

Geography of Korea

OVERVIEW

Korea is a peninsular coast with four seasons. Korea boasts picturesque beaches, mountains and rivers. It is cut off from the Asian continent by two seas and mountains. The Yellow Sea and the East Sea (sometimes called the Sea of Japan) separate Korea from China and Japan. About 3,500 islands are clustered along the coast, mostly to the south and west.

The peninsula is roughly 600 miles long. It falls between the 34th and 42nd parallels in the north latitudes. At its narrowest point, it is 120 miles wide; at its widest, it stretches 160 miles.

Korea shares a border with both the People's Republic of China and Russia. Korea is 70% mountainous; its mountain chain runs north to south or on a diagonal from northeast to southwest. The mountain ranges are mostly in east Korea.

Korea has seven major rivers, six of which flow into the Yellow Sea or the Korea Strait. In the past, major waterways were used as a source of irrigation and hydroelectric power. Rivers have also shaped the plains that produce rice and other food products.

Korea has a variety of weather and is considered mid-latitude monsoonal. Some southern parts are subtropical but in the far north the weather is much like that of Siberia. June, July and August are wet months and receive more than 50% of the yearly rain.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

- Students will learn about the location and physical features of Korea.
- Students will learn basic geography terms, including the layers of the earth's core.

MATERIALS

- world map
- atlases
- worksheet #1 (map of Korea)
- worksheet #2 (map of world)
- clay
- worksheet #3 (clay activity)
- worksheet #4 (comparison of North and South Korea)
- worksheet #5 (physical features definitions)
- worksheet #6 (Digging a Hole to Korea)

Time Frame: 2 days

THE LESSON

Day 1:

1. Tell students that they are going to go on an imaginary trip to Korea. To plan the trip, they need to learn where Korea is and how to get there. Ask students if they can locate Korea on a world map. Pass out atlases and have students learn as much about Korea as they can by using physical and political maps. Have students label features and cities of importance on worksheet #1 (map of Korea). This activity can be done in small groups.
2. Introduce the geographic term "peninsula." Ask for a definition and ask students to work with partner to find other peninsulas in the world and to make a list of their names and locations. Have students locate the peninsulas on worksheet #2. Talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the peninsular land form.

Peninsula: a land area almost entirely surrounded by water but still connected to the mainland.

3. Tell students that it is important to have correct “mental maps” in their minds and the following activity will help them remember the peninsula of Korea. Distribute worksheet #3 and go over the directions for the activity, which will be done on worksheet #1 (map of Korea). Distribute clay. Put clay inside the shape of Korea. Use extra clay to form mountain ranges. Use an atlas or a physical features map to locate the mountain ranges.

Day 2:

1. Ask students to refer to worksheet #1. Demonstrate to students where the 38th parallel is and ask them to use their pencils to draw the demarcation line from east to west.
2. Explain the demarcation line to the students. Talk about what this means to the Koreans.

In the mid 1940s, a power struggle took place over Korea between the former Soviet Union and the U.S. After World War II, the efforts of the Koreans to establish an independent government were frustrated by the U.S. in the south and the Soviet occupation of the north. Soviet forces were aligned with North Korea, above the 38th parallel and the U.S. forces supported South Korea, or the Republic of Korea. The two Koreas and their allies struggled through the three year Korean War (1950- 53). The war-time agreement between the U.N. and the North Korea established a military demarcation line that still divides Korea. It is known as the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone).

3. Look at a map and predict the seasonal changes Korea might experience. Explain why. Go to an atlas and find a world map. Identify countries that are in the same latitudes. Pass out worksheet #2 (map of world) and have students color in the map between latitudes north 42 and 34. List the countries and identify any that may not have a climate similar to Korea’s. Explain Why.

