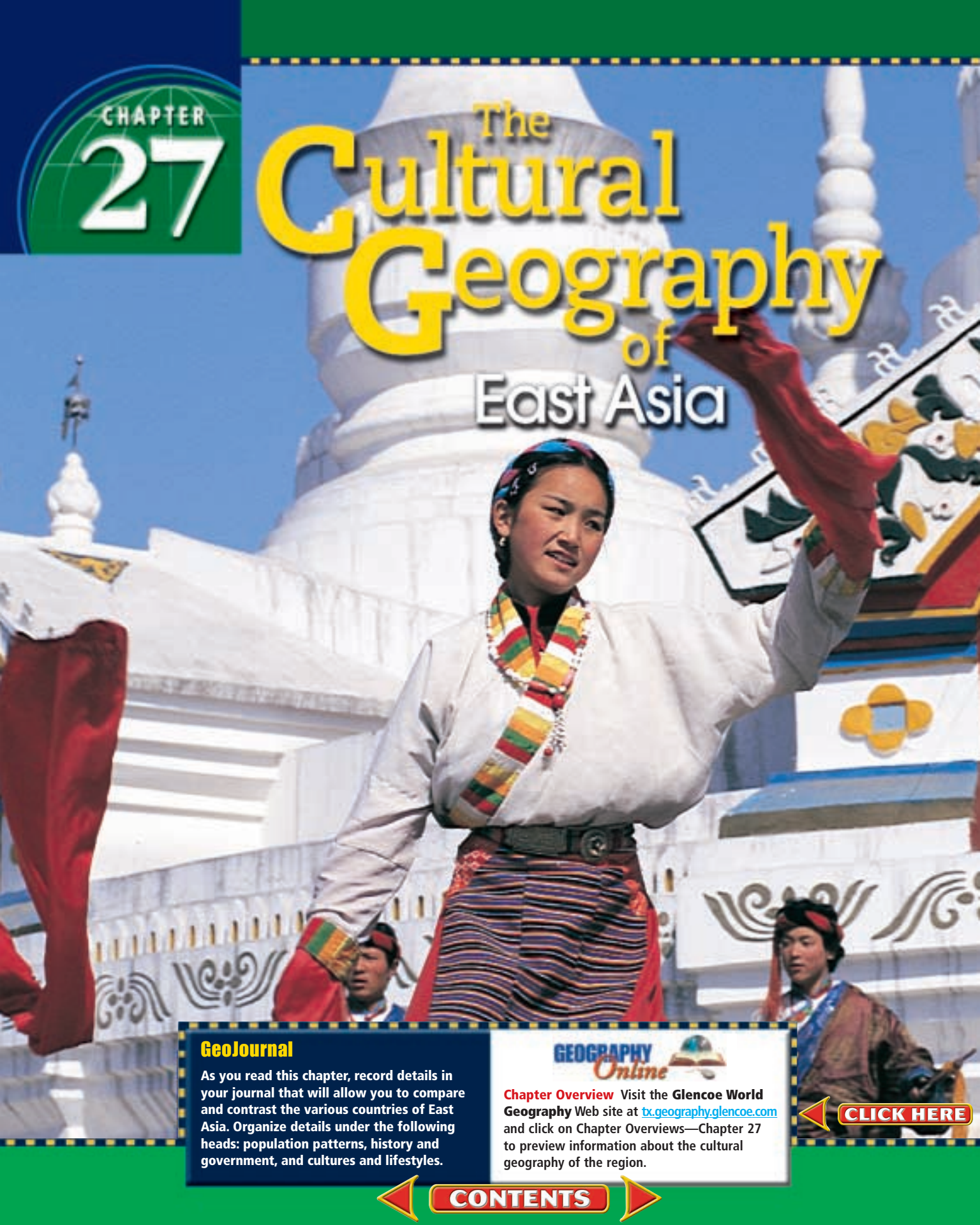


CHAPTER

27

The Cultural Geography of East Asia



GeoJournal

As you read this chapter, record details in your journal that will allow you to compare and contrast the various countries of East Asia. Organize details under the following heads: population patterns, history and government, and cultures and lifestyles.



Chapter Overview Visit the **Glencoe World Geography** Web site at bx.geography.glencoe.com and click on Chapter Overviews—Chapter 27 to preview information about the cultural geography of the region.

CLICK HERE

CONTENTS

Guide to Reading

Consider What You Know

In many parts of the world, people are migrating from rural areas to cities. What advantages and disadvantages do you think this trend brings?

Read to Find Out

- What ethnic groups make up East Asia's population?
- In what country do the majority of East Asians live?
- How is population in East Asia distributed?

Terms to Know

- aborigine
- homogeneous

Places to Locate

- Taipei
- Seoul
- Pyongyang
- Tokaido corridor
- Tokyo

Population Patterns

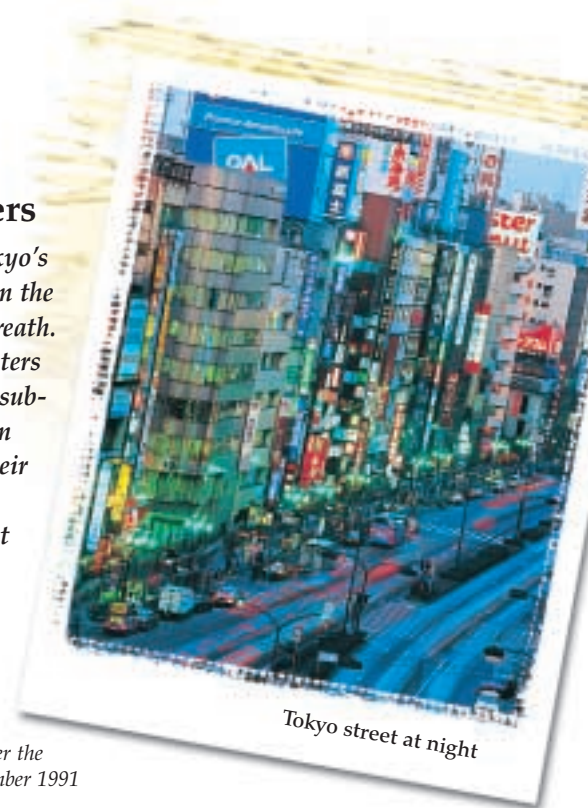
 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

A Geographic View

Torrent of Commuters

There seems to be no end to Tokyo's congestion, no time of day when the city slackens pace to catch its breath. By 8 a.m., three million commuters are coursing through train and subway stations, joining 12 million residents of Tokyo proper on their purposeful way to work. . . . One rush hour morning . . . I got swept away in a pedestrian torrent . . . flowing in the opposite direction, and I was carried the distance of a city block. . . .

—Arthur Zich, "Japan's Sun Rises Over the Pacific," National Geographic, November 1991



Tokyo street at night

In Japan, as in other parts of East Asia, people are crowded onto relatively small lowland areas along rivers or on sea-coasts. There, the largest cities are located. In this section you will learn what peoples make up East Asia's population, where East Asians live, and why many of them are migrating from rural areas to cities.

Human Characteristics

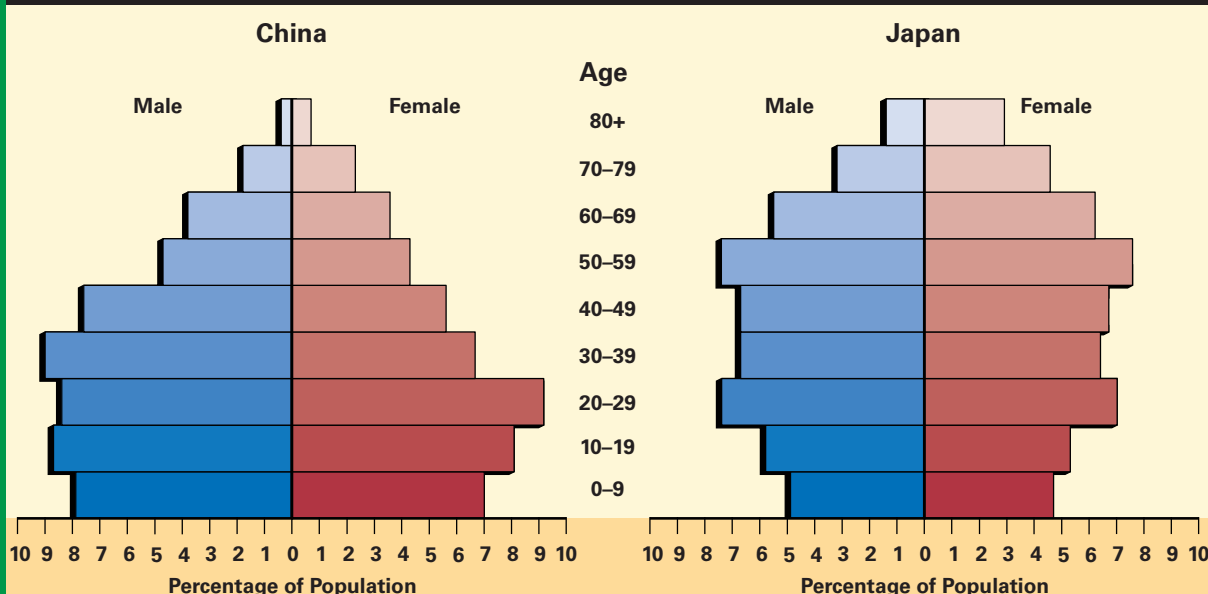
East Asia has more than 1.5 billion people—about 25 percent of the world's population. East Asians form many different ethnic groups, each with its own language and cultural traditions. Among the region's major ethnic groups are the Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese, Korean, and Mongolian.

