

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

GRADES: 6-12

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SUBJECT: Social Studies, Geography

TIME REQUIRED: Three to six class periods

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify the relationship between names and certain cultures and locations
- Interpret data
- Identify countries where names originate
- Apply research skills
- Respond to literature
- Evaluate historical events in relationship to current events

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Computers with Internet access
- World map
- Several copies of the suggested novels
- Handout: Venn Diagram (attached)

BACKGROUND:

In several books about Korea during the Japanese occupation (1905–1945), one recurring theme is how the Japanese tried to force Koreans to adopt Japanese names and language. Because names are a vital part of human identity, changing a person's name was meant to change that person's identity from Korean to Japanese, and thus convert his or her allegiance from Korea to Japan. This lesson will explore the meaning of our names, identify what countries they originated from and read literature concerning what life was like for Koreans during the Japanese occupation.

PROCEDURE:

1. Discuss with students the origin of their name. Ask them why they have the name that they do? Are they named after a particular person? Who gave them their name? What does their name mean? Why is a name important? Conduct research the Internet to find the country of origin and the meaning of their names. Have them discuss with their parents their name and the answers to the above questions. Have them write a paragraph summarizing the results of their research.
2. Create maps that show family migration or immigration, or a map that highlights all the which students discover in their family trees. Locate Korea and Japan on a world map. Have students explore relationships in the geography of these two countries. What similarities and differences can they discover? Create a Venn diagram of their findings (see Handout).
3. Read the first two chapters of Linda Sue Park's novel *When My Name was Keoko* and pages 105 to 106 of Richard Kim's novel *Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood*

aloud. Allow time for discussion of how the families in these stories feel about changing their Korean names to Japanese names. Have the students choose Japanese names to use instead of their own names. Construct name tags for them to wear for the remainder of the day. Tell students that they may not be called by their own names while at school; they must be called by their Japanese name. The following day, discuss some of their responses to the name changes. How did they feel? What reactions did they get from other students? Was it difficult to remember to call your friends by their other names?

EVALUATION:

Have students write about their responses to this historical event as it relates to events taking place in the news today. What parallels can they find between the Japanese occupation of Korea and other occupations in recent times?

ENRICHMENT:

- Using a listing of Korean vowels and consonants, have students translate their names into *han'gul*, following the *han'gul* alphabet as closely as possible to the vowels and consonants that we use in the English alphabet. Make name tags and wear these for the remainder of the period or day. A Web site to explore is:
<http://park.org/Korea/Pavilions/PublicPavilions/KoreaImage/hangul/school/theory01.htm>

REFERENCES:

Choi, Sook Nyul. *Year of Impossible Goodbyes*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1991. (Grades 5-9)

Kim, Richard E. *Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998. (Grades 7-12)

Park, Linda Sue. *When My Name Was Keoko*. New York: Dell Yearling, 2002. (Grade 5)

Watkins, Yoko Kawashima. *So Far From the Bamboo Grove*. New York: Beech Tree Books, 1986. (Grades 6-9)

Maps of Korea, Japan and the World:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/>

About Korea:

<http://www.koreanculture.org/index.php>

Name Origins:

<http://www.babynamesworld.com/names1/what-does-my-name-mean.html>

<http://www.behindthename.com/nmc/jap.html>

Six Lessons on Data Analysis and Probability Using Student's Names:

http://illuminations.nctm.org/index_o.aspx?id=151

HANDOUT: VENN DIAGRAM

Name _____

Subject: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Comparing Maps of Korea and Japan

