

# Japan and the Koreas

*Japan lies off the Pacific coast of Asia. The Japanese call their country the land of the rising Sun. To the west is the Asian mainland. Stretching from the mainland is a rugged peninsula occupied by North and South Korea.*

Ohaiyo (Hi!). I'm Akiko and I live in Japan. My dad works for Toyota, and my mom stays home. Every morning except Sunday I put on my school uniform and eat rice soup and pickles. I leave for school on the subway at 6:30 A.M. The subway is so crowded that I can't move. Special workers are hired to push more people into each car. At school, I study reading, math, English, science, and writing. I am still learning to write Japanese. I know 1,800 characters, but I need to know about 3,000 to pass the high school exams. For lunch, I eat rice and cold fish my mom packed for me. Before we can go home, we clean the school floors, desks, and windows. My dad usually isn't home until very late at night, so my mom helps me with my homework in our "big" room, which is 8 feet by 8 feet. In the evenings, I go to a special *juku* school to help me study harder for the important school exams. If I do not do well on these exams, I will not go to a good high school, and my whole family will be ashamed. On Sundays I sometimes go with my parents to visit my grandparents, who are rice farmers. We went to a baseball game once. I like rock music a lot, especially U2.

Geisha in Kyōto, Japan



White-naped cranes

Section  
**1**

# Natural Environments

**HOLT**  
**Geography's Impact Video Series**

Watch the video to understand the impact of natural hazards.

**READ TO DISCOVER**

1. What are the major landforms of Japan and the Koreas?
2. Which climates are found in the region?
3. What are some important resources in Japan and the Koreas?

## Reading Strategy

**READING ORGANIZER**

Before you read this section, make a table with three columns. Label one column Japan, the second column South Korea, and the third column North Korea. As you read this section, write information about the landforms, climates, plants, animals, and natural resources of each country in the appropriate column. Include key terms and their definitions.

**IDENTIFY**

Chishima Current (Oyashio)

Japan Current (Kuroshio)

**DEFINE**

tsunamis

flyway

**LOCATE**

Hokkaidō

Honshū

**Locate, continued**

Shikoku

Kyūshū

Inland Sea

Ryukyu Islands

Okinawa

Kuril Islands

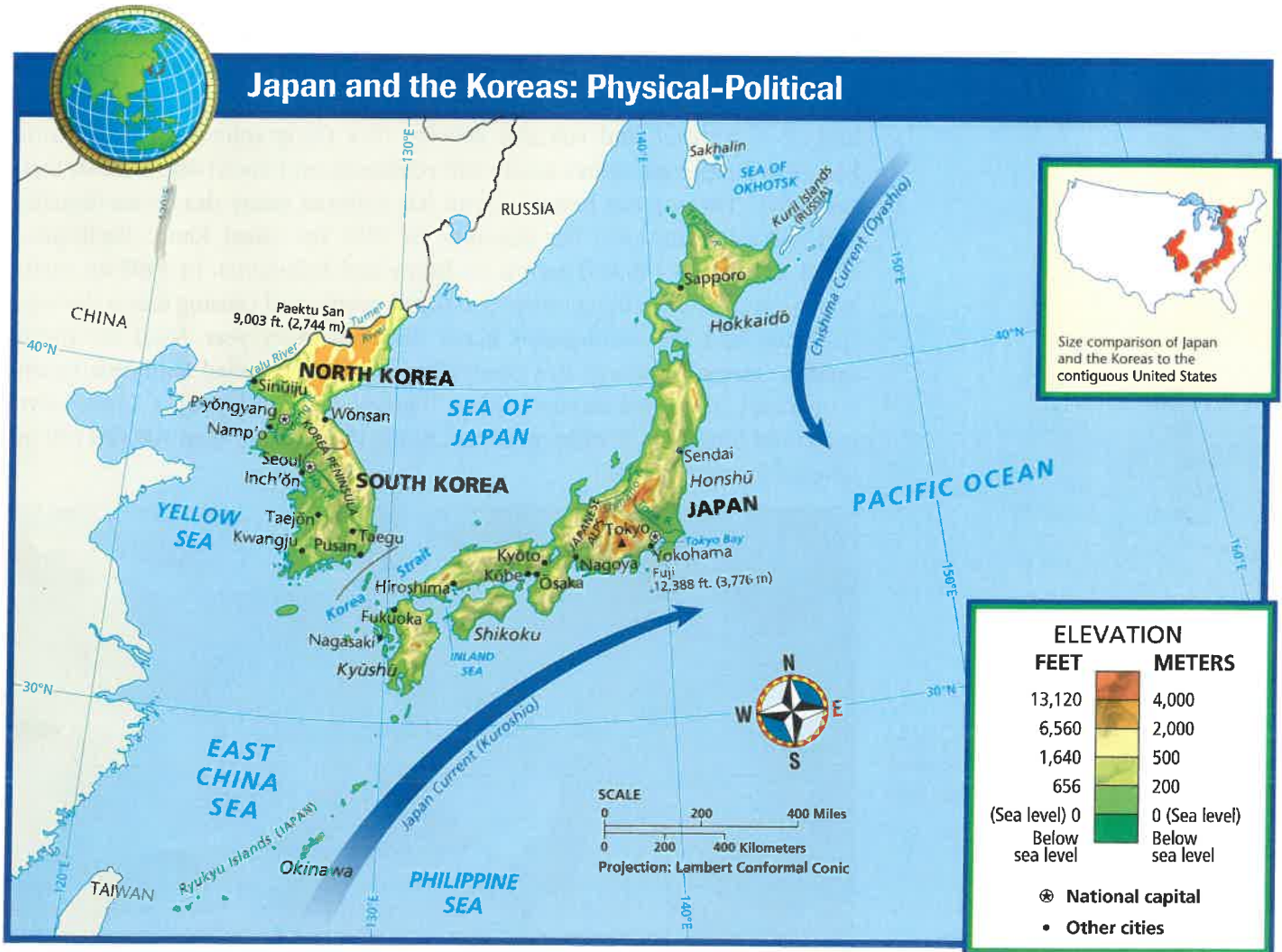
Japanese Alps

Fuji

Sea of Japan

Korea Peninsula

## Japan and the Koreas: Physical-Political





*Fuji's volcanic cone is one of Japan's most recognized landmarks. Although Fuji has not erupted since 1707, geologists consider it an active volcano.*

## Landforms

Four main islands and thousands of smaller ones make up Japan. From north to south, the four main islands are Hokkaidō (hoh-KY-doh), Honshū (HAWN-shoo), Shikoku (shee-KOH-ko), and Kyūshū (KYOO-shoo). Honshū is the largest and most populous island. The Inland Sea separates the three main southern islands. The smaller Ryūkyū (ree-YOO-kyoo) Islands to the south are also part of Japan. Okinawa is the largest of these. Japan also claims the Kuril (KYOOHR-eel) Islands to the north. The Soviet Union occupied the Kurils at the end of World War II. Russia now controls them.

More than 70 percent of Japan is mountainous. Japan's longest mountain range is the Japanese Alps. This range forms a rugged volcanic spine on the island of Honshū.