China

When people in China say someone is Chinese, they use the Chinese word that means "a person of the Middle Kingdom." About 92 percent

◀ Tibetan dancers, Beijing, China

Populations of China and Japan by Age and Gender



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, 2000

Population pyramids illustrate the demographic makeup of a country.

- From the 1950s to the 1990s, China's population growth rate slowed in step with declining fertility and birthrates. Still, China's population grew by millions each year.

- Although Japan is one of the world's most populous countries, it is also one of the slowest growing. Japan's slow rate of population increase is partly the result of low birthrates. Birthrates are now less than one-third what they were before the 1950s.

- As a result, Japan has large numbers of people aged 50 and older, which suggests an aging population. The number of children as a percentage of the total population is much smaller in Japan than in China.

Geography Skills for Life

1. **Interpreting Graphs** Which country has a relatively young population?

2. **Applying Geography Skills** What does the shape of each country's population pyramid say about the structure of its population?

of China's 1.3 billion people belong to the Han, an ethnic group named for a powerful ancient Chinese ruling family. From 206 B.C. to A.D. 220, Han rulers developed a culture whose influence has lasted to the present.

The remaining 8 percent of China's population belong to about 55 different ethnic groups, most of whom live mainly in western and northern China. Although ruled by China, non-Chinese peoples such as the Tibetans have their own separate histories and cultures. For example, the Tibetan homeland of Tibet, located on a high Himalayan

plateau, was once a Buddhist kingdom. Since China's takeover of Tibet in 1950, the Tibetans have resisted Chinese efforts to destroy their culture.

Off China's southeastern coast lies the island of Taiwan. Taiwan and China share a long history. Most of Taiwan's people are descended from Chinese who migrated to the island several hundred years ago. Another 15 percent of the Taiwanese population descend from Chinese who fled from China to Taiwan in 1949, after the Communists in China defeated the Nationalist government in a civil war. Taiwan's original inhabitants, or **aborigines**,

are related to peoples in Southeast Asia and the Pacific area. They make up only about 2 percent of Taiwan’s population.

Japan, Korea, and Mongolia

The populations of other East Asian countries have distinct ethnic groups. Japan is ethnically **homogeneous** (HOH•muh•JEE•nee•uhs)—having a population belonging to the same ethnic group. About 99 percent of Japan’s population is ethnic Japanese, descendants of Asian migrants who crossed the Korean Peninsula to reach Japan centuries ago. The migrants forced Japan’s earliest-known aboriginal people, the Ainu (EYE•noo), to move gradually north. Small numbers of Ainu still live on the island of Hokkaido (hoh•KY•doh).

Like Japan, Korea has long been ethnically homogeneous. Koreans trace their origins to early peoples from northern China and Central Asia. They have maintained their common identity despite long periods of foreign rule and today’s division of the Korean Peninsula into communist North Korea and democratic South Korea.

The people of Mongolia are mostly ethnic Mongolians. Centuries ago their Mongol ancestors ruled the world’s largest land empire, which stretched from China to eastern Europe. Today the Mongolians are divided into separate linguistic groups, but about 90 percent of them speak the Khalkha Mongolian language.

Where East Asians Live

Physical geography influences where East Asians live. Because much of East Asia is barren and mountainous, the region’s population is distributed unevenly. Most East Asians settle in coastal areas or in fertile areas along rivers. In these places, among the most densely populated on Earth, the land and climate are favorable for agriculture, industry, and urban growth.

Population Distribution and Density

Despite China’s large land area, more than 90 percent of Chinese live on only one-sixth of the land. Most inhabit the fertile valleys and plains of China’s three great rivers: the Yellow (Huang He), Yangtze (Chang Jiang), and Xi. Large urban centers, such as Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin, and Guangzhou, lie in river valleys or coastal plains.

They have populations ranging from 6 million to more than 13.5 million. By contrast, the rugged western province of Xinjiang has a sparse population of farmers and herders living on scattered oases. About 2.5 million people live in Mongolia’s vast interior steppes, a population density of only 4 people per square mile (2 people per sq. km).

Space is limited on Taiwan, where most of the island’s 22 million people live in cities such as **Taipei** (TY•PAY) that lie on or close to the coast. In North and South Korea, most people inhabit coastal plains that wrap around the Korean Peninsula’s mountainous interior. About two-thirds of the Korean population lives in rapidly growing cities, such as **Seoul** (SOHL) and **Pyongyang**.

Japan has limited land area for its large population. Forested mountains cover the central part of the country, leaving only valleys and coastal plains for settlement. About 78 percent of Japan’s 126.7 million people live in coastal urban areas, such as the **Tokaido corridor**—a series of cities crowded together on the main island of Honshu. One of these cities, **Tokyo**, is the world’s most populous urban area, with more than 28 million people. By contrast, Japan’s northernmost large island, Hokkaido, remains rural with few people.

Culture

Japan’s Urban Lifestyle

Urbanization shapes the physical surroundings and lifestyles of the Japanese people. Hundreds of skyscrapers tower over the busy streets of Japan’s modern cities. Glaring neon signs advertise cars, electronics, and watches. As in most of East Asia’s crowded cities, a childless couple might live in a tiny one- or two-bedroom apartment. Because of Japan’s high population density and costly land, suburban homes are small compared to those in other developed countries.

The Japanese have adapted to their crowded conditions with an efficient transportation system. Commuters board the Shinkansen express, or bullet train, to get to their destinations. As the electric train pulls out of the station, its movement gently presses passengers back into their seats. In a few moments, the train reaches speeds of up to 160 miles per hour (257 km per hour) along the Tokaido corridor. The westbound train cruises from Tokyo through the urban,



Geography Skills for Life Traveling

in Japan Japan's high standard of living enables vacationers to go abroad or to seaside and mountain resorts.

Place What form of public transportation is popular in Japan today?

industrial areas of Nagoya, Osaka, and Kobe, to Fukuoka on the island of Kyushu, 604 miles (972 km) away. A trip that takes more than 11 hours of hectic driving and delays by car takes only about 5 hours by high-speed train.

Migration

In recent decades many people in China and South Korea have moved from rural, desert, or mountainous areas to cities. Although most Chinese still live and work on farms, millions of people continue to migrate to high-growth urban areas. Many are especially drawn to southeastern China, where China's communist government allows privately owned businesses in Hong Kong and in special economic zones. For factories in these special zones, the arrival of migrants means plenty of available labor, as one observer notes:

“These wailai gongren—literally, external coming workers—outnumber the Dongguan population, with more

arriving all the time. ‘When I need workers,’ a sweater factory manager said, ‘I just put a sign outside the gate.’”

Mike Edwards, “Boom Times on the Gold Coast of China,” *National Geographic*, March 1997

In South Korea many people also have moved from rural areas, seeking industrial jobs in coastal cities. Politics, however, has affected migration on the Korean Peninsula. To escape communism, many people in the mid-1900s fled from North Korea to South Korea or to other countries, especially the United States and Canada, seeking political and economic freedom. Today South Korea has 48.8 million people, more than twice as many as North Korea, where the standard of living is much lower.

Challenges of Growth

Population changes and increasing urbanization have brought challenges to East Asia. In China and South Korea, for example, the steady migration from rural villages to cities has led to urban overcrowding. This population shift has contributed to farm labor shortages in the countryside. To stem migration from rural areas to already overcrowded urban areas, China, for example, has built dozens of new agricultural towns in remote areas. These towns are designed to provide more social services and a better quality of life for rural people. The Chinese government hopes that the benefits of the new towns will encourage people to stay on their farms.



