



International treasure

12-14



International treasure

Topic: Geography

Level: Secondary education (12-14 years old)

Concepts: European countries and capitals

Time required: +/- 30 min

Summary of the activity: You've found a map of Europe with a strange parchment that says: "If you retrace our steps, a treasure you will find. Incredible riches await you, so don't waste any time!"

Material needed: A pen, coloured pencils, a map of Europe (including Greenland, with or without country names)... and motivation!

Itinerary/Process Summary: This is a classic adventure with multiple choices. The right choice leads to story progression, the wrong choice leads to an explanation or a return to the previous paragraph to try again. The wrong answer may have no consequences or lead to another path before reaching the right one.

Practical advice: As the adventure progresses, students can mark the names of the capitals on the map. Depending on the students' level, you may choose not to provide the names of the countries on the map and ask them to identify where they are based on the indications they have received in the paragraphs and their prior knowledge. They can also fill in the countries with the colours of their flags (following the illustrations proposed in this adventure) to identify and differentiate them.

Additional blank map to complete (two versions): Download [here](#).

1

Urban exploration is a subject that fascinates many young people, so you decided to give it a try yourself. Exploring an abandoned building not far from your home, out of sight, you manage to sneak into a cellar. Armed with your flashlight, you set about searching through the piles of objects, wandering between cobwebs and memories.

Suddenly, you find an old rolled-up poster: it's a map of Europe! Along with it is a strange piece of parchment on which is written: "If you retrace our steps, a treasure you will find. Incredible riches await you, so don't waste any time!"

Curious and eager for adventure, you decide to take up the challenge and unravel this mystery. Let's go on a treasure hunt!

 **Go to paragraph 11.**






2

The parchment changes again, and instead of a sentence, you now see a compass appear. It points North.

A wind rose on the map confirms that North is at the top. Several countries light up, with their names indicated this time.

You have to make a choice and find a country in the North to cool down the map, which is still burning your fingers... Which country will you choose?!

- Ireland  **Go to paragraph 24.**
- Iceland  **Go to paragraph 9.**
- Germany  **Go to paragraph 29.**

3





So you've chosen **Amsterdam**... And suddenly, the air around you swirls and changes!

You're now standing on the banks of a large canal with a pretty windmill, strangely placed right next to a city.

On the map, you see the Netherlands light up and then turn red. Oops! Amsterdam is the capital of the Netherlands, not Belgium.

The map shakes in your hands. You've made a mistake, but you've got a second chance. Think carefully... What is the capital of Belgium?

- Paris  **Go to paragraph 7.**
- Brussels  **Go to paragraph 15.**



4

You venture a little further and notice on the signs a language that doesn't seem to be Italian or Spanish...

The parchment you're holding with the map starts to shake, and as you look at it, you notice that the writing has changed. It now reads:

"With Spain as my only neighbour, surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, fish is my speciality, and Lisbon is my capital. Who am I?"

Think about it... Which country is this?

- Cyprus  **Go to paragraph 13.**
- Portugal  **Go to paragraph 18.**

5



You're now in **Madrid**. It's hot and you're looking for a cooler spot to rest and find the next step of your treasure hunt.

There isn't much shade, so you risk dying of heat and thirst if this continues. The map doesn't seem to be very useful and starts to heat up between your fingers. Suddenly, you understand!

It's too hot in this region. The next stage must be in a cold country, probably towards the North. The map shakes, confirming your thinking.

 **Go to paragraph 2.**

6

Your choice lands on Greenland, to the west of Iceland.



Once you arrive, you're plunged into the freezing cold. It's a stunning and magnificent place, sparsely populated and always covered in snow. Among the few towns on the edge of this glacier-covered island, you discover that the capital is called **Nuuk**.

The map trembles in your hands. You're not really sure of yourself because you realise that you're very close to the American continent... And yet Greenland is actually part of Europe! In fact, it's an independent territory which is part of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Either choice could have been the right one. Europe is so big and varied! You're getting closer to the treasure!



