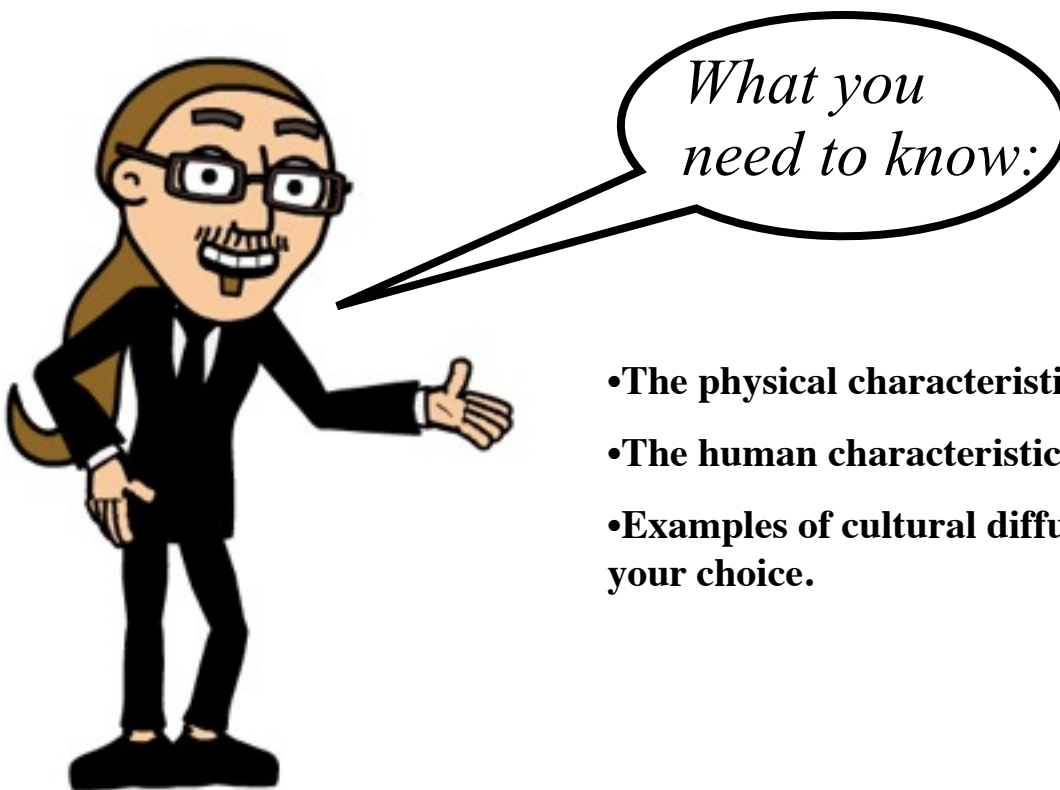


UNIT Nine :

World Regions

County & Culture

Research



- The physical characteristics of places.
- The human characteristics of places.
- Examples of cultural diffusion in the country of your choice.

Section one - Europe

Section two - Africa

Section three- Asia

Unit Nine : Prove it! Country Report

Section one

Europe

Questions:

What mountain ranges divide Northern and Southern Europe?

Why are the Northern Plains important to Europe?

What is the climate like around the Mediterranean Sea? What types of crops grow there?

Why does Europe have such a high population density?

What part of Europe has the densest populations?

Describe Europe's population. How is it different from Africa and Asia (use the chart to help)?

How are the economies of Eastern and Western Europe different?

What makes people want to migrate to Europe?

What is the European Union? Why was it formed?

Bonus Questions (use the web):

If I gave you a 100 Euro bill, how many dollars would it be worth?
(hint: currency conversion)

What were the SIX founding member countries of the European Union?

What European city has the most skyscrapers? (this is tricky, googling the question won't help)



[answer online](#)

Bird's & ...
...

The mountains that form the Alps run from southeastern France, through Switzerland and Italy, into Austria. In the last 2 million years, ice has molded the scenery, carving pyramid-shaped peaks, like the Matterhorn (above), knife-edged ridges, dramatic waterfalls, and armchair-shaped basins filled with lakes. Alpine plants, such as the Bird's Eye primrose, have adapted to growing at high altitudes.