▲ A family in Xi'an, China

Ever-growing populations in East Asia have put a strain on limited resources and services. Some of East Asia's governments see population control as another way to meet the challenges of population growth. In 1979 China began a policy that allowed each family to have no more than one child. Although not followed by all Chinese, the "one-child" policy until recently had been a factor in slowing China's population growth rate. Now that the policy is no longer strictly enforced,

China's population growth rate is increasing once again. Statistics presented in the population pyramid of China on page 662 suggest that a higher birthrate is largely responsible for the increased population growth rate.

Population changes will continue to play an important part in East Asia's future. In the next section, you will learn about the values and traditions that sustain East Asians as they face the many challenges of the future.

TAKS Practice

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** aborigine, homogeneous.
- 2. Main Ideas** Create a graphic organizer like the one below, and fill in key points about population distribution and density, ethnic groups, and migration. Summarize one of the three topics in terms of population patterns in East Asia.



Critical Thinking

- 3. Drawing Conclusions** How does high-speed transportation in Japan affect daily life and the economy?
- 4. Identifying Cause and Effect** Why has migration to urban areas increased in East Asia in recent years?
- 5. Making Inferences** How might population growth and the continued migration of people from rural to urban areas affect East Asia's agricultural future?

Analyzing Graphs

- 6. Place** Study the graph on page 662. How might China's demographic makeup affect the rural/urban distribution of its population?

Applying Geography

- 7. Geography and Cities** Study the physical and political maps on pages 636–637. Describe the type of physical feature East Asia's major cities have in common.

GEOGRAPHY

AND HISTORY

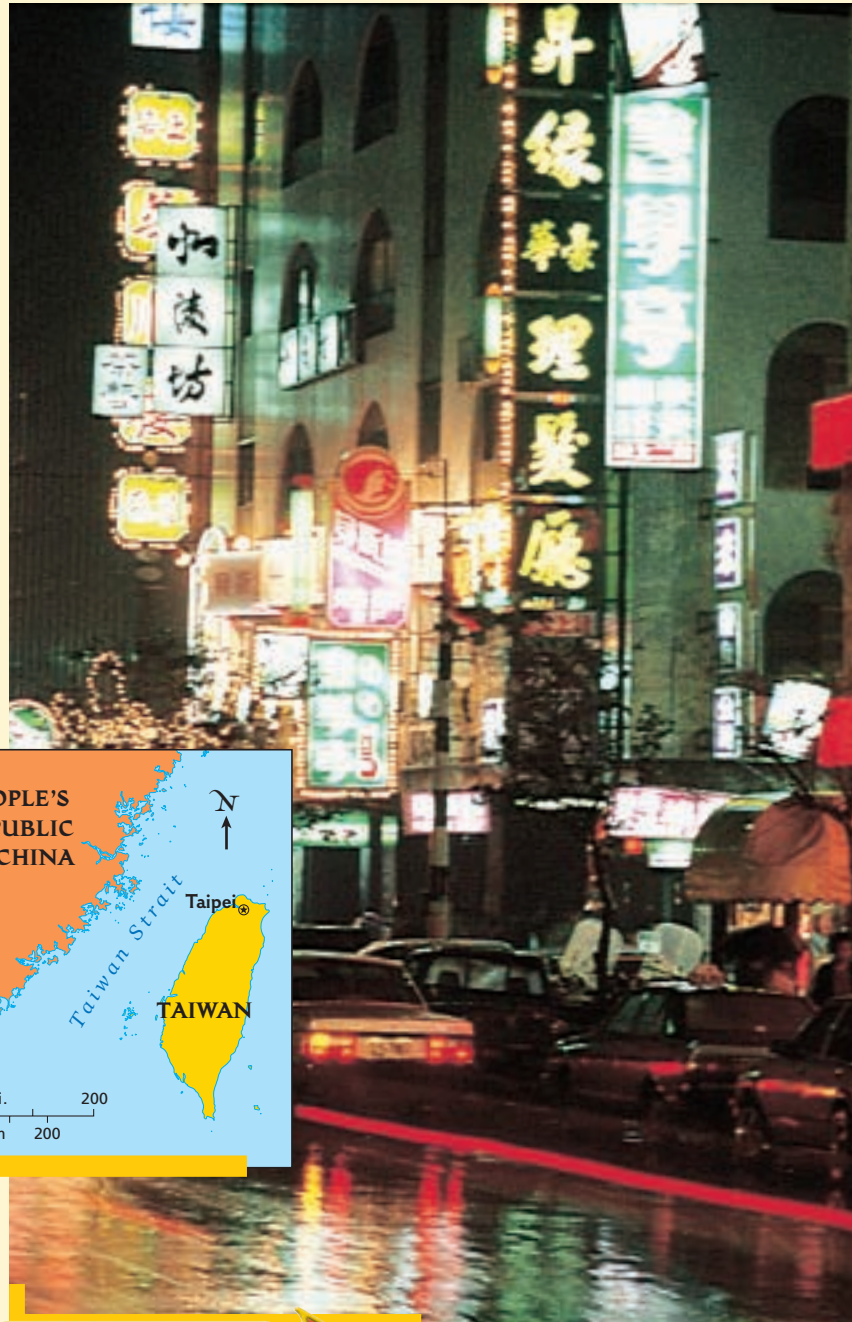
A TALE OF TWO CHINAS

WOULD YOU VOTE FOR A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE who occasionally donned a Superman costume? The citizens of Taiwan did when they elected Chen Shui-bian as their president. Neighboring China was infuriated, though not just because of the costume.

An Island Republic of China

Taiwan is a mountainous island located 90 miles (145 km) off China's coast. For most of its history, Taiwan has belonged to China. In 1949 the Chinese Nationalist Party, led by Chiang Kai-shek, lost its civil war against Mao Zedong's Communists. The battered Nationalist army fled to Taiwan with two million refugees. From Taipei, its capital-in-exile, the Nationalist regime maintained that it was the legitimate government of one China and vowed to recover control of the mainland. Taiwan called itself the Republic of China, while the Communist mainland took the name of the People's Republic of China.

United States intervention in the 1950s kept the more powerful Communists from conquering Taiwan. In step with the mainland, Taiwan pursued a goal of "one China"—two parts of one nation moving toward reunification. Taiwan wanted China's Communist government to change and to negotiate with Taiwan as an equal. Communist leaders, however, said no.



Taiwan's capital of Taipei bustles with economic activity. ►



◀ President Chen Shui-bian and Taiwan's first female vice president, Annette Lu, celebrate their win.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



From Rice Fields to Computer Chips

As the two sides haggled, many nations shifted their allegiance from Taiwan to China. The United States improved its relations with China in the 1970s and ended diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Meanwhile, life on the island was changing as dramatically as its alliances.

When the Nationalists first arrived in Taiwan, they found farmers cultivating rice fields in fertile valleys and a small population of native people living in the mountains. Taipei was an overgrown shantytown. The Nationalists quickly and brutally seized power. They allowed no local representation, and freedoms were limited.

In 1975 President Chiang Kai-shek died. When his son Chiang Ching-kuo was elected president in 1978, he began to institute democratic reforms. He ended martial law and legalized opposition political parties. By the 1990s Taiwan was a shining example of democracy in Asia. Prosperity transformed the island into an economic powerhouse. By comparison, China's communist economy was stagnant.

In 2000 Chen Shui-bian of the Democratic Progressive Party became the first ethnic Taiwanese and the first non-Nationalist to be elected president. Chen supports Taiwanese independence from the mainland—a stance that evokes angry reactions and military threats from China. Ever mindful of China's threats of war, Chen is working to improve ties with the mainland.

Today the economies of China and Taiwan are intertwined. Taiwan has invested billions of dollars in factories on the mainland. China, and the rest of the world, relies on Taiwan for key computer parts. With its strategic location and hardworking population, Taiwan is an important player in the global economy.

Looking Ahead

China advocates a “one country, two systems” approach to reunification with Taiwan. Most Taiwanese, however, would prefer to remain separate from China. How might China and Taiwan reconcile their differences for a better future for both countries?

- 1949** Chinese Nationalists, defeated by Chinese Communists, flee to Taiwan and establish government
- 1975** Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek (photo above) dies
- 1978** Chiang Ching-kuo elected president of Taiwan
- 1980s** Taiwan institutes democratic reforms
- 1990s** Taiwanese demonstrators (background photo) call for independence from China
- 1996** Taiwan holds first presidential elections; tensions with China escalate
- 2000** Chen Shui-bian wins presidential election; China threatens war unless Taiwan resumes reunification talks

Guide to Reading

Consider What You Know

Many of the inventions we take for granted, such as printing, gunpowder, paper money, the compass, and the wheelbarrow, originated in ancient East Asia. Why do you think these ideas did not spread to the West until many centuries later?

