

16. SOUTH KOREA AND ITS CULTURE

GRADES: 3-5

AUTHOR: Mariam Baradar

SUBJECT: Social Studies

TIME REQUIRED: Two class periods

OBJECTIVES:

1. Become familiar with Korea's geography.
2. Obtain basic facts on South Korea.
3. Gain understanding of South Korean culture.
4. Be able to count in Korean.
5. Become familiar with South Korean contributions and achievements.
6. Realize that the earliest astronomical observatory building in the world is located in South Korea.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- *Count Your Way Through Korea* by Jim Haskins, illustrations by Dennis Hocherman, Carolrhoda Books, Inc./Minneapolis, 1989.
- World map
- Copy of Worksheet #1 for each student
- Copy of Worksheet #2 for each student

PROCEDURE:

1. Using the world map, ask the students to locate Korea and trace its border.
2. Identify the countries and bodies of water that border Korea. Point out that Korea and the Commonwealth of Independent States (former Soviet Union) share a border.
3. Tell students the population of Korea today (1995) is about 70 million. Explain that Korea is one of the few countries of the world that is divided into North and South. Korea was divided in 1948. The military enforces the border between North and South Korea.
 - A. North Korea is called Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It has a communist government system and their leader is Kim Jong Il. The capital of North Korea is P'yongyang.
 - B. South Korea is called Republic of Korea and has a democratic republic government system. The president of South Korea is Roh Moo-hyun who was elected in 2003. The capital of South Korea is Seoul. Seoul has a population of 15 million people.
4. Tell the students that the book they will read today is about South Korea. Emphasize that they have to answer questions about South Korea on the worksheets based on the information on the book.
5. Distribute Worksheet #1. Ask students to fill in the blanks as the information is encountered in the story.
6. Read aloud or have students take turns reading aloud *Count Your Way Through Korea* by Jim Haskins. As each page is read stop to correctly pronounce the Korean words and answer questions such as these:
 - What are the Korean numbering systems?
 - What system is used to count minutes and money?
 - Does any one know what is an astronomical observatory?

- Where is the oldest astronomical observatory located?
 - What is the name of the oldest stone astronomical observatory in South Korea?
 - Why do you think Ch'omsong-dae has 365 Stones?
 - How old is Ch'omsong-dae Observatory?
 - What is the boundary of South Korea to the West, East, North, South?
 - What is the boundary of North Korea to the North?
 - What is the population of Korea? South Korea? North Korea?
7. To reinforce the information gained from the book, distribute *Worksheet #2*. Ask the students to find and draw a circle around the words that they filled in on *Worksheet #1*. Go over the worksheets with the class and discuss it as a group.
 8. Divide the class into small groups to conduct research in the school library to identify the names of individuals who won the six gold medals at the 1984 Summer Olympic Games and prepare a short biographical report. Have each group share its report with the class.

EVALUATION:

The students should complete *Worksheet #1* and *#2* with 90% accuracy.

ENRICHMENT:

- Ask the students individually or in a small groups (3-4 students) to conduct research in the library and prepare a one-page report on Korea. Topics could be: Korean flag, language, economy, and monetary unit, culture, family structure, tea ceremony...etc. Encourage them to be creative with their class presentation. Ask them to share their report with the class. Follow with class discussion.
- Invite a Korean student/parent/community member to make a presentation regarding his/her culture, educational system, family structure, or any other topic to the class.
- To challenge talented and gifted students, have them do a contrast and comparison of the following: 1) physical attributes of South Korea and the state in which they reside, or 2) the economy/literacy rate of South Korea and other countries. The following list is an example and it could be extended or changed to fit any classroom activity. (After students complete the information, ask them to locate these countries on the map of the world and identify what continent on which they are located.)

	LITERACY RATE	MONETARY UNIT	LANGUAGE
KOREA			
JAPAN			
CHINA			
SAUDI ARABIA			
AFGHANISTAN			
TURKEY			
INDIA			
KYRGYZISTAN			
PHILIPPINES			
SRI LANKA			
TAJIKISTAN			

Answers to Worksheet #1:

1. Seoul
2. han'gul
3. seesaw
4. olympic
5. Changgi
6. baseball
7. South Korea
8. 10
9. Ch'omsong-dae
10. Pagoda
11. Popchu-sa
12. gold medals
13. spicy
14. Sino-Korean

WORKSHEET # 1

Directions: fill in the blanks based on the information from the book *Count Your Way Through Korea* by Jim Haskins.

1. The capital of South Korea is _____.
2. _____ is the official language of South Korea.
3. _____ is a Korean game.
4. The 1988 Summer _____ Games were held in Seoul.
5. Korean kind of chess game is called _____.
6. _____ is almost as popular in South Korea as it is in the United States. Soccer and baseball are the most popular sports in South Korea today.
7. In 1982, _____ won the 27th World Baseball Championship which happened to be played in Seoul.
8. There are _____ vowels in the Korean alphabet.
9. The oldest existing astronomical observatory of the world is _____ and it is located in South Korea.
10. The _____ of Popchu-sa has five stories.
11. _____ Temple was built in A.D. 553. It is thought to be the oldest wooden Pagoda in Korea.
12. South Koreans won six _____ at the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles.
13. Korean food has a very _____ taste.
14. Koreans use two different kinds of numbering systems. One is called _____ that is influenced by Chinese and is used to count minutes and money. The other is Korean numbers that are used to count persons and things.

