



South Korea

Prepare for 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang

Printable activity book

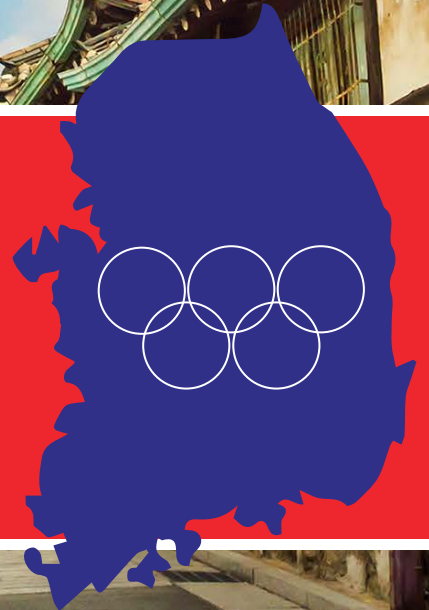
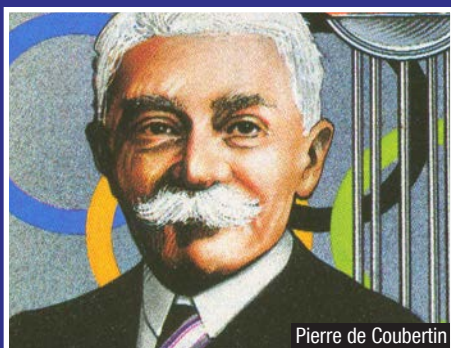


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Introduction

History of The Olympic Games

The Olympic Games began in Ancient Greece and occurred every four years for centuries. All wars ceased during the contest. The oldest recorded competition was a 183 m (200 yd) foot-race. Later the Olympics expanded to include activities such as wrestling, jumping, spear throwing, discus throwing, and chariot racing. In 394 AD, the Games were ended by the Roman emperor Theodosius I.

The modern day Olympics were revived in 1896 through the persistence of a young French nobleman, Pierre de Coubertin. He believed the Olympics would be part of a great educational program that incorporated the Ancient Greek notion of a balanced development of mind and body. The Union des Sports Athlétiques agreed that the first Olympics would take place in Greece but would then move to other cities in the world every four years. The Winter Olympics were created in 1924 and take place in a separate cold-weather sports site.¹ The 2018 Winter Olympics will take place in PyeongChang, South Korea.

Why learn about South Korea?

Have you ever heard of the city of PyeongChang? Can your children locate South Korea on a map? How much South Korean history do you know? This season's Winter Olympic game's commentators will include many interesting facts, but may lack more detailed information about the beautiful nation of South Korea. This study is a great way to take current events and turn them into learning opportunities so your family will better understand the world. This 9-day study of South Korea is designed to fill in the gaps so you can appreciate this unique country.

Why will you study North Korea as well?

North and South Korea used to be one united country of Korea before it was divided by war. South Korea only recently became a separate nation in 1948. It is important to know the history of this separation to understand how it shaped the culture today. As you fill in the notebook pages included in this ebook, you will see the similarities and differences between these two nations.

Instructions

1. Look at the **Schedule** and read the assigned **excerpts** from *Journey to the Eastern Hemisphere* (included in Appendix 1).²
2. Complete the scheduled **Notebook Pages** after reading each excerpt.
3. Finally, see the **Notes** for parental guidance and answers.

Enjoy!

¹ Benagh, Jim. "The History of the Olympic Games." Scholastic. Accessed December 26, 2017. <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/history-olympic-games/>.

² The complete *Journey to the Eastern Hemisphere* book can be purchased at sonlight.com/FH15.

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Schedule

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Journey to the Eastern Hemisphere</i> See Appendix 1 (p. 15)	North Korea: The Big Picture	Meet the People of North Korea through Everyday Life in North Korea	North Korea's Government through The Economy of North Korea	North Korea's History through "North and South Korea (1948)"	"Korean War Begins (1950)" through "Signed Agreement (1991)"
Notebook Pages See p. 7	North Korea: The Big Picture Map It (both North & South Korea)	Meet the People of North Korea through Everyday Life in North Korea	North Korea's Government through The Economy of North Korea	Korea Timeline (#1–4)	Korea Timeline (#5–6)

	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
<i>Journey to the Eastern Hemisphere</i> See Appendix 1 (pg. 15)	The Korean War	South Korea: The Big Picture through Everyday Life in South Korea	South Korea's Government through The Economy of South Korea	South Korea's History	You're all Done! Enjoy watching the Winter Olympics!
Notebook Pages See p. 7	The Korean War	South Korea: The Big Picture through Everyday Life in South Korea	South Korea's Government through The Economy of South Korea	Choose Your Adventure	

Notes

Day 1

North Korea: The Big Picture

Read the section in *Journey to the Eastern Hemisphere* in the North Korea chapter titled **North Korea: The Big Picture** (pp. 16-17). Next fill in the section of the Notebook Pages titled **North Korea The Big Picture** (top half of p. 8).

Possible answers:

1. Dominated by communism
2. Run by a dictator
3. People live austere lives, and experience frequent shortages of food and necessities.
4. The government restricts all economic and social activity

Map It (Both North & South Korea)

See p. 9 (top half) and p. 10 for the Notebook Pages to fill in. See the map on p. 18 in the *Journey to the Eastern Hemisphere* excerpt to use as a reference.

The map answer key is on p. 6.

Day 2

Meet the People of North Korea

Read **Meet the People of North Korea** (p. 17) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 9, bottom, left).

Possible answers:

1. Lack of ethnic diversity
2. Higher urban than rural population
3. Little migration into the country, but people flee

Land, Water, and Climate in North Korea

Read **Land, Water, and Climate in North Korea** (pp. 17-19) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, left column).

Possible answers: shares borders with South Korea, China, and Russia; bordered by the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea; generally cool weather (except for the summer), etc.

North Korea's Wildlife

Read **North Korea's Wildlife** (p. 19) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, left column).

Possible answers: pigeons, herons, cranes, black bears; has little wildlife due to deforestation; the demilitarized zone serves as a sanctuary

Everyday Life in North Korea

Read **Everyday Life in North Korea** (pp. 19-20) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, left column).

Possible answers:

1. Few consumer goods or social services
2. Urban high-rises with small apartments; heat and water inadequate
3. Little leisure; few automobiles
4. Use agricultural communes
5. Education valued
6. No religious freedom

Day 3

North Korea's Government

Read **North Korea's Government** (p. 20) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, left column).

Answer: Communist dictatorship

North Korean Culture

Read **North Korean Culture** (pp. 20-21) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 12, left column).

Possible answers: art, music, dance, fashion, writing (in support of the government)

The Economy of North Korea

Read **The Economy of North Korea** (pp. 21-22) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 12, left column).

Possible answers: government controlled; strong focus on military growth; closed economy; self-reliant; insufficient agriculture; substandard consumer goods; slowest growing economy

Day 4

North Korea's History

Read *part of North Korea's History* (pp. 22-23). Stop after reading the section titled "South and North Korea (1948)."

Korea Timeline

Fill in part of the section of the Notebook Pages titled **Korea Timeline**. Just fill in the boxes labeled 1-4. (p. 13, top four boxes).

Possible answers:

1. Independent kingdom in 1392; increased importance of Confucianism; resisted invasions from Japan and China
2. "Hermit Kingdom" for 200 years; only traded with Japan and China; persecuted Catholic missionaries
3. Japan used its war with China and Russia to occupy and take over Korea. Japan lost territory of Korea in World War II; Japan treated the Koreans harshly and used the people almost as slave labor
4. The Soviet Union influenced North Korea communistically while the U.S. influenced South Korea democratically. Kim Il-Sung, the head of the Korean Workers' Party, was the first premier or "Great Leader."

Day 5

North Korea's History

Read the rest of **North Korea's History**, "Korean War Begins (1950)" through "Signed Agreement (1991)" (pp. 24-25).

Korea Timeline

Fill in the rest of the section of the Notebook Pages titled **Korea Timeline**. Fill in the boxes labeled 5-6. (p. 13, bottom two boxes).

Possible answers:

5. North Korea struck first, both sides suffered losses, both sides were given foreign aid, resulted in a demilitarized zone.
6. North and South Korea became separate and equal members of the UN, communication opened up between the two countries, stopped using force, prohibited nuclear weapons. Cooperation stalled in 1993 due to North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Day 6

Korean War

Read **The Korean War** article (pp. 26-27). and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 12, middle section).

Possible answers:

Cause of: Korea had been split into two parts after World War II, the north influenced by the Soviet Union and the south by the U.S. When the UN suggested Korea vote for one government, the nations ended up creating two separate governments. Each government refused to recognize the other.

North Korea wanted to form one united, communist Korea with the democratic South Korea, so it attempted to take over with force on June 25, 1950.

Summarize major events or ideas: North Korea invaded South Korea. The U.S., along with the UN, saw this as a global threat of Communism, so the Allies defended South Korea. After some struggle, General Douglas MacArthur decided to not only defend South Korea, but overtake North Korea. Chinese Mao Zedong disliked this strategy and fought back. President Truman eventually fired MacArthur in hopes to find success in peace talks. It still took two years to come to a peace agreement.

Outcome of: Between 2.5 and 5 million deaths, prisoners of war would be allowed to decide where they wanted to live, instituted a 2-mile demilitarized zone between the countries, South Korea remains free of communism, both countries remain independent yet have not truly settled peace.

Day 7

South Korea: The Big Picture

Read **South Korea: The Big Picture** (p. 28) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 8, bottom half).

Possible answers:

1. Democratic government
2. Has flourished in income and standard of living
3. Independent since 1945

Meet the People of South Korea

Read **Meet the People of South Korea** (pp. 28-29) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 9, bottom, right).