4. A very successful lesson is called How to Dig a Hole to the Other Side of the World, written by Faith McNulty, New York: Scholastic Inc., 1979. It combines physical geography and science. Students build models of the earth's layers to understand that Korea is in the opposite hemisphere from the U.S. (worksheet #6).
5. Tell students that at the end of the study of Korea, the class will make an edible map of Korea to celebrate their accomplishments as world travelers. (This can be a pizza, gingerbread cookie from a mix with chocolate chips for mountains, a rice crispy cookie, etc.)

EXTENSIONS

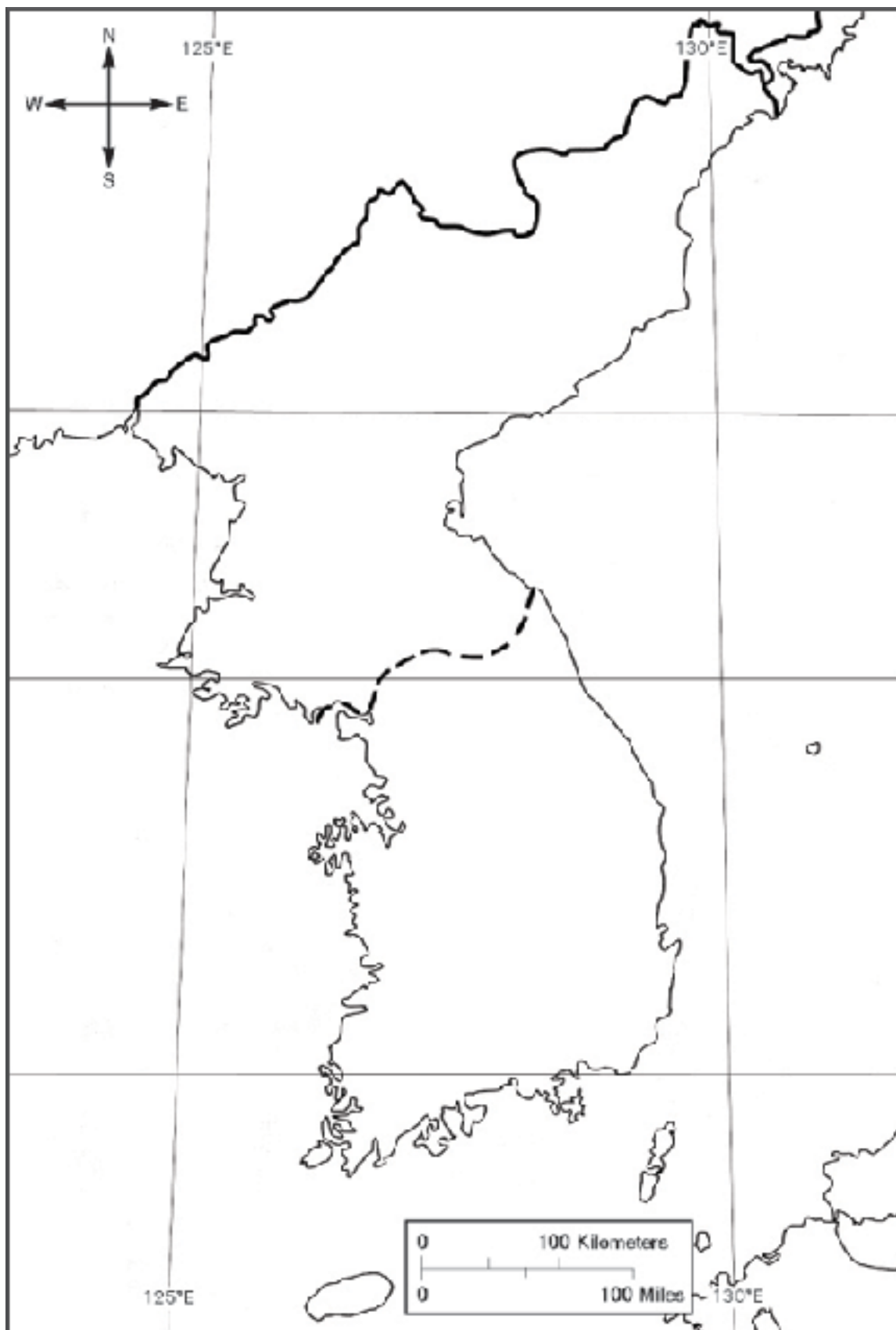
1. Tell students that there are differences between North Korea and South Korea that they are going to learn about. Pass out worksheet #4 and discuss the differences.
2. Continue work on physical features using worksheet #5 (physical features definitions).