WORKSHEET #2

Directions: Find each of the words that you filled in on Worksheet #1. Draw a circle around each word. You may find them in horizontal, vertical or other directions.

p	s	i	n	o	k	o	r	e	a	n	c
o	l	c	p	i	s	e	p	r	c	o	h
p	s	e	o	u	l	p	e	q	m	o	o
c	e	k	h	l	u	o	i	m	k	g	m
h	e	d	a	t	y	u	i	c	p	p	s
u	s	x	n	b	n	m	o	u	y	a	o
s	a	k	g	m	u	o	p	p	p	g	n
a	w	k	o	l	m	e	z	i	k	o	g
t	q	w	r	k	n	w	e	r	c	d	d
g	o	l	d	m	e	d	a	l	s	a	a
s	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	e
k	s	o	u	t	h	k	o	r	e	a	p
m	k	z	g	p	o	a	m	q	g	r	l
v	b	m	r	x	t	e	n	b	u	b	d
u	x	x	c	h	a	n	g	g	i	x	z
d	w	o	n	q	h	p	a	i	u	w	m
b	a	s	e	b	a	l	l	d	d	l	q

ANSWER SHEET #2

p	s i n o k o r e a n	c
o	l c p i s e p r c o	h
p	s e o u l p e q m o	o
c	e k h l u o i m k g	m
h	e d a t y u i c p	s
u	s x n b n m o u y	o
s	a k g m u o p p p	n
a	w k o l m e z i k	g
t	q w r k n w e r c	o
g	o l d m e d a l s	d
s	y y y y y y y y y	a
k	s o u t h k o r e a	e
m	k z g p o a m q g r l	p
v	b m r x t e n b u b d	l
u	x x c h a n g g i x z	d
d	w o n q h p a i u w m	q
b	a s e b a l l d d l	

INFORMATION SHEET # 1 CH'OMSONG-DAE

According to the 1982 Guinness Book of World Records: "The earliest astronomical observatory building in the world is the Ch'omsong-dae observatory in Kyongju, South Korea." Records indicated observatory was constructed between 633 and 647 A.D.

Ch'omsong-dae is a bottle-shaped granite tower. It is a cylinder, of which the upper circle and the lower circle are different in diameter, on a square stone base. On the top, long square stones are crossed making a # shape. At the 12th layer, there is a square window, facing due south, which measures about 1 meter square. The total number of stones from the ground to the 27th layer is 365. Ch'omsong-dae is 9.108m high (29 feet) with a diameter of 4.93m at the base and 2.85m at the top. The square window is at a height of 4.16m from the stone base.

The purpose of the tower was to predict events on earth by observing the celestial phenomena and to study the meteorological phenomena for application to farming.

Ch'omsong-dae may well have been a multipurpose observatory, measuring the sun's shadow, much in the way of a gnomon, and determining the positions of constellations for exact measurement of the celestial and equinoctial points as well as the 24 fortnightly period. The number of stones in each layer was considered to symbolize the 24 fortnightly periods of a year.

Ch'omsong-dae was presumed from its peculiar shape to have been built in accordance with the yin-yang theory (um-yang theory in Korean) representing the round-heaven and square-earth.

INFORMATION SHEET #2

Additional Information on South Korea

The population of Korea is about 76 million people: 48 million in South Korea, 18 million in North Korea, and 10 million abroad in China and Japan.

South Korea is the most Christian nation in Asia. South Korea has the world's largest churches of many different denominations, i.e., Methodist Kwanglim Church and Full Gospel Church in Youido, Seoul, Korea.

Han'gul is the official written language of South Korea. Education is the most important topic discussed in Korea. The literacy rate of South Korea is 98 percent. Only elementary education is compulsory and free (K-6). At middle school level (7-9) and high school level (10-12) tuition has to be paid by everyone except those who live in remote farm and fishing villages. All high school students who graduate have to take a national entrance exam to enter universities. Korean Language, Literature, English, Math are the required subjects for the university entrance exams. Some universities have additional entrance exams. In 1996 some universities will require article-writing instead of taking the additional test. The competition to enter the prestigious universities is keen and fierce which greatly affects the lives of high school students and their parents.

The monetary unit of South Korea is the Won (currently one U.S. dollar equals about 930 won). South Korea has a strong economy. According to the World Bank, the distribution of income in South Korea is comparatively one of the best in the world. South Korea has a high level of employment, the unemployment rate is only 2%. Through high employment, South Korea has been able to push up the standard of living and maintain stable prices. Korea is 11th among 150 countries in the world in terms of trade and export (in 2005). Manufacturing is the most important industry. South Korea exports electronics, iron (Pohang Steel Company is the second largest steel company in the world), automobiles, and industrial machinery to the United States of America, Japan, European countries, and neighboring countries in Asia.

The following are world rankings for South Korea in terms of exporting:

Shipbuilding.....#1
Semi Conductor.....#2
Automobile.....#6



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November 16, 1995

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Count Your Way through

Korea



by Jim Faskus

illustrations by Eunmi Park

Count Your Way through
Korea

by Jim Haskins

illustrations by Dennis Hockerman

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To Michael and Marcus

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Introductory Note

The Korean language is part of a family of languages called Altaic, which also includes Turkish and Mongolian. It is not related to Chinese. But centuries of close contact between Korea and China have added many Chinese words to the Korean language.

Koreans use two different kinds of numbering systems. One is called Sino-Korean, which means it is influenced by Chinese. The other is Korean. Sino-Korean numbers are used to count minutes and money. Korean numbers are used to count persons and things. The Korean numbers are used in this book, because in this book we count persons and things.

