**The Geography of Bliss: One Grump’s Search for the Happiest Places in the World**

**By:** Kathy Kozenski, Geography Educators’ Network of Indiana, Inc.

**Title**: The Geography of Bliss: One Grump’s Search for the Happiest Places in the World

**Author:** Eric Weiner

**Publishing Information:** Hatchette (Twelve Books), New York, 2008. ISBN 10: 0-446-58026-0.

**Theme:** Global search for “happiness”

**Number of Pages:** 329

**Target Audience:** AP Human Geography students and adults

**Brief Description:** National Public Radio (NPR) correspondent, Eric Weiner, explores the concept of happiness in various places around the globe: Iceland, Switzerland, Romania, Bhutan, … Interacting with and talking with people from many cultures, countries, governments, economies, and histories, Mr. Weiner gains a perspective on happiness that incorporates diverse and numerous aspects of life. Research begins in the Netherlands at the World Database on Happiness. Studies occurred over a multi-year period incorporating personal and professional relationships and expanding to incorporate additional people and data/information.

**Major Points:** Happiness from numerous cultural perspectives around the world

**Your Opinion:** The book is a fun read overall. The author has a “dry” sense of humor that, at times, is fabulous and at other times may be difficult for younger readers to comprehend. Each chapter explores the concept of happiness from a particular country through the eyes of its citizens – *as interpreted by the author*.

**Ideas for use in the Classroom:** In a high school Advanced Placement Human Geography or World History, or Geography and History of the World, course, students could read a particular chapter addressing a particular country of study (Dubai, Norway…). A few possibly inappropriate (swearing) words are utilized in every chapter.

Educators – please read prior to incorporating into the classroom based upon your students (and parents/guardians) needs. Some mild language and cultural norms may be questionable for classroom use.