General World Cultures

Chapter 28- Korea

**occupied**- controlled by a foreign military force

**truce**- a temporary agreement to stop fighting

**demilitarized zone**- an area where no military forces are allowed

**sweatshop**- a factory that pays very low wages to laborers who work long hours in crowded conditions

**A Rugged Peninsula**

\* The Korean Peninsula is in northeast Asia between the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan. Two other rivers separate it from China, its northern neighbor. It shares a border with Siberia (in Russia). There are two countries on the Korean Peninsula: North Korea and South Korea.

\* Korea has a varied climate. The north is dry and has long, cold winters. The south benefits from warm ocean currents. Summers in the south are mild and moist. Winters are cold, but they are short.

If you could choose your ideal climate, where would it be and what is it like?

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\* Korea’s main agricultural cop is rice. Most of the good farmland is in the south. The north, however, has more mineral resources, including iron and coal. Korea has a long coastline, but it provides a few good harbors for large ships. Seoul, the capital of Korea, is the fourth-largest city in the world.

\* About 70% of the Korean Peninsula is covered with mountains. These mountains are low but steep. How can this have a positive and/or negative effect? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Because of the mountains, cultural differences have developed among the Korean peoples. For example, there are six different dialects of the Korean language.

\* Physical geography has also protected Korea. How can mountains protect?

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Would the mountains have provided more protection before technology? Explain.

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The mountains slowed armies coming from the north. Armies coming from any other direction had to approach the sea. Korea managed to keep out invaders for most of its long history.

\* Korean civilization goes back more than 2,000 years. Over the centuries, it has been strongly influenced by Chinese culture. For example, Buddhism came to Korea through China. Koreans borrowed construction ideas from the Chinese. Steep roofs, red tiles, and upturned corners are features of buildings in both countries.

\* Korean culture is strong and unique. The language, unlike Chinese, is written with letters, not characters. Koreans have perfected the lovely blue-green pottery glaze known as celadon. We will now do a Google search to see the beautiful example.

Christianity is Korea’s main religion.

**A Divided Nation**

\* Korea became one country 1500 years ago. Although it was attacked many times and **occupied** twice, it remained unified until 1910. In that year, it was conquered by Japan and became a colony. The Japanese government tried to do away with Korean culture. Koreans were forced to use Japanese names and to speak only Japanese. They were also used as enslaved laborers.

\* During WWII, Soviet and U.S. troops drove the Japanese out of Korea. Soviet troops came in from the north. The U.S. moved in soldiers from the south.

\* Unfortunately. Korea became a battleground during the cold war. The Soviets wanted Korea to become a Communist nation. The U.S. wanted it to become a capitalist democracy. Because neither side could overcome the other, Korea was divided into two separate countries in 1948. One was North Korea, or the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The other was South Korea, or the Republic of Korea. The place where the two armies met originally, the 38th parallel, marks the approximate border between them.

\* The Korean War lasted 3 years and cost more than 5 million lives. In 1953, both sides agreed to a **truce**. Have you ever had a truce with a sibling/enemy? Describe.

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When fighting stopped, neither side had gained an inch. Land along the 38th parallel became a **demilitarized zone**, or DMZ. All military forces agreed to pull their troops back from this area. To this day, however, both keep large forces near the DMZ. A real peace treaty has never been signed. Officially, the two Koreas are still at war.

\* North Korea is a strict Communist nation. It is also one of the world’s most isolated countries. It has few dealings with any other country, especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Few people are allowed in or out, so little is known about North Korea except what the government reports. In fact, they have been threatening violence against the U.S. and other enemies that they perceive. They have even threatened nuclear war. <http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2013/06/16/north_korea_takes_uturn_from_nuclear_threat_tells_us_lets_talk.html>  
The current leader of North Korea is Kim Jong-un. He took over for his deceased dad, Kim Jong-il.

\* South Korea has a capitalist economy, but it is politically unstable. Millions of Koreans have relatives across the border whom they have not seen since 1950. In August of 2000, 200 family members from North and South Korea met. Do you think that you could go years…as many as 50, to see your close relatives? Explain.