Possible answers:

1. Low birth rates
2. Most live in urban areas
3. Korean language spoken, and taught English

Land, Water, and Climate in South Korea

Read **Land, Water, and Climate in South Korea** (p. 29) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, right column).

Possible answers: South Korea's only neighbor is North Korea; mainly mountainous with small valleys and a narrow, coastal plain

South Korea's Wildlife

Read **South Korea's Wildlife** (p. 29) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, right column).

Possible answers: decline of animals' habitats due to deforestation and overfishing; has a temperate climate that many bird species visit

Everyday Life in South Korea

Read **Everyday Life in South Korea** (pp. 30-31) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, right column).

Possible answers:

1. Respect for elders; honor for the dead
2. Most people live in urban settings
3. Good education system
4. Celebrations are important
5. Freedom of religion
6. High quality of life

Day 8

South Korea's Government

Read **South Korea's Government** (p. 31) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 11, right column).

Answer: republic

South Korean Culture

Read **South Korean Culture** (pp. 31-32) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 12, right column).

Possible answers: UNESCO World Heritage sites; traveling troupes; ceramics; traditional fashion, etc.

The Economy of South Korea

Read **The Economy of South Korea** (pp. 32-33) and fill in the section of the Notebook Page with the same title (p. 12, right column).

Possible answers: successful economy; industrialized and modernized; little agriculture, big in technology/manufacturing; large tourism industry, enjoys freedom of the press, etc.

Day 9

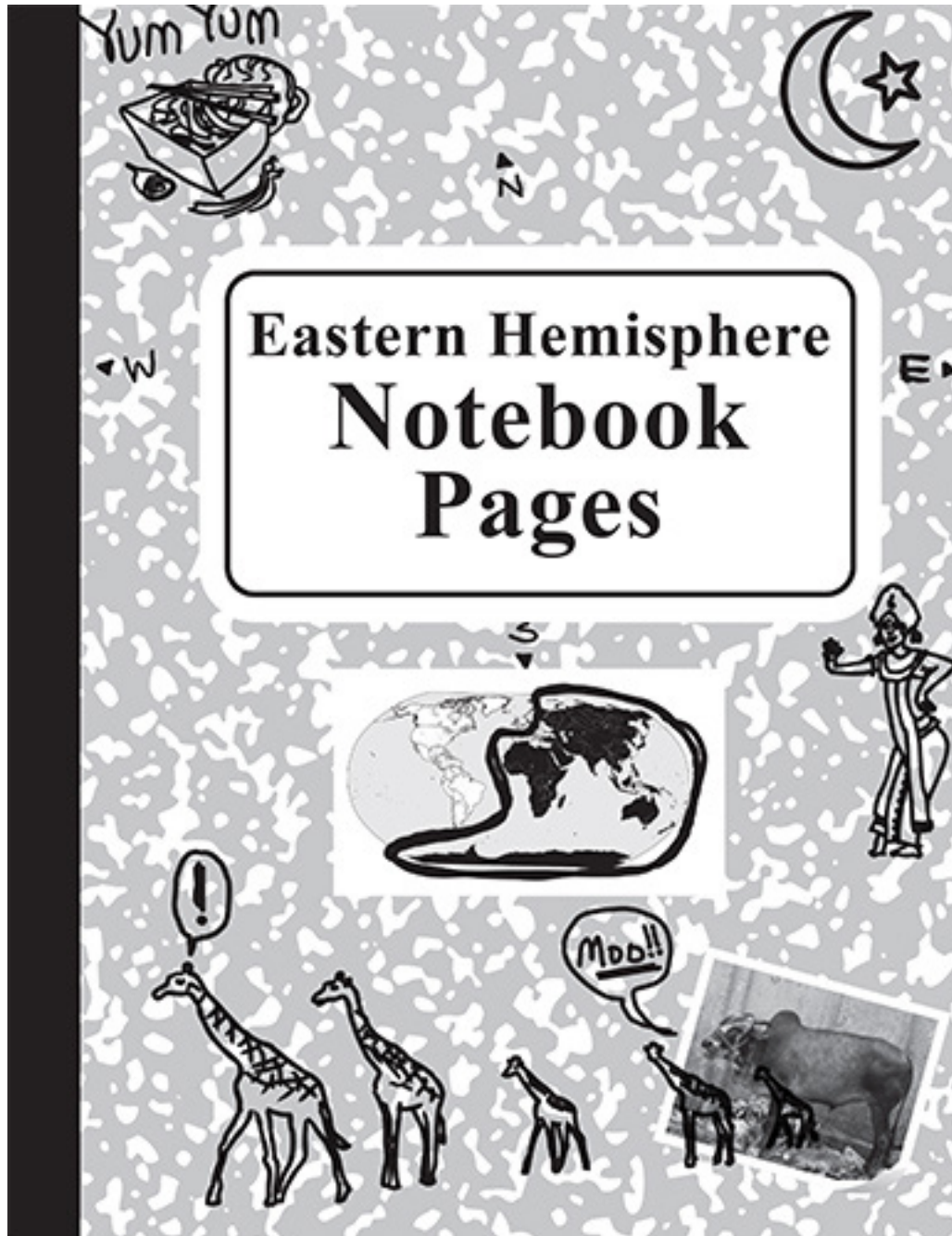
Choose Your Adventure

Read **South Korea's History** (pp. 33-35). Complete the **Choose Your Adventure** section of the Notebook Pages (p. 12, bottom).

You're all Done! Enjoy watching the Olympics!

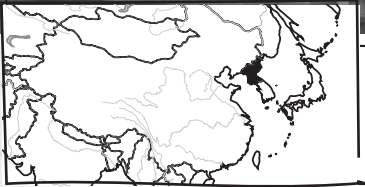
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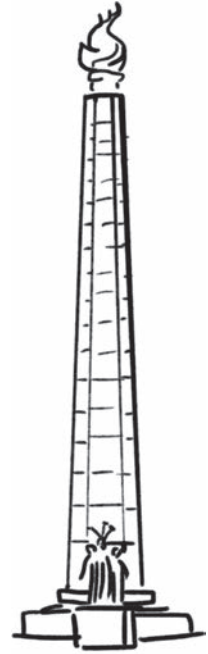
Enjoy these Notebook pages
for North & South Korea

NORTH KOREA



THE BIG PICTURE

Write a few facts that you've learned about North Korea.



38°

south korea



the big picture

Write a few facts that you've learned about South Korea.



Map It

Label the following locations on your North and South Korea map on the following page. Use the coordinates provided to help you easily locate the cities, bodies of water, or point of interest. To correctly label your map, remember to use the symbols on the map key provided.

Shade North and South Korea in two different colors.

Label the capital cities with a star: ★

Pyongyang Seoul

Bodies of Water:

Han River (F2) Yalu River (C3)
Naktong River (H2) Taedong River (E1)

The bodies of water that surround the countries:

Yellow Sea (H1) Sea of Japan (G5)
Korea Strait (I3)

Islands:

Cheju Island (J1)

Label the following cities with over a million inhabitants with the ● symbol:

Incheon (former name Incheon) (G2) Taegu (H3)
Pusan (H3)

Label the city hosting the 2018 Winter Olympics with the ● symbol:

PyeongChang (G3)

Countries:

China Russia Japan

Point of Interest:

Line of Demarcation
(line that divides North and South Korea)



Meet the People of North Korea

Write three facts that caught your attention:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

meet the people of south korea

Write three facts that caught your attention:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



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Land, Water, and Climate in North Korea

Write one fact from this section of your reading.

land, water, and climate in south korea

Write one fact from this section of your reading.

North Korea's Wildlife

Write the name of an animal that reminds you of North Korea.

south korea's wildlife

Write the name of an animal that reminds you of South Korea.

Everyday Life in North Korea

List three facts about life in North Korea:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

everyday life in south korea

List three facts about life in South Korea that differ from its neighbor to the north:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

North Korea's Government

North Korea's form of government is:

south korea's government

South Korea's form of government is:

North Korean Culture

Describe an art form you found interesting:

south korean culture

Describe an art form you found interesting:

The Economy of North Korea

the economy of south korea

THE KOREAN WAR

Cause of:


Summarize major events or ideas:


Outcome of:

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Choose Your Adventure



 Make kimchi to serve as a side dish for a family dinner, or make Kimchi Fried Rice as a dinner for your family. For a recipe, try searching for a recipe online.

 Would you like to have been a Korean living under Japanese control? Explain the following orally:

- What events led to Japan's control of Korea, and what was Japan's motivation for taking control?
- What was life like for Koreans while the Japanese were in control?
- Would you have liked living as a Korean during this time? What do you value about your life where you live now that influences your decision?

Korea Timeline

Choson Dynasty
Years ruled: 1392–1910
Two facts:

1

AD 1392–
1910

1

**Korea's rulers close the country
to all foreigners except Chinese and
Japanese** 1600's–1800's

Write two things you learned about the events
in Korea during this 200 year span.

