

“Ichi-Ni-San-Shi-Go . . . Japan” Studying Japan using the 5 Themes of Geography

Author Jeannine Kuropatkin
Grade Level 6-7
Duration 3-4 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Element 1: The World In Spatial Terms

3.How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth’s surface.

Element 2: Places and Regions

4.The physical and human characteristics of place.

5.That people create regions to interpret Earth’s complexity.

6.How culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.

Element 4: Human Systems

10.The characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics.

12.The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

Element 5: Environment and Society

14.How human actions modify the physical environment.

15.How physical systems affect human systems.

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading

Key Ideas and Details

6.RI.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

7.RI.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

6.W.4 and 7.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

6.W.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

7.W.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

The use of geographic representations and tools helps individuals understand their world.

6.G1.1 Use and construct maps, graphs, and other representations to explain relationships between locations of places and regions.

7.G1.1 Use and construct maps and other geographic representations to explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

Human-environment interactions are essential aspects of human life in all societies.

6.G2.1 Compare diverse ways people or groups of people have impacted, modified, or adapted to the environment of the Eastern Hemisphere.

7.G2.1 Explain how cultural demographic patterns, economic decisions, and human adaptations shape the identity of nearby and distant places.

7.G2.2 Analyze cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar and different.

Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth’s surface.

6.G3.1 Analyze how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of people, goods, and ideas.

7.G3.1 Explain how changes in transportation, communication, and technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.

6.G4.1 Explain why environmental characteristics vary among different world regions.

7.G4.1 Analyze cultural and environmental characteristics among various places and regions of the world.

7.G4.2 Explain how the relationship between the human and physical characteristics of places and production of goods influences patterns of world trade.

7.G4.3 Analyze how changes in population distribution patterns affect changes in land use in places and regions

Overview

As one of the world's most highly developed nations, modern Japan is a paradoxical hybrid of state-of-the-art technology and deeply rooted cultural traditions that somehow coexist harmoniously. Via cultural diffusion, Western culture has adopted much that is Japanese: popular cars, electronic components, sushi, karaoke, Pokemon, and anime to name a few. Although most Americans can identify Mt. Fuji, kimono-clad geishas, Buddhist pagodas, and other traditional images of Japan; it is doubtful that they understand the geographic connection such images represent.

Purpose

This lesson is designed to help students: 1) survey the physical and cultural geography of Japan, 2) build research skills, and 3) analyze Japan's geography using the Five Themes of Geography.

Materials

1. Asia and Relative Location of Japan map (unlabeled and unlabeled)
2. Japan map (labeled and unlabeled)
3. Color Pencils
4. Student Note Taking Sheets & Answer Keys (Location, Place, Human Environment Interaction, Movement and Regions)
5. Which Theme is it? and Key
6. Researching Japan—Student Tip Sheet
7. Reference books and online resources
8. 5 Themes of Geography graphic organizer
9. Mini-Poster Template and Example
10. Assessment Rubric for "5 Themes of Geography" Graphic Organizer & Mini-Poster

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. identify geographic locations on a map.
2. determine central ideas from research.
3. categorize geographic statements according to the criteria of the 5 Themes of Geography.
4. locate and use appropriate print and/or electronic references to answer questions.

Procedures

SESSION ONE and TWO

1. Ask students to brainstorm the following question: "When you think of Japan, what images immediately pop into your head?" Generate a class list on the whiteboard.
2. Next ask students to identify those items on the list that are Japanese products or ideas that have been widely adopted by the United States. Put a checkmark by those items. Explain to students that they have just identified examples of cultural diffusion. Cultural diffusion is when one culture "borrows" foods, customs, products, holidays, clothing styles, languages, or ideas from another culture. This is a great example of one of the Five Themes of Geography called "Movement." Cultural diffusion represents a "movement of ideas" between cultures.
3. Inform students that the Five Themes of Geography consist of: Location, Place, Human Environment Interaction (HEI), Movement, and Regions. Each of these themes provides a useful tool for examining the overall geography of places on Earth. The Five Themes are especially helpful when applied to the study of countries, such as Japan. It is usual to start out with the theme of Location since this theme answers the question, "Where is it?"
4. Pass out color pencils and copies of the two maps that have been printed back to back. Instruct students to look first at the map of Asia and Relative Location of Japan and pose the following guided instructions while you project the same map.
 - Locate Japan on the map and color it red.
 - What body of water lies directly east of Japan? (Pacific Ocean) Circle the label Pacific Ocean in blue.
 - What two countries, located on a peninsula, lie directly west of Japan? (North & South Korea) Color North Korea yellow & South Korea green.
 - What large Asian country lies directly west of the two Koreas? (China) Color China orange.
 - Japan's history and culture has been greatly influenced by Chinese ideas.