Read to Find Out

- Where did East Asia's ideas and traditions originate?
- How did East Asia first react to contact with the West?
- What major wars and revolutions occurred in East Asia?

Terms to Know

- culture hearth
- dynasty
- clan
- shogun
- samurai

Places to Locate

- Great Wall of China
- Guangzhou

History and Government

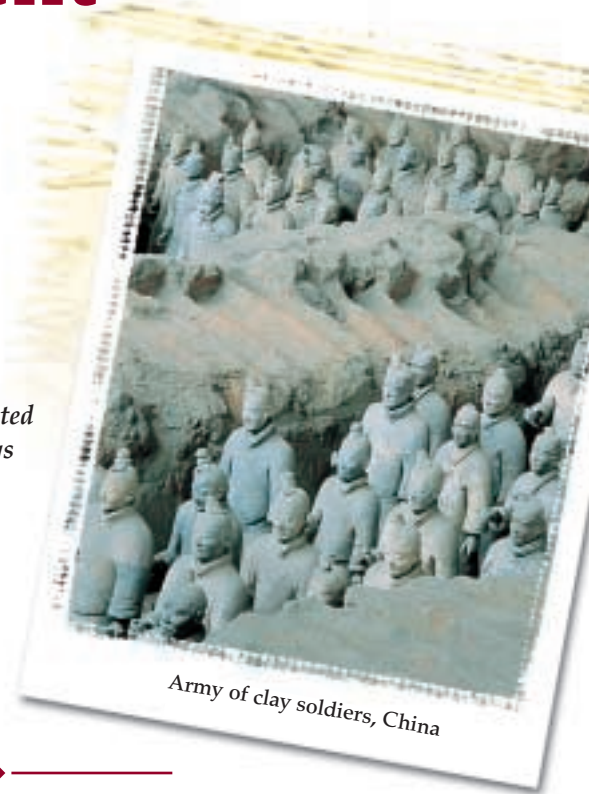


A Geographic View

China's Buried Army

"A creation of awesome scale and accomplishment—an unforgettable symbol of the power of China's first emperor . . . Qin Shi Huang [Di] wanted an army with him after he died," says museum director Yuan. "His underground empire was a miniature of his real one." More than 700,000 laborers toiled 36 years building his monument.

—O. Louis Mazzatenta, "China's Warriors Rise From the Earth,"
National Geographic, October 1996



Army of clay soldiers, China

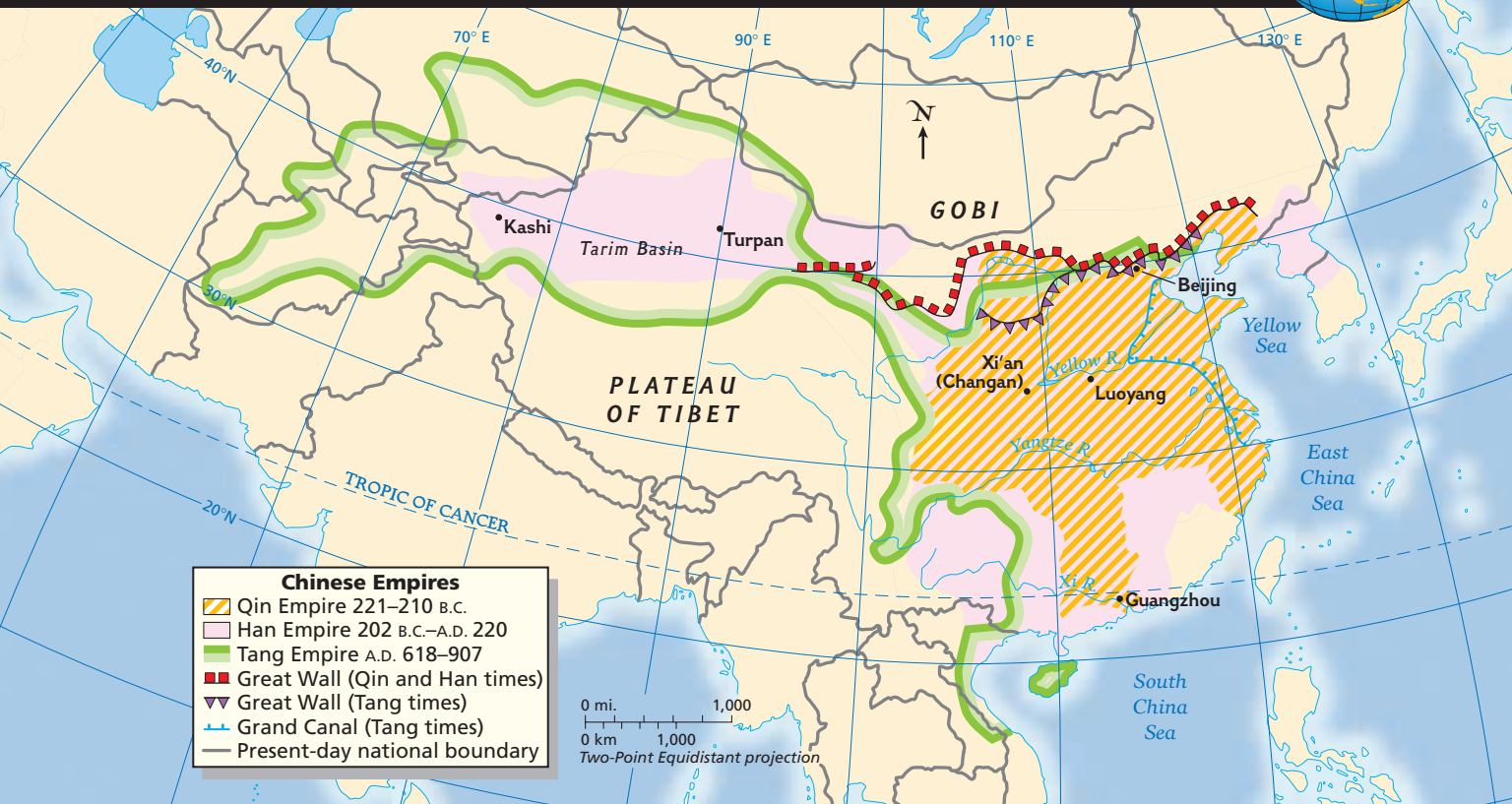
In the Chinese city of Xi'an, archaeologists have unearthed thousands of life-size clay statues of soldiers and horses positioned as an army ready for battle. These burial statues were to protect the ancient Chinese ruler Qin Shi Huang Di (CHIHN SHIHR HWAHNG DEE) from threats in the afterlife. During the 200s B.C., Qin Huang Di ordered the building of the **Great Wall of China** to protect his empire. Archaeological finds, such as that of Qin Huang Di's tomb, reveal much about East Asia's long history and political heritage.

Ancient East Asia

East Asia is home to some of the world's oldest continuous civilizations. China, where the earliest East Asian civilization emerged, became the region's **culture hearth**, or a center from which ideas and practices spread to surrounding areas. Throughout history, China's influence helped shape East Asia's cultures. The Koreans and the Japanese, for example, blended Chinese ways with their own to form distinct cultural traditions.



Chinese Empires, 200s B.C.–A.D. 900s



Geography Skills for Life

1. **Interpreting Maps** Which Chinese empires extended northwest of the Plateau of Tibet?

2. **Applying Geography Skills** Why do you think the Chinese built the Grand Canal?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps

Government

China's Dynasties

Although China's culture began more than 5,000 years ago in the valley of the Wei River, a tributary of the Yellow River, historical records were first kept under the Shang **dynasty**. The dynasty, or ruling family, took power about 1600 B.C. in the North China Plain. Like all succeeding dynasties, the Shang faced rebellions by local lords, attacks by Central Asian nomads, and natural disasters such as floods. When the government was stable, it could defend its people against some of these problems. Eventually, however, the dynasty weakened and fell. According to the Chinese, a fallen

dynasty had lost "the mandate of heaven," the approval of the gods and goddesses.

After the Shang, the Zhou (JOH) dynasty ruled for 900 years, beginning about 1122 B.C. During the era of the Zhou dynasty, Chinese culture spread, trade grew, and the Chinese began making iron tools. China's best-known philosopher, Confucius (or Kongfuzi), lived during this time. He founded a system of thought based on discipline and moral conduct that for centuries influenced East Asian life. Another thinker, Laozi (or Lao-tzu), helped found Daoism, a philosophy of living in simplicity and harmony with nature.