 **Go to paragraph 20.**



So you've chosen **Paris**... And suddenly, the air around you swirls and changes! You're now standing in the middle of a cobbled street, and when you look up, you see the Eiffel Tower over you, surrounded by light.

On the map, you see France lighting up too, then turning red. Oops! Paris is the capital of France, not Belgium.

The map shakes in your hands. You've made a mistake, but you've got a second chance. Think carefully... Which is the capital of Belgium?

- Amsterdam  **Go to paragraph 3.**
- Brussels  **Go to paragraph 15.**



The reflections of the sun on the metal of the monument dazzle you and after blinking a bit, you find yourself transported back to another place. Looking around you, you see colourful buildings in the bright sunshine, and you can hear the sound of the sea nearby.

You notice a sign that says: "Lisbon". The name rings a bell. On the map, a dot lights up over the country you're in, but you can't see its name.

You notice that there is only one country next to it and you can read the capital: "Madrid".

If you want to move on, you need to find out more about these mysterious countries in order to identify them.

 **Go to paragraph 4.**

9



Iceland? You haven't confused it with Ireland? And you're right!

Here you are then, in a magnificent city between snow-capped mountains and the ocean. As you look up, you discover the magnificent Northern Lights colouring the sky.

Iceland is indeed a cold country! It's an island right in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, part of Europe, but quite close to the Arctic Circle, which means temperatures of up to -15°C . In fact, few people live outside the cities, and the capital, **Reykjavík**, is the most populous one.

You can feel the map getting progressively colder while the island lights up green.



Go to paragraph 26.

10



You're standing on the banks of a river in front of a statue of a mermaid. You're in Poland, a country to the East of Germany, but a sign tells you that you're not in Vienna but in **Warsaw**.

Oops! So it was the other proposal.



Go to paragraph 30.




11

You analyse the map carefully and try to identify a starting point. Where should you begin? There are several paths and crosses pointing to various places, but they seem to be false trails because they are not connected.

As you turn the parchment over, exposed to the intense light of your torch, you manage to make out some almost illegible words that gradually appear and present you with your first enigma.

"A bright beginning in the heart of beautiful and brave Belgium, neighbouring France, Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg."

As you try to find the right country on the map, you can read different names of capitals and have to identify the one that corresponds to Belgium :



- Paris  **Go to paragraph 7.**
- Amsterdam  **Go to paragraph 3.**
- Brussels  **Go to paragraph 15.**

12

As you look around you, you notice that there are several possible destinations. City names appear on the map.

Rome to the West, towards France, and Zagreb in the North, towards Germany.

Which one do you choose?

- Rome  **Go to paragraph 28.**
- Zagreb  **Go to paragraph 37.**

13



So you chose Cyprus. Transported again, you find yourself at the foot of copper-coloured stone buildings.

On the map, an island on the opposite side of Europe turns red: Cyprus is indeed an island and, therefore, has no neighbouring country. It is part of Europe, but its capital isn't Lisbon; it's **Nicosia**.



You understand your mistake and retrace your steps, as you now know where to go.

 **Go to paragraph 18.**

14

A new indication appears: "To discover what you want, you have to explore a great unknown".

Two country names now appear on the map. Which one do you choose?

- Hungary  **Go to paragraph 39.**
- Ukraine  **Go to paragraph 35.**

15



So you chose **Brussels**... And suddenly, the air around you swirls and changes! You're now in the middle of a small grass lawn surrounded by narrow streets, and you see a large monument linking a series of metal balls together: it's the Atomium.

On the map, Belgium lights up and turns green. Well done!

You can see Paris, the capital of France, and Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands, also light up. Now you know which country each of these cities belongs to.




 **Go to paragraph 8.**

16

If you look carefully, you'll notice that other countries, also close to the North, have lit up on the map.

On the parchment, a new sentence reads: "Vast and varied, beyond the waves and mountains, Europe spreads".

So, you need to choose a European country for the next stage. Which one will you choose?