2

2

1600's

Japan Imperialism 1910–1945
Two facts about the Japanese take-over:

3

1910–
1945

3

Aug. 15,
1948

4

North and South Korea form

Aug. 15, 1948

One fact:

4

Sept. 9,
1948

Korean War begins June 1950
Write two facts you learned about the Korean
War:

5

June
1950

5

**North and South Korea sign an
agreement not to use force against
each other** 1991

Two facts about this pact between the two
countries:

6

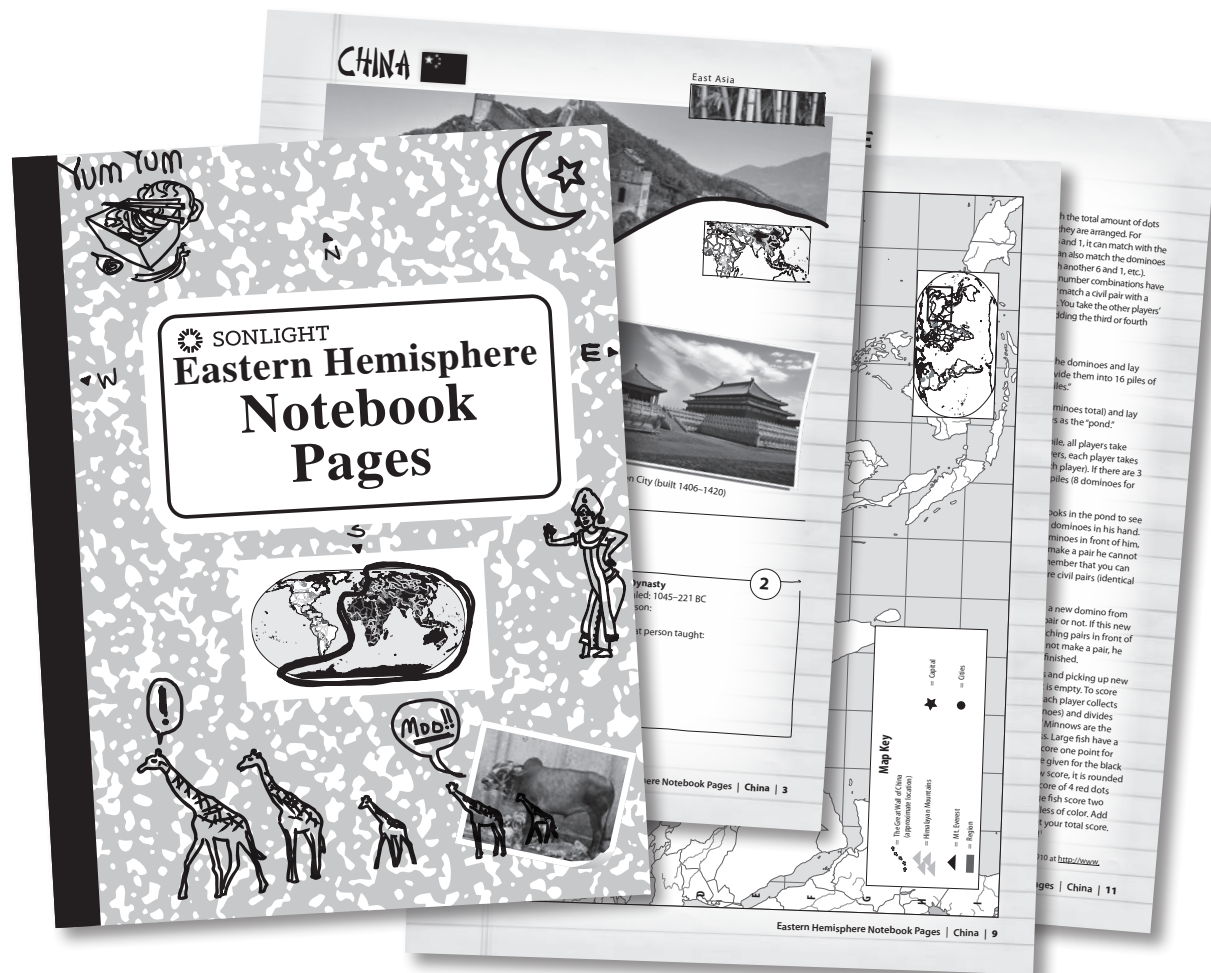
6

1991

Present

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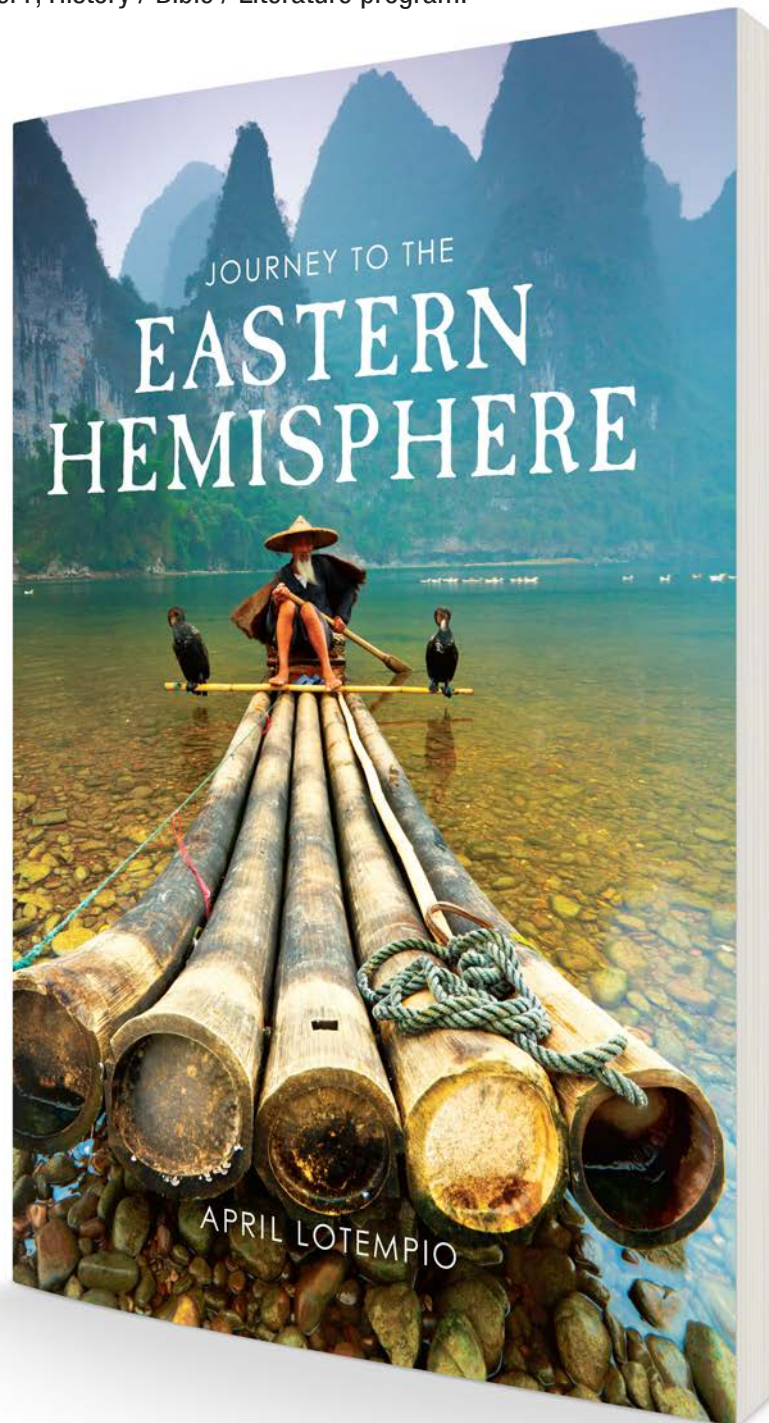
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Appendix 1

The following excerpts come from the history spine used in Sonlight's Level F, History / Bible / Literature program.



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NORTH KOREA: THE BIG PICTURE

North Korea, or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), was formed in 1948, though people had been living in this part of the world for as long as recorded history. Korea's ancient history included thousands of years of rule by Korean governments and foreign invaders. In 1392, Korea became united under the Choson dynasty and almost all Koreans worked as farmers in an agricultural society. This kingdom lasted until the Japanese took control from 1910 to 1945. The Japanese shifted Korea's economic focus from agriculture to industry. At the end of World War II, Korea was freed from Japanese rule. The northern half came under Communist rule with help from the Soviet Union.

Communists continued the industrialization of the country and refused to recognize the independent south. The division into North Korea and South Korea led to decades of tension and violence. North Korea attempted but failed to unite both Koreas by force in the Korean War of 1950–1953. Although

Fast Facts

Capital:
Pyongyang

Size:
99th in the world

Area:
74,899 sq miles
(194,000 sq km)

Coastline:
1,550 miles (2,494 km)

Highest Point:
Mount Paektu 9,003 feet
(2,744 meters)

Lowest Point:
Sea of Japan 0 feet (0 m)

Population:
25 million

Official Language:
Korean

Currency:
North Korean won (KPW)



National Anthem:
“Aegukka” (Patriotic Song) Although it shares this name with South Korea's anthem, the lyrics are different.

National Symbol:
red star, chollima
(winged horse)

large-scale fighting stopped, the countries never signed a peace treaty and conflicts continue to this day.

All aspects of North Korean life are dominated by communism. The country is run by a dictator, supported by the powerful Communist party. The government restricts all economic and social activity. The people live austere lives and experience frequent shortages of food and necessities.

MEET THE PEOPLE OF NORTH KOREA

The almost 25 million people of North Korea are overwhelmingly Korean, with just a small number of Chinese and ethnic Japanese. In fact, North Korea is one of the least ethnically diverse countries in the world. The population is growing slowly now, though it doubled between 1953 and 1993. There is very little migration into and out of the country. However, hundreds of thousands of North Koreans have escaped to China and other countries due to political persecution.

All citizens speak Korean, though there are several different dialects, or local forms, that are widely understood by all. About half of the words come from the Chinese language, though there has been an effort to eliminate or replace any words borrowed from Chinese or Western culture. The Korean language uses 10 vowels and 14 consonants.

About 60% of North Koreans live in urban areas, the largest of which is Pyongyang. Other major cities are much smaller in comparison. The rural population is mainly spread out among the western coastal lowlands. Some live in small fishing villages on the east coast. The interior mountains are sparsely settled. Because the government has focused so heavily on industrialization since 1945, many Koreans have moved to cities. This has resulted in a shortage of farm workers.