The Korean language contains some vowels that are pronounced differently than in English. The sound *o* is often pronounced like the *u* in the English word *but*.

1 하나 (hah-NAH)

The **one** building that is most symbolic of Korea is Ch'omsŏngdae (chom-sung-DEH). It is a stone astronomical observatory, or building where people study the stars and planets in the sky. It is thought to be the oldest existing observatory in the world. It is often pictured on travel posters, in guidebooks, and on postage stamps.

Ch'omsŏngdae stands 29 feet tall and is shaped like the top part of a glass bottle. It is made up of 365 stones, one stone for each day in a year. The observatory was built in the seventh century during the reign of Queen Sondok. Heavenly signs and what people say they mean are still very important in Korean culture.

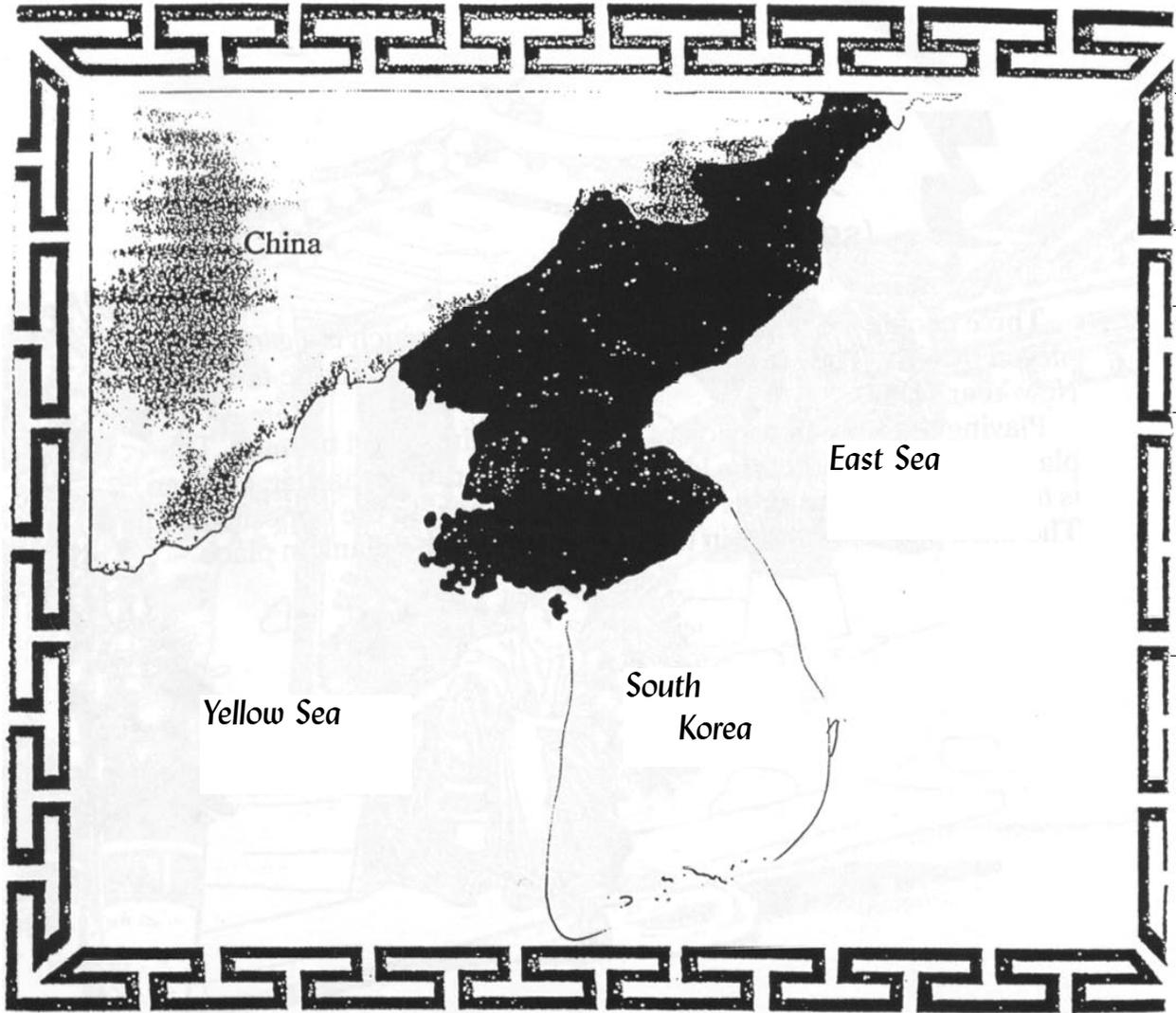




2 둘 (tool)

There are **two** Koreas, North and South. North Korea is called the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. South Korea is called the Republic of Korea. The country was divided in 1948, after World War II. The two regions could not agree about how Korea should be governed.

All attempts to reunite the country, both by force and by treaty, have failed. Both Koreas are now independent nations. Most of the information in this book is about South Korea.



3 셋 (set)

Three people are required for Korean seesaw, which is a game usually played by girls. They traditionally play seesaw to celebrate the Korean New Year's Day.

Playing the Korean version of seesaw requires good balance. The players at either end of the long plank stand, rather than sit, and one is thrown up into the air as the other goes down on the opposite end. The third player, who sits in the middle, keeps the plank in place.