- Sweden  **Go to paragraph 17.**
- Greenland  **Go to paragraph 6.**
- Denmark  **Go to paragraph 19.**

17



Having chosen Sweden, you cross the ocean to the east and disembark at the very north of the countries you had previously visited.

You are now in an old town where water is everywhere around you. On one of the warm-toned buildings, a sign tells you the name of the city: **Stockholm**.

The country lights up on the map. You've come to the right place! Sweden is indeed a European country. But in reality, the other illuminated countries, Greenland and Denmark, although very far from each other, are also part of Europe!

Either choice could have been the right one. Europe is so big and varied!

You're getting closer to the treasure, little by little!

 **Go to paragraph 20.**

18



Is this
Portugal?

Yes, it is! Everything seems to fit the description. You're in **Lisbon**, Portugal, a country renowned for its ports and the beauty of its architecture.

Portugal lights up in green on the map and you can now move on to the next stage based on the signs and towns indicated. You're heading for Spain because that's the only place you can go at the moment.

 **Go to paragraph 5.**

19



So you decide to go to Denmark, close to the Netherlands and Germany and just below Sweden.

It's a smaller country, but a very beautiful one, with beaches and harbours, beautiful landscapes, colourful houses and happy people. You can read on a sign that you are in **Copenhagen**, the capital.

Like Sweden, Denmark is part of Europe. But did you know that Greenland, although geographically remote and close to America, was also part of the Kingdom of Denmark and is, therefore, also part of Europe? Surprising! Either choice could have been the right one. Europe is so big and varied!



→ **Go to paragraph 20.**

20

Even though you feel you're getting closer to the treasure, you wonder how much further you have to go. You feel the parchment trembling between your fingers.

You look at it and discover a new indication, which you read carefully.

"From West to East, from South to North, from hot to cold and back again, you discover sparkling landscapes and rich cultures... You're halfway there now, but you've already received some precious gifts. Don't ignore the beauty of the journey for the sake of your destination."

What do you think this means?



→ **Go to paragraph 21.**

21

It doesn't seem to be much of a clue to the next stage...

It looks like the scroll is trying to tell you not to go too fast and focus too much on the treasure, especially if it stops you from enjoying the places you visit and the sceneries you discover.

Let's hope you haven't ignored the value of the previous steps and that you'll continue to enjoy this journey!



Go to paragraph 27.

22

You find a shovel nearby and start digging for a long time before hitting something. Excited, you drop to your knees and continue digging with your hands to free the object.

It's a treasure chest! At last!

You manage to dig it out and look at it. It seems a bit small and very light... And above all, it has a padlock with letters on it. A password!

Trying random words doesn't seem very effective. You have to work out which word will open the chest. You count the spaces on the padlock: there are four letters. The answer shouldn't be too difficult.

If you've already explored Europe's second-largest country,



Go to paragraph 36.

If you still haven't explored Europe's second-largest country,



Go to paragraph 25.

23



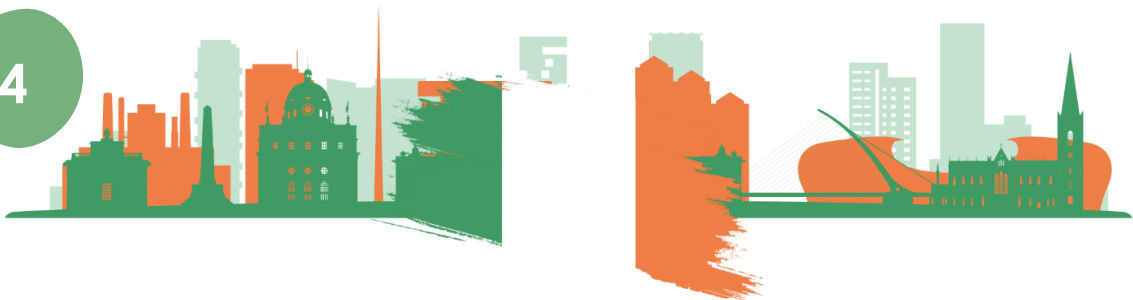
Athens? Exactly!