LAND, WATER, WILDLIFE, AND CLIMATE IN NORTH KOREA

Land

North Korea's total land area is about 74,899 square miles (194,000 square km), about the size of the state of Virginia, making it the 99th largest country in the world. In addition to sharing a border with South Korea, North Korea borders China to the north and shares an 11 mile border with Russia. Most of the country is covered by hills and mountains with deep, narrow valleys. The east and west are separated by the Nangnim Mountains, which run from north to south. North Korea's highest peak, Mount Paektu, is an extinct volcano that rises 9,003 feet (2,744 meters) in the northern part of the country. The volcano Changbaishan, on the Chinese border, was active in the past but has not erupted in over one hundred years. Flat coastal plains stretch along the western part of the country and in some parts of the east. Only 20% of North Korea's land is suitable for farming, mainly in the wide, fertile plains of the western coast.

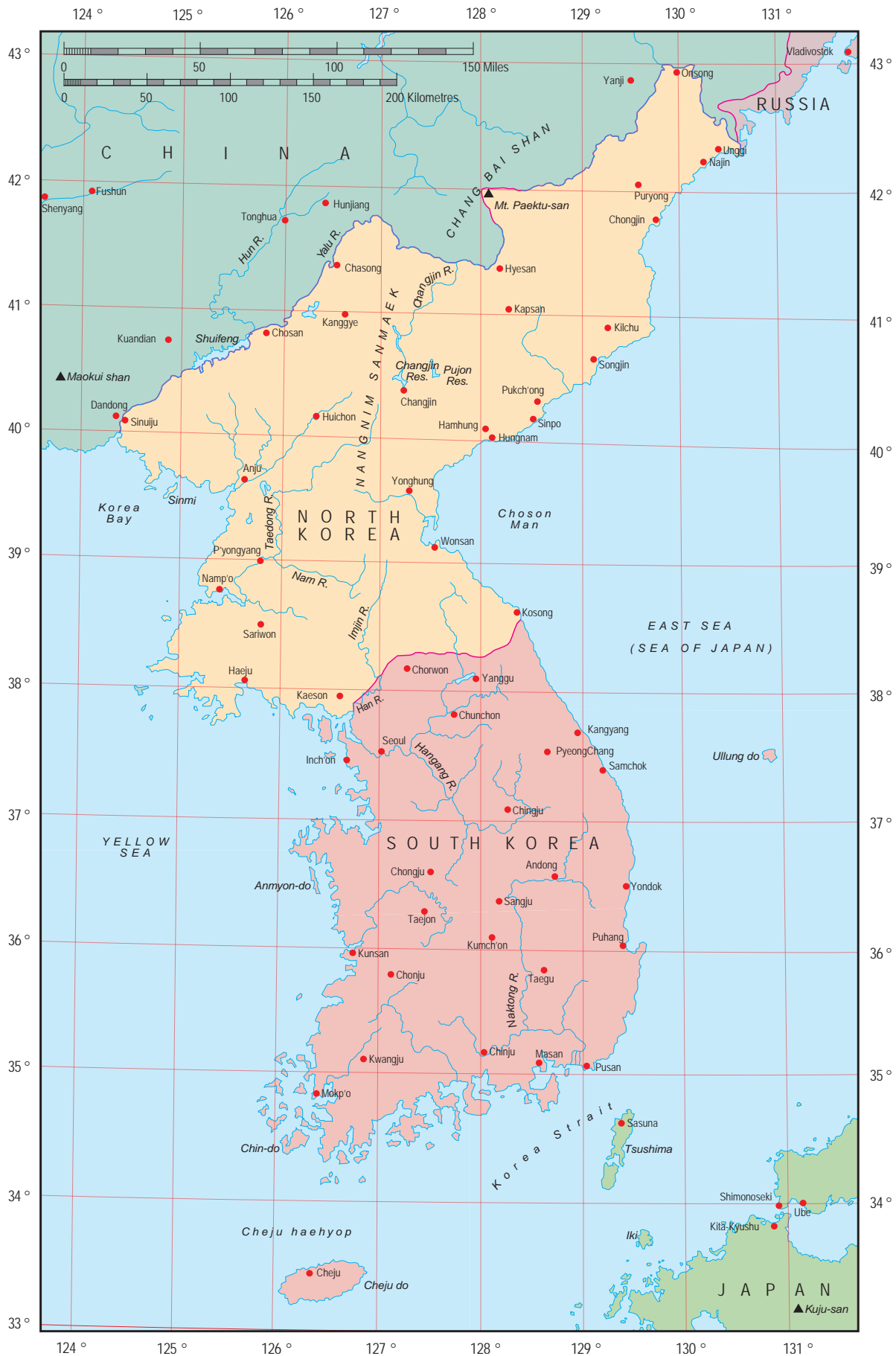
Water

To the east is the East Sea, or Sea of Japan, and to the west is the Korea Bay in the Yellow Sea, giving North Korea a total of 1,550 miles (2,494 km) of coastline. Its longest river, the Yalu, runs approximately 497 miles (800 km) from the southern slope of Mount Paektu westward to the Korea Bay. The Tumen River flows 323 miles (520 km) from the north side of Mount Paektu to the East Sea. The Taedong River flows from north to southwest through the capital of Pyongyang. Most of North Korea's major rivers flow to the Yellow Sea in the west.

Climate

North Korea's climate is generally cool, with long and bitter winters. Average winter temperatures range from 20° F to -10° F. Warm summer temperatures average 70 to 80° F. Most of the country's 40 inches (101 cm) of annual rainfall occurs in the summer. North Korea experiences some droughts in late spring and typhoons in the early fall. Monsoons, or seasonal winds, bring

Map of North and South Korea



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hot, humid air from the south in the summer and cold, dry air from the north during the winter.

Wildlife

Once home to a variety of large mammals, North Korea has experienced a loss of habitat due to deforestation. Deer, antelope, goat, and leopard populations have dropped greatly. Few, if any, tigers are left. Though the plains are heavily populated by people, they are also home to several bird populations, including pigeons, herons, cranes, and others.

The 784 square mile demilitarized zone has become overtaken by nature since 1953, resulting in a kind of sanctuary. In addition to dozens of birds and fish species, it is also occupied by Asiatic black bears, lynxes, and other mammals.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN NORTH KOREA

Family Life

The overall standard of living in North Korea has improved since World War II. However, the strong focus on industrialization and military growth has hurt the areas of consumer goods and social services. In the 1990's, North Korea experienced extreme economic hardship that led to food shortages, inadequate medical care, and lack of daily necessities. Many North Koreans abandoned their homes and families during this crisis.

City Life

Most urban residents have jobs in factories. North Korea offers housing in urban areas, almost all of which is supported by the government. Working-class families live in small, one room apartments while a few government officials have single-family houses with gardens. Large cities have many newer high-rise buildings, but heat and water systems are inadequate. Streets are typically empty as North Koreans have little leisure time and few own automobiles. Even the largest cities have very few restaurants or theaters where residents can enjoy free time.

Country Life

Communists in North Korea converted small family farms into larger agricultural communes. Farmers work on land they do not own, using some modern machinery. They often live together in government-owned apartment buildings.

Recreation

North Koreans have very little time for leisure. What resources they have are controlled by the government, which operates gyms and runs organized sports. In cities, residents can enjoy state-operated theaters.

Education

North Korea requires 12 years of free primary and secondary education. Students attend preschool for one year, followed by five years of primary school and six years of secondary school. Students learn communist ideology along with work skills. The focus is on science and technology. North Korea boasts a 100% literacy rate—a vast improvement over the less than 50% rate of the 1940's. In addition to academic studies, all students are required to work during the summer. With government approval, North Koreans can continue their education in high school or vocational school. After that, they may attend a two- to six-year college, adult education program, or technical school.



A typical day in Pyongyang, North Korea

Religion

North Korea has no official religion. It is traditionally a Buddhist and Confucianist country, with some followers of Christianity and Chondogyo (or Religion of the Heavenly Way). The government maintains an illusion of religious freedom by allowing certain state-sponsored groups to exist. However, there is almost no free religious activity independent of the government.

In the past, most Koreans lived according to Confucian ideals, with some influence from Buddhism. Christian missionaries arrived in the 18th and 19th centuries, but were driven out by the end of World War II. In 1860, Confucian teacher Ch'oe Che-u founded Chondogyo, a combination of other major religions, which became quite popular.

Health Care

Although North Koreans enjoy free healthcare, medical resources and personnel are in short supply. Social insurance provides care for injured or disabled workers, care throughout pregnancy and childbirth, homes for the elderly, and funeral benefits.

NORTH KOREA'S GOVERNMENT

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was formed as a Communist state in 1948. It has been run as a one-man dictatorship since its beginning. It has a Constitution, which has been revised extensively since then. Although the Constitution claims to provide freedoms for religion and speech, people are strictly controlled by the Communist government and have little freedom.

The head of state is no longer called president, since the title "eternal president" was reserved for Kim Il-Sung after his death. Instead, the chairman of the National Defense Commission is the "supreme leader." A Central People's Committee, made up of high-ranking officials of the Communist party, sets policy.

A Supreme People's Assembly consists of 687 members who are seemingly elected to five-year terms by popular vote. In actuality, however, the list of candidates is

approved by the ruling Communist party, or the Korean Workers' Party (KWP). The Supreme People's Assembly in turn elects the unopposed premier, who heads the government. They meet only a couple weeks each year, and have little real power. The KWP controls all political activity in the nation, including setting policy and holding elections. All citizens age 17 and older can vote, but there is typically only one candidate per position. Voting is seen as a way to agree with the decisions of the KWP.