After the Zhou, powerful dynasties expanded China's territory. In the 200s B.C., Qin Shi Huang Di

united all of China and built the first section of the Great Wall to ward off attacks from Central Asia. Under the Han and Tang dynasties, traders and missionaries took Chinese culture to all of East Asia. In the early 1400s, under the Ming dynasty, the naval explorer Zheng He (JUNG HUH) reached as far as the coast of East Africa. The last dynasty, the Qing, ruled China from the mid-1600s to the early 1900s.

Korea and Japan

About 1200 B.C. Chinese settlers brought their culture to the neighboring Koreans. Buddhism later spread from China to Korea and became Korea's major religion. In the centuries that followed, a series of Korean dynasties, including the Silla and the Koryo, united the Korean Peninsula. About A.D. 1300 the Chinese seized control of Korea and introduced the philosophy of Confucius, which became the model for Korea's government, education, and family life.

The Korean Peninsula was for centuries a cultural bridge between the Asian mainland and Japan. As a result, China and Korea had a major impact

on Japan's civilization. In the A.D. 400s Japan, once ruled by many **clans**, or family groups, united under the Yamato dynasty. Yamato rulers adopted China's philosophy, writing system, art, sciences, and governmental structure. The Japanese also were influenced by the works of Korean scholars.

By the 1100s the armies of local nobles had begun fighting for control of Japan. Yoritomo Minamoto became Japan's first **shogun**, or military ruler, in 1192. Supporting the shogun were professional warriors, or **samurai**. Although an emperor officially ruled Japan, the samurai helped powerful shoguns govern the country until the late 1800s.

Contact With the West

By the 1600s Western countries had set up shipping routes to East Asia, hoping to share in the region's rich trade in silk and tea. China, Japan, and Korea, however, all rejected foreign efforts to penetrate their markets. Under Western pressure, China finally opened the port of **Guangzhou** to limited trade in 1834. Dissatisfied, Europeans used powerful warships to force China to open more ports. By the 1890s, European governments and Japan had claimed large areas of China as *spheres of influence*—areas in which they had exclusive trading rights. Deadlocked by rivalries, these powers reluctantly agreed in 1899 to a U.S. proposal to open China to all countries for trade.

During the 1800s the United States also worked to open Japan for trade. In 1854 U.S. naval officer Matthew C. Perry pressured the Japanese to change their policy. He and Japanese officials negotiated a treaty that ended centuries of Japanese isolation and opened Japan to trade with the United States. Not long afterward, rebel samurai forced shoguns to return full authority to the emperor. Japan's new government rapidly modernized the country's economy, government, and military forces.

Modern East Asia

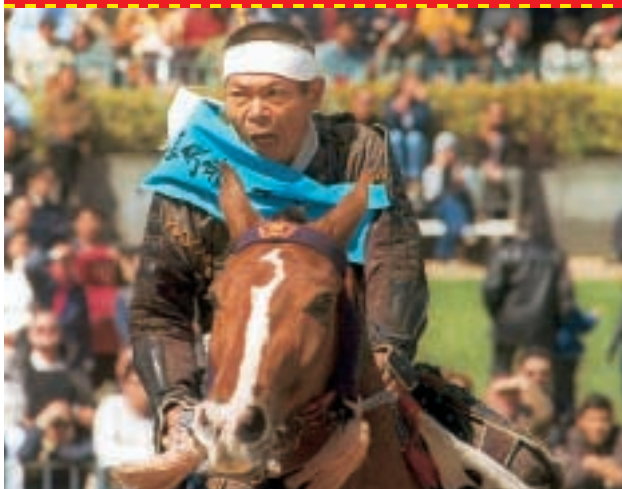
During the 1900s East Asia as a whole was involved in two world wars. Meanwhile, each East Asian country faced its own internal upheavals.

Revolutionary China

In 1911 a revolution led by Sun Yat-sen ended the rule of emperors in China. By 1927 a military

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World Explorer



Geography Skills for Life

Japanese History A Japanese man performs as a samurai in a historical reenactment.

Region Why were samurai important to Japanese history?



Japanese Expansion, 1895–1942



Geography Skills for Life

1. **Interpreting Maps** What areas of mainland East Asia were ruled by Japan during World War II?

2. **Applying Geography Skills** Why was Japan's conquest of Manchuria an important step in expanding its empire?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps

leader, Chiang Kai-shek, had formed the Nationalist government. Meanwhile, Chiang's communist rival, Mao Zedong, gained support from China's farmers. After years of civil war, the Communists won power in 1949 and set up the People's Republic of China on the Chinese mainland. The Nationalists fled to Taiwan and set up a government called the Republic of China.

In the late 1900s, the People's Republic of China maintained strict communist political rule. However, pressures to modernize gradually opened China's economy to free-market influences. Meanwhile, Taiwan built a powerful, export-based economy and carried out democratic reforms.

Japan's Transformation

From the 1890s to the 1940s, Japan used diplomacy and military force to build an empire that included Taiwan (then called Formosa), Korea, other parts of mainland Asia, and numerous Pacific islands. This expansion was one factor that led Japan to fight the United States and other Allied countries in World War II. After its defeat in 1945, Japan became a democracy. Stripped of its overseas territories and military might, Japan rebuilt its shattered economy and society. By the late 1900s, it had emerged as a global economic power with worldwide trading and business links. One retired official described the change this way:

“After the war, Japan was in chaos. There was regret, suffering. There were no rich then, only poor. We pulled together, worked hard, geared our economy for export. . . . Now we’re prosperous, and we’re bringing that prosperity to others.”

Arthur Zich, “Japan’s Sun Rises Over the Pacific,” *National Geographic*, November 1991

A Divided Korea

After World War II ended, Korea was divided into American-backed South Korea and communist-ruled North Korea. Wanting to unite Korea, North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950. During the Korean War, United Nations forces, led by the United States, rushed to South Korea’s defense. By June 1951, each army had dug in along the thirty-eighth parallel. The stalemate ended with a truce in 1953. Millions of Koreans had died and both countries were devastated. Today, North Korea and South Korea are still separated by the cease-fire line along the thirty-eighth parallel.

North Korea’s communist society often cannot meet the basic needs of its people. South Korea has become a democracy with a prosperous market economy. In 2000, relations between North Korea and South Korea began to improve after the leaders of the two countries held talks. That same year, South Korea’s president, Kim Dae Jung, won the Nobel Peace Prize for his peacemaking efforts.



Geography Skills for Life

A Historic Meeting A monk reads about the historic meeting of North Korea’s Kim Jong Il and South Korea’s Kim Dae Jung in June 2000.

Place Why was the meeting between the two leaders considered historic?

A Free Mongolia

Under the Soviet Union’s influence, Mongolia was a communist state from 1924 to 1991. After the collapse of Soviet communism, the Mongolians adopted a democratic constitution that opened the way for free elections and a market economy, reflecting a growing openness to new ideas in East Asia.

TAKS Practice

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** culture hearth, dynasty, clan, shogun, samurai.
- 2. Main Ideas** On tables like the one below, summarize each East Asian country’s history and government during each time period.

Country: _____

Ancient Times: (3000 B.C. to A.D. 1600)	
Contact With the West (1600s–1900s)	
Modern Times (1900s to present)	

Critical Thinking

- 3. Drawing Conclusions** Why were European powers dissatisfied with China’s opening of the port of Guangzhou?
- 4. Comparing and Contrasting** How were economic developments in Taiwan and South Korea during the 1900s similar and different?
- 5. Making Inferences** Why do you think the Chinese Nationalists who fled to Taiwan called their government the Republic of China?

Analyzing Maps

- 6. Human-Environment Interaction** Study the map of Chinese empires on page 669. Which rivers are linked by the Grand Canal?

Applying Geography

- 7. Spread of Culture** Draw a map of East Asia to show the spread of Chinese culture in the region. Use arrows to show key movements. Then write an explanation of your map.

Guide to Reading

Consider What You Know

East Asian food, art, pottery, and sports have become popular around the world. What foods and other products from East Asia are found in your community?

Read to Find Out

- What languages do the peoples of East Asia speak?
- What religions and philosophies do many people of East Asia follow?
- How do the standards of living of East Asians compare with one another?
- How does education in East Asia compare with education in North America?
- What traditional arts make East Asia unique?