You discover a breathtaking view of the sea under a radiant sun, from a high hill covered with immense ancient ruins, adorned with white stone columns and statues. There's no doubt about it; you're in Greece!

Athens, named after Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, war and handicraft, is the country's capital. Well done!

 **Go to paragraph 12.**

24



It's true that Ireland is further north than Belgium and Portugal.

Ireland is an island close to Great Britain, some of which, Northern Ireland, is part of the United Kingdom (along with England, Scotland and Wales), while the majority of the island, known as the Republic of Ireland, is an independent country. Its capital, **Dublin**, is best known for its pubs, bars and famous beer.

But are you sure it's a northern country where it's quite cold? Oops, the map is turning red: it's not cold enough here to find the next clue... Which country is colder than Ireland?

• Iceland  **Go to paragraph 9.**

• Germany  **Go to paragraph 29.**

25

The parchment now bears a new inscription: "You have missed the answer because you have not explored the unknown. Retrace your steps, and soon you will discover the treasure."

You now realise that you must turn back. By going straight to Rome, you've missed a few clues. Let's see what clues the other proposal can give you!

 **Go to paragraph 37.**

26

You've finally managed to cool off. You don't even have time to visit this beautiful place or enjoy the Northern Lights; you've still got a treasure to find!

But which way to go? You're on an island in the middle of the ocean... so there are no neighbouring countries!



Perhaps the map could provide you with some information you might not have seen about other Nordic countries, for example?

 **Go to paragraph 16.**

27

As you think back over the beautiful towns and landscapes you've seen so far, you notice that the map has started to glow. An area in the South-east of Europe has started to shimmer... The name of the country appears: "Greece". The parchment then gives you the following riddle: "Ancient source of a thousand knowledges and home to a thousand myths, I vow glory to the divinity of wisdom."

Which city is it?

- Athens  **Go to paragraph 23.**
- Vienna  **Go to paragraph 31.**

28



So you chose **Rome**.

The environment around you changes, and you discover new Renaissance-inspired architecture, under a beautiful sun, with the delicious smell of pizza wafting from the streets.

On the map, a country in the shape of a boot lights up: you're in Italy.

You can see the famous ruins of the Colosseum, where gladiator battles were once held. As the map turns green, confirming that you're in the right place, you head towards the Colosseum.

In the centre of the ruins, you notice a strange mark on the ground: a cross carved into the solid dirt. The map and parchment begin to glow and shake with excitement.

Wow! You've found the treasure!

 **Go to paragraph 22.**

29





Germany? Here we go!

You discover a city full of history and magnificent buildings: **Berlin**.

But the climate isn't very cold, although it's a bit grey, but we're not in the North of Europe. On the map, you can see Germany light up in red in the centre of the continent, right next to Belgium, France and the Netherlands.

So you've been near here before, remember? It's not exactly a cold country... The map's still heating up!

You can try your luck again. So where do you have to go?

- Ireland  **Go to paragraph 24.**
- Iceland  **Go to paragraph 9.**

30



So **Vienna** would be the capital of Austria? Indeed, the map is turning green!

Austria is a German-speaking country partially covered by the Alps, neighbouring Germany and many other countries such as Slovakia and Italy, but quite far from Greece...

By logic, you deduce that the capital of Greece is the other proposal.



 **Go to paragraph 23.**

31

Vienna is your answer?

The map shakes and turns red. You were so close to the sea but suddenly, it disappeared! You find yourself in a mountainous country close to Germany... It's clearly not Greece.

Which country has Vienna as its capital?

- Austria  **Go to paragraph 30.**
- Poland  **Go to paragraph 10.**

32



Bucharest is the capital of Romania! This beautiful city is crossed by a river and dotted with lakes, parks and gardens.

Did you fall into the trap? Indeed, the names Budapest and Bucharest sound alike, but Budapest is the capital of Hungary.