4

넷

(net)

There are **four** parts to the traditional costume for men in Korea: a short, loose-fitting shirt with long sleeves, called a *chŏgori* (cho-GO-ree); a vest worn over the shirt; baggy pants, called *paji* (BAH-jee), that are tied at the ankles; and a hat. The most traditional hat is made of stiff black horsehair and is tied under the chin. It is called a *kat* (gaht). These hats are almost never seen today, but older Korean men usually wear a hat of some kind.

Traditional clothing for Korean women includes a long, loose, flowing skirt worn high above the waist and a very short, flared, long-sleeved blouse that crosses in front and ties with long colorful ribbons.

Today many people in South Korea wear Western-style clothing, especially in the cities. In North Korea, many wear plain clothes that look like uniforms. Throughout Korea, men are less likely than women to put on traditional clothes, even for ceremonies. But still, it is common in the cities and in the countryside to see people dressed in the old way.



5 다섯 (TAH-sut)

The pagoda of Pöpchu-sa Temple (BOPE-choo-sa) has five stories and is made of wood. It is thought to be the oldest wooden pagoda in Korea.

Pagodas are graceful buildings that are like churches. They were first built in Korea when the religion called Buddhism came to the country in A.D. 372. Buddhism started in India, but China helped to spread it to Korea and other parts of the Far East.

Pöpchu-sa Temple was built in A.D. 553. The five-story pagoda contains Korea's tallest statue of Buddha, or "Enlightened One."



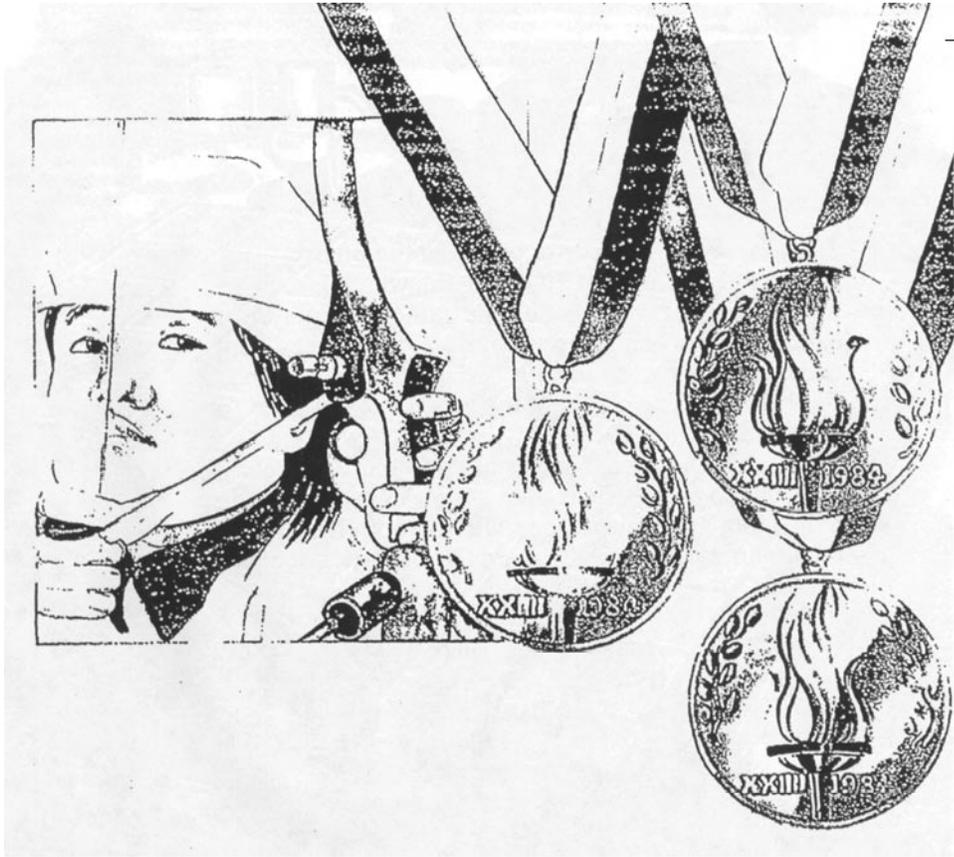


6 여섯 (YEH-sut)

South Korea won six gold medals at the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles: one in women's archery, one in boxing, two in judo, and two in wrestling.

Of these sports, archery and judo are the two that have been popular in Korea for many centuries. Boxing and wrestling were not introduced until this century. Soccer and baseball are the most popular sports in Korea today.

