heard this message they were troubled, and they issued this statement: “It is not proper for Christians to give women in marriage to pagans. If you are baptized, you shall have her for your wife, inherit the kingdom of God, and be our co-believer. If you do not do so, however, we cannot give you our sister in marriage.”

When Vladimir learned of their response, he said to the emperors’ envoys, “Tell the emperors I will accept baptism, since I have already given some study to your religion, and the Greek faith and ritual, as described by the emissaries I sent to examine it, has pleased me well.” When the emperors heard this report they rejoiced and persuaded their sister Anna [to consent to the match]. They then sent word to Vladimir, “Be baptized, and then we shall send you our sister.” But Vladimir said, “Let your sister herself come [with the priests] to baptize me.” The emperors complied with his request and sent their sister, accompanied by some dignitaries and priests . . . The bishop [episkop] of Kherson, together with the princess’s priests . . . baptized Vladimir. . . .

As a bride price in exchange for the princess, he gave Kherson back to the Greeks and then went back to Kiev.

When the prince arrived at his capital, he directed that the idols should be overturned and that some should be cut to pieces and others burned up . . .

Thereupon Vladimir sent heralds throughout the whole city, proclaiming, “If anyone, whether rich or poor, beggar or slave, does not come tomorrow to the river, he will be an enemy of mine.” When the people heard this they went gladly, rejoicing and saying, “If this were not good, the prince and his boyars would not have accepted it.” On the morrow the prince went forth to the Dnieper with the priests of the princess and those from Kherson, and a countless multitude assembled. They all went into the water; some stood up to their necks, others to their breasts . . . The priests stood by and offered prayers. There was joy in heaven and upon earth at the sight of so many souls saved. But the Devil groaned, “Woe is me! They are driving me out of here!” . . .

He [Vladimir] ordered that wooden churches should be built and established where [pagan] idols had previously stood. He founded the Church of Saint Basil on the hill where the idol of Perun and the other images had been set, and where the prince and the people had offered their sacrifices. He began to found churches, to assign priests throughout the cities and towns, and to bring people in for baptism from all towns and villages. He began to take the children of the best families and send them for instruction from books.

Activity Options

1. **Analyzing Causes and Recognizing Effects**
   Draw a cause-and-effect diagram to illustrate what happened as a result of Vladimir’s conversion to Byzantine Christianity.

2. **Writing for Social Studies** Write a headline for the Kievan Times about one of the events described in this excerpt from the Primary Chronicle.

Byzantines, Russians, and Turks Interact 31
Two wars, the capture and blinding of his father, and a proposed diplomatic marriage were the haunting memories of Ivan III's childhood. Ivan III was born in 1440 to a princely throne in Moscow, then a small state in a time of severe crisis. Surviving much conflict, Ivan III built the foundation of modern Russia.

Ivan's father Basil II, the grand duke of Moscow, was in the midst of a struggle for power with a cousin, Dmitri Shemyaka. At the same time, Basil was also fighting the Mongols who then ruled Russia. Basil lost a battle to the Mongols and was captured. When he was released, he was captured again by Shemyaka, who was now ruling Moscow. Ivan, only six years old, was captured as well. Shemyaka blinded Basil, but Ivan's father won release and soon retook his throne. In 1452, Basil's army finally defeated Shemyaka, who died after being poisoned. That army was said to be led by Ivan, though he was only 12 years old.

Ten years later, Ivan became grand duke when his father died. For the next 40 years, Ivan used diplomacy, alliances, war, and trickery to expand the size of Moscow and increase his own power. He forged treaties and then, when he had no use for them, abandoned them. When Ivan was finished, he had achieved his goals. The ruler of Moscow was powerful, and his state, which he was first to call “all Russia,” had grown.

Upon becoming grand duke, Ivan first tried to weaken the Mongols in the east, but his attack failed. He then aimed to capture Novgorod. First, he used diplomacy to make sure that no other state would help Novgorod. Next, he attacked and defeated its army in battle. While some resistance remained for several years, Ivan was in full control by the late 1470s. He then proceeded to completely break the power of the nobles there. He seized their grounds and forced them to move to Moscow. He gave the property to his supporters, but terms of ownership had changed. The land was officially the grand duke's, only on loan to them as long as they served the ruler. Novgorod's defeat increased both Moscow's size and Ivan's power.

About this time, Ivan took another important step. After long negotiations he agreed to marry Sophia, the niece of the last Byzantine ruler. After the marriage, Ivan began to use the title czar, the Russian term for emperor. He also began calling Moscow the “third Rome” (after Rome and Constantinople).

After the defeat of Novgorod, Ivan turned on the next most powerful Russian state, Tver. Once again, he used diplomacy to isolate Tver and then invaded it and took control.

Next, Ivan turned east, hoping to finally remove the Mongol threat. By now, the huge Mongol Empire had split into three smaller kingdoms. In 1480, Akhmed, the leader of the strongest one, marched his army against Ivan. They faced each other for two months without fighting, as Akhmed waited for promised reinforcements. When they never arrived, Akhmed led his army away. Later, rivals had him killed, and Mongol power was finally broken. Ivan secured his border with the Mongols in 1487, when he captured one of the remaining kingdoms.

Ivan now moved west. After marrying his daughter to the son of the king of Lithuania, he attacked that nation in 1500. He shattered the Lithuanian army, which led to further Russian expansion.

While enlarging Moscow, Ivan also took steps to increase the grand duke's power. He reformed the government, beginning a system of administration that remained in use for hundreds of years.

Questions

1. **Making Inferences** How might Ivan's early life have influenced his goals and the methods he used to achieve them once he became ruler?

2. **Clarifying** Give two examples of how Ivan used diplomacy effectively.

3. **Forming and Supporting Opinions** Ivan III is often called “the Great.” Do you think that is an appropriate name? Why or why not?
RETEACHING ACTIVITY  The Russian Empire

Section 2

Determining Main Ideas  The following questions deal with the development of the Russian culture. Answer them in the space provided.

1. What role did Vladimir play in bringing Christianity to Kiev?

______________________________________________________________________________

2. What contributions did Yaroslav the Wise make to Kievian Russia?

______________________________________________________________________________

3. What effect did the Mongol invasions have on Kievian Russia?

______________________________________________________________________________

4. How did Moscow's princes overcome the Mongols?

______________________________________________________________________________

Reading Comprehension  Find the name or term in the second column that best matches the description in the first column. Then write the letter of your answer in the blank.

____ 5. Russia's first important city

   a. Ivan III

____ 6. ruler who converted Kiev to Christianity

   b. Novgorod

____ 7. ruler who built the first library in Kiev

   c. czar

____ 8. Novgorod's prince and military hero who cooperated with the Mongols

   d. Alexander Nevsky

____ 9. ruler who led the Russian state to become an empire

   e. Vladimir

____ 10. the Russian version of the word “king”

   f. Yaroslav the Wise