Japan's highest peak, Fuji, rises to 12,388 feet (3,776 m) in central Honshū. Fuji's snow-capped volcanic cone has long been a symbol of Japan. The rest of the land—less than 30 percent—is made up of plains. Most are located on the Pacific coast of Honshū. The three most important plains include the Kanto Plain near Tokyo and the Nobi (NOH-bee) Plain near Nagoya. The third, in the Kansai region, lies near the cities of Kōbe (KOH-bay) and Ōsaka (oh-SAH-kah). All three coastal plains are densely populated.

Japan lies along a subduction zone. The Pacific plate dives under the Eurasian and Philippine plates in this zone. This location makes the islands a hotbed of tectonic and volcanic activity. (See Geography for Life: Tectonic Forces in Japan.) Japan has nearly 200 volcanoes, and about one third of these are active. Throughout history, Japan has suffered many deadly earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. For example, in 1923 the Great Kanto Earthquake killed more than 140,000 people in Tokyo and Yokohama. In 1995 an earthquake struck Kōbe, killing more than 6,400 people and causing major damage. As many as 1,500 earthquakes occur in Japan every year. Most are minor quakes. Tectonic activity also creates large sea waves called **tsunamis** (soo-NAH-meess). The word *tsunami* means “harbor wave” in Japanese. These waves can travel hundreds of miles per hour. Some rise to more than 100 feet (30 m) when they reach shore.

*The rugged Korea Peninsula is made up of rocks such as granite and gneiss and has a rocky coastline.*



West of Japan, across the Sea of Japan and Korea Strait, lies the Korea Peninsula. This 600-mile-long (965-km) peninsula is about the same size as the state of Utah. To the west is the Yellow Sea. Two countries, North Korea and South Korea, occupy the Korea Peninsula. North Korea borders China along the Yalu and Tumen Rivers. It also shares a short border with Russia in the far northeast.

The peninsula's landforms are mostly hills and low mountains. Unlike Japan, the Koreans do not have active volcanoes. The most mountainous region is in the northeast. Several peaks there rise higher than 8,000 feet (2,438 m). Steep mountains plunge into the sea along the east coast. A coastal plain is located on the west coast. This crowded plain contains the peninsula's best farmland and most of its population.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Physical Systems* How do tectonic forces affect Japan?

## Climates, Plants, and Animals

The Asian monsoon system influences the climates of Japan and the Korea Peninsula. During the summer, moist Pacific winds sweep across the region from the south. During the winter, dry northwest winds blow from Siberia in eastern Russia. Precipitation is greatest in the summer months. Most areas get between 40–60 inches (100–150 cm) of annual precipitation. (See the precipitation map in the unit atlas.) Typhoons from the tropical Pacific Ocean occasionally strike the Japanese and Korean coasts in the late summer and fall months.

Japan spans almost the same latitudes as the east coast of the United States. Therefore, the climates found in each place are similar. Hokkaidō and northern Honshū have a humid continental climate similar to that of the New England states. The cold **Chishima Current** (**Oyashio**) from the north cools summers. Cold winds blowing from the Asian mainland bring severe winters to northern Japan. Heavy snows fall in the mountains, particularly on Japan's western slopes. Southern Japan, including Kyūshū, Shikoku, and southern Honshū, has a humid subtropical climate similar to that of the southeastern United States. The warm **Japan Current** (**Kuroshio**) brings moist marine air to these areas. Summers are quite warm and humid, and winters are mild.

The Korea Peninsula has a similar climate pattern. The north has a humid continental climate, and the south has a humid subtropical climate. North Korea experiences very cold and snowy winters. South Korea's winters are milder. Summers are warm and humid across most of the peninsula.

Temperate and middle-latitude forests cover much of Japan and the Koreas. These forests contain camphor, oak, and pine trees. Maples are also common in Japan and are greatly admired for their beautiful fall colors. Some forests in the Koreas have been cleared. Deforestation and population growth have greatly limited the habitats of many large mammals there. Even in remote areas, bears, leopards, and tigers have almost disappeared. In Japan, however, many mammals are still common in forested mountain areas. These animals include antelope, bears, deer, and foxes. Both Japan and the Koreas are



Japanese macaques (muh-KAKS), or snow monkeys, live on the northern tip of Honshū at 41° N latitude. This latitude marks the northern limit of monkey habitation in the world. Macaques survive 4 to 5 months of winter snow cover each year by eating tree bark.



### Internet connect

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KEYWORD: SW3 CH28

FOR: Web sites about Japan and the Koreas





**INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD**

Tokyo's Tsukiji Market is one of the largest fish markets in the world. Every day, fresh fish are shipped in from around the world. However, even though Japan's fishing fleet is one of the most advanced and successful in the world, the country still imports seafood to meet its huge demand. **How might improved technology have both positive and negative effects on Japan's fishing industry?**

also on a major flyway—a migration route for birds. Hundreds of species of migratory birds pass through Japan and the Koreas on their journeys north and south.

✓ **READING CHECK: Physical Systems** How do the locations of warm and cold ocean currents affect the region's climates?

## Natural Resources

Mineral and energy resources are quite limited in Japan. As a result, the Japanese rely heavily on oil and coal imports. Japan's industrial economy also depends on imports for many industrial metals and minerals. These imports include iron and aluminum. Because of its expensive oil imports, Japan has made efforts to conserve energy. Nuclear and hydropower plants have helped

lower the country's dependence on imported oil. The Koreas are also oil-dependent and use nuclear power and hydropower. North Korea has deposits of iron ore, copper, lead, and coal.

More than 65 percent of Japan is forested—a very high percentage. In low-land areas, deciduous forests are common. Mountain regions have more evergreen trees. Commercial forestry in Japan is carefully controlled to limit soil erosion and protect plant and animal species. To further protect its forest resources, Japan imports much of its timber from Canada, Southeast Asia, and the United States.

Japan's island geography has helped create a culture that depends on the sea for much of its protein. Japanese waters are rich in marine life, and Japan has one of the world's largest fishing fleets. South Korea also has a large fishing fleet. Despite worldwide protests against whaling, the Japanese continue to hunt whales in international waters. In addition, aquaculture supplies fish, shellfish, seaweed, and pearls (from oysters) in Japan. Sometimes this practice is called sea farming.

✓ **READING CHECK: Places and Regions** From where do the Japanese get much of the protein in their diet?



## Review

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Keyword: SW3 HP28

**Identify** Chishima Current (Oyashio), Japan Current (Kuroshio)

**Define** tsunamis, flyway

### Working with Sketch Maps

On a map of Japan and the Koreas that you draw or that your teacher provides, label Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Hokkaidō, Honshū, Shikoku, Kyūshū, Inland Sea, Ryukyu Islands, Okinawa, Kuril Islands, Japanese Alps, Fuji, Sea of Japan, and the Korea Peninsula. Which islands are controlled by Russia but claimed by Japan?

### Reading for the Main Idea

- Places and Regions** About how much of Japan is mountainous?
- Physical Systems** How are the climates of northern Japan and the Koreas different from climates in southern Japan?
- Environment and Society** What are some of the geographic and economic effects of Japan's forestry policies?

### Critical Thinking

- Analyzing** How do you think Japan's dependence on ocean resources influences its culture? How might Japan's whaling policies affect its relations with other countries?

### Organizing What You Know

- Create a chart like the one shown below. Use it to compare the natural environments of Japan and the Koreas.

Japan	The Koreas

# Geography for Life

## Tectonic Forces in Japan

Japan is located in one of the most tectonically active areas in the world. Stretching along the Pacific Ring of Fire, the country sits at the intersection of four major crustal plates. Tectonic forces along these plate boundaries have long shaped Japan's physical geography.