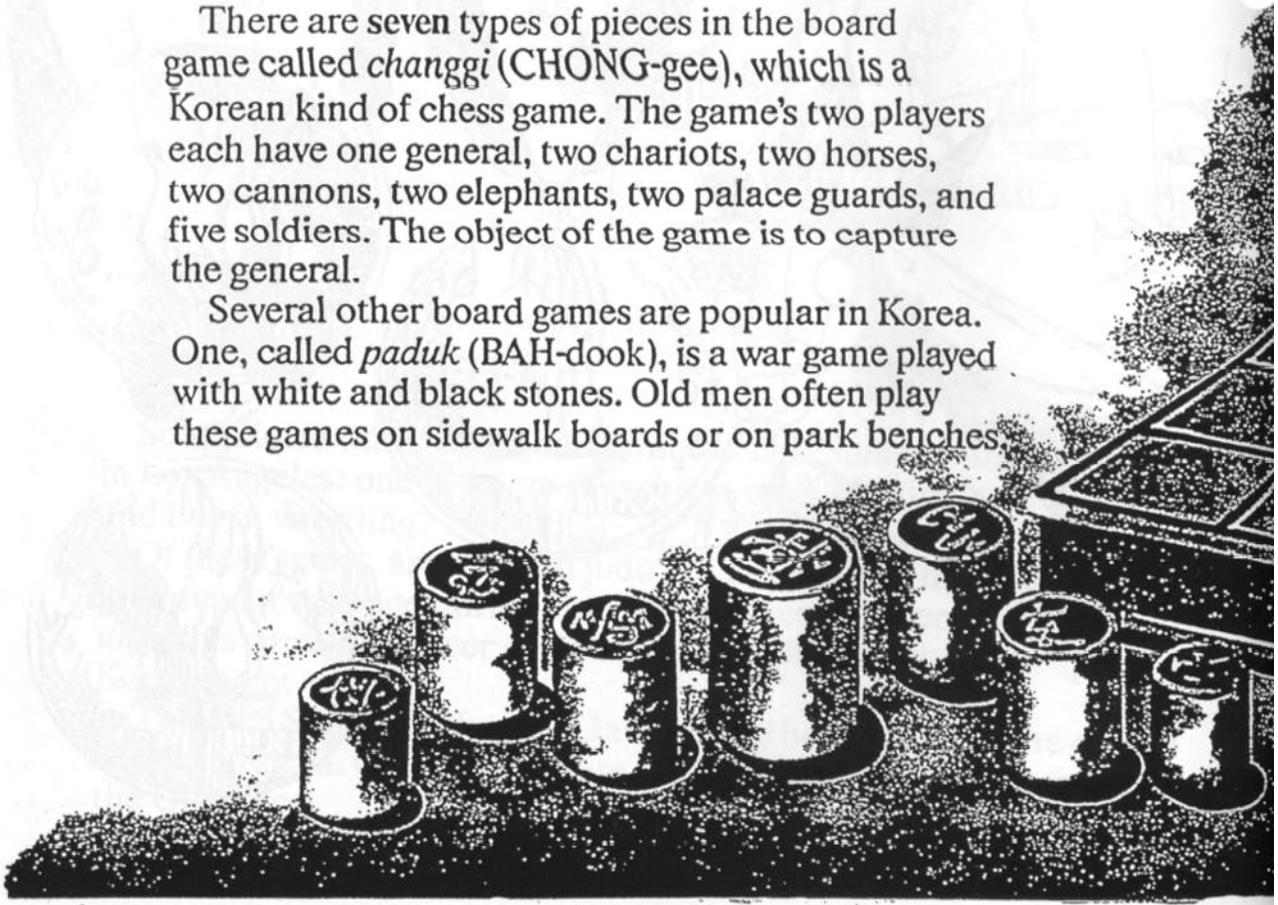
The 1988 Summer Olympic Games were held in Seoul, the capital of South Korea. Only once before had an Asian nation, Japan, hosted the Olympics.

