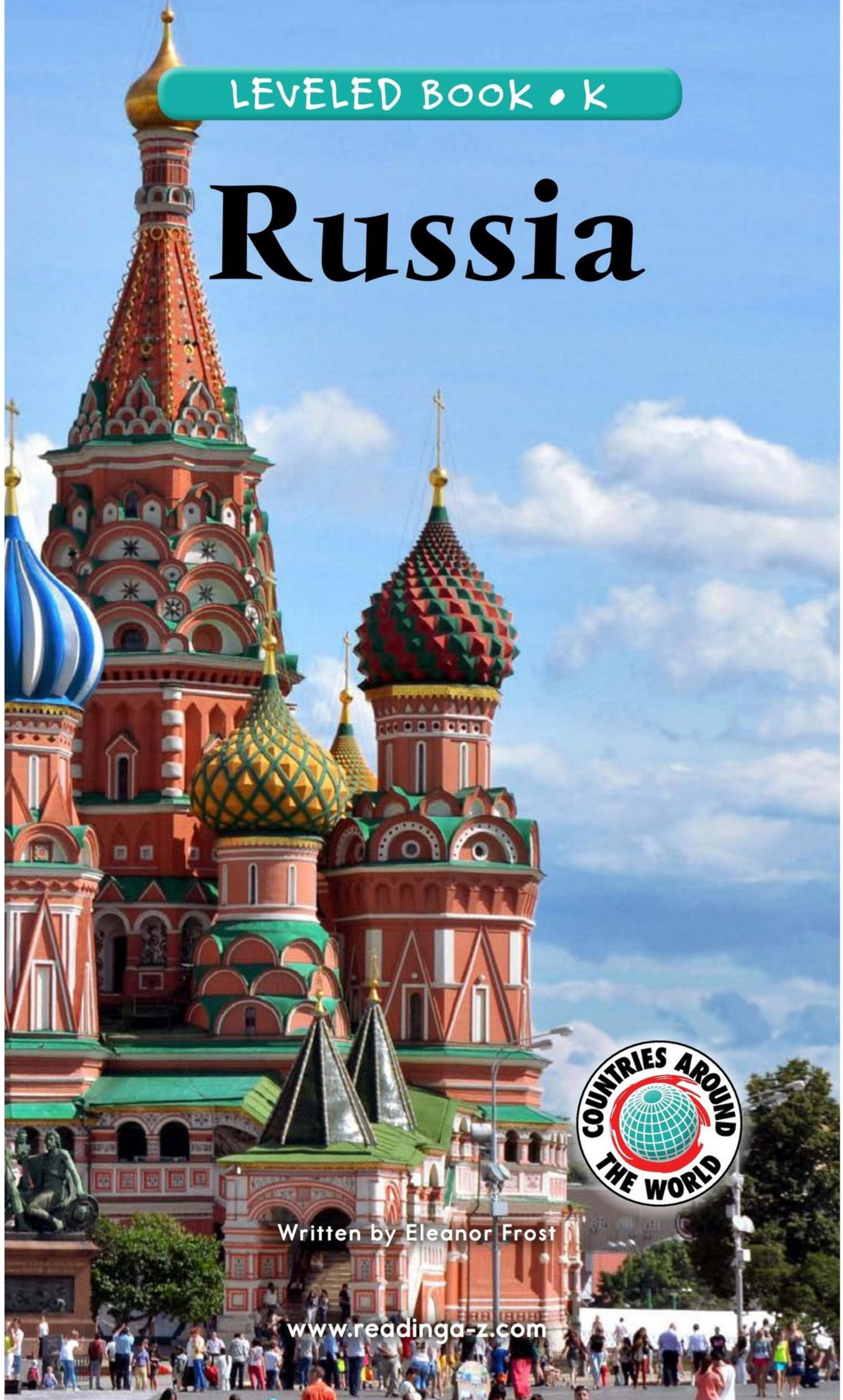


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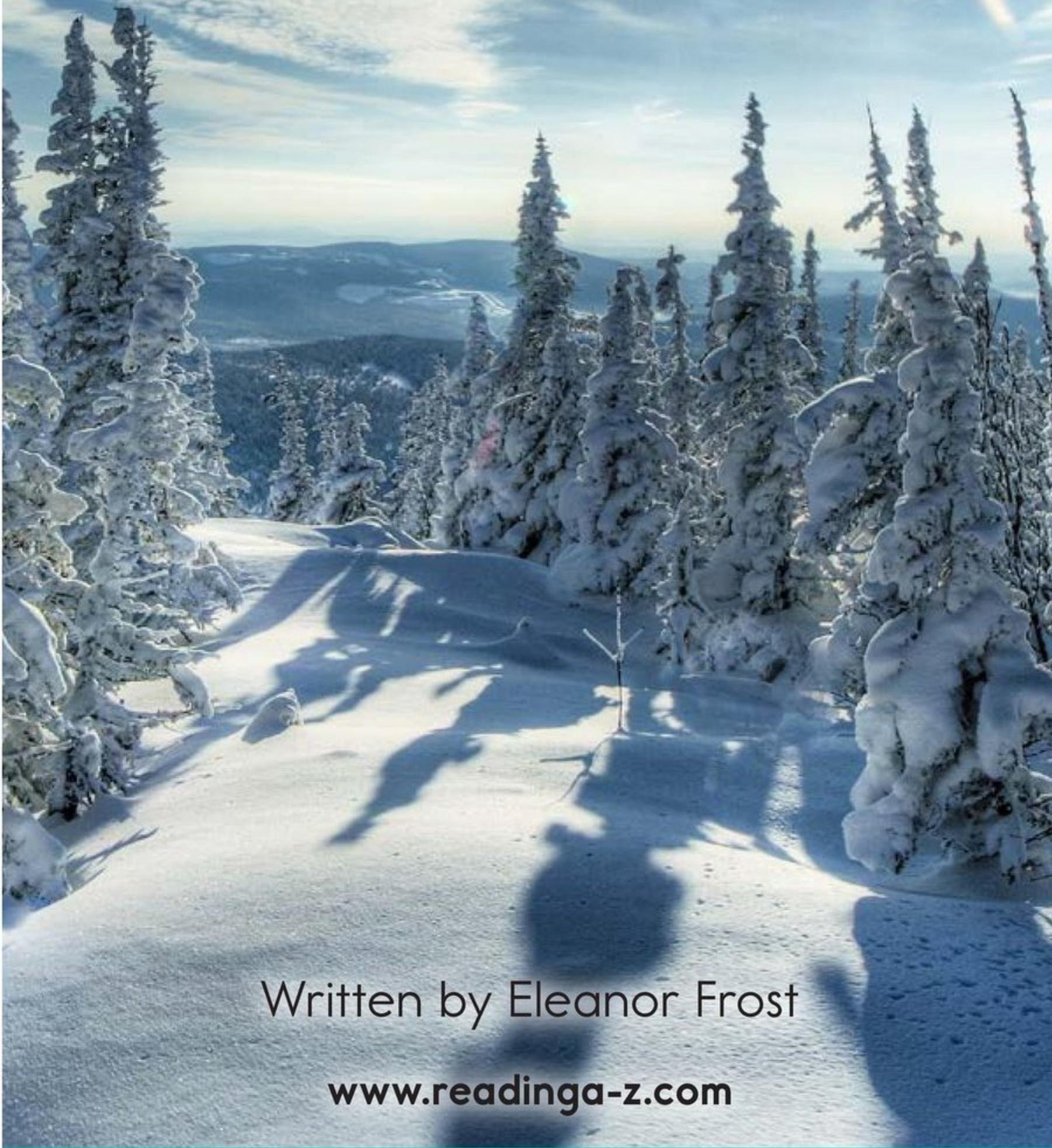
Russia



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Focus Question

What makes Russia special?

Words to Know

celebrate
czars
mine

peasants
president
traditions

Front cover: St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow

Title page: Snow in the mountains

Page 3: People shopping in Moscow

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Russia



Where Is It?