The parchment vibrates and once again shows you a compass, this time pointing South. On the map, the country just below Romania lights up, and the name of a city appears: "Sofia".

Let's go!

 **Go to paragraph 34.**

33



You chose **Budapest**? Oops!

The map is shaking and turning red. After all, it wasn't obvious! The names of the two cities are very similar, so anyone could have made a mistake. Budapest is the capital of Hungary, not Romania.

The parchment seems indulgent and lets you take the right path to Romania by choosing the only other option.

 **Go to paragraph 32.**

34



Here you are in Bulgaria, just between Romania and Greece. This country bordering the Black Sea is covered in religious buildings such as cathedrals and monasteries.

In the centre of its capital, **Sofia**, you can see a large square with a huge, magnificent cathedral at its centre, with strange architecture and curved roofs.

In your hands, the parchment trembles again.

 **Go to paragraph 14.**

35



You now land in Ukraine, even further East. It's a big country, the second largest in Europe, sharing a border with Russia. You've probably already heard about it on the news.

Between some magnificent buildings and historic monuments, you come across a sign indicating the name of the capital: "**Kyiv**".

The parchment vibrates and now tells you:

"Pay attention to this precious clue".

You realise you're on the right track. Have you finally found the key to the treasure?

If you've already found the treasure chest,

➡➡➡ → **Go to paragraph 36.**

If you haven't found the treasure chest yet,

➡➡➡ → **Go to paragraph 38.**

36

Finally facing the treasure chest in the middle of the Colosseum, you look at the padlock. You have to open it with the name of a city in four letters. You've now explored a lot of countries, but one of them has made a particular impression on you, and the clues have been pointed out to you. So you decide to line up the letters of the capital of Ukraine: _ _ _ _
Bingo! Suddenly, the lock opens! Congratulations, you've found the treasure!

 **Go to paragraph 40.**

37





So you've chosen to explore **Zagreb**. As you look around, you discover colourful houses and a welcoming landscape.

The map then shows the country you're in: Croatia.

In which direction should you go next? On the map, a country to the east of Croatia sparkles, and its name appears: "Romania."

But to get there, you need to know its capital. Which one do you think it is?

- Bucharest  **Go to paragraph 32.**
- Budapest  **Go to paragraph 33.**

38

The parchment begins to shake again. You can read a new inscription on it:

"You hold the key, but the treasure seems to be missing. You must search far into the past, where some have fought since ancient times."

You have to go back and make a new choice. Which city could be involved in ancient battles?



Go to paragraph 12.

39

Hungary? This country might ring a bell...

Haven't you already been here during your travels? Or at least you've heard of its capital: Budapest.

What's more, Hungary is much smaller than Ukraine, so it's not a "great unknown". It seems that your only option now is to go and explore the other proposed country.



Go to paragraph 35.

40



Hands shaking with excitement, you open the chest and discover the famous treasure that has been waiting for you all along.

Inside, you find postcards and stamps with magnificent landscapes of the different countries and cities you've visited, as well as other European cities that you missed but weren't far from during your adventure! You look at them with emotion from the wonderful journey you've had. Perhaps you're a little disappointed... This treasure doesn't look very lucrative: no gold, diamonds or jewels.

But then you turn the cards over and notice that behind them are messages addressed to you. Passionate speeches from the inhabitants of these beautiful countries, describing traditions, legends and values of each culture and nation, rich in history and humanity.

You read several of them, silently. The people have written to you personally, thanking you for your curiosity and efforts.

The parchment also begins to give you a final message:

"You have travelled all over Europe with me. The value of discovering these places, cultures and identities is more precious than gold and diamonds. May you appreciate it and continue your adventure beyond borders!"



Designed by 6 European organisations, the project intends to create efficient, engaging pedagogical materials and tools for teachers in order to implement an innovative gamified Homework methodology with pupils. In doing so, we wish to contribute to boosting their efficiency and engagement rate in remote work and, more specifically, in Homework.

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