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Most Koreans would like North Korea and South Korea to be united. Why is this?

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Colorado is trying to split into two separate states because of gin laws and other things that have occurred. Do you support this? Is this good or bad? Explain.

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*Complete the North and South Korea Map Study on page 419.*

**One Little Tiger**

\* After the Korean War, South Korea rebuilt its cities and small factories with help from the U.S. Today, South Korea has one of the world’s fastest-growing economies. For this reason it is known as one of Asia’s four “little tigers.” The other “little tigers” are Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore. The nickname sets them apart from Asia’s economic dragon- Japan.

\* South Korea makes many of the same products as Japan. It produces steel, iron, electronic goods, and cars. It also manufactures plywood, textiles, clothes, and shoes. It exports almost everything it makes. South Korea’s goods are generally of lower quality than Japan’s, but they tend to be less expensive. Thus, South Korea is doing what Japan did in the 1950s. The country has found markets all over the world and is now the 12th-largest trading nation. Its people enjoy a high standard of living compared to most Asian countries. South Koreans work hard for success, however. On average, they work for 55 hours per week. The average U.S job requires 40 hours per week.

\* North Korea has been struggling with famine since 1995. Some of the causes of the famine are flooding, droughts, and shortages of fuel and machines.

\* North Korea is a highly industrialized nation, too. Unlike South Korea, it exports and imports very little. North Korea grows its own food and uses its own raw materials for its industries. It makes products only for North Koreans.

*Complete the Geography in Your Life Reading Transportation Maps on page 421.*

**A Change in Family Structure**

\* Korean society has changed a great deal since the Korean War. How can a war impact a country, both good and bad if possible? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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In 1950, half of the people worked in agriculture. Many Koreans lived in isolated mountain villages, and quite a few had never been outside their villages. In those days, sons traditionally did not leave home when they married. Instead, they brought their wives into the household. Do you see yourself living on your own when you are older? What type of job do you think you will have? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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A typical Korean home had three or four generations living under the same roof.

\* Family life was heavily influenced by Confucian values and ideas. They also valued age. The eldest men were the most respected. Do you agree that the older a person, the more respect they should be shown? How about if someone is a day older? \_\_\_\_\_\_

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Women traditionally played a minor role both in the family and in Korean society.

\* In crowded cities, the pattern of family living has changed. There is not enough room for large families to live together. Single adults often have their own apartments. Young couples live in their own homes, away from the rest of the family.

\* As Korea industrialized, women have gone to work in great numbers. Women make up most of the workforce in **sweatshops**. A sweatshop is a crowded factory that pays low wages. Korea has been able to make affordable goods for export mainly because of these low wages. Korea’s economy would not be where it is today without these low paid workers. Some products that cost $100 or more at the store may cost the company selling the item only $3-$5.

\* Do you think you will visit parents or other relatives a lot when you are older?

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\* Korean adult children visit their parents often. It is still common for people to be introduced to each other through a matchmaker. Koreans also consider it their duty to take care of the graves of their ancestors. On one holiday, family members weed the graves sites of their ancestors and plant flowers or shrubs.

**Korean Martial Arts**

\* The martial arts are techniques for hand-to-hand fighting. Buddhist monks developed the first of these arts in India more than 1500 years ago. As Buddhism spread to China and Japan, so did the martial arts. Gradually, they branched into many different styles. Kung fu, aikido, Shaolin temple boxing, tai chi chuan, judo, kendo, and karate are a few of these styles. Now, MMA (mixed martial arts) is a hugely popular sport in the U.S. and all over the world. A majority of these styles came from the Japanese martial arts.

\* Karate is probably the most famous martial art. It is a way of fighting without weapons. Karate masters use their hands, feet, and other parts of their bodies. They depend on speed, grace, inner calm, and strength of mind…much like Mr. Cutright does on a daily basis.

\* Tae kwon do uses fast, striking movements- mainly kicks, jumps, and punches. A tae kwon do master can kick forward, to the side or backwards, as Mr. Cutright will now demonstrate.

*Complete the Global Issues Saving the Dolphins on page 425.*