The country is divided into nine provinces and four municipalities. The national capital city is Pyongyang. Local governments oversee activity right down to the household level.

Military service is compulsory for men, giving North Korea one of the world's largest military forces, including a 1 million-man army, 110,000-man air force, and 60,000-man navy. Men serve for three to twelve years, and women may volunteer to serve.

NORTH KOREAN CULTURE

Koreans have a distinct identity and culture, despite centuries of foreign influence (especially from China) and attempts by the Japanese to do away with Korean culture. Traditional Korean culture took a blow after World War II when Soviet occupiers destroyed family ties in favor of Communist party loyalty. Under Communism, individual freedoms have been severely limited in North Korea. Westernization, or the adoption of western culture, has occurred slowly and under strict government control. The people live a harsh lifestyle of hard work and obedience to government authority. Scarce cultural activities are generally state-sponsored and group-oriented.

The Arts

North Korea's government supports traditional fine arts as long as they express loyalty to Communist ideals. Most public art celebrates Kim Il-sung and the revolution. Artists and writers promote Communism and nationalism—a belief in the superiority of one's country. They are not allowed to practice or perform independently as every artist, musician, dancer, and writer is assigned to a government institution.

Museums and archaeological sites are important cultural attractions as they help strengthen feelings of North Korean pride.

Fashion

Clothing in North Korea is generally basic and functional rather than fashionable. It resembles that worn in other parts of the developed world. On holidays, some North Koreans dress in traditional clothes—long, full skirts for women and loose trousers for men, along with a shirt and jacket.

Food and Drink

The most popular food in North Korea is rice. People also commonly eat fish, barley, beans, potatoes, and some fruits. Korea is famous for *kimchi*—a spicy, sour mix of pickled or fermented vegetables, usually cabbage and radishes. North Koreans eat very little meat or dairy products. Tea and coffee are the most common drinks. Koreans also enjoy a variety of alcoholic drinks, including beer and *sake* (rice wine).

THE ECONOMY OF NORTH KOREA

North Korea's economy has been greatly weakened by its Communist government. As a command economy, the government sets economic goals, determines prices, and controls all means of production. Central planning and the focus on military growth have resulted in chronic economic problems, shortages, and a low standard of living. North Korea is a closed economy, both in terms of interaction with other countries and disclosure about economic activities. National industrialization and the focus on self-reliance have resulted in insufficient agriculture, substandard consumer goods, and lack of foreign investment. North Korea's economy is one of the slowest-growing economies in the world. A disastrous 2009 effort to reform the currency caused severe inflation and economic hardship. North Korea has recently attempted to establish special economic zones to improve trade and cooperation with other countries.

Although North Korea a reasonably large labor force (41st worldwide), with 12.6 million workers, its economic output per person is one of the world's lowest. Roughly 37% of workers partake in agricultural activity and 63% in industry and services. Industry makes up almost half of the nation's economy, with another 33% coming from services and 25% from agriculture.

North Korea's exports go overwhelmingly to China (76%) and South Korea (16%), and consist mainly of minerals, metal products, military equipment, fish products, and textiles. It imports mainly petroleum, coal, machinery, and grain. Imports exceed exports.

Agriculture

Less than 20% of North Korea's land is suitable for farming. Farmers grow rice, corn, soybeans, and potatoes and raise cattle and pigs. Farmers' challenges include crop-destroying weather, poor soil, rocky terrain, lack of machinery and fuel, along with the inefficient Communist system of collective farming. North Korea relies on frequent international food aid to avoid famine and starvation. Much of the population suffers from long-term malnutrition. Since 2002, the government has allowed a small increase in freedom for farmers.

Forestry and Fishing

Japanese occupation in the first half of the 1900's greatly depleted North Korea's timber resources. Reforestation efforts have helped replenish the forests. The nation is ideally suited for excellent fishing, with long coastlines, numerous islands, and offshore reefs. A variety of currents bring both warm- and cold-water species.



The capital city of Pyongyang

Mineral and Energy Resources

North Korea is rich in mineral resources, including gold, iron ore, coal, tungsten, and graphite. Mining operations, however, are mainly small-scale. Energy comes primarily from hydroelectric plants and coal-burning plants. Electric power in North Korea falls far short of the country's needs.

Manufacturing

North Korea's major industries are military products, machines, chemicals, textiles, and food processing.

Services

Tourism is greatly restricted in North Korea. Most visitors come from China and all are accompanied by official North Korean guides.

Transportation

After the devastating Korean War of the 1950's, transportation in North Korea has improved greatly. Rail lines, the most important form of transportation, were rebuilt with help from other Communist countries, especially the Soviet Union. However, current growth is limited by scarce energy resources. Paved roads are rare, since few people own automobiles. Citizens are not allowed to travel freely among counties and provinces, though many do so illegally. Air travel is controlled by the government, with one international airport in Pyongyang and a few other domestic airports elsewhere.

Communication

All media outlets in North Korea are strictly state-controlled and heavily censored. The government is responsible for several daily newspapers, periodicals, radio broadcasts, and television programs. These outlets all promote communist ideology and North Korean nationalism. Through extensive government effort, radios are in almost every home and village and almost as many televisions. Government radio broadcasts are often blared through loudspeakers in public places in villages. Foreign broadcasts are banned and the government jams all such signals. Internet use is greatly restricted.

NORTH KOREA'S HISTORY

The history of people on the Korean peninsula dates back thousands of years. The earliest people groups to settle the area were the Tungusic people, who migrated from Manchuria and Siberia. They developed the Korean language, which draws heavily on Chinese. Pyongyang frequently served as a key city or capital during Korea's early history.

Early History

Traditionally, Choson, located near the modern-day capital Pyongyang, formed the first Korean state in 2333 BCE. Around 100 BCE, the Chinese invaded and conquered the northern part of the Korean peninsula. The Koreans, separated into tribes, fought back to regain some of the territory and united themselves into states. The three Korean states of Koguryo, Paekche, and Silla formed the Three Kingdoms of ancient Korea.

Koguryo, in the north, took back control of the Chinese territory in 313 CE. Fighting then broke out among the Three Kingdoms for total control of the Korean peninsula. In the 660's, with the help of the Chinese, Silla conquered the other two states. During the next 200 years of relative stability, Korean culture flourished in the form of arts, education, and Confucian thought.

When Silla collapsed after fighting in the 800's and 900's, the conquerors renamed the area Koryo, which became the modern name Korea. Under new leadership, books and learning became a priority. In 1234, Koreans invented the first printing press to use movable metal type.

After centuries of alternately fighting against and allying with Chinese invaders, war broke out once again in the mid-1200's. A group allied with the Chinese Ming dynasty defeated those allied with the Mongol tribes from the north. The victorious General Yi Song-ye became king of the new nation, which he renamed Choson.



Gyeongbokgung royal palace in Seoul was built in 1394

Choson Dynasty (1392–1910)

General Yi established an independent kingdom in 1392. He moved the capital to Seoul, now the capital of South Korea, and made Confucianism the national religion. Buddhism, which had continued since the 700's, became less important. During the centuries-long Choson dynasty, Korean culture flourished and the economy grew. Korea resisted invasions by the Japanese and Chinese.

Under the rule of the Choson dynasty, Korea closed itself off to all foreign countries in the 1600's and was known as the Hermit Kingdom for 200 years. Only China and Japan traded with Korea. When Catholic missionaries came from Europe in the 1830's, Korean authorities persecuted them and killed any converts.

Japan Takes Control (1910–1945)

Japan forced Korea into a trade agreement in 1876 that opened ports to foreign trade. Several other countries then signed treaties to trade with Korea as well. The countries began to fight for control of Korea. When Japan went to war against China and then Russia in the early 1900's, they moved troops through Korea. Even when the wars ended, the troops remained. Japan exerted increasing control over Korea until it formally annexed the country by adding it to Japanese territory in 1910. The Japanese ruled the Koreans harshly, instituting major social and economic changes. They saw

Korea as a source of people and industry to fuel their war efforts. They forced Koreans to work in mines, factories, and the military. The Korean language was banned in public and Koreans were assigned Japanese-style names.

Japanese rule came to an end when Japan lost World War II. With Soviet troops in the north and American troops in the south, Korea was divided for what was expected to be a temporary reconstruction period. However, as relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union worsened, the two regions became more separate.

North and South Korea (1948)

By 1948, the U.S. in the south and Soviet Union in the north had helped establish new governments in Korea and began to withdraw their influence. This left the Republic of Korea in the south and the Democratic People's Republic in the north. Neither government recognized the other as an authority in Korea. The south followed more democratic principles while the north maintained Communist rule. North Korea's first premier was Kim Il-Sung, head of the Korean Workers' Party (or KWP), the Communist party in North Korea. He was installed on September 9, 1948, the day North Korea was officially formed. He established himself as the "Great Leader" and ruled harshly until his death in 1994.

Korean War Begins (1950)

With both regions eager to take over the entire Korean peninsula, North Korea struck first with a surprise attack in June of 1950. The ensuing Korean War lasted until 1953 and resulted in devastation and loss of life on both sides. As part of the Cold War between communists and non-communists in other countries, both sides of the Korean War were given foreign aid. China and the Soviet Union gave aid to North Korea, and the United Nations supported South Korea. The war ended with an uneasy truce and a boundary between the two countries called a demilitarized zone (or DMZ). Tensions continued through the 1950's and 1960's. Both countries stationed armed troops along the border, and fighting occasionally erupted.