ASSESSMENT

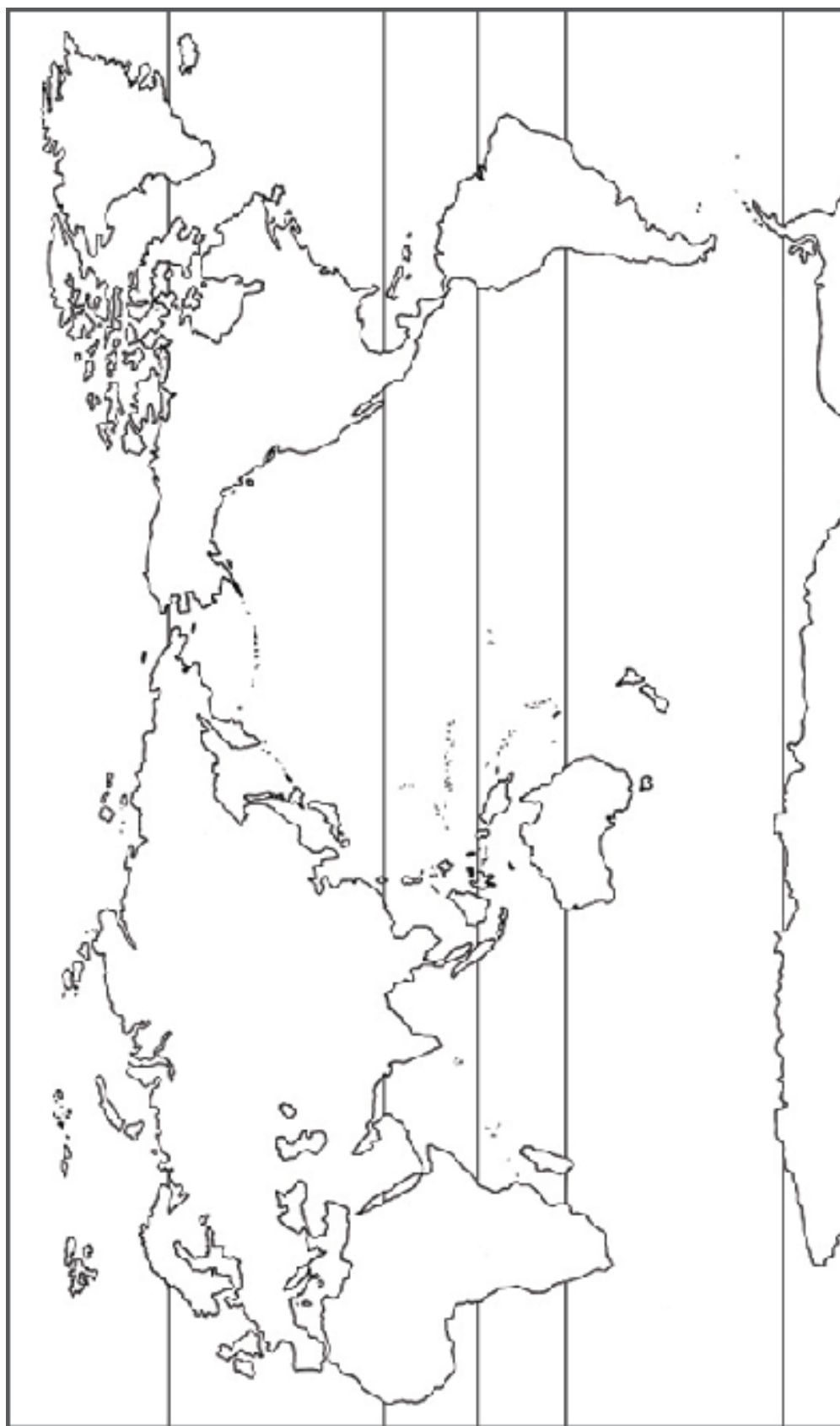
1. Ask students to close their eyes and to visualize Korea's shape, where its mountains are located and any other features that they may know. Put away any wall maps or other maps of Korea. Have the students make a free hand drawing of Korea. This map should contain information gained from these lessons. At the end of the unit, another map will be made and progress will be compared.
2. Ask students to write in their geography journals. (Each page should be dated.) Ask them to list three things that they have learned about Korea, its location, its physical features, its climate or any other item. Students can write three short paragraphs.