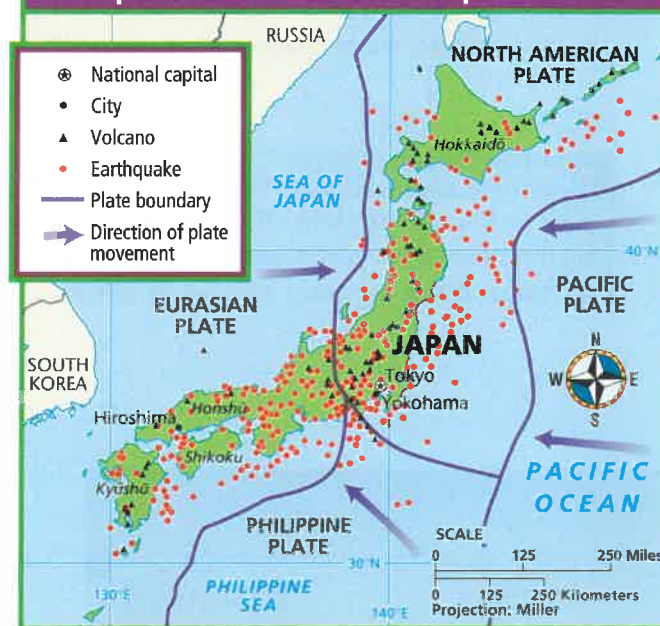
The Japanese islands are formed by the upper part of a large mountain chain that rises from the ocean floor. Volcanic processes created this mountain chain. These mountains are the result of the subduction of the Pacific and Philippine plates under the Eurasian and North American plates. This subduction created the Japan Trench as the heavier oceanic plates were pulled down below the continental plates. Material from the oceanic plates was then slowly heated and transformed into magma. Eventually, the magma rose back to the surface. There it formed the mountains and volcanoes that are now Japan.

Tectonic forces also created patterns in Japan's physical geography. Steep geologically young mountains are common. There has not been enough time for most of the land to be worn down by erosion. Also, Japan's many hot springs and most of its lakes are volcanic in origin.

Tectonic forces in Japan pose numerous hazards. Active volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis are serious threats. For example, the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 wrecked Tokyo and Yokohama. The quake struck just before noon. At that time, Japanese in thousands of homes and restaurants were using gas and wood-burning stoves to cook lunch. As wooden buildings collapsed and gas mains broke, fires raged out of control. Broken water mains made it impossible for firefighters to battle the blazes. The Great Hanshin Earthquake that struck Kōbe in 1995 was also a major disaster. It caused about \$100 billion in damage and left thousands homeless.

*Kōbe's Nagata Ward was devastated by the 1995 earthquake, which sparked raging fires.*

### Earthquakes and Volcanoes in Japan



**INTERPRETING THE MAP** Over the years, Japan has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on earthquake prediction research. How might advanced warning of earthquakes help prevent disasters?

Dealing with and preparing for tectonic hazards has been a major concern in Japan. In fact, the Great Kanto Earthquake influenced engineering practices designed to make buildings earthquake-safe. For example, engineers began to focus on building structures flexible enough to withstand the violent shaking caused by earthquakes. Also, local governments made many changes to building codes. These changes included new rules limiting the height of buildings. Still, the 1995 damage in Kōbe shows that tectonic hazards remain a serious threat in Japan.

### Applying What You Know

- Summarizing** Why is Japan so tectonically active?
- Cause and Effect** How have tectonic hazards affected engineering practices in Japan? How might new engineering techniques help the Japanese adapt to their environment?

# Section 2

## History and Culture

### READ TO DISCOVER

1. What cultures influenced the early history of Japan and the Koreans?
2. What were some major events in the modern history of the region?
3. What are some notable features of Japanese and Korean culture?

### Reading Strategy

**PAIRED SUMMARIZING** Read this section silently, making notes as you read. Working with a partner, take turns summarizing the material and your notes. Stop to discuss ideas that seem confusing. Include key terms and their definitions.

### IDENTIFY

Meiji Restoration

Diet

### DEFINE

shogun

samurai

annex

armistice

demilitarized zone (DMZ)

### LOCATE

Kyōto

Nagasaki

Tokyo

Hiroshima



*In this woodcut, a samurai warrior orders farmers to kneel before their lord. During the rule of the shogun, Japanese society was divided into four main classes: artisans, farmers, merchants, and warriors.*

### Early History

Japan's early inhabitants were the Ainu (i-noo). They may be the descendants of people who migrated into Japan from northern Asia several thousand years ago. In about 300 B.C. invaders from Asia drove the Ainu into northern Japan. The new immigrants introduced rice farming to the islands. Within a few hundred years they had settled all the major Japanese islands. Today the Ainu number only about 20,000. Most live in northern Hokkaidō, where they fish and farm.

Korea's early people came from northern and central Asia. In 108 B.C. the Chinese invaded Korea. This event marked the beginning of a long period of Chinese influence on Korean culture. Eventually, the Koreans recaptured most of the peninsula. Korean culture flourished and became known in Asia for its architecture, ceramics, and painting.

China and Korea greatly influenced Japan's early culture. Over time, however, a distinct Japanese culture emerged. For example, Shintoism became Japan's main religion. Shintoism centers around *kami*. The *kami* are the spirits of natural places, sacred animals, and ancestors.

In the A.D. 700s Japan began to develop a unique political system. The Japanese established a capital at Kyōto (KYOH-toh) in central Honshū. A Japanese emperor was officially in control of Japan's political system. However, by the late 1100s real power rested with a powerful warlord called a **shogun**. Over time the power of the shogun grew. Eventually the

shogun ruled over other wealthy landlords called *daimyo*. The *daimyo* controlled their own local territories. They also had professional warriors called **samurai** who protected them.

The Japanese political system was similar to the feudal system of medieval Europe. There was constant strife as local lords tried to invade each other's territories. However, when the Mongols tried to invade in 1274 and 1281, the Japanese put aside their rivalries. They united to defeat the invaders.

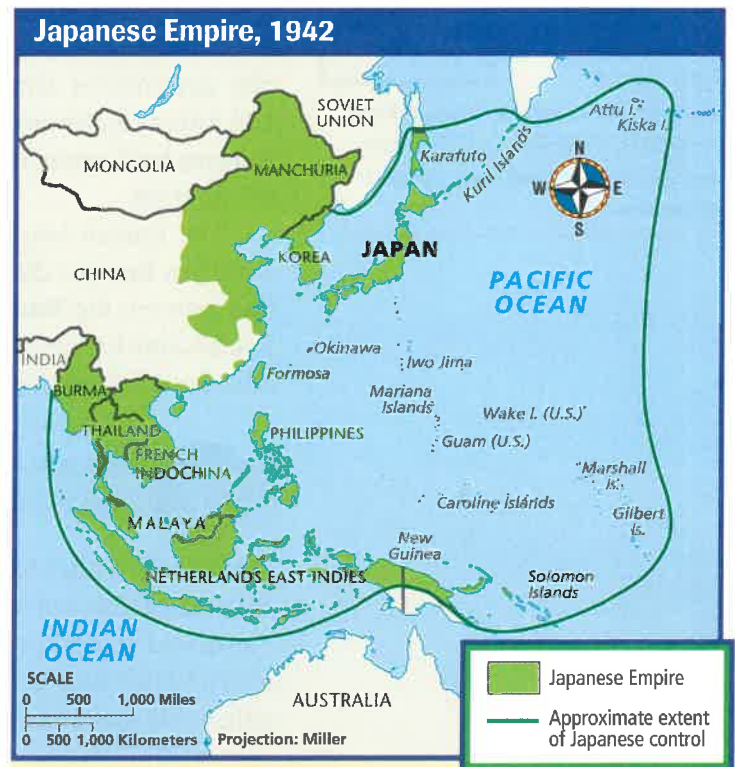
Portuguese traders arrived in Japan in the 1500s. Spanish and Dutch merchants soon followed. These Europeans introduced Christianity to Japan. However, the Japanese drove out European traders and missionaries in the 1600s. They allowed only a few foreigners, mostly Dutch traders, to remain in Japan. They restricted the Dutch traders to an island near the port of Nagasaki. Japanese leaders feared that foreign ideas might cause instability in Japanese society. Japan remained largely cut off from the world from the 1600s to the mid-1800s.