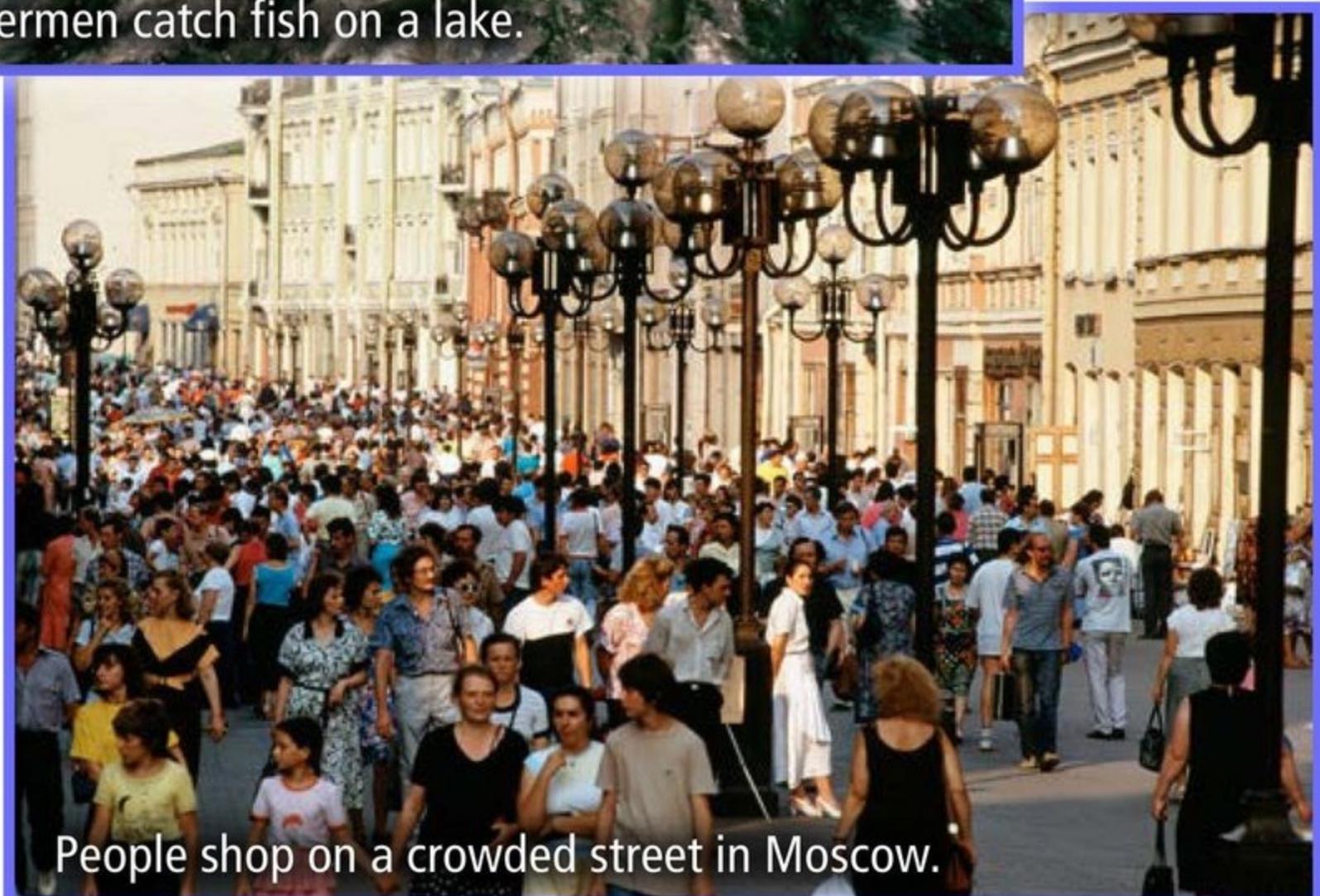
Russia is a very big country. It is the largest country in the world—almost twice as big as the United States. Russia is part of both Europe and Asia.

Moscow is the capital of Russia. It is a big city in the European part of the country. More than twelve million people live there. The Russian **president** lives in a famous group of buildings in Moscow.





Russian fishermen catch fish on a lake.



People shop on a crowded street in Moscow.

People

Most people in Russia live and work in cities. The main language is Russian. In the country, jobs have to do with the land and the sea. For example, many people fish, **mine** oil and coal, and cut trees for wood.

Sports such as soccer and ice hockey are popular in Russia. Russia is famous for music and a kind of dance show called *ballet*. *Swan Lake* is a famous Russian ballet.

Dancers perform *Swan Lake*.