WORKSHEET #1

MAP OF KOREA



MAP OF WORLD



WORKSHEET #3

LEARNING THE GEOGRAPHY OF KOREA

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Make a rope of clay and lay it along the shape of Korea.

2. To me, the shape of Korea looks like a

If you wrote "a tiger," can you see any other image in the map?

If so, what is it?

3. Remove the clay carefully. On a blank piece of paper, use the clay to make the shape of Korea.

4. List three observations that you made in doing this project.

5. Describe the differences that you noticed between the eastern and western parts of Korea.

6. Look in your atlas or at a physical map and see if you can determine why the differences exist.

7. How would living in a peninsula be different from living in a land-locked region? Where would you prefer to live? Why?

WORKSHEET #4

COMPARISON OF NORTH & SOUTH KOREA

Name: _____

Date: _____

Korea is one nation. However, in 1948, it was divided into two sections. The two nations continue to share the Korean language, heritage and cultural traditions. But their political and economic systems are different. The North Korean economy is based on the communist system, and the South Korean economy is considered to be a capitalistic system that encourages global trading. North Korea is ruled by the, "Dictator for Life." South Korea is governed by an elected president.

North Korea**Name:** The Democratic People's Republic of Korea**Capital:** Pyongyang**Form of Government:** Communist**Area:** 47,077 square miles
(121,929 sq. kil.)**Population:** Over 23,000,000**Unit of Money:** Won**Religion:** Religion is discouraged**Land:** Extremely mountainous,
with deep valleys**Climate:** Hot summers, cold winters**Education:** 11 years free and compulsory**South Korea****Name:** The Republic of Korea**Capital:** Seoul**Form of Government:** Democratic Republic**Area:** 38,221 square miles (98,992 sq. kil.)**Population:** Over 45,000,000**Unit of Money:** Won**Religion:** Buddhism and Christianity with most people believing in the teachings of Confucius**Land:** Rugged, mountainous**Climate:** Cold, dry winters, hot rainy summers**Education:** Ages 6-8, free and compulsory; 3 years of both middle and high schools

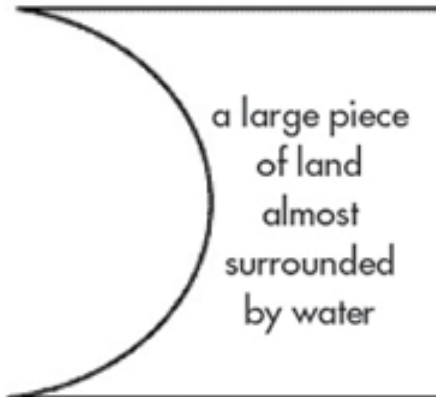
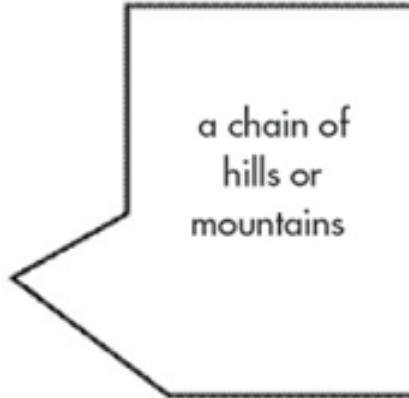
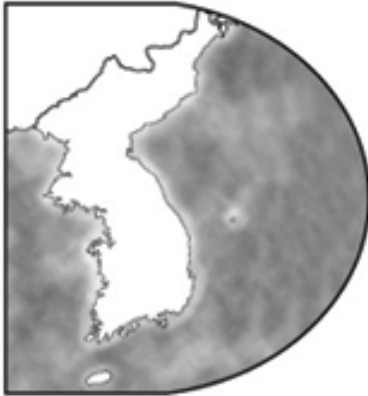
WORKSHEET #5