After the Korean War, Kim Il-Sung strengthened the country's military forces by increasing the number of troops and investing in infrastructure, such as airfields. The government redistributed farmland from the wealthy to the poor and organized collective farms. The Soviet Union, China, and countries in Eastern Europe all aided in North Korea's economic growth. However, Kim soon eliminated the Soviet and Chinese Communist influences. Without foreign aid, and with a strong focus on the military and heavy industry, North Korea continually failed to meet its economic goals. This resulted in food shortages, which were worsened by the rapid population growth. Between 1953 and 1993, North Korea's population tripled.

North Korea's strict travel and trade restrictions, along with complete government control of the press, isolated it from the rest of the world. For decades, the country maintained friendly relations with the Soviet Union and China, while remaining hostile toward the United States. However, the collapse of the Communist party in the Soviet Union and friendly relations between China and South Korea left North Korea with few allies. Even so, North Korea still desired to unify South Korea under its control.

This tension between North and South Korea continued for decades. In 1967-8 North Korean troops ventured into the demilitarized zone, attacked South Korean troops, and entered the South Korean capital city in a failed assassination attempt against the South

Korean president. North Korea also took aggressive actions against the United States by seizing a U.S. ship in 1968 and shooting down a U.S. Navy plane in 1969. North Korea was found guilty of a bombing in Burma that killed 17 South Korean officials in 1983. When South Korea hosted the Olympic Games in 1988, North Korea refused to participate.

Signed Agreement (1991)

Finally, North Korea gave up its insistence on a single joint Korean seat in the United Nations (UN). North and South Korea were each admitted to the UN as separate and equal members. Around this time, diplomatic relations between the two longtime rivals began to improve. Leaders met for talks and relatives were allowed to cross the DMZ to visit separated family members. The two countries agreed to stop using force against one another, increase trade and communication, and prohibit nuclear weapons. Cooperation stalled in 1993, however, due to controversy over North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Before Kim Il-Sung's death, he had promoted his son, Kim Jong Il, to several top government posts. Kim Il-Sung was named North Korea's "eternal president" and his son took the title "supreme leader." Kim Jong Il continued his father's cult of personality and focus on "military first politics." He did, however, advance foreign relations by signing a treaty with the United States to stop development of nuclear weapons. In return, the United States helped build two reactors to provide electrical power throughout North Korea. This effort involved cooperation among North Korea, South Korea, Japan, and the United States.

In the 1990's, North Korea was weakened by a devastating food shortage that resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths due to starvation. The country nearly collapsed economically when a government program aimed at reforming the currency failed. The government acknowledged the failure of the program and executed the official responsible for the change. Unfortunately, North Korea also renewed nuclear weapons activity in the late 1990's and early 2000's, reviving international tensions.

In December 2011, Kim Jong Il died, leaving his youngest son, Kim Jong-Un, as supreme leader. Once again, North Korea agreed to stop nuclear weapons testing in exchange for food and aid from the United States. However, this pledge was short-lived as North Korea denied access to weapons inspectors, tested nuclear devices, and refused to submit reports on weapons activity. Since then, North Korea has engaged in a cycle of alternately denying they have certain nuclear weapons capabilities and threatening to use those nuclear weapon capabilities they have.



Flag of North Korea

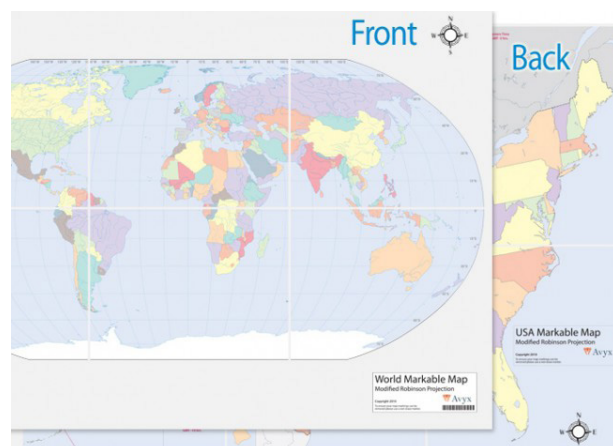
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THE KOREAN WAR

After World War II, Korea was divided into two parts with two different forms of government: North Korea had a communist form of government and South Korea had a more democratic form of government. The Soviet Union helped establish the Communist government in the north, while the United States helped establish democracy in the south.

In 1950, the North Korean army crossed the dividing line of the two countries in an effort to forcefully unite both parts of Korea under a single communist government. Nations around the world watched and waited to see if the conflict between North and South Korea would grow into a full-scale war between the Soviet Union and the United States, or even erupt into World War III. For the first time, a worldwide organization, the United Nations, played a role in a war. It condemned the aggression by North Korea and called member nations to help support South Korea.

From 1950 to 1953, over 2.5 million people lost their lives in the Korean War. Over 60 years later, the two countries have yet to settle on a peace treaty.

Tensions leading to the war began immediately in 1945 after the end of World War II. Japan lost control of Korea, which it had annexed in 1910. The Korean people were now free and ready to rebuild their nation. In order to aid the reconstruction, the country was divided into the north and the south along the 38th parallel for what was expected to be a short time. The Soviet Union occupied the north and the United States occupied the south. However, political tensions between the Soviet Union and the U.S., World War II allies, entangled their Korean counterparts.

The Soviet Union had become an increasingly powerful Communist nation by the mid-1900's. While the democratic U.S. opposed Soviet growth and ideology, the two countries had only engaged in a "cold war" up to that point. Without fighting one another directly, both the Soviet Union and the U.S. took steps to strengthen and spread their own political systems throughout the world.

In 1947, the newly-formed United Nations declared that the Korean people should hold elections to establish one government. The Soviet Union refused and instead helped establish the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Meanwhile, South Korea formed its own government, the Republic of Korea, and the United States removed the last of its troops. Thus, one outcome of these warring ideologies was the formation of the separate nations of North Korea and South Korea in 1948.

The two new neighboring countries withstood an uneasy peace as each refused to recognize the independence of the other and both established their opposing forms of government. In North Korea, Communist dictator Kim Il-Sung received the full support of the Soviet Union. In South Korea, president (and sometimes dictator) Syngman Rhee tested the limits of democracy. Before the Korean War even began, constant skirmishes along the border between North and South Korea resulted in almost 10,000 deaths. For the most part, the United States avoided direct intervention in South Korea, but concern over the spread of communism forced the U.S. to remain involved.

The first military action of the Cold War took place on June 25, 1950, when the North Korean People's Army invaded South Korea. This marked the beginning of the Korean War. Under Communist influence, 75,000 North Korean soldiers crossed into South Korea. U.S. troops immediately came to South Korea's aid in fighting the war. Under the leadership of President Harry Truman, Americans saw this as a war not only between North and South Korea, but between democracy and the global threat of communism. "If we let Korea down, the Soviet[s] will keep right on going and swallow up one [place] after another," said Truman. The global community, represented by the United Nations, agreed. The UN condemned the invasion and called upon its members to help South Korea. It placed military forces of 15 other member nations under the command of the United States as Allies in the fight against North Korea. In all, 41 nations contributed aid to South Korea in the form of food, weapons, and supplies.

The beginning of the war did not go well for the Allies. The North Korean army was much more disciplined and better prepared than the South Korean army. They had experience from fighting alongside the Soviets and Chinese during World War II. They advanced rapidly through South Korea. The American troops, parched by the hot, dry summer, drank contaminated water in rice paddies and became sick. By the end of the summer, U.S. General Douglas MacArthur changed the strategy. No longer would the Allies simply attempt to defend South Korea from invasion. Their new goal was to free North Korea from harmful Communist control.

The new strategy was successful at first. A surprise attack by sea at Incheon allowed the Allies to push the invading troops out of Seoul. General MacArthur and his forces chased them north across the border. They captured the North Korean capital of Pyongyang and drove the North Koreans almost to the Chinese border.

This tactic, however, was seen as aggression by Communist China. Chinese dictator Mao Zedong sent troops to North Korea to help defend against the invading Americans. He also warned the U.S. to avoid the Chinese border. Tensions ran high as General MacArthur sought to provoke the Chinese into fighting but President Truman hoped to avoid a larger conflict. Eventually, the Chinese joined the fighting and pushed the Allies back to the south. The hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops were far more than what General MacArthur had predicted. Communists recaptured the South Korean capital of Seoul.

General MacArthur hoped to mount another attack against North Korea. He famously claimed that there was “no substitute for victory” against these Communist forces. Although much of the world hoped to stop the spread of Communism, no one wanted to repeat the recent horrors of World War II. In April of 1951, President Truman fired the aggressive General MacArthur and turned his focus toward peace talks. General Matthew B. Ridgway took over as commander in chief of the U.S. armed forces.

For the next two years, fighting continued as the leaders attempted to come to a peace agreement. Both North and South Korea agreed to stop fighting and

maintain the boundary between the countries. However, they disagreed about what to do with prisoners of war. North Korea and the Chinese wanted POWs to be forcibly “repatriated,” i.e., to remain in the country which had captured them. South Korea and the United States wanted POWs to be returned to their homelands. Negotiations stalled.

The Korean War was unpopular among Americans. In 1953, they elected former army general Dwight D. Eisenhower as president upon his promise to end the war. Finally, the two sides reached an agreement on July 27, 1953. Prisoners of war would be allowed to decide where they wanted to live. A new boundary would add



The demilitarized zone between North and South Korea

1,500 square miles (2,414 square km) to South Korea’s territory. The boundary between the two countries would remain a 2-mile wide “demilitarized zone.”

A result of the war was that South Korea remained free of communism and the contrast between North and South Korea remains to this day.

The Korean War was relatively short, but it was devastating. Between 2.5 million and 5 million people lost their lives. More than half of these were civilians and almost 40,000 were Americans. Another 100,000 Americans were wounded. The demilitarized zone still exists between North and South Korea decades later. Attempts at reconciliation and peace talks have been interrupted by outbreaks of fighting and suspicions over nuclear weapons development in the north. North and South Korea have never signed a peace treaty and rely on the 1953 armistice agreement. U.S. military troops remain in South Korea to discourage any further hostilities.