✓ **READING CHECK:** **Human Systems** How did migration and the diffusion of ideas influence cultural change in the region?

## Modern History

In 1853 U.S. Navy ships under Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived in what is now called Tokyo Bay. This contact helped open Japan to foreign influences and trade. Over time these influences sparked change in the country. In 1868 a group of samurai demanding reforms overthrew the last shogun. They restored the emperor's power. This political revolution became known as the **Meiji Restoration**. *Meiji* means "enlightened rule." The Japanese then moved the capital from Kyōto to Tokyo. The emperor began to modernize Japan. Many ideas for modernization came from Europe and the United States. Over time the emperor pushed to reform the country's education system, government, industry, and laws. By 1890 Japan had a constitution and parliamentary system of government.

Japan soon became a world industrial and military power. To meet its growing need for natural resources and increase Japanese influence in Asia, Japan expanded its borders. In 1895 the Japanese took the island of Taiwan from China. In 1905 Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. The Japanese then gained control of the southern half of Sakhalin from Russia. In 1910 Japan annexed Korea. To **annex** an area means to formally join it to a country. Later the Japanese gained control of Manchuria, China's mineral-rich northeastern region. By 1920 Japan's empire also included many islands in the North Pacific. Then in 1937 Japan invaded the rest of China. Japan's growing empire provided the Japanese with valuable natural resources and military bases.



**INTERPRETING THE MAP** By 1942 Japan had conquered Korea and large parts of China and Southeast Asia. The Japanese also established fortifications on many small islands in the Pacific. **What geographic factors led Japan to expand its territory?**





*Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima marks the spot where the first atomic bomb was dropped on August 6, 1945. The blast killed more than 70,000 people and destroyed most of Hiroshima.*



Japan signed an alliance with Germany and Italy in 1940. The next year Japan entered World War II by attacking the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Soon Japan controlled most of Southeast Asia and many Pacific islands. Later in the war, U.S. and Allied forces pushed the Japanese back. The United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Japan then surrendered.

After World War II Japan set up a democratic government. (See Connecting to Government: Japan's Constitution.) That government includes an elected law-making body called the **Diet** (DEE-uh-t) and a prime minister. Japan's emperor is still the symbolic leader of the country but has no political power. With U.S. financial aid, Japan began to rebuild its economy and infrastructure.

Japan lost Korea at the end of World War II. The United States and Soviet Union then divided Korea along the 38th parallel (38° N latitude). The Soviets occupied the northern part of the peninsula, and the Americans occupied the south. In North Korea the Soviets set up a communist government called the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In the south the United Nations supervised an election. South Korea then became the Republic of Korea. In 1949 the Soviet and U.S. occupation forces withdrew.

In 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea, sparking the Korean War. The UN sent troops to defend South Korea. Most were U.S. troops. UN forces drove the North Koreans back and nearly ended the war. However, China's communist government sent troops to support North Korea and again drove the UN forces southward. Eventually, the UN troops were able to push the North Koreans back again. In 1953 the two sides signed an **armistice**, or truce, to end the fighting.

The Korean War caused great damage across the peninsula. More than 1 million Koreans died. At the end of the fighting, the two sides set up a truce line between the North and South Korean forces. The strip of land along this line became known as the **demilitarized zone (DMZ)**. It stretches east-to-west near the old boundary at the 38th parallel.



## FOCUS ON HISTORY

**The DMZ** Neither North nor South Korea governs the DMZ, which is about 150 miles long (240 km) and 2.5 miles (4 km) wide. At the end of the fighting, North and South Korean troops withdrew from the DMZ. This movement created a buffer zone between the two countries' armies. No military forces from either side may enter the area.

*The DMZ between North and South Korea is one of the most heavily guarded borders in the world. The North Korean army keeps about 700,000 troops stationed near the DMZ. South Korea also has many troops stationed in the area, and some 37,000 American soldiers help to defend its border.*





**INTERPRETING THE MAP** Heavy fighting took place in the hills and ridges along the 38th parallel during the Korean War. The Iron Triangle, a valley surrounded by steep hills, was a particularly strategic area fought over by North Korean and UN forces. How do you think the fighting in this region shaped the boundaries of the DMZ?

The DMZ has become known as one of the most fortified and tense borders in the world. North Korean troops face South Korean and U.S. troops across the divide. The landscape along the edges of the DMZ features barbed wire, concrete walls, guard towers, mines, and tank traps. However, the area between the edges is largely free of humans.

The almost total lack of human activity in the DMZ over the last 50 years has allowed a unique ecosystem to develop. Many rare and endangered animals have found refuge in the DMZ. These include Siberian tigers and Amur leopards. The red-crowned crane and the white-naped crane, two of the world's most endangered birds, also live there. Deforestation and urban growth have reduced the habitats of these animals in other parts of the peninsula.

A group is now working to turn the region into a system of nature reserves and protected areas. This group, called the DMZ Forum, hopes to create a future "peace park" out of the area. Conservation issues will likely remain unresolved for a while, however. First, the Koreans must resolve the political and military differences that separate them.

**READING CHECK: Human Systems** What processes created the unique ecosystem between North and South Korea?

## Culture

Many elements of Japanese and Korean culture originated in China. For example, Chinese ideas and practices were the basis for Japan's early political systems. Chinese customs, food, and architecture have also greatly influenced the region.

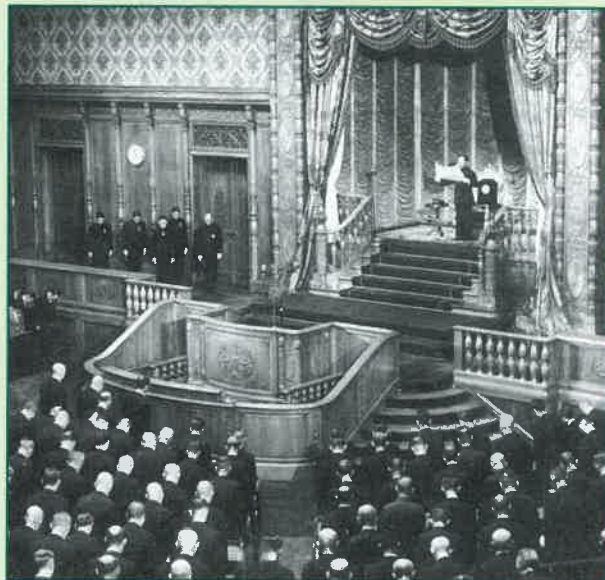
**People and Languages** Japan and the Koreans are each dominated by a single major ethnic group with a common language. In Japan some 99 percent of the population are ethnic Japanese. The small minority groups are Koreans, Chinese, and Ainu. The Japanese language is spoken throughout the country,

## Japan's Constitution

Allied occupation forces directed the creation of Japan's current constitution after World War II. This new democratic constitution took effect on May 3, 1947. It completely changed Japan's form of government.