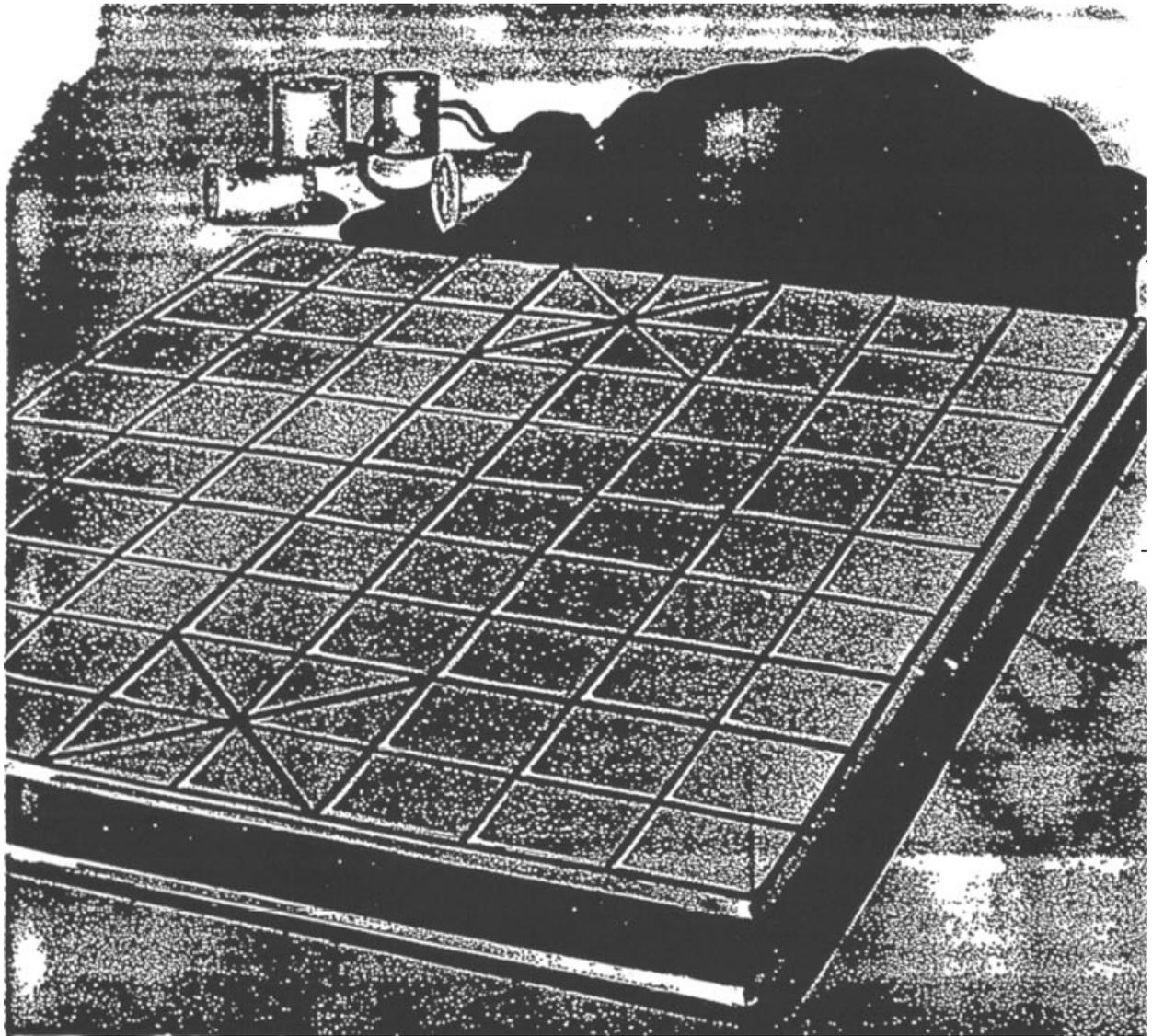


7 일곱 (ill-GUP)

There are seven types of pieces in the board game called *changgi* (CHONG-gee), which is a Korean kind of chess game. The game's two players each have one general, two chariots, two horses, two cannons, two elephants, two palace guards, and five soldiers. The object of the game is to capture the general.

Several other board games are popular in Korea. One, called *paduk* (BAH-dook), is a war game played with white and black stones. Old men often play these games on sidewalk boards or on park benches.







여덟
(yeh-DUL)

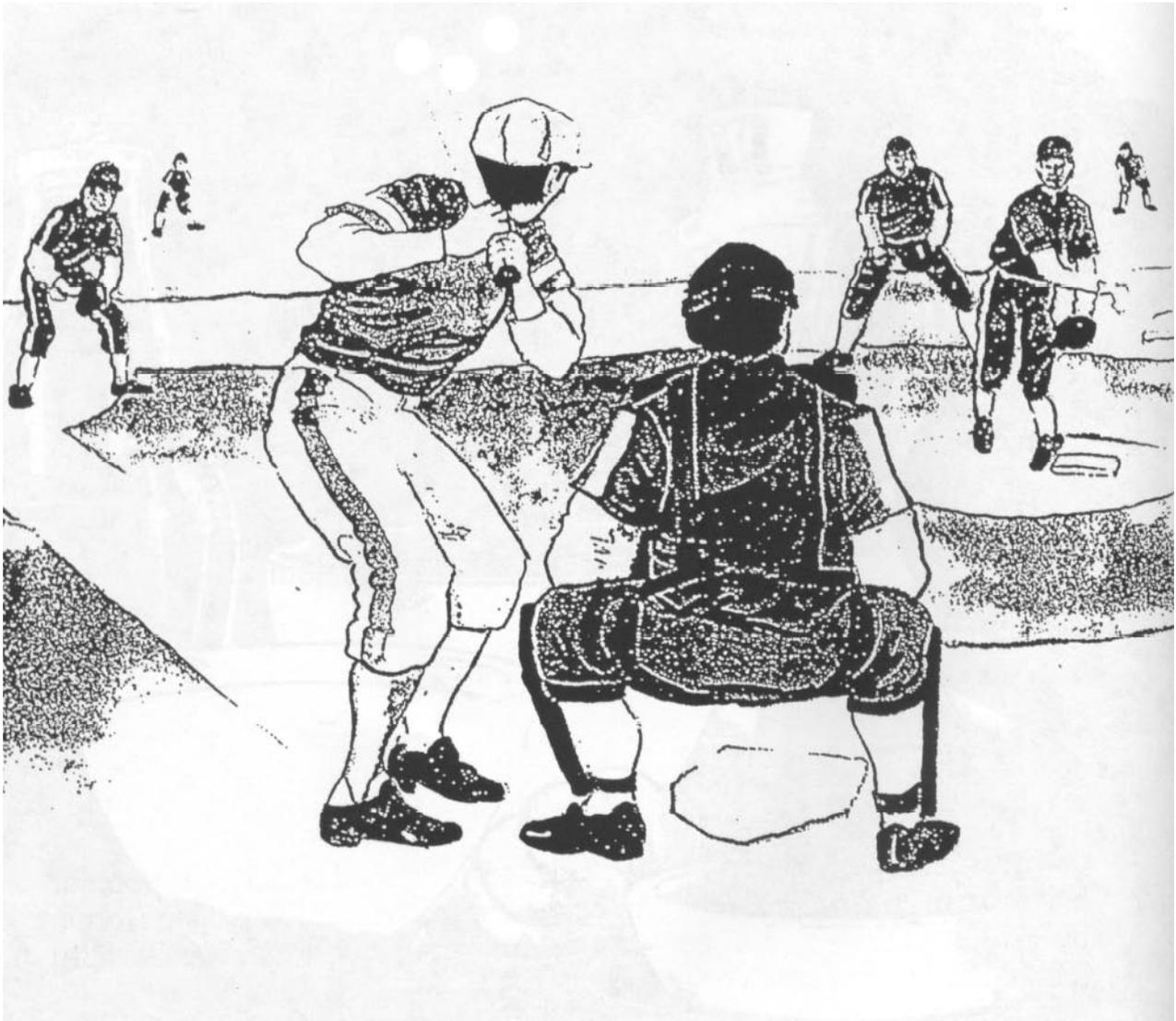
Eight kinds of seasonings are likely to be found at a Korean meal: red pepper, red pepper paste, soy sauce, soybean paste, ginger, garlic, sesame oil, and sesame seeds.

