

JAPAN AND KOREA

“Japan, North Korea, and South Korea occupy a relatively small portion of northeast Asia but have played a significant role in world history over the past one hundred years.”

“The Japanese call their country *Nippon*, which means ‘source of the sun’”

“Korea has been known as the ‘Hermit Kingdom’ meaning it walled itself off from the rest of the world. While the North continues to hold to that nickname, the South has not.”

Physical Geography:

- Japan is a group of four main islands due east from the coast of Russia and the Korean Peninsula plus a stretch of thousands of smaller islands to the northeast and southwest.
 - 1 - **Hokkaido** - northernmost island - Ainu are the native people
 - 2 - **Honshu** - largest island, home to 80% of the Japanese people. Kanto Plain - **Tokyo**
 - 3 - **Shikoku** - smallest of the main four. Mountainous and heavily forested
 - 4 - **Kyushu** - southernmost and second-most-populous of Japan's main islands
 - Ryukyu Islands - island chain stretching to the southwest. Okinawa
 - **Ogasawara Islands** - southeast of the four main Japanese islands. **Iwo Jima**.
- The Japanese Islands lie in the middle of the Ring of Fire. There is a constant threat of earthquakes and tsunamis. 110 active volcanoes.
- Sea of Japan (East Sea) separates Japan and Korea.
- One of the largest importers of fossil fuels because it lacks mineral resources.

- Korea is a peninsula that extends from northeastern China. Mountains and hills cover most of the peninsula. It has been split into two countries:
 - North Korea
 - South Korea - capital **Seoul**
- The Yellow Sea separates Korea from mainland China. Gobi Desert sandstorms in the spring blow in sand turning the surface of the water yellow.
- Most of the farmland in South Korea is dedicated to growing rice.
- North Korea has large amounts of coal and Tungsten.

“Both Japan and Korea have similar histories. During ancient times both were made up of small regions ruled by competing clans. The **clan** was the basic unit of social, religious, and political organization. Both countries were unified by powerful leaders. Both learned from China's advanced culture, writing, literature, and philosophy.”

Human Geography:

- On the Japanese island of Honshu, the Yamato clan became the most powerful and forged a unified Japanese state in the 6th century AD
- Shoguns ruled Japan in the emperor's name until 1867. American admiral, Matthew Perry, made Japan open to trade with the threat of force. In 1868 the emperor was restored. Emperor Meiji reigned until 1912 and promoted a modernization program to build a Japanese Empire.
- Japan is a constitutional monarchy with a parliament, like Britain.
- high-context culture - social harmony is of highest importance

- In 935 the Korean peninsula united under the Koryo dynasty. In this time the country formed a unique culture and identity.
- In 1910 Japan gained control of the peninsula and initiated an extensive modernization program.
- After WWII the country divided at the 38th parallel. The US supervised the southern half, the Soviet Union oversaw the northern half. The superior north invaded the south in 1950. After three years of warfare, there was a truce setting up the thirty-eighth parallel as a demilitarized zone (DMZ).
- South Korea has been a democratic republic since 1987.
- North Korea's official name is - **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** however it is not democratic, a republic, or for the people. The focus of the government is the glorification of their leader - Kim Jong Un, his father Kim Jong Il, and grandfather Kim Il Sung, the "Great Leader."

Religion - p486-487

- Shinto

VOCABULARY:

- prefecture
- tsunamis
- samurai
- shogun
- DMZ