Japan's earlier Meiji constitution of 1889 had granted supreme power to Japan's emperor. However, the 1947 constitution gave power to the Japanese people through their elected legislature, the Diet. The emperor remained important in government only as "the symbol of the State and the unity of the people." Japan's new constitution also guaranteed individual freedoms, such as freedom of speech, religion, and the press. These individual rights had not been guaranteed under Japan's earlier constitution. Japan's new constitution also granted women the right to vote.

**Analyzing Information** How is the adoption of the 1947 constitution an example of the spread of culture traits and cultural convergence?



and several regional dialects exist. Japanese may be related to Korean. Written Japanese uses a combination of Chinese characters and Japanese symbols called kana.

Nearly the entire population of North and South Korea are ethnic Koreans. Chinese are the main minority group. The Korean language is spoken throughout the peninsula, and there are several major dialects. About half of all Korean words come from Chinese. However, the grammar of Korean is similar to Japanese. Written Korean uses a 24-letter alphabet called hangul.

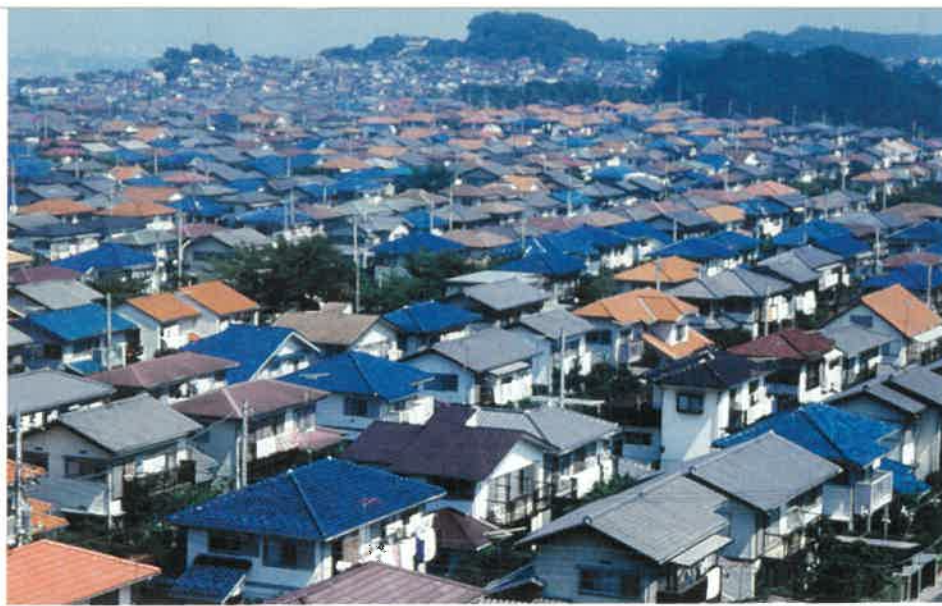
**Religion** Buddhism was introduced into Japan from China in the A.D. 500s. Today a combination of Shintoism and Buddhism dominates religion in Japan. Shintoism centers around the worship of natural spirits and ancestors. Buddhism stresses the unimportance of material goods. Both religions have greatly influenced Japan's traditional culture. For example, the same family might hold Shinto marriage ceremonies and Buddhist funerals.

Korea's major religion has historically been a blend of Buddhism and Confucianism. However, Christianity is now a major religion in South Korea. This is true even though Korea was never a European colony. About half of South Korea's population is Christian. North Korea's communist government officially allows freedom of religion. The state controls most religious activity, however.

**Settlement and Land Use** Japan is about the same size as California. Yet the country is home to nearly 127 million people—nearly four times as many people as there are in California. In fact, Japan is one of the world's most densely populated countries. On average there are 869 people per square mile in Japan. Most people live along Japan's narrow coastal plains, which are very crowded. The largest and most densely settled plains are in eastern Honshū. Japan's largest cities are also found there. (See the population map in the unit atlas.)



*The Daibutsu, or Great Buddha, in Kamakura, Japan, attracts pilgrims and tourists from all over the country. The hollow bronze statue is 37 feet (11 m) tall. Visitors can enter it through a door in the back.*



#### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

*Houses are packed together on this densely settled coastal plain near Tokyo. In areas close to cities, population densities can reach several thousand people per square mile. What human processes contribute to Japan's tremendous population density?*

The Koreans are also densely populated. The most crowded areas lie along the west coast. South Korea's urban areas have grown tremendously in the last decades. About 81 percent of South Koreans now live in urban areas. In North Korea, only about 60 percent of the population is urban.

✓ **READING CHECK:** **Environment and Society** Where do most Japanese live, and where are the country's largest cities?

**Food** Japan's main food is rice, which the Japanese eat at most meals. Fish are the major source of protein. Sushi (SOOH-shee)—vinegared rice and vegetables or raw fish—and sashimi (SAH-shee-mee)—thin slices of raw fish—are popular. Other common foods include cooked vegetables, tofu, and various types of noodles. Tea is the most popular drink. The diet of many Japanese has been changing since World War II. Fast food is more common, and people are eating more meat and dairy products.

Korea's staple food is also rice. Grilled meats and a wide range of vegetables are common. Barley, potatoes, and wheat are grown and used in many foods. One of the most popular dishes in Korea is kimchi (KIM-chee). This spicy dish is a mixture of Chinese cabbage, garlic, ginger, and other vegetables.

**Education** Japan has an excellent education system and one of the highest literacy rates in the world. This system has helped Japan become an industrial and economic power. Almost all children attend elementary and junior high schools, which are free. Students study many different subjects, such as art, mathematics, science, and social studies. Much time is spent learning how to read and write the Japanese language. There is intense competition among students to get into Japan's best universities. Many high school students attend special "cram" schools to prepare for difficult university entrance exams.

South Korea's education system is similar to Japan's. Most children attend free elementary, middle, and high schools. About one third of high school graduates go on to university. Admission is based on grueling entrance exams. In North Korea, teaching communist ideology is a major focus of the education system. The government also requires students to work as part of their



Korean women perform a traditional fan dance. The dancers' dresses are like those worn centuries ago by the Korean nobility. As they dance, the women make patterns with their fans.



schooling. Higher education in North Korea is much more limited than in South Korea and Japan. However, adult education is widespread. Many adults attend technical schools at night.

**Traditions and Customs** Western influences have greatly altered Japanese culture. Still, many traditions are important. Family ties are strong, and respect for elders is important. Traditional dress for both men and women is the kimono—a long robe with wide sleeves. Kimonos are mostly worn for special occasions. Removing one's shoes before entering a house is a common custom. Japanese wear slippers or socks instead of shoes inside the home.

