

Japan and the Koreas**Lesson 1****MAIN IDEAS**

1. The main physical features of Japan and the Koreas are rugged mountains.
2. The climates and resources of Japan and the Koreas vary from north to south.

Key Terms and Places

Fuji Japan's highest mountain

Korean Peninsula Asian peninsula that includes both North Korea and South Korea

tsunamis destructive waves caused by large underwater earthquakes

fishery place where lots of fish and other seafood can be caught

Lesson Summary**PHYSICAL FEATURES**

Japan is made up of four large islands and more than 3,000 smaller ones. Its land area is slightly smaller than the state of California, but it stretches across 1,500 miles of ocean—about the length of the eastern United States coastline. Most people live on the four largest “home” islands, which are Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu.

Mountains cover about 75 percent of Japan. The Japanese Alps are Japan's largest mountain range. They are very steep and rocky. Japan's highest mountain, **Fuji**, is not in a mountain range. It is a volcanic peak that rises above a flat area in eastern Honshu. It has become a symbol of Japan and is considered sacred by some people. Many shrines and temples have been built around it.

The **Korean Peninsula** juts south from the Asian mainland. It is divided between North and South Korea. Rugged mountains run along the eastern coast. The western coast has plains and river valleys. The Koreas have more rivers than

Circle the names of Japan's four largest islands.

Where is the mountain range located in the Korean Peninsula?

Lesson 1, *continued*

Japan. Most of them flow westward and empty into the Yellow Sea.

Japan is subject to volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and **tsunamis**, which are destructive waves caused by large underwater earthquakes. The Korean Peninsula does not have many earthquakes or volcanoes. Both Japan and the Koreas are subject to huge storms, called typhoons, that sweep in from the Pacific Ocean.

Underline the definition of a tsunami.

CLIMATE AND RESOURCES

Besides having similar physical features, Japan and the Koreas also have similar climates. In both places, climate varies from north to south. The northern regions have a humid continental climate. It brings cool summers, long, cold winters, and a short growing season. In the south, a humid subtropical climate brings mild winters and hot, humid summers. Heavy rains and typhoons in the summer can bring as much as 80 inches of rain each year.

In a humid subtropical climate, when does most of the rain fall?

There are few natural resources in Japan or South Korea, but North Korea is rich in mineral resources such as iron and coal. Both of the Koreas use their quick-flowing rivers to generate hydroelectric power. Japan has one of the world's strongest fishing economies. The islands lie near one of the world's most productive fisheries. A **fishery** is an area where lots of fish and seafood can be caught. Swift ocean currents near Japan carry numerous fish to the islands. Huge fishing nets are used to catch the large number of fish needed to serve Japan's busy fish markets.

Which country in this region has mineral resources?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Analyze Write a paragraph describing the physical features and climate of Japan.

Lesson 1, *continued*

DIRECTIONS Read each sentence and fill in the blank with the word in the word pair that best completes the sentence.

1. The northern parts of the region have a _____ climate, in which the summers are cool but the winters are long and cold. **(humid continental/humid subtropical)**
2. The _____ along the eastern coast is covered with rugged mountains. **(tsunami/Korean Peninsula)**
3. A _____ can be brought on by underwater earthquakes. **(tsunami/fishery)**
4. Swift ocean currents provide a productive _____ area for Japan. **(fishery/humid subtropical)**
5. Many Japanese consider _____ a sacred place. **(Fuji/the Korean Peninsula)**

fishery	Fuji	humid continental
humid subtropical	Korean Peninsula	tsunamis

DIRECTIONS Choose four of the vocabulary terms from the word bank to write a summary of what you learned in the lesson.
