

# Belgium Bonanza: Castles, Comics, and Chocolate!

Let's take an exciting journey to a small but mighty country in the heart of Europe: Belgium!

## Part 1: Where in the World is Belgium? (10 mins)

Using a world map or online map, let's find Belgium! Notice its neighbors (France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands). What large body of water is nearby? (North Sea). What's its capital city? (Brussels - it's also like the capital of Europe because the European Union headquarters are there!). Discuss why location might be important for a country.

## Part 2: A Whirlwind History Tour (15 mins)

Belgium has a fascinating past! It's been part of different empires and kingdoms. Let's touch on a few key moments:

- **Roman Times:** Known as Gallia Belgica.
- **Middle Ages:** Famous for knights, castles, and wealthy cities known for trading cloth (like Bruges and Ghent). Let's look up pictures of Belgian castles!
- **World Wars:** Belgium was a major battleground in both World War I and World War II. Discuss briefly why its location made it important during these conflicts (e.g., the flat land of Flanders Fields in WWI).
- **Modern Belgium:** Became an independent country in 1830.

**Activity:** Draw a simple timeline and mark these periods or events.

## Part 3: Culture Club - Languages, Food, and Fun! (20 mins)

Belgium is unique! It has three official languages: Dutch (called Flemish in Belgium), French, and German. Most people speak Flemish or French.

### Famous Belgian Things:

- **Food:** Belgian Waffles (different types!), Chocolate (world-famous pralines!), Fries (often called 'frites' and served with mayonnaise!). *Optional yummy break: Try making simple waffles or tasting different kinds of chocolate if available.*
- **Comics:** Belgium is crazy about comics! Ever heard of The Smurfs or Tintin? They're Belgian! Brussels even has a Comic Strip Route with murals on buildings.
- **Landmarks:** The Atomium (a giant model of an iron crystal) in Brussels, medieval castles, and beautiful town squares. Let's search for images online!

**Discussion:** Which part of Belgian culture sounds most interesting? Why?

## Part 4: Creative Corner - Show What You Know! (15 mins)

Choose one activity:

1. **Travel Brochure:** Fold a piece of paper and create a mini-brochure encouraging people to visit

Belgium. Include drawings and facts about its food, landmarks, or history.

2. **Comic Character:** Invent a simple Belgian comic character. Maybe they love waffles or live in a castle? Draw your character and give them a name.
3. **Belgium Fact Sheet:** Write 5 interesting facts you learned about Belgium today.

## Wrap-up (5 mins)

Share your creative project! What was the most surprising thing you learned about Belgium today? Can you point to Belgium on the map again? Great job exploring Belgium!