The Japanese have a rich heritage in the arts. Traditional music is played on native instruments such as drums, flutes, and gongs. Japanese theater called Kabuki (kuh-BOO-kee) uses colorful costumes and makeup to portray historical events. In literature several types of Japanese poetry are widely popular. Painting, sculpture, and many other decorative arts also have a long history in Japan.

In the Koreas the central importance of family life has declined somewhat as the peninsula has developed and urbanized. However, many traditions and customs survive. For example, traditional clothing styles are still common, particularly in North Korea. Korean dance is popular in both North and South Korea. Dancers wear traditional clothes called *hanbok*.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Places and Regions* How is education in Japan and South Korea different from education in North Korea?

## Section 2

# Review

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### Identify

Meiji Restoration  
Diet

### Define

shogun, samurai,  
annex, armistice, demilitarized zone (DMZ)

### Working with Sketch Maps

On the map you created in Section 1, label Kyōto, Nagasaki, Tokyo, and Hiroshima. Which city became Japan's capital after the Meiji Restoration?

### Reading for the Main Idea

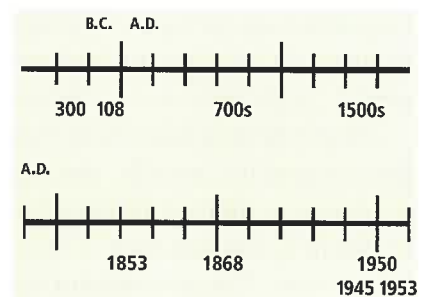
- The Uses of Geography** What events have created the boundary between North Korea and South Korea?
- The Uses of Geography** How did trade and the diffusion of ideas lead to cultural change in Japan in the last half of the 1800s?

### Critical Thinking

- Drawing Inferences and Conclusions** What geographic factors may have influenced Japan's ability to control its territory and keep European traders out before the mid-1800s? How did this affect Japan's foreign policy at the time?
- Identifying Points of View** How do you think European traders and Japanese leaders viewed Japan differently?

### Organizing What You Know

- Copy the time line below. Use it to describe major events in the region's history.



# Section 3

## The Region Today

### READ TO DISCOVER

1. What are some characteristics of Japan today?
2. How is life in North Korea different from life in South Korea?

### Reading Strategy

**TAKING NOTES** Taking notes while you read will help you understand and remember the information in this section. Your notes will be useful for reviewing the material. Use the headings in this section to create an outline. As you read about the Japan and the Koreas today, write details you learn beneath each heading. Include key terms and their definitions.

### DEFINE

subsidies  
work ethic  
export economy  
trade surplus  
urban agglomeration

### LOCATE

Yokohama	Kōbe
Nagoya	P'yōngyang
Ōsaka	Seoul

## Modern Japan

Despite modern influences, traditional Japanese culture remains an important part of Japanese society. Many Japanese still follow traditional ways of life, particularly in rural areas. A land of contrasts, Japan blends traditional and modern and East and West.

**Agriculture** About 11 percent of Japan is arable, and about 5 percent of Japanese workers are farmers. However, these farmers supply about 70 percent of the country's food needs. They have succeeded by using terraced cultivation and modern farming methods. Government **subsidies**, or financial support, protect Japanese farmers from foreign competition.

Farmers use more than half of Japan's farmland to grow rice. Tea, soybeans, fruits and vegetables, and mulberry trees (for silkworms) come from the south. Northern Japan is colder and has a shorter growing season. Farmers grow wheat, other grains, and vegetables there. Hokkaidō has a successful dairy industry.

Most Japanese farmers live in small villages. The average farm is only 2.5 acres (1 ha). However, expanding cities are taking over more and more good farmland.

**Industry** Japan began its rapid economic growth in the 1950s. Soon the country became a model for economic success. One of the reasons for this success was Japan's culture. The Japanese have a strong **work ethic**—a belief that work itself has moral value. Long workdays and six-day workweeks are common. Also, most workers feel loyal to

### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

*A farmer in central Japan harvests his rice crop. Farm machinery used in Japanese agriculture is often small and efficient. **Why do you think many Japanese farmers prefer smaller farm machinery?***



their companies. In turn, many companies have offered employees lifetime employment, although this has recently been changing. Japanese industry also benefited from the *keiretsu* system. This system brings together banking, big business, and government to set common goals. The combined efforts of these three groups helped Japanese industry grow.

In the 1990s, however, Japan faced stiff competition from the newly industrialized countries of East and Southeast Asia. The *keiretsu* system could not adapt quickly enough in the rapidly changing world economy. Many observers believe Japan will need to make some changes to regain its economic leadership in Asia. For example, many argue that Japan must allow more foreign competition and foreign investment into the country.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Human Systems* What is the *keiretsu* system?

**International Economy** Japan has been very successful at selling and manufacturing its products overseas. For example, Japanese companies have auto-manufacturing plants in the United States, which is a major market for Japanese cars. Japanese companies also invest in many other countries.

Japan's main economic competition comes from other Asian countries like China and South Korea. This competition has hurt some Japanese industries, such as shipbuilding and steel production. For example, South Korea is now the world's leading shipbuilder. Japan once dominated this industry. In the future, China may become the leader in shipbuilding because of its lower labor costs. However, Japan remains a world leader in quality manufactured products like automobiles, cameras, and electronics. It is also a leader in robotics and biotechnology.

Japan has an **export economy**. In this type of economy, goods are produced mainly for export rather than for domestic use. Japan imports raw materials and energy and exports high-quality manufactured goods. Japan's export economy is so strong that Japan has built up a huge **trade surplus**. A trade surplus exists when a country exports more than it imports. For example, Japan has a large trade surplus with the United States. This has become an important issue in U.S.-Japanese trade relations. The U.S. government wants Japan to open its markets to more American goods.

#### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

Japan exports between 4 and 5 million automobiles each year and is the world's second-largest automobile producer after the United States. Consumers around the world buy Japanese cars for their high quality, excellent design, and competitive prices. **How do you think the export of Japanese cars to the United States affects automobile production in this country?**



**Urban Geography** Japan has many industrial regions. However, the country's industrial-urban core is located on Honshū's eastern coastal plains. Three large functional regions can be found there. The Keihin region includes Tokyo and Yokohama. To the southwest lies the Chukyo region, which includes the city of Nagoya. The cities of Ōsaka, Kōbe, and Kyōto are part of the Keihanshin region even farther west. A dense network of high-speed trains, highways, and air services connects these regions. (See Case Study: High-Speed Rail.)

Tokyo-Yokohama is the largest **urban agglomeration** in the world. An urban agglomeration is a densely populated region surrounding a central city. About 26 million people are jammed into the urban region of Tokyo-Yokohama. This region is Japan's center of commerce, education, entertainment, government, and trade. Because little land is available, real estate prices are among the highest in the world. Yokohama, just to the south on Tokyo Bay, is Japan's busiest seaport.

The Chukyo region around Nagoya is important in the production of textiles, ceramics, and motor vehicles. Kōbe and Ōsaka—Japan's second-largest city—are major seaports. Kyōto is Japan's ancient capital.

**Modern Ways of Life** Most Japanese are middle-class. Families typically live in suburban areas. Parents often spend several hours each day commuting to and from work in the cities. Most Japanese families are small, with one or two children. Homes are also small and expensive. Sliding wooden screens separate sparsely furnished rooms. Families are used to tight spaces, and children often share bedrooms.

