

Japan and the Koreas

Section 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

Section Summary

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Japan is made up of four large islands and more than 3,000 smaller ones. They stretch across 1,500 miles of ocean, about the length of the Eastern United States coastline. But they include only about as much land area as California. Most people live on the four largest islands, which are Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. Mountains cover about 75 percent of Japan. The Japanese Alps are Japan's largest mountain range. Japan's highest mountain, **Fuji**, is not in any mountain range, but is an isolated volcanic peak 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, and is divided between North and South Korea. Rugged mountains run along the eastern coast, and plains can be found on the western coast and in the river valleys. Korea has more rivers than Japan. Most of them flow westward and empty in the Yellow Sea.

Circle the names of Japan's largest islands.

Where on the Korean Peninsula are the mountains located?

Section 1, continued

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

Underline the sentence that explains what a tsunami is.

CLIMATE AND RESOURCES

Just as Japan and the Koreas have many similar physical features, they also have similar climates. In both places, climate varies from north to south. The northern regions have a humid continental climate with cool summers, long, cold winters, and a short growing season. In the south, a humid subtropical climate brings mild winters and as much as 80 inches of rain each year. Most of the rain falls during the hot, humid summers, which is also when typhoons occur.

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

Unlike the rest of the region, 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**, which are areas where lots of fish and seafood can be caught. Huge fishing nets are used to catch the large number of fish needed to serve Japan's busy fish markets.

Which country on the Korean Peninsula has mineral deposits?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Analyzing Write a paragraph describing how physical features and climate affect daily life in Japan.