

Life in Poland Today

For those of us who live a quarter of the way around the world from Poland, we might have old romantic notions of Polish kings and princes and Polish people wearing traditional colorful costumes and clothing. Yet life in Poland today is remarkably similar to everyday life in the United States. Like in most large countries, there is a distinct split in lifestyle between urban and rural areas. Urban life in major metropolitan cities in Europe, Poland included, is much like urban life in the United States.

Today's Polish clothing would fit right in with everyday life in the United States. Modern Polish women don't wear babushkas or long skirts any more than American women wear sunbonnets and long full skirts like women wore in pioneer days. Business attire in Poland is on a par with that of the United States as well.

Shopping malls in metropolitan areas of Poland are highly similar to the shopping malls sprinkled throughout suburban United States and other European countries. The large grocery store is indeed a supermarket in the populous areas of Poland. About thirty percent of Polish families shop in supermarkets like those in the United States.



Just like in the United States, the rural population of Poland doesn't have local access to shopping malls or supermarkets. In the United States, broadcasters who produce news programs like to visit small-town America to cover some local festival or event, showing how quaint parts of the U.S. still are. There are lots of quaint rural areas in Poland too but it would be a mistake to believe that the inhabitants of any small town, Americans or Poles, aren't modern progressive people.

One major way in which life in Poland and life in European countries in general differs from life in the United States is the rich cultural history that influences daily living. European cities and towns alike are filled with exquisite old architecture dating back centuries. Vast areas of the United States have only been settled with permanent buildings since 1870 while architecture in Europe can date back to the ancient Romans.

Europeans treasure their architectural history and have invested countless dollars in restoring and preserving worthwhile buildings, especially those ravaged by the bombings of World War II. It's only been in recent decades that the American people want to preserve historic old buildings rather than raze them to build something new in their place.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Multiple Choice Questions

Circle the correct answer.

1. What type of clothing do people in Poland wear now?
 - a. Business people dress like American businesspeople
 - b. Children wear traditional colorful clothing to school
 - c. Most women wear babushkas
 - d. All of the above

2. People who live in cities have a very different lifestyle from people who live in rural areas in what parts of the world?
 - a. Only in Europe in general
 - b. Only in Poland
 - c. Only in the United States
 - d. All over the world

3. Shopping malls in Poland resemble shopping malls
 - a. In the rest of Europe
 - b. The United States
 - c. Both a. and b. above
 - d. None of the above

4. Another name for people who live in Poland is
 - a. Poles
 - b. Polanders
 - c. Polandese
 - d. Polandians

5. Old architecture in Poland was destroyed by
 - a. A major earthquake
 - b. Bombings during World War II
 - c. Both a. and b. above
 - d. None of the above

6. Poland can be characterized by
 - a. Quaint rural villages
 - b. Modern urban areas
 - c. Both a. and b. above
 - d. None of the above

Name: _____ Date: _____

Short Answer Questions

1. Describe three features of life in Poland in olden times.
2. Describe the clothing that people in Poland wear today.
3. When do modern people wear traditional clothing? For example, when do Polish people wear their traditional colorful costumes and American women wear long cotton skirts and sunbonnets?
4. List two ways that rural Poland to rural America are alike today.
5. Discuss one major way in which life is different between modern Poland and the United States.
6. Locate Poland in a map of Europe. What countries border Poland?
7. Describe a project in your area where Americans are preserving an old building because of its historic architecture.

Answer Key

Multiple Choice

1. a.
2. d.
3. c.
4. a.
5. b.
6. c.

Short Answer

1. The country was ruled by kings and princes. People wore colorful traditional clothing. There was magnificent architecture.
2. It is like clothing worn by Americans.
3. Every country has festivals to honor the old traditions of the people. So people wear old-fashioned clothing at these festivals.
4. Rural Poland and rural America are similar. People in small towns do not have local access to supermarkets and shopping malls. Some rural areas in both countries are quaint.
5. One major way in which life in Poland and life in European countries in general differs from life in the United States is the rich cultural history that influences daily living. European cities and towns alike are filled with exquisite old architecture dating back centuries.
6. Poland is bordered by Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Russia.



7. Individual response