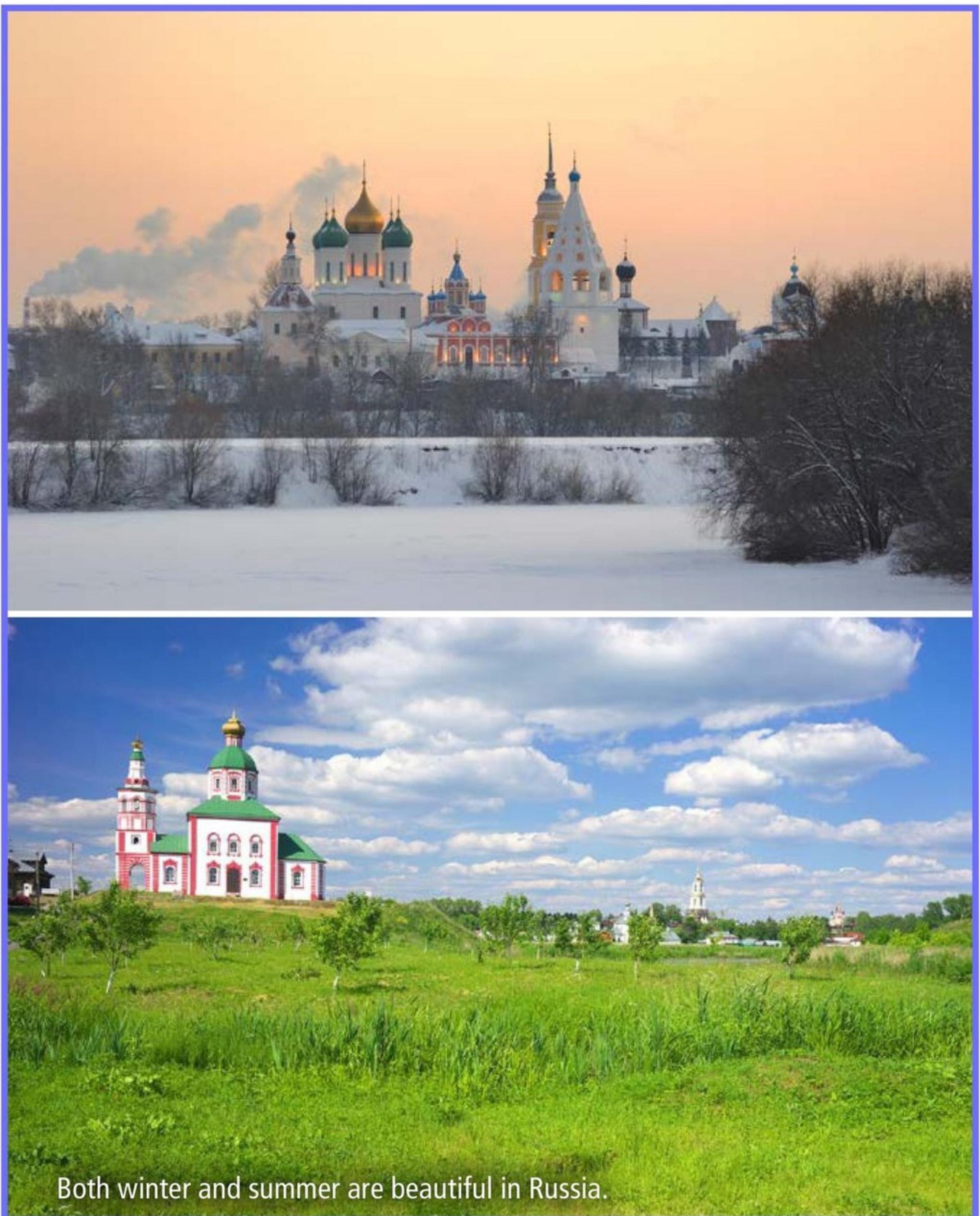
Russia's Landforms



Land

The land in Russia is mainly low flatlands, high flatlands, and mountains. The deepest lake in the world, Lake Baikal, is in Russia. Russia has frozen flatlands in the north and wide grassy lands in the south. In between are huge forests.

Russia is a cold country, and it is home to the coldest village in the world. But many places in Russia also have beautiful summers.



Both winter and summer are beautiful in Russia.



Peter the Great, czar of Russia from 1682 to 1725

History

In the past, **czars**, or emperors, ruled Russia. During that time, the **peasants** in Russia were unhappy. They didn't like the way the czars ruled the people. They fought in 1917 to change their country's ways.

After the fight, Russia took control of a group of other nearby countries. Together they formed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The USSR had many problems, so it broke up in 1991. Today, Russia has a president.



People stand in a food line in the Soviet Union in 1934.

Celebrations

Many people **celebrate** Christmas and Easter in Russia. On Easter, they eat cakes and paint hard-boiled eggs.



Russian Easter egg

Russians also have a holiday to celebrate the end of winter. For this holiday, people eat pancakes with butter. They also have fun with sleigh rides and snowball fights.



Food

A popular soup in Russia is famous around the world. People make the soup from beets and other vegetables. Beets are red, so the soup also has a red color.

Many Russians like a homemade drink. The drink has a sour flavor.

Russians make a popular soup from beets, onions, and carrots.



Russians enjoy a sour drink made from bread.





These children are wearing traditional Russian clothing.

Conclusion

Russia is home to both crowded cities and wild forests. Russia has a long, rich history and many interesting things to do. The Russian people value the traditions of their beautiful homeland.



Population: 142,423,773

Land: 16,377,742 sq km (6,323,500 sq. mi.)

Capital City: Moscow

Primary Language: Russian

Name of Currency: ruble



Source: CIA World Factbook (2016)

Glossary

celebrate (*v.*) to do something special to honor an event (p. 12)

czars (*n.*) male Russian rulers before the Russian Revolution in 1917 (p. 10)

mine (*v.*) to take minerals from the ground by digging or blasting (p. 6)

peasants (*n.*) members of the lowest class of people in a society (p. 10)

president (*n.*) the leader of the government in some countries (p. 5)

traditions (*n.*) beliefs or customs that are passed down from year to year and generation to generation (p. 14)

Russia

A Reading A-Z Level K Leveled Book

Word Count: 401

Connections

Writing

Write a paragraph telling why you think Russians celebrate the end of winter.

Social Studies and Art

Make a poster about Russia. Include a picture of the Russian flag and five important facts about the country.



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