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Direction: 1. Color.

2. Cut out shapes.

3. Paste Puzzle pieces together on a separate sheet.



EXTENSION : Digging a Hole to Korea

OBJECTIVE

Students will create a model of the earth to identify and label the four layers of the earth and to learn about the concept of a round earth.

MATERIALS

- global playdough (four balls, each a different color)
- wax paper
- dental floss
- plastic straws, cut into thirds
- worksheet

To make global playdough, each ball requires a different color: red, yellow, natural and blue or green and the following ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup salt
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- food coloring (red, yellow, blue or green)

Cook all ingredients (except coloring) on low heat until thick and lumpy. Knead the dough, slowly adding coloring.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read a book about Korea or a book about the layers of the earth. See bibliography for book on Korea; suggested reading includes How to Dig a Hole to the Other Side of the World (written by Faith McNulty, New York: Scholastic Inc., 1979).
2. Students will be divided into groups of 2-4. Distribute wax paper to each group. Each group will be responsible for rolling the dough for one of the four layers. Each group should be asked to smooth out the dough and roll it up into a ball.
3. The red dough should be presented to the teacher. This is the inner core. The yellow dough should then be flattened and put around the red dough. The yellow dough is the outer core. The natural color dough, or mantle, should be flattened and put around the yellow dough. Then the blue or green dough, or crust, should be flattened around the natural color dough.
4. Students should be asked to locate the equator with a pencil. Ask them to put a dot above the equator, to indicate where they live. Turn the globe to the opposite side and put a dot for Korea. (This will, of course, be an approximation.)
5. Using dental floss, gently cut the earth along the equator. The halves may be sprayed with acrylic spray to keep from falling apart.

EXTENSIONS

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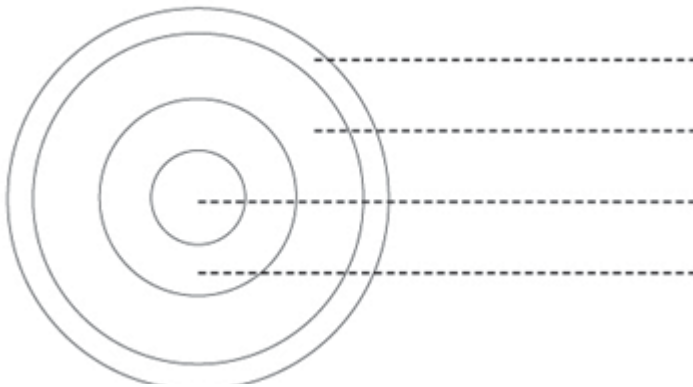
WORKSHEET #6

CAN YOU DIG A HOLE TO KOREA?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Many people say, "Can you dig a hole to China?" Korea is not that far away from China. If you can dig a hole to China, you can dig a hole to Korea, too! Before you dig the hole, you need to know something about the earth's layers.

Here is a picture of the earth's layers. Please label them.



1. Did you know that Korea is about the same size as Idaho? Find Idaho on the map.

2. Idaho has _____ people, Korea has _____. Korea has _____ times as many people as Idaho. Put _____ dots in Idaho and _____ times that many dots in Korea. Make all the dots the same size. (Idaho has a population of 1,200,000, and Korea has 68,500,000)



3. Write a sentence about your population findings.