Japanese society has been greatly influenced by Western culture. For example, Western clothing, foods, and music are very popular. Baseball, golf, skiing, and soccer are common forms of recreation. At the same time, the Japanese have also influenced Western culture. Sushi bars and Japanese video games, landscaping, and cartoons can be found around the world.

Japan has one of the lowest birthrates in the world. In addition, life expectancy rates—84 years for women and 78 for men—are among the world's highest. As fewer people are born and people live longer, the average age of Japan's population is increasing. This "graying" population puts increased demands on health care and social services.

The role of women in Japanese society has also changed in recent decades. Women now receive more education than before and are an important part of the workforce.



**INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD** *Tokyo is one of the largest cities in the world and is the focus of Japan's transportation network. What can you see in this photo that shows Tokyo is an important functional region?*

**INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD**

*A family in Japan gets by with very little space when compared to a typical American family. What might be some reasons that Japanese houses are smaller on average than American houses?*







North Koreans honor a giant statue of Kim Il Sung, leader of North Korea from 1948 until his death in 1994. Kim set up a communist government in North Korea with close ties to the Soviet Union and China.

More than 50 percent of Japanese women are employed. As economic opportunities for women have grown, so have other opportunities. For example, women have become more involved in politics and government.

✓ **READING CHECK: Human Systems** How have economic opportunities for women in Japan changed in recent decades?

## The Two Koreas

The two Koreas share a common culture, but their level of political and economic development is very different. (See the unit Fast Facts table.) For example, the per capita GDP of South Korea is more than 16 times that of North Korea.

**North Korea** North Korea is an isolated country under a strict communist dictatorship. The country's leader, Kim Jong Il, came to power when his father died in 1994. North Korea has a large military and a command economy. The state controls most aspects of its citizens' lives. For example, the government limits and controls travel within the country. In general, government officials and high-ranking military officers live more comfortably than the average North Korean.

Outside the capital of P'yŏngyang (pyuhng-YANG), most North Koreans live in poverty. The country's farming system is based on inefficient communist state farms. The government lets some farmers have small garden plots for themselves. However, farmers cannot grow enough to feed themselves. Droughts and floods have caused severe food shortages. When the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, Soviet aid ended. The North Korean economy then collapsed. Food shipments from the United Nations have helped the country feed itself in recent years, but major problems still exist. Thousands of North Koreans have fled to China to seek a better life.

Seoul's Namdaemun Market features a wide range of everyday items and consumer goods.



**South Korea** For many years South Korea's military dominated the government. However, today the country has a democratically elected government. South Koreans enjoy many rights and freedoms not found in the north. In addition, South Korea used U.S. aid to rebuild its industries after the Korean War. It developed from a poor farming country into an industrial "Asian Tiger" in only decades. "Asian Tiger" is a term used to describe countries in East and Southeast Asia that have experienced rapid economic growth in recent decades. Like Japan, South Korea has an export economy. Its major industries are shipbuilding, steel, automobiles, textiles, and electronics.

South Korea's business model is similar to the *keiretsu* model in Japan. Huge family-owned conglomerates called *chaebol* dominate South Korea's economy and political system. Four *chaebol* control most of South Korea's manufacturing and exports. This situation has prevented competition and led to corruption and debt. The government has passed recent reforms



## INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

In June 2000 Presidents Kim Jong Il of North Korea (left) and Kim Dae Jung of South Korea (right) met. The two leaders pledged to improve their countries' relations and to work toward the reunification of the peninsula. How do you think these meetings might affect relations between North and South Korea?

to try to improve South Korea's economy. They include opening the market to foreign investment and competition.

South Korea has a large urban middle class with access to consumer goods. The country's capital and largest city is Seoul (SOHL). Seoul is a huge city and a growing industrial and cultural center. South Korea's small farming villages are disappearing as the country continues to urbanize.

**Korean Reunification** For decades Koreans have hoped to reunify their two countries. In recent years the two Koreas have had better relations. For example, South Korean tourists have been able to visit a few selected areas of North Korea. Talks and official visits continue, but the countries remain worlds apart. Many South Koreans fear that North Korea might develop and possibly use nuclear weapons. Another concern is whether South Korea could afford the cost of reuniting with one of the world's poorest countries.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Places and Regions* How are the economies of North Korea and South Korea different?



North Korea has almost no privately owned cars. The government owns nearly all cars and sets them aside for official use only.



## Review

### Define

subsidies  
work ethic  
export economy  
trade surplus  
urban agglomeration

### Working with Sketch Maps

On the map you created in Section 2, label Yokohama, Nagoya, Ōsaka, Kōbe, P'yŏngyang, and Seoul. Which city is South Korea's capital and economic center?

### Reading for the Main Idea

- Human Systems** How did Japan's culture help the country develop economically?
- Places and Regions** What are some important characteristics of the Japanese and South Korean market economies?
- Places and Regions** What are some obstacles to Korean reunification?

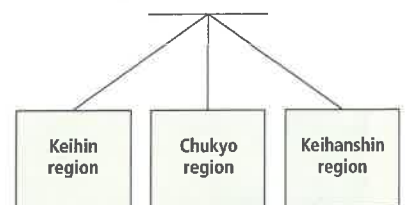
### Critical Thinking

- Comparing** How are politics, economics, and society in North Korea related? How does this situation differ in South Korea?

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Keyword: SW3 HP28

### Organizing What You Know

- Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to describe the three functional regions that are the industrial-urban core of Japan.



# CASE STUDY

## Japan's High-Speed Rail

**Human Systems** Japanese transportation engineers have developed one of the most sophisticated, efficient, and profitable rail networks in the world. For many Japanese travelers, railways are the preferred mode of transportation. A number of geographic factors have made train travel more attractive than road or air transportation.

### Linking Major Urban Centers

The most advanced part of the Japanese rail network is the *Shinkansen*. This high-speed train links major urban centers such as Tokyo and Ōsaka. Only 320 miles (515 km) apart, Tokyo and Ōsaka lie on the southern coast of Japan's largest island, Honshū. These cities have easy access to deepwater ports. This access has helped them develop into the urban and industrial core of Japan. In 1964 the first *Shinkansen* line connected Tokyo and Ōsaka. It was named the "New Tokaido Line" after an ancient highway that once linked Kyōto and Tokyo. By 1975 the Japanese had extended the main rail line to Fukuoka. That city

lies at the western edge of Japan's manufacturing belt on the island of Kyūshū. The Japanese have since added other lines radiating northward from Tokyo.

The most impressive aspect of the Japanese *Shinkansen* system is the incredible speeds that trains move. The fastest trains from Tokyo to Ōsaka travel at 160 miles per hour (257 kph). The trains can cover the 664-mile (1,070-km) journey from Tokyo to Hakata in less than seven hours and carry 1,000 passengers. In addition to being fast, the trains run often and on time. These qualities are very important for business passengers. For example, during the morning and evening rush hours, trains run every 7.5 minutes. On average, each train misses its schedule by only 36 seconds!

### Factors Behind Success

Why has rail travel been so successful in Japan? Japan is a country where space is limited and land values are very high. As a result, trains have a distinct advantage over road and air travel. Why is this so? Road travel gobbles up larger chunks of real estate than rail networks. For example, cars and trucks need highways, access ramps, gas stations, and parking lots. In turn, increasing traffic constantly creates pressure to build even more roads. These roads then eat up even more space. High fuel costs can also make car and truck travel expensive. In fact, Japanese fuel prices are often about three times higher



**INTERPRETING THE MAP** Begun in the 1960s, the Shinkansen system now connects most of Japan's major cities, with even more routes planned or under construction. Which areas on the map have lines planned or under construction? Why do you think these routes have not yet been built?

than those in the United States. It should be no surprise, then, that many Japanese do not want to take cars on long trips.