ASIA

SOUTH KOREA

SOUTH KOREA: THE BIG PICTURE

Every August 15th, the people of South Korea celebrate Liberation Day. This was the day in 1945 on which they became independent from Japan. The Republic of Korea (ROK) was formed three years later on this date. Although the nation is fairly new, people have been living in Korea for as long as recorded history.

Although South and North Korea share ancient history, since 1945 their paths have differed. Despite conflicts with its northern neighbor and some internal turmoil, South Korea has flourished under its democratic government. Income and the standard of living have improved greatly, helping make South Korea a considerable economic power.

MEET THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH KOREA

The ethnic makeup of South Korea is almost completely homogeneous, meaning that almost everyone is ethnically Korean. A small population of about 20,000 Chinese also live in the country. The foreign population is increasing, with most

Fast Facts

Capital:
Seoul

Size:
109th in the world

Area:
61,963 sq miles
(160,483 sq km)

Coastline:
1,499 miles (2,412 km)

Highest Point:
Mount Halla 6,398 feet
(1,950 m)

Lowest Point:
Sea of Japan 0 feet (0 m)

Population:
49 million

Official Language:
Korean (with English
widely spoken)

Currency:
South Korean won
(KRW)



National
Anthem:

“Aegukga” (Patriotic
Song) Although it
shares this name with
North Korea’s anthem,
the lyrics are different.

National Symbol:
yin-yang

immigrants coming from China, Japan, and the United States. The number of people migrating into the country is about equal to the number migrating out. Overall, South Korea's population is growing very slowly, with one of the lowest birth rates in the world.

All citizens speak Korean, and English is taught widely in schools.

Most South Koreans (83%) live in cities. Almost 10 million live in Seoul, the largest city. Six other cities have a population of 1 million or more. Because roughly half of the nation's people live in these seven cities, the population density is very high. In rural areas, people live in villages clustered in river valleys, at the base of hills, or in coastal lowlands. Only a few settlements are scattered throughout the mountains.

LAND, WATER, WILDLIFE, AND CLIMATE IN SOUTH KOREA

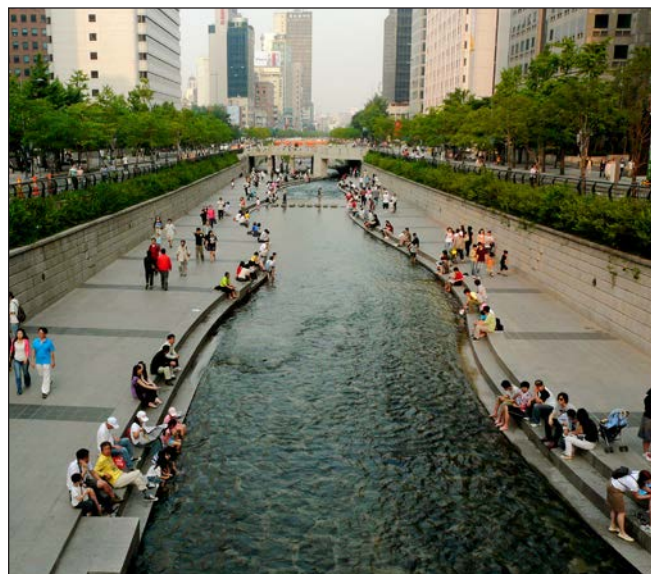
Land

South Korea's total land area is about 61,963 square miles (160,483 square km), about the size of the state of Pennsylvania, making it the 109th largest country in the world. South Korea's only adjacent neighbor is the country of North Korea, to the north. It is separated from Japan, to the south, by the Korea Strait. The land is mainly hilly and mountainous, with small valleys throughout and narrow coastal plains. The T'aebaek Mountains run north-south along the eastern coastline. Other mountain ranges branch off from there, including the Sobaek Mountains, but none are very high. The highest point, Mount Halla, is a historically active volcano that has not erupted in centuries. South Korea also consists of several small islands, mainly to the south and west, including the volcanic island of Cheju.

Water

South Korea is bordered by the East Sea, or Sea of Japan, to the east, the Yellow Sea to the west, and the East China Sea to the south. This gives South Korea a total of 1,499 miles (2,412 km) of coastline. Almost all rivers originate in the T'aebaek Mountains and flow south or west. The Han, Kūm, and Naktong are all important rivers in South Korea. The Naktong River is South Korea's

longest, at approximately 325 miles (523 km). Because of South Korea's complex coastline and the shallowness of the Yellow Sea, the west coast experiences tidal variations of up to 30 feet (9 meters)—one of the most pronounced in the world.



Seoul's residents enjoying Cheonggyecheon

Climate

South Korea has a temperate climate with generally cold, dry winters and hot, humid summers. Average winter temperatures range from the mid-30s °F to the low 20s °F with summers averaging in the high 70s °F. Rainfall in South Korea is heavier in summer than in winter and averages about 35–60 inches (89–152 cm) per year. The east coast is the driest and the south coast is the wettest. Winter snowfall is heaviest in the mountains. South Korea's climate is influenced by monsoons, or seasonal winds. Occasional typhoons bring high winds and floods.

Wildlife

Once home to a variety of large mammals, South Korea has experienced a loss of habitat due to deforestation. Overfishing and pollution have also impacted marine habitats. Deer are the most abundant large mammal in South Korea. Populations of tigers, leopards, lynxes, and bears have almost disappeared. Hundreds of bird species migrate to South Korea seasonally.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN SOUTH KOREA

Family Life

Despite recent modernization in many aspects of life, South Koreans still maintain many traditional values of Confucian culture. These include respect for elders and societal seniority based on age, marital status, and economic status. Because traditional beliefs state that spirits do not leave the earth for many years, South Koreans still consider deceased relatives part of the family and honor them on major holidays.

Holidays and celebrations are very important to South Koreans, who mark the major life milestones of a baby's first 100 days of life, marriage, and the 61st birthday. They also celebrate the Lunar New Year (called Söl-lal) and the harvest moon festival (called Chusŏk, or the Korean Thanksgiving). Families wear traditional clothing, prepare special foods, and make formal greetings to elders.

City Life

Although South Korea's population has not grown overall, people have been moving to cities in vast numbers. This rapid urbanization led to a shortage of housing in big cities. Before the 1960's, the capital Seoul had few buildings above 10 stories. Now, high-rise apartment buildings provide over 2.5 million homes. While the government responded quickly to the need for housing, other services, such as water, sewage systems, and transportation, have not kept pace with the need.

Overall, city-dwellers enjoy better job opportunities, education, health care, and entertainment than those living in rural areas. However, they also face increasing crime, traffic, and pollution.

Country Life

Rural homes are usually simple structures made of brick or concrete blocks. Some have a second or third story and almost all have electricity. Traditional ondol floors carry hot air from the kitchen through channels to heat the home. More modern buildings use pipes to carry heated water or electric coils to provide heat from below the floor.

Recreation

South Koreans love to spend leisure time outdoors and exercising. The country offers many national parks where people can hike, camp, or ski. Tae kwon do, a form of martial arts, and wrestling are two of the most popular sports. South Korea has professional leagues for baseball and soccer. They also enjoy a variety of Western sports, such as golf, tennis, table tennis, and boxing.

In 1988, Seoul, South Korea hosted the Summer Olympic Games. Pyeongchang, another city in South Korea, has been chosen to host the



The night lights in the city of Seoul

2018 Winter Olympic Games. In 2002, South Korea co-hosted the World Cup soccer finals along with Japan. These international events have boosted sports programs and facilities as well as national pride.

In addition to sports, South Koreans enjoy movies, plays, operas, and musical performances. Reading is popular and television networks offer a wide variety of entertainment.



Gwangju World Cup Stadium

Education

Almost all of the adults in South Korea can read and write. Children must attend six years of primary school and three years of middle school, both of which are free. After that, most go on to high school or technical school. Since the end of World War II, colleges and universities have increased in number. Now, about 80% of high school graduates go to college. Admission to the best schools, however, is fiercely competitive and high school students must work extensively to prepare for the entrance exams. In recent years, overseas study has grown popular, especially in the United States.

Religion

South Korea has no official religion, but the people are guaranteed freedom of religion. About 43% of South Koreans claim no religion. The rest are about 32% Christian and 24% Buddhist. The nation also has strong historical ties to shamanism (the belief in spirits that respond to a shaman, or priest), Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism. As different belief systems came into and fell out of popular practice, none were truly abandoned. This has resulted in a unique mix of beliefs among South Koreans, which influences their culture.

Health Care

Since the end of the Korean War in 1953, health care has improved to the point that most people have health insurance and access to medical care. Sanitation and public health have also improved, leading to fewer epidemics.

SOUTH KOREA'S GOVERNMENT

The Republic of Korea (ROK) is a republic, meaning elected officials represent the people and follow an established set of laws. Its capital is in the northern city of Seoul. The nation is divided into nine provinces, six metropolitan cities, one special city (Seoul), and one special self-governing city (Sejong).

South Korea's Constitution became effective July 17, 1948 and has been amended several times since.

It guarantees basic freedoms such as religion and the press, but these can be limited by the government. All citizens age 19 and older have the right to vote, and they elect a president for one five-year term who serves as chief of state and commander of the armed forces. The president appoints a prime minister to serve as the head of the government. These two leaders collaborate to appoint a State Council, a group of advisors. The National Assembly consists of 300 leaders who are elected through a combination of direct and indirect voting to serve four-year terms. They make and carry out the laws of the nation. South Korea has several different political parties as well as several special interest groups, such as Lawyers for a Democratic Society, the National Council of Churches in Korea, and the Federation of Korean Industries.