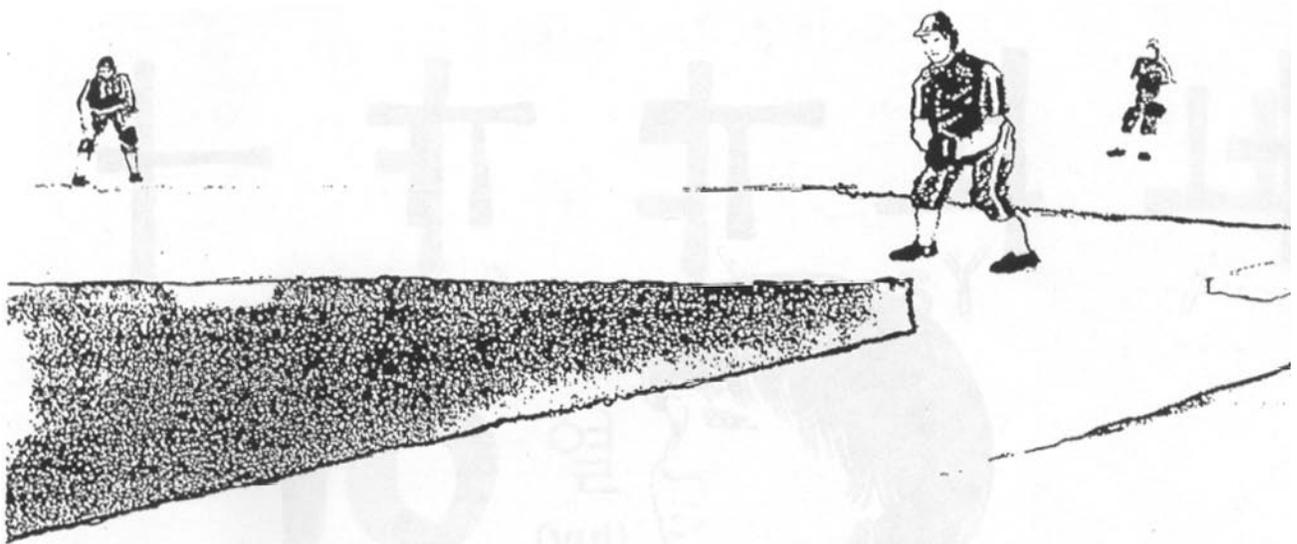
Much Korean food has a very spicy taste. Strong, hot foods are more common in Korean cooking than in Japanese or most Chinese dishes.

Another difference between Korean food and that of Japan and China is that in Korea a meal is not served one course at a time. Instead, all the dishes in a meal are served together.