This is a river valley before the arrival of a glacier. Glaciers are huge masses of ice that grind away land as they move slowly forward.

THE LAKE DISTRICT

The 15 lakes of the Lake District in northwestern England lie in U-shaped valleys extending outward like the spokes of a wheel from an uplifted dome of low mountains. Long ago, the valleys contained rivers, but during the Ice Age these were deepened by the movement of glaciers. Most were dammed by eroded rock left behind when the glaciers melted. The erosion of the main valleys has cut off tributary valleys and left them "hanging" above the main valleys, often with waterfalls cascading from them.



When glaciers retreat, at the end of an Ice Age for example, they leave behind U-shaped valleys.

A hanging valley on the side of the main valley



Ullswater is a lake that lies in a U-shaped valley.



NORTHERN FORESTS

A thick band of dense coniferous forest, known as taiga, covers northern Europe. Conifers (trees that have cones), such as spruce and pine, keep their leaves all year round and can withstand heavy snow. They also provide winter food and shelter for many animals.

NORTHERN PLAINS

The North European Plain stretches from southern England across France and Germany as far as Russia, ending at the Ural Mountains. Most of the plain is low-lying, and in the Netherlands it even lies partly below sea level. Some of the world's most fertile farmland is found here, as well as important deposits of coal, oil, and natural gas. This is Europe's most densely populated area and contains many major cities.



Wheat, sugar beets, and apples are grown on the plains of northern France.



Foxes are often found in the fields and woodlands of Europe, although many now live in towns. They eat almost anything - from rabbits to apples or worms.



THE DANUBE

The Danube, western Europe's longest river, flows eastward from its source in Germany to its mouth on the Black Sea. It serves as a trade route between the nine countries that lie along its course. The Danube delta, where the river divides into numerous channels, is an important wetland area. About 300 different bird species have been recorded in the delta, as well as boars, deer, and wild cats.



THE MEDITERRANEAN

The region around the Mediterranean Sea has a distinctive climate of hot, dry summers and mild, rainy winters. These conditions are perfect for growing crops such as citrus fruits, grapes, and olives, shown here in southern Spain. Many trees, such as cork oaks, develop thick bark as a protection against the heat.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR ON THE MAP

Area: 4,000,000 sq miles (10,400,000 sq km)

Highest point: Mt. El'brus, Russian Federation, 18,510 ft (5,642 m) Map K11

Longest river: Volga, Russian Federation, 2,194 miles (3,530 km) Map L8

Largest lake: L. Ladoga, Russian Federation, 7,100 sq miles (18,389 sq km) Map J7

Largest island: Great Britain, 88,745 sq miles (229,850 sq km) Map D9

PEOPLES OF EUROPE

EUROPE IS A CROWDED CONTINENT. It is the second smallest of the continents by area, yet it has the third highest population. As a result, population densities are very high, and most Europeans live in cities. Europe is also crowded with countries – more than 40 different nations jostle for position on the continent. Conflicts between these countries have often erupted into war – two world wars have started on European soils in the last 100 years. Yet, despite these problems, Europe is by and large a rich continent, and many European countries are among the wealthiest in the world. Some pockets of poverty exist, but in general the population enjoys a high standard of living compared to most other parts of the world. Much of this wealth has come as a result of industrial growth, and because of the large colonial empires established by many European countries in Africa, Asia, and the Americas.



EUROPEAN CITIES

A large proportion of Europeans live in cities. The most densely populated part of Europe lies in the west and forms a belt that stretches more or less continuously from southeastern Britain, through northern France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and into Germany. In these densely populated areas, individual cities can merge into one another, forming what are known as conurbations. The largest of these is in the German industrial region known as the Ruhr. By contrast, in eastern Europe a greater proportion of the population lives in country areas.