The nation maintains an army, navy, and air force. Service is mandatory for all males for at least 21 months, and women may volunteer to serve. The armed forces are much smaller than those of North Korea and exist mainly to defend against an attack from this northern neighbor. For this purpose, South Korea also has a large number of U.S. troops stationed in the country.

SOUTH KOREAN CULTURE

Despite recent political and economic changes, South Korea has a long and rich history that forms a unique culture. Several sites have been named UNESCO World Heritage sites, including Buddhist writings at Haein Temple, volcanic caves on the island of Cheju, and burial monuments that are thousands of years old. The National Museum of Korea in Seoul is home to many cultural artifacts and



Goryeo Celadon kettle designed like a turtle

the National Museum of Contemporary Art holds the country's largest collection of contemporary art.

The Arts

South Koreans have long enjoyed performances by traveling troupes. They put on puppet shows, do acrobatics, juggle, sing, and dance. The most popular traditional dance is the sandae masked dance, wherein male performers wear large, brightly painted masks made of paper, wood, or gourds. Traditionally, singers and dancers would be accompanied by a 12-stringed zither and an hourglass-shaped drum called a changgo.

Korean painting dates back thousands of years to murals found in ancient royal tombs. Artists also developed several distinct forms of ceramics, including fine celadon (greenish glazed) ware.

Today, South Korea has several national companies for dance, drama, and music.

Fashion

The hanbok is a traditional Korean form of dress, still worn on special occasions. South Koreans wear different hanbok for different occasions, usually involving a long, full skirt and short jacket for women and loose pants and jacket for men. For everyday wear, most Koreans dress in typical Western clothing.

Food and Drink

The Korean diet is based on rice and other grains, along with vegetables and beans. In urban areas, foreign dishes like pizza, hamburgers, and sushi have become popular. Korea is famous for kimchi—a spicy, sour mix of pickled or fermented vegetables, usually cabbage and radishes. In the fall, families or whole villages spend several days preparing the winter supply of kimchi in a festival called kimjang. South Koreans eat a small but increasing amount of meat or dairy products. Tea and coffee are the most common drinks. Koreans also enjoy a variety of alcoholic drinks, including beer, sake (rice wine), and soju (a distilled grain alcohol).

THE ECONOMY OF SOUTH KOREA

South Korea's economy is one of the largest in Asia and ranks 14th in the world. It far surpasses its northern neighbor, North Korea. Most economic growth in South Korea has occurred since the 1950's, after the nation was formed and finished fighting the Korean War. Prior to that time, it had been mainly an agricultural society. Since then, however, it has become more industrialized and modernized.

The work force is one of the largest in the world (25th) but is aging rapidly. About 3% of South Koreans are unemployed and 16% live below the poverty line.

Agriculture

Although agriculture was the primary economic activity in the past, it now makes up just 2% of the nation's economy. Farmers grow rice, barley, vegetables, and fruit. They also raise cattle, pigs, and chickens and provide milk and eggs. South Korea must import many of its food needs. Rapid urbanization has caused the population of farmers to become smaller and older. This problem has been offset by improvements in machinery.

Forestry and Fishing

South Korea has been recovering from deforestation during the Japanese occupation. However, logging remains a small industry and South Korea imports much of its timber. Fishing, on the other hand, is an important economic resource. The country is ideally suited for deep-sea fishing. It consumes and exports large numbers of fish.

Mineral and Energy Resources

South Korea lacks mineral resources, with just small reserves of coal, iron ore, gold, lead, and other minerals. It imports almost all of its petroleum and metal needs. The nation relies mainly on thermal electric power, with some hydroelectric and nuclear power sources.

Manufacturing

Major industries in South Korea include electronics, automobiles, chemicals, steel, and shipbuilding. Manufacturing and industry account for 39% of the nation's economy. Many of the goods are produced for export, making South Korea the 6th largest exporter in the world. Almost half of these exports go to China, the United States, Japan, and Hong Kong. The rapid growth of cities has led to an increase in construction of buildings, roads, and water and sewage systems.



Port of Busan is the largest port in South Korea

Services

This sector accounts for almost 59% of South Korea's economy. The country has a large tourism industry, catering largely to visitors from other Asian countries. Other major service industries include finance, real estate, insurance, and business services.

Transportation

Most of South Korea's passenger travel and freight transport occurs on roads. It has a well-developed bus network and several railways, which are mainly government-owned. A few large cities have subway systems. South Korea also has several domestic and international airports.

Communication

With freedom of the press, South Korea has many public and private newspapers, radio stations, and television networks.

SOUTH KOREA'S HISTORY

Both North and South Korea share their past history. (To read about that history, see North Korea's History.) The two countries' histories diverge after World War II. Once the Japanese had been forced to leave, South Korea needed to be rebuilt.

North and South Korea (1948)

By 1948, the U.S. in the South and Soviet Union in the North had helped establish new governments in Korea and began to withdraw their influence. This left the Republic of Korea in the south and the Democratic People's Republic in the north. Neither government recognized the other as an authority in Korea. The north followed communist principles while the south maintained democratic rule. South Koreans elected Syngman Rhee as their first president.

After the Korean War

The Korean War (1950–1953) amplified tensions between President Rhee and his National Assembly. Rhee ran for four terms as president, instead of two, and pushed through laws that allowed him to be elected by the popular vote. Legislators and student demonstrators opposed his level of control over the government. Under intense pressure, Rhee resigned in 1960 and fled to Hawaii. His time as president is known as the First Republic.



Once surrounded by walls, Seoul is still home to the "Great Southern Gate"

For a few months thereafter, a parliamentary cabinet ruled South Korea with Prime Minister Chang Myŏn elected as a figurehead. During this Second Republic, South Korea suffered from social and economic problems and its government was hobbled by opposing factions. In 1961, General Park Chung-Hee overthrew the government in a military coup.

Park ruled South Korea under martial law and dissolved the National Assembly. However, pressure from non-military leaders as well as foreign powers forced him to run for president in a democratic election. In 1963, Park was elected by a narrow margin to become president during the Third Republic. Like Rhee before him, Park took political action to extend his presidency beyond two four-year terms. After being elected for a third term, Rhee went so far as to declare a national state of emergency in which he suspended the constitution and dissolved the legislature. Beginning in 1972, the Fourth Republic began with Park serving unlimited six-year terms. He had almost unlimited power and worked to suppress anyone who opposed him. Under Park's leadership, the government greatly limited freedom of speech and of the press. They also jailed many of Park's opponents. After two more re-elections, Park was assassinated by his friend, and leader of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, Kim Jae-Kyu.

Throughout this time of political turmoil in the late 1900's, tensions with North Korea continued. During Park's presidency, North Korean troops ventured into the demilitarized zone, attacked South Korean troops, and entered the South Korean capital city in a failed assassination attempt against him. North Korea was also found guilty of a bombing in Burma that killed 17 South Korean officials in 1983. When South Korea hosted the Olympic Games in 1988, North Korea refused to participate.

After Park's assassination, South Korea experienced a brief period of military rule. Clashes between demonstrators and the military occurred frequently and were often violent. The government was finally

restored with the election of President Chun Doo-Hwan in 1980. Beginning with this Fifth Republic, the president would be limited to one seven-year term. Chun ruled until 1988, when Roh Tae-Woo took office in the nation's first peaceful transfer of power. Under his leadership, which began the Sixth Republic, South Korea hosted the Summer Olympic Games. Political parties became more unified and ties with foreign nations were strengthened. Legislation was changed to limit the president's term to five years instead of seven.

Signed Agreement (1991)

Finally, North Korea gave up its insistence on a single joint Korean seat in the United Nations (UN). North and South Korea were each admitted to the UN as separate and equal members. Around this time, diplomatic relations between the two longtime rivals began to improve. Leaders met for talks and relatives were allowed to cross the DMZ to visit separated family members. The two countries agreed to stop using force against one another, increase trade and communication, and prohibit nuclear weapons. Cooperation stalled, however, in 1993 due to controversy over North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

In 1993, President Kim Young-Sam took office. He was a civilian, rather than a military leader. He took action to end government corruption and removed thousands of officials from their positions. Kim's own son was arrested for bribery and tax evasion. Previous presidents Chun and Roh were also convicted of serious crimes involving finances.

The next president, Kim Dae-Jung, extended pardons to Chun and Roh as an act of goodwill. Kim improved the nation's relations with North Korea and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace for this "sunshine" policy.

In 2013, South Korea's first female leader, Park Geun-hye, took office as president. She is the daughter of former President Park Chung-hee.



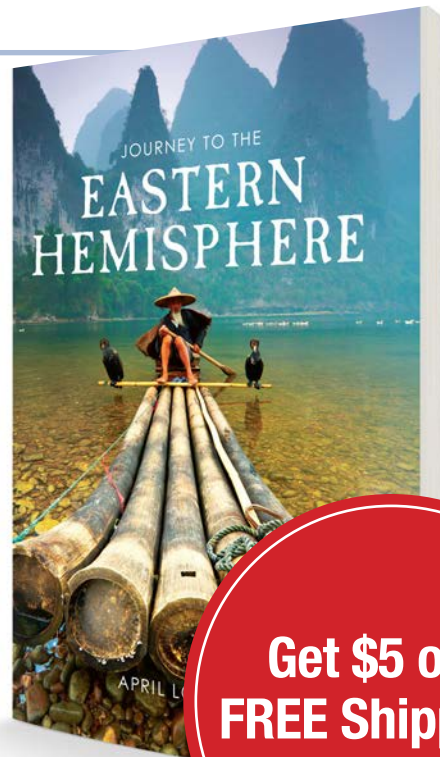
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