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- What large country lies northwest of Japan? (Russia) Color Russia purple.
- What small island nation lies directly SW of Japan? (Taiwan) Color Taiwan brown.
5. Have students flip the paper over to the side with the Japan map and pose the following guided instructions while you project the map.
 - Japan is an *archipelago* or a chain of islands. How many major islands form the country of Japan? (Four)
 - The northern-most island is called Hokkaido (*hok – eye – doe*). Label Hokkaido.
 - Directly south of Hokkaido, lies the largest of the four islands, called Honshu (*hon – shoe*). Label Honshu.
 - The smallest island to the south of Honshu is Shikoku (*she – ko – coo*). Label Shikoku.
 - The island furthest to the south is Kyushu (*cue – shoe*). Label Kyushu.
 - The capital of Japan, Tokyo, is located on the east coast of Honshu. Label Tokyo on the map using the star symbol.
 - The traditional capital of Japan, Kyoto, is located in south-central Honshu. Label Kyoto on the map, using the dot symbol.
 - The body of water to the east of Japan is the Pacific Ocean, while the one directly west of Japan is the Sea of Japan. Label both of these.
6. Tell students to use their just completed maps to help them answer the following questions.
7. Where is Japan located? (off the east coast of the Asian continent, east of the Sea of Japan and the two Koreas, west of the Pacific Ocean, NE of Taiwan)
8. Where is Tokyo located? (on the east coast of the island of Honshu, NE of Kyoto)
9. Inform students that they have just used examples of “relative location” to describe the general position of Japan and Tokyo on earth. Whenever you answer the question, “Where is it?” you are actively engaged in the theme called Location.
10. Pass out the student notes entitled Location. As the teacher discusses the theme of Location, and its subcategories of absolute and relative location, the students fill in the missing notes. The teacher projects the Answer Key. (Note: When discussing the

concept of “absolute location,” it is imperative that students see a map of Japan displaying latitude and longitude grid lines.)

11. Repeat the procedures with Place, Human Environment Interaction, Movement, and Regions note taking sheets.
12. Pass out the Which Theme is it? assessment. Instruct students to use their note taking sheets and maps of Japan to help them answer the questions. Collect for a grade.

SESSION THREE and FOUR

Note: If time is an issue, have students complete only one of the research assignments.

1. Inform students that they will research reference books and electronic sources, to further analyze Japan’s geography. Explain that their research will result in a final product, a “Five Themes of Geography” Graphic Organizer and/or a Mini-Poster of Japan. Show students the examples of the completed Graphic Organizer & Mini-Poster.
2. Pass out copies of the Assessment Rubric and go over the criteria for grading the assignment.
3. Pass out the Five Themes of Geography Graphic Organizer and Mini-Poster template. Project and explain the Assessment Rubric for the graphic organizer and the mini-poster.
4. Share the Student Tip Sheet: Researching Japan on the Internet.
5. Give students the remainder of these sessions to conclude their research.

Assessment

ELA and Geography

Use the Assessment Rubric to evaluate the final products for a language arts and geography grade. Mastery will be a minimum score of 4 out of 6.

Extensions

Students could choose one topic from their Five Themes Graphic Organizer and perform more in-depth research into this area of Japan’s geography.

The research could result in a 2-3 page report with bibliographic citations. At least one paragraph of the report should be devoted to

analyzing the topic's connection to one (or more) of the Five Themes of Geography.

Sources

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<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/4142.htm> U.S. Department of State's Background Notes on Japan.

<http://www.worldclimate.com/> Type in a SPECIFIC city name to find its average monthly temperature, average monthly precipitation, and latitude/longitude coordinates.

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/> Choose a Region, then a Country to get to a wide menu of choices about geography and travel tips for the tourist.

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<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/> Asia For
Educators, Columbia University – Click on the
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