Subject Matter Expert
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Chapter 1, Card 1 Jacob Wyatt
Chapter 1, Card 2 Exterior view of Hagia Sophia, built 532–37 AD/Istanbul, Turkey/Bildarchiv Steffens/Bridgeman Images
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In 476 CE, the fall of Rome completed a long decline for the Western Roman Empire.

**Big Question:** How did Russia become a Christian country?
CHAPTER 1: Introduction

In 565 CE, the Eastern Roman Empire—also known as the Byzantine Empire—was on the rise.

**Big Question:** How did Russia become a Christian country?
CHAPTER 1: Russia’s Beginnings

The Slavs were among the earliest people to settle in Russia.

**Big Question:** How did Russia become a Christian country?
In 954 CE, Princess Olga of Kiev traveled to Constantinople, where she learned about Orthodox Christianity.

**Big Question:** How did Russia become a Christian country?
CHAPTER 1: Russia’s Beginnings

After converting to Orthodox Christianity in 988 CE, Prince Vladimir forced all the people of Kiev to convert, too.

Big Question: How did Russia become a Christian country?
In 1054 CE, the Christian Church split into Western Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

**Big Question:** How did Russia become a Christian country?
CHAPTER 2: The Mongols Invade

The Mongols attacked Kiev and other Russian cities, and then left the Tatars in charge of the conquered lands.

**Big Question:** What are some key features of Russian geography, and how have these features influenced the nation’s history?
Between 1271 and 1295, Venetian Marco Polo traveled throughout Asia, exploring the Mongol Empire.
CHAPTER 2: The Mongols Invade

The city-state of Muscovy became increasingly powerful under strong rulers, such as Ivan I ("Ivan the Moneybag").

Big Question: What are some key features of Russian geography, and how have these features influenced the nation’s history?
CHAPTER 3: Ivan the Great

Ivan III, also known as Ivan the Great, ruled with absolute power and declared himself czar.

Big Question: How did Ivan III gain more control over those he ruled?
CHAPTER 4: Ivan the Terrible

Ivan IV, also known as Ivan the Terrible, expanded Russia’s borders.

Big Question: Why was Ivan IV called “Ivan the Terrible”? 
CHAPTER 5: Peter the Great

Big Question: What did Peter the Great hope to do for Russia?

Peter the Great modernized and Westernized Russia. He hired European architects to design and build the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg.
CHAPTER 6: Catherine the Great

Catherine the Great was born a German princess but became one of Russia’s greatest rulers.

**Big Question:** Why did serfdom continue in Russia?