Terms to Know

- ideogram
- shamanism
- lama
- acupuncture
- haiku
- calligraphy
- pagoda

Places to Locate

- Mongolia
- Tibet

Cultures and Lifestyles



A Geographic View

A Spiritual Journey

As early as the [A.D. 400s], caves were carved into the sandstone cliffs of the Tian Shan range as shrines and places of worship for [Buddhists]. . . . Worshipers built these shrines in hopes of . . . personal well-being, a safe and prosperous journey, advancement in the next life, or perhaps the birth of many healthy sons. . . .

—Reza, “Pilgrimage to China’s Buddhist Caves,” National Geographic, April 1996



Worshippers at Buddhist shrine, China

The peoples of East Asia have a long and rich cultural heritage. Since ancient times the ideas and practices of three religious traditions—Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism—have profoundly influenced the region. In the modern era, communism also has had a major impact on the peoples and cultures of China, North Korea, and Mongolia. East Asians also have adopted many aspects of Western culture. In this section you will learn about the variety of cultures and lifestyles found in East Asia today.

East Asia’s Languages

Because of their diverse backgrounds, people in East Asia speak languages from several different language families. The largest, Sino-Tibetan, which includes Chinese and Tibetan, comprises languages spoken by more than 1.2 billion people. Other principal languages of East Asia include Japanese, Korean, Khalkha Mongolian, and Uyгур—spoken in western China.

China's Languages

Han Chinese, the most widely spoken language of China, has many dialects. Mandarin, the northern dialect, has become China's official language. It is taught in schools and used in business and government. Cantonese, another major dialect, is widely spoken in southeastern China. Other languages of China include Tibetan, Manchu, Uygur, and Mongolian dialects.

Unlike Western languages that use letters to stand for sounds in spoken language, Chinese languages use **ideograms**, pictures or symbols that stand for ideas. Chinese has thousands of ideograms. Each ideogram has one meaning, but combining it with other ideograms gives it a new meaning. For example, the ideogram for "man" next to the ideogram for "word" means standing by one's word, or "sincerity." Spoken Chinese languages also depend on tone, or pitch. Similar syllables, pronounced with different tones or inflections, take on different meanings.

Japanese and Korean Languages

Although the Japanese language developed in isolation, experts believe it may be distantly related to Korean and Mongolian. Over centuries, both Japanese and Korean languages borrowed words from Chinese. Japanese had no written form until the A.D. 400s, when Chinese writing and literature were introduced into Japan. Japan's first writing system was based on Chinese characters. Western languages, especially English, have also influenced Japanese and Korean languages.

Religion and Philosophy

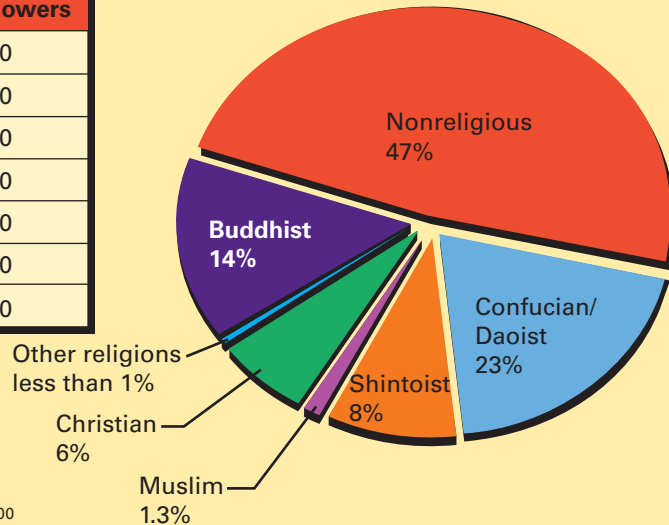
East Asians hold a variety of philosophical and religious beliefs, including Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. They also may follow more than one religion. Many Japanese, for example, practice both Buddhism and Shintoism, an ancient Japanese religion that stresses reverence for nature. Other religions of East Asia include Christianity,



GRAPH STUDY

East Asia: Religions

Religion	Number of Followers
Confucian/Daoist	350,000,000
Buddhist	215,000,000
Shintoist*	120,000,000
Christian	90,000,000
Muslim	20,000,000
Other religions	12,000,000
Nonreligious	700,000,000



*Many Japanese practice both Shintoism and Buddhism.
Sources: World Almanac, 2001; Britannica Book of the Year, 2000

Geography Skills for Life

1. **Interpreting Graphs** Which two religions have the largest number of followers in East Asia?

2. **Applying Geography Skills** How have communist governments influenced religion in China and North Korea?

widely practiced in Korea, and Islam, which has many followers among the Uygur people of western China. Some East Asians also practice **shamanism**, faith in leaders believed to have powers to heal the sick and to communicate with spirits.

Communist governments in China and North Korea strongly discourage all religious practices, but many people still hold to their traditional faiths. Before communism, Buddhist religious leaders called **lamas** ruled in Mongolia and Tibet. When communist governments came to power, they began to persecute Buddhists. **Mongolia** is now a democracy, and Mongolian citizens are again free to engage in religious practices.

In **Tibet**, however, the Chinese government continues to place harsh restrictions on the Buddhist population. For example, Tibetans risk arrest just for owning photographs of the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual leader. The Dalai Lama currently leads a worldwide movement in support of Tibetan rights from his place of exile in neighboring India.



The Dalai Lama

Standard of Living

During the late 1900s, booming economies in East Asia improved standards of living for many of the region's peoples. In wealthy countries, such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, lifestyles have improved dramatically in the last few decades. Yet large gaps remain between the rich and the poor. In economically developing countries, such as China, glittering steel-and-glass skyscrapers in the cities stand in sharp contrast to the mud houses in the surrounding rural areas.

One indicator of a country's standard of living is gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, or the value of goods and services each person produces. By 2000, for example, Japan's GDP per capita was \$32,350, the highest in the region. By comparison, China's GDP, at \$750 per capita, was one of the lowest.

Economy

Japan's Downturn and Recovery

The Japanese traditionally have valued individual loyalty to society in return for society's protection and support. Japanese businesses often ran on the principles of teamwork and cooperation.

White-collar workers had secure lifetime jobs with benefits, such as insurance programs, leave-of-absence policies, and opportunities to buy company stock.

In 1997 many of these traditions were pushed aside when Japan, along with other Asian countries, suffered a severe economic downturn. Thousands of companies went bankrupt, and financial pressures forced the companies that survived to operate more efficiently. For the first time, companies had to lay off large numbers of workers.

Since 2000, Japan's economy has still been faltering. Declining sales continue to force companies to lay off workers, and huge debts threaten to cripple the banking industry. Hesitant to spend, many Japanese consumers face housing shortages because of higher costs and lack of confidence in the economy. Meanwhile, Japan's business practices have changed. As companies focus more on profits and less on workers' job security, workers, in turn, have less loyalty to their companies.

China's New Direction

During the 1970s a new communist leadership came to power in China after the death of Mao Zedong. The most prominent leader, Deng Xiaoping (DUHNG SHOW•PIHNG), took China in a new economic direction, summed up in his phrase, "To get rich is glorious." After years of strict control



Student Web Activity Visit the **Glencoe World Geography** Web site at tx.geography.glencoe.com and click on Student Web Activities—Chapter 27 for an activity about cultures and traditions of China, Japan, and the Koreans.

over China's economy, China's communist leaders began allowing some free enterprise as a result of economic and political setbacks during the 1950s and 1960s.

During the "Great Leap Forward" campaign of the 1950s, large government-owned farms had replaced the small-scale farm cooperatives. The new farms, however, failed to produce enough food for the country. About 20 million Chinese died of starvation, and the economy crumbled.

To move China forward, Deng Xiaoping allowed private ownership of businesses and farms. Chinese officials welcomed foreign businesses and technology to China. Foreign investment flowed into special economic zones where foreigners could own and operate businesses with little government interference. The resulting economic growth raised the standards of living of some Chinese. Despite progress, China's economy is still agricultural, and the majority of Chinese have a lower standard of living than do other East Asians.

Education and Health

Most East Asians highly value learning. Today elementary education is free throughout the region, and opportunities for higher education have expanded greatly. Better education and higher standards of living have also improved the region's health care.