Airports present similar disadvantages for mass travel in a country like Japan. For one thing, they also require large areas of land. The most desirable airport locations are close to large urban areas. These locations are often in places where land prices are highest. In addition, the availability of land there is very limited. In Tokyo planners decided to locate the city's main airport an hour away—by train. Workers in Ōsaka built a new airport in the harbor on a human-made island. When you factor in the time it takes to get to and from these airports, trains can be faster than airplanes. Japanese travelers seem to agree. Even with expansion of their airports, Ōsaka and Tokyo are linked by six times as many trains as airline flights. In fact, train travel accounts for 84 percent of all trips between the two cities.

### Spreading Success Around

Japan is not the only place where high-speed train travel makes sense. In 1998, 12 countries had passenger trains that average more than 125 miles per hour (200 kph). Sixteen other high-speed railways were in

*Originally designed to carry people over long distances, Shinkansen trains have become popular among Japanese commuters.*



*All Shinkansen trains are monitored by computers in Tokyo. The computers control the trains' speeds and the distances between them.*

development in places such as South Korea and Sweden.

The same factors that led to the success of the *Shinkansen* are found where other such networks are in development. Many large cities are close together. In addition, road and air travel are stretched to the limit. As a result, high-speed rail is becoming more appealing. Even large countries have found high-speed rail attractive. In 1996, for example, Chinese leaders set a goal to launch a high-speed link between Beijing and Shanghai. Officials hope to cut the travel time between the cities from 17 hours to six or seven hours. The United States recently began operating high-speed train service between New York and Washington, D.C. Projects in Texas and California have also been proposed. Supporters of projects like these believe high-speed rail travel is likely to become an increasingly popular way to travel in densely populated regions. The Japanese *Shinkansen* set the standard for these future projects.

### Applying What You Know

- 1. Summarizing** What factors have made the *Shinkansen* a successful mode of transportation in Japan?
- 2. Making Generalizations** What might be some other solutions to travel problems in countries like Japan?

# CHAPTER 28

# Review

HOLT

## Geography's Impact

Review the video to answer the closing question:  
*How has Japan's position on the Ring of Fire made it so prone to natural hazards?*



### Building Vocabulary

On a separate sheet of paper, explain the following terms by using them correctly in sentences.

tsunamis	armistice
flyway	demilitarized zone (DMZ)
shogun	subsidies
samurai	work ethic
Meiji Restoration	export economy
annex	trade surplus
Diet	urban agglomeration

### Locating Key Places

On a separate sheet of paper, match the letters on the map with their correct labels.

Hokkaidō	Kyūshū	P'yōngyang
Honshū	Sea of Japan	Seoul
Shikoku	Tokyo	



### Understanding the Main Ideas

#### Section 1

- Places and Regions** What are Japan's four main islands? Which is the largest and most populated?
- Physical Systems** Why might you find so many different species of birds in Japan and the Koreas?

#### Section 2

- Places and Regions** During what period did Japan control the Korea Peninsula?
- Human Systems** How are the Japanese and Korean written languages different?

### Section 3

- Environment and Society** What is agriculture like in North Korea?

### Thinking Critically

- Drawing Inferences and Conclusions** How did cultural patterns and attitudes in Japan influence innovation and the diffusion of ideas before the mid-1800s?
- Analyzing Information** Why do you suppose Japan's *keiretsu* system could not adapt quickly enough to the rapidly changing world economy of the 1990s?
- Evaluating** Why do you think the United States maintains a large military presence in South Korea today?

### Using the Geographer's Tools

- Analyzing Maps** Study the map of the Japanese Empire in Section 2. How far did Japan expand its empire in the Pacific?
- Creating Charts** Create a chart describing and comparing the languages, religions, land use patterns, systems of education, and customs of Japan, North Korea, and South Korea.
- Preparing Maps** Use the information in Section 3 to prepare a map of Japan's three major urban-industrial regions. Do you think these are formal, functional, or perceptual regions? Why?

### Writing about Geography

Imagine you are a high school student in Japan. Write a letter to a friend in the United States in which you describe Japan's educational system. How is it similar to the education system in the United States? How is it different? When you are finished with your letter, proofread it to make sure you have used standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.



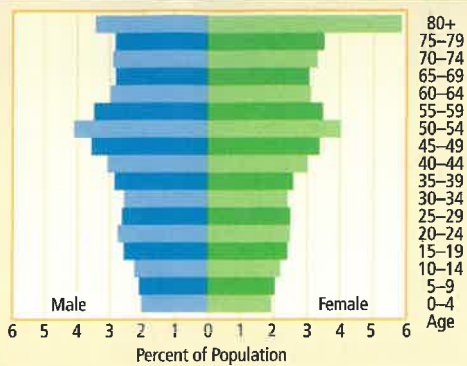
S K I L L B U I L D I N G

## Geography for Life

### Field Work

**Human Systems** Conduct field work to find some Japanese products that affect your daily life. Start by creating a list of the products in your home that were made in Japan. What types of products are they? How much did they cost? Then interview friends and neighbors in your community to find out what Japanese-made products they find useful. What can these products tell us about Japan's level of development and economy? Why do you think Japanese products are so successful in the United States?

Japan: Projected Population Pyramid, 2025



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

**Interpreting Graphs**

Study the projected population pyramid for Japan in 2025. Then answer the following questions.

- According to the population pyramid, in 2025 Japan is projected to have
  - many more younger people than older people.
  - more people under the age of 4 than between 50–54.
  - more people over the age of 40 than below that age.
  - more men than women over the age of 80.
- What factors might account for the way Japan's population pyramid is projected to look in 2025?

**Analyzing Secondary Sources**

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

"Japan's earlier Meiji constitution of 1889 had granted supreme power to Japan's emperor. However, the 1947 constitution gave power to the Japanese people through their elected legislature, the Diet. The emperor remained important in government only as 'the symbol of the State and the unity of the people.' Japan's new constitution also guaranteed individual freedoms, such as freedom of speech, religion, and the press. These individual rights had not been guaranteed under Japan's earlier constitution."

- Which of the following things did Japan's 1947 constitution *not* do?
  - guarantee individual freedoms
  - make the emperor more powerful
  - allow freedom of the press
  - take power from the emperor and give it to the people
- What role did the emperor play in the government set up by the new constitution?

**Alternative Assessment**

PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY



**Learning about Your Local Geography**

**Individual Project: Research**

Like Japan and the Koreas, the United States is on a major flyway for migrating birds. How does this affect the wildlife in your area? Use your local library to learn about migratory birds that pass through your area each year. What are some of these types of birds? Where are they traveling from, and where are they going? At what time of the year do they travel? Write a short report answering these questions. You might want to create a map of the United States that notes important migratory bird routes.

**Internet connect**



**Internet Activity:** go.hrw.com  
KEYWORD: SW3 GT28

Choose a topic on Japan and the Koreas to:

- create a newspaper on Japan and the Koreas.
- research active volcanoes along the Ring of Fire.
- learn about a typical school day in Japan.