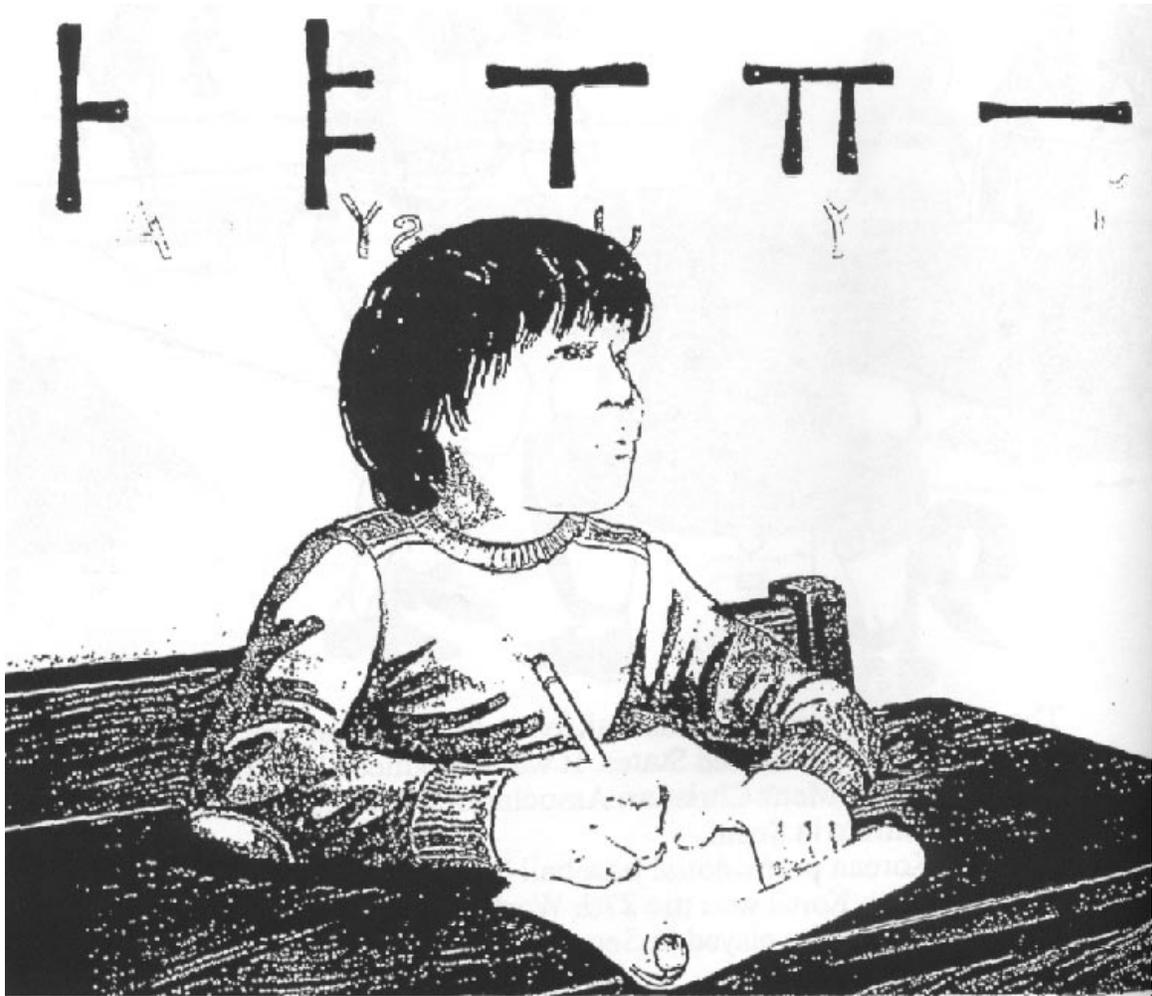


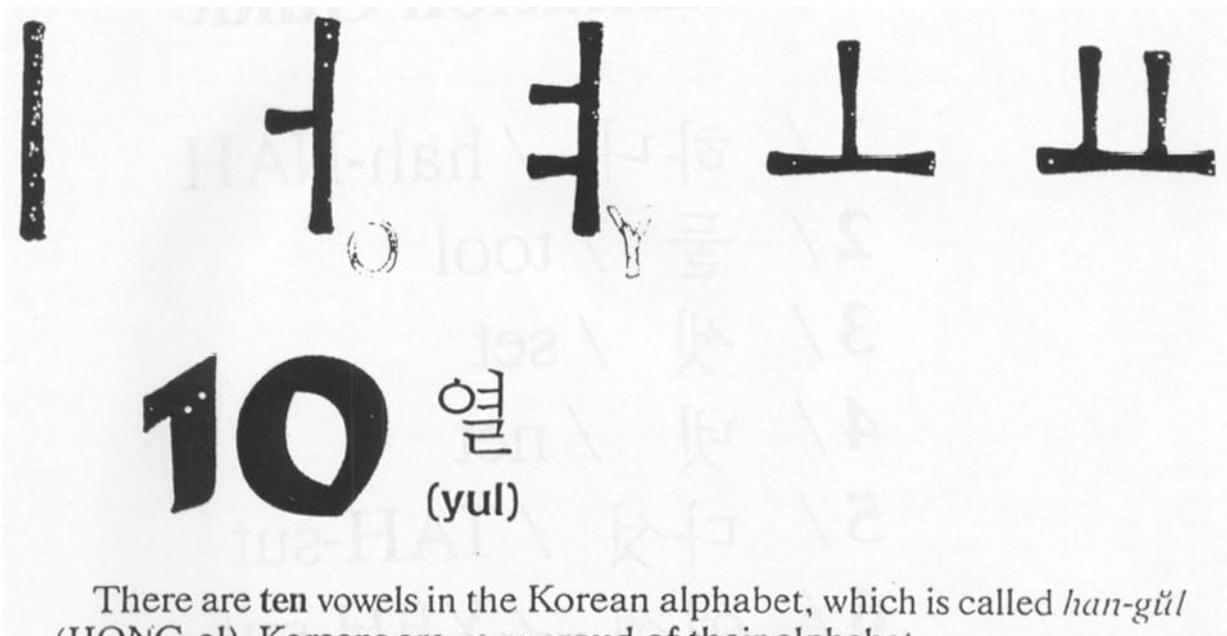


九 아홉 (AH-hope)

There are **nine** players on a baseball team. Baseball is almost as popular in Korea as it is in the United States. It was introduced in 1906 to Korea by YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) workers at the German Language Institute in Seoul.

The first Korean professional baseball league was formed in 1982. That year, South Korea won the 27th World Baseball Championship, which happened to be played in Seoul.





There are ten vowels in the Korean alphabet, which is called *han-gŭl* (HONG-ol). Koreans are very proud of their alphabet.

Before the invention of their own alphabet during the 1400s, Koreans used Chinese characters for writing. These were hard to learn, and only the rulers and the wealthy had the time and money to learn how to write them. Then King Sejong the Great, who ruled Korea from 1418 to 1450, asked a group of scholars to develop a system of writing “for the people.” *Han-gŭl* was the result.

Han-gŭl is easy to use in printing and in typewriting. Koreans believe that due to *han-gŭl*, their country has one of the highest literacy rates in the world: almost every Korean can read and write.

Pronunciation Guide

- 1 / 하나 / hah-NAH
- 2 / 둘 / tool
- 3 / 셋 / set
- 4 / 넷 / net
- 5 / 다섯 / TAH-sut
- 6 / 여섯 / YEH-sut
- 7 / 일곱 / ill-GUP
- 8 / 여덟 / yeh-DUL
- 9 / 아홉 / AH-hope
- 10 / 열 / yul