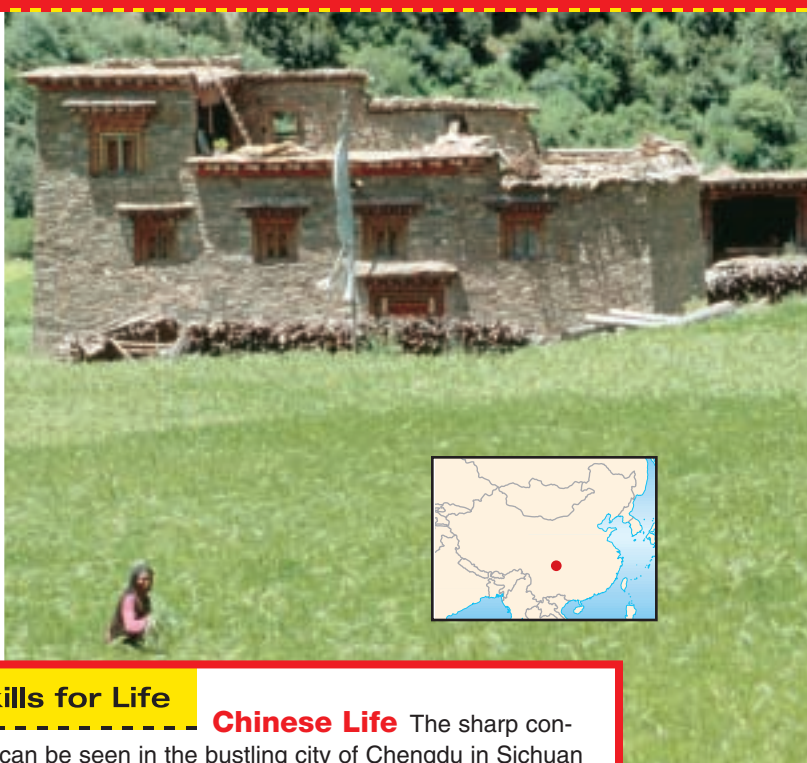
Literacy and Learning

In the several East Asian countries that spend the most money for education, the literacy rate is high. Nearly all Japanese can read and write, and South Korea has a literacy rate of 98 percent. The literacy rate for Taiwanese and North Koreans is 95 percent. China and Mongolia, however, have a lower literacy rate of about 82 percent.

In the past only the wealthiest Chinese learned to read and write, but China's communist government has pushed to increase literacy. During the Cultural Revolution, a period of upheaval in the late 1960s,



World Explorer



Geography Skills for Life

Chinese Life The sharp contrasts of Chinese life can be seen in the bustling city of Chengdu in Sichuan Province and in the quiet rural landscape that surrounds the city.

Place Why do the majority of Chinese have a lower standard of living than do other East Asians?

the growth of literacy, however, suffered a brief setback. During this time, schools and factories closed and people believed to be enemies of Mao Zedong's form of communism were persecuted. After Mao's death the Chinese government again emphasized education, and literacy has steadily risen.

Young South Koreans spend an average of 14 years in school and are among East Asia's best-educated students. South Korea and Taiwan believe that educational excellence supports the high performance of their economies.



▲ Chinese New Year celebrations (above) and Japanese professional baseball (right)

Health Care

Better health care has raised life expectancies, and infant mortality has declined in East Asia. The average life expectancy is about 74 years for women and 70 years for men. Communist governments generally pay for medical treatment. As China moves toward a market economy, however, its government no longer guarantees equal access to health care. As a result, the gap in the quality of health care between urban areas and rural areas is widening.

Many East Asians rely on both Western and traditional medical care, including herbal medicines. **Acupuncture**, an ancient practice that involves inserting fine needles into the body at specific points in order to cure disease or relieve pain, is popular in China. Both herbal medicine and acupuncture are widely accepted around the world.

Leisure Activities

East Asians engage in a variety of leisure activities, ranging from music to sports. Recreation frequently involves family activities. Because of small living quarters in many urban areas, people often socialize in public parks and restaurants.

Food

Although cooking styles vary throughout the region, East Asians prefer staple foods, such as rice,

wheat, and millet. Many East Asians maintain vegetarian diets or get protein from fish. Western foods, such as beef, chicken, and dairy products, recently have become popular. As a result, more East Asians now have health problems associated with a Western diet.

Sports and Festivals

East Asians of all ages practice traditional exercises and martial arts, such as tai chi, tae kwon do, *gongfu* (kung fu), or karate. Japan's ancient sport of sumo wrestling draws thousands of fans to several tournaments each year. East Asians also enjoy many Western sports, such as baseball, soccer, and volleyball. Olympic champions in skiing, swimming, gymnastics, table tennis, and other sports have come from East Asia.

Colorful celebrations mark the seasons of the year, national holidays, and religious ideas or events in East Asia. Many people participate in parades and ceremonies related to the Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist, and Shintoist religions. People in East Asia also commemorate the Lunar New Year, which begins in late January or early February. The Lunar New Year reflects the lunar calendar, which is based on the phases of the moon instead of Earth's movements around the sun.



music of EAST ASIA

Under Chinese influence, music in East Asia has evolved over thousands of years. Used for both spiritual and entertainment purposes, music of the region is characterized by the use of strings, wind instruments, and percussion.

Instrument Spotlight

The **shakuhachi** is a bamboo flute from Japan with five finger holes. This unique wind instrument arrived in Japan through China during the A.D. 600s and 700s. Unlike other instruments, the shakuhachi developed a strong collection of solo pieces and was used by Zen Buddhist monks as a form of spiritual practice and for meditation. This music usually has a peaceful effect on both the player and the listener.



World Music: A Cultural Legacy Hear music of this region on Disc 2, Tracks 14–18.

The Arts

Over the centuries East Asians have excelled in the arts. Their artistic and literary achievements are deeply rooted in the long history of the region. During ancient times Chinese styles in art and architecture influenced all of East Asia. Religions such as Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and Shintoism also have inspired great art in the region. In modern times Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution tried to wipe out the traditional arts of China in favor of communist-inspired art forms. After Mao's death, however, Chinese artists returned to their traditions.

Literature

In ancient China and Japan, poetry flourished among the educated members of society. Li Bo and Du Fu, for example, created some of China's best poetry. In their works these poets described human relationships and the beauty of nature. In A.D. 1010 a Japanese noblewoman, Lady Murasaki Shikibu, wrote one of the world's first novels, *The Tale of Genji*, about the life and loves of a prince at the emperor's court. The Japanese also developed a form of poetry called **haiku** that originally had

only 3 lines and 17 syllables but now is written in many line and syllable combinations. A major theme is the fragile beauty of nature, as this example of haiku from the 1600s reveals:

“*The red maple leaves shine so bright
The wings of flying birds are scorched.*”

“In a Japanese Garden,” *National Geographic*, November 1989

East Asia still produces notable writers. In 1994 Japanese writer Kenzaburo Oe won the Nobel Prize in literature for his works that connect the myths of traditional Japanese village life with life in the modern era. Exiled Chinese writer Gao Xingjian also won the Nobel Prize in literature in 2000.

Music and Theater

East Asian music is based on a five-tone scale with a melody line but no harmony. Over the centuries, instruments such as flutes, drums, and gongs accompanied dancers in temple rituals. Stringed instruments included the lute, the guitar, and the koto, a type of zither.

East Asians have many forms of drama. Chinese traditional opera uses elaborate costumes, music, and acrobatics or martial arts displays. Japan’s lively Kabuki theater uses costumes, song, and dance. By contrast, the Japanese Noh drama has actors who tell stories only through precise movements. Traditional art in Korea may involve group folk dances. Most East Asian countries produce movies.



▲ The ancient art of making porcelain is still practiced in China today.

Visual Arts

Throughout history, East Asians have developed their own unique art forms. In China, Korea, and Japan, artists have painted the rugged landscapes of their countries. These paintings often include a verse made in elegant brush-stroke **calligraphy**, the art of beautiful writing. The Japanese also created vivid prints using carved wood blocks. Influential print artists include Hiroshige and Hokusai. Other Japanese art forms include origami, in which paper is folded into the shapes of animals and birds; the tea ceremony; formal landscaping; and ikebana, or flower arranging. In East Asia elegant Chinese pottery developed into a fine art over thousands of years. During the Tang dynasty, Chinese potters created the fine, thin porcelain known today as china. In

Korea, during the Koryo dynasty, artists made graceful vases with a pale green glaze called celadon still highly valued all over the world. Buddhist temples in China, Korea, and Japan contain many statues and sculptures in stone, bronze, or jade.

Architecture

Except for skyscrapers, most East Asian architecture uses wood, brick, and stone. Bamboo is important in the architecture of Japan and southern China. Traditional East Asian buildings often have gracefully curved tile roofs in the **pagoda**, or tower, style.

Despite the changes and pressures brought by modernization, East Asians have kept alive their ancient art forms. These traditions help unite East Asia’s diverse peoples into a cultural region.

TX TAKS Practice

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** ideogram, shamanism, lama, acupuncture, haiku, calligraphy, pagoda.
- 2. Main Ideas** On a table like the one below, fill in details about each country’s languages, religions, education, health, standard of living, leisure, and arts.

China	Japan	N. Korea	S. Korea

Critical Thinking

- 3. Comparing and Contrasting** Describe health care in East Asia. How is it different from health care in the United States?
- 4. Making Generalizations** How have rising standards of living changed the lives of people in East Asia?
- 5. Drawing Conclusions** How do East Asia’s religions influence its art forms?

Analyzing Graphs

- 6. Region** Study the graph on East Asia’s religions on page 674. Christianity accounts for about what percentage of religious followers in East Asia?

Applying Geography

- 7. Chinese Culture** Write a paragraph explaining the impact of the “Great Leap Forward” and the Cultural Revolution on Chinese culture.

Reading an Economic Activity Map

Geographers and researchers use economic activity maps as well as other specialized maps to help them understand a region. An economic activity map gives a quick overview of economic resources and activities.

Learning the Skill

By comparing activities on an economic activity map with information on other types of maps, such as political, climate, or population density maps, geographers can quickly see the distribution of economic resources. Geographers can also get an idea about a country's economic potential and the people's standard of living.

Economic activity maps use colors to represent dominant economic activities. Other maps may use patterns or symbols instead of colors. In all economic activity maps, the key or legend defines the colors and symbols.

To read an economic activity map, follow these steps:

- Identify the geographic region shown on the map.
- Study the map key to understand all colors, symbols, and patterns used on the map.
- Study the map to determine what resources and economic activities are predominant in each area.
- Compare the map with other maps showing landforms, climate, and natural vegetation of the region. Draw conclusions about the interaction of humans with the environment.



Practicing the Skill

Use the economic activity map above to answer the following questions.

1. Which color on the map represents subsistence farming?
2. Which country has more coal deposits?
3. Which area has little or no economic activity?
4. Which part of the region probably has the lowest standard of living? The highest? Explain your answer.

Applying the Skill

Use a reference book or Internet sources to create an economic activity map for your city or county. Draw an outline map of your region, and create symbols and colors to represent economic activities in your area. Be sure to include a map key.



The **Glencoe Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook, Level 2** provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.



SECTION 1

Population Patterns (pp. 661–665)

Terms to Know

- aborigine
- homogeneous

Key Points

- East Asia's 1.5 billion people are made up of many different ethnic groups with a variety of religions, languages, and cultures.
- Population in East Asia is unevenly distributed. It is concentrated in urban areas, in river valleys, and on coastal plains.
- Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea are highly urbanized countries. Mongolia is predominantly rural. In China most people live in rural areas.
- Massive migration from rural to urban areas has caused farm labor shortages in parts of East Asia.

Organizing Your Notes

Create a chart like the one below to help you organize your notes for this section. Fill in details for ethnic groups found in each country.

	Ethnic Group	Chief Population Distribution	Largest Area of Concentration
China			

SECTION 2

History and Government (pp. 668–672)

Terms to Know

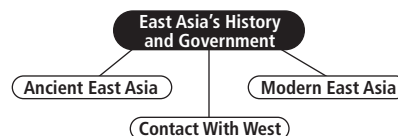
- culture hearth
- dynasty
- clan
- shogun
- samurai

Key Points

- Confucianism and Daoism developed in China about 500 B.C. Buddhism spread from India throughout East Asia.
- China was ruled by a succession of dynasties until the early 1900s.
- Contact with the West forced East Asians to modernize.
- Revolutions and wars transformed East Asia in the 1900s.
- By the end of the 1900s, East Asian countries had important roles in the global economy.

Organizing Your Notes

On a web diagram like the one below, fill in important events in East Asia's history, including its various forms of government systems.



SECTION 3

Cultures and Lifestyles (pp. 673–679)

Terms to Know

- ideogram
- shamanism
- lama
- acupuncture
- haiku
- calligraphy
- pagoda

Key Points

- Sino-Tibetan languages and Korean and Japanese are the region's main languages.
- East Asians often adopt practices from more than one religious tradition.
- Rising standards of living since 1945 have brought dramatic improvements in education and health care for some countries.
- East Asians have a long history of traditional arts and activities.

Organizing Your Notes

Create an outline using the format below to help you organize your notes for this section.

East Asia's Languages and Religions	
I. Languages	
A. China	
1. Mandarin	
2. Cantonese	

Reviewing Key Terms

Write the key term that best completes each of the following sentences. Refer to the Terms to Know in the Summary & Study Guide on page 681.

1. A ____ was a professional soldier in early Japan.
2. Soldiers of ancient Japan were loyal to a military ruler known as a(n) ____.
3. ____ is the art of beautiful writing.
4. China was East Asia's ____, the center from which ideas spread.
5. A ruling family known as a(n) ____ formed China's early government.
6. Before ruling families, tribal groups, or ____, ruled in China.

Reviewing Facts

SECTION 1

1. Which countries in the region of East Asia are the most ethnically homogeneous?
2. What portions of East Asia are relatively unpopulated? Why?
3. What is Japan's most populous region? Why?

SECTION 2

4. During which dynasty did the philosophies of Confucius and Laozi emerge?
5. How did Japan build an empire in the early 1900s, and how did the empire come to an end?
6. How did the Communists in China come to power?

SECTION 3

7. Name four religious or philosophical traditions of East Asia.
8. Why is education a high priority in Taiwan and South Korea?
9. Name five art forms important in East Asia.

Critical Thinking

1. **Comparing and Contrasting** How do the standards of living vary among East Asian countries and between rural and urban areas?
2. **Making Inferences** Why are farmlands and the food supply of critical importance to China?
3. **Analyzing Consequences** Create a web diagram like the one below to show the effects of migration to urban areas in East Asian countries. Then write a paragraph explaining those effects.



Locating Places

East Asia: Physical-Political Geography

Match the letters on the map with the places and physical features of East Asia. Write your answers on a sheet of paper.

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Wuhan | 5. Tokyo | 8. Ulaanbaatar |
| 2. Shanghai | 6. Beijing | 9. Seoul |
| 3. Taipei | 7. Guangzhou | 10. Kyoto |
| 4. Yangtze | | |



Self-Check Quiz Visit the **Glencoe World Geography** Web site at tx.geography.glencoe.com and click on Self-Check Quizzes—Chapter 27 to prepare for the Chapter Test.

CLICK HERE

Using the Regional Atlas

Refer to the Regional Atlas on pages 636–639.

- 1. Place** Which East Asian cities have populations over 5,000,000?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** What natural resource may account for the areas of high population density in western China?

Thinking Like a Geographer

Think about the thousands of migrant workers settling in China's special economic zones. What are some of the problems created by this influx of people? As a geographer, what strategies would you suggest to help solve these problems? Explain your answer.

Problem-Solving Activity

Group Research Project Work with a group to research and evaluate the Chinese government's international reputation on human rights. Issues include the treatment of religious dissidents, political prisoners, ethnic Tibetans and exiled leaders, and students during the 1989 pro-democracy demonstrations at Tiananmen Square. Consider the following: What is China's current status on human rights? How will the Internet and communications technology affect this issue? Prepare a report stating your opinions and predicting future developments.

GeoJournal

Compare and Contrast Use the information you noted in your GeoJournal to write an essay comparing cultural aspects of two East Asian countries. Include specific examples.



Technology Activity

Creating an Electronic Database

Create a database of the population densities of several East Asian countries, regions, or cities. Then use the database to help you draw an outline map to show population distribution using color codes, and include a map key.



TAKS Test Practice

Study the table. Then choose the best answer for the following multiple-choice question. If you have trouble answering the question, use the process of elimination to narrow your choices.

Economic Activities in East Asia

	Taiwan	China	Japan	South Korea
Economic Activity	%	%	%	%
Agriculture	2.9	18.4	1.7	4.9
Industry	34.0	48.7	36.0	43.5
Services	63.1	32.9	62.3	51.6
Labor Force				
Agriculture	8.0	50.0	5.0	12.0
Mining & Manufacturing	37.0	23.0	32.0	27.0
Services & Other	55.0	27.0	63.0	61.0

Source: *The Economist Pocket World in Figures*, 2001

- Based on the chart, which two countries have economic activities that are the most similar in all areas?

- A South Korea and Taiwan
- B Taiwan and Japan
- C Taiwan and China
- D China and Japan



Charts and tables may reveal patterns or trends. Look for similarities in groups of numbers before you draw conclusions. In addition, numbers need not be exactly alike in a question such as this one. For example, although both China and South Korea have the same percentage for Services under Economic Activity, the other figures vary widely.