Population: approximately 774,000,000 people
Number of countries: 43

Least densely populated country: Iceland, 7 people per sq mile (3 per sq km)

Largest country:

The Russian Federation straddles northern Europe and Asia (see page 138) and its European part covers 1,527,341 sq miles (3,955,818 sq km)

- KEY**
- 1 NETHERLANDS
 - 2 BELGIUM
 - 3 LUXEMBOURG
 - 4 SWITZERLAND
 - 5 LIECHTENSTEIN
 - 6 MOLDOVA
 - 7 ANDORRA
 - 8 MONACO
 - 9 SAN MARINO
 - 10 VATICAN CITY
 - 11 SLOVENIA
 - 12 CROATIA
 - 13 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
 - 14 SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO
 - 15 ALBANIA
 - 16 MACEDONIA

Most densely populated country: Monaco, 42,840 people per sq mile (16,477 per sq km)

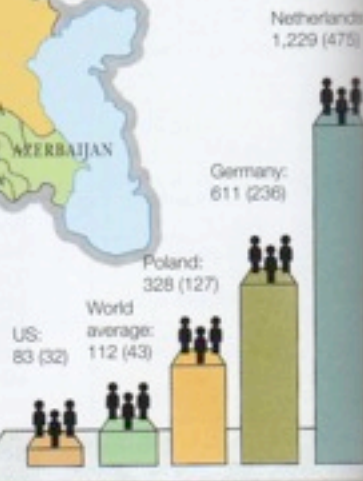
Smallest country: Vatican City, 0.17 sq miles (0.44 sq km)

POPULATION DENSITY

Over 774 million Europeans are crammed into an area little more than the size of Australia. As a result, European countries have some of the highest population densities in the world. In the Netherlands, for example, there are 1,229 people per sq mile (475 per sq km). Population densities in eastern Europe are lower, but even these are above the world average.

Population density chart

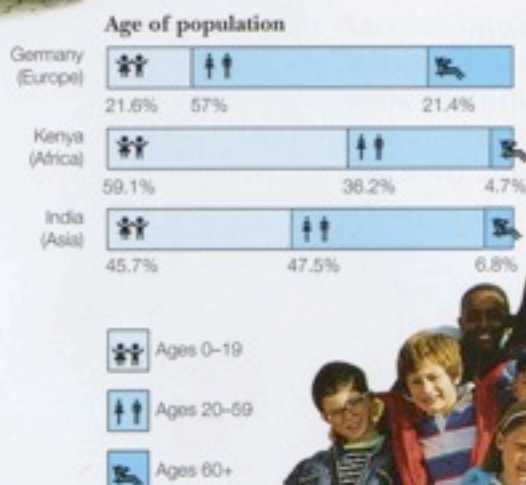
The figures on the chart show the number of people per sq mile (per sq km). Comparisons outside Europe are also included.





THE CHANGING POPULATION

Compared to Asia and Africa, the populations of most European countries are stable – they are not increasing or decreasing to any great extent. Birth rates are low, and average life expectancy is very high – about 75 years in most countries, compared to less than 50 years in Afghanistan and most of Africa. As a result of these two factors, Europe's population is relatively elderly, with a large number of people aged 60 years and over.



THE TWO EUROPE

Economically, Europe can be divided into two main sets of countries. Western Europe contains some very rich countries, such as Germany, France, and Switzerland, which have strong economies. By contrast, eastern Europe contains former communist countries such as Poland, Hungary, and Romania, which are much poorer. They are still struggling to adjust their economies in order to compete in world markets.

A market in the Russian Federation. Under communism all commerce was controlled by the State



CULTURAL MELTING POT

Europe's wealth and relative political stability have attracted large numbers of migrants to its shores, many from former colonies. As a result, most countries, particularly in western Europe, contain large numbers of people from ethnic minorities. In France, for example, north Africans from Algeria and other former colonies have settled in cities such as Marseilles and Paris.



The UK's population contains migrants from many countries, including the Caribbean, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

New European countries



SPLITTING APART

Europe is a fragmented continent made up of more than 40 independent countries. Even within individual countries there are sometimes separate groups, such as the Basques in Spain, who claim some form of independence from the national government. New countries are still being formed. The former USSR, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia are among the European countries that have split apart in recent years, sometimes violently.



The European Parliament, elected by the people of the EU, meets in this building in Strasbourg, France.



The stars on the flag of the European Union represent solidarity, perfection, and unity.

THE EUROPEAN UNION

In 1957, six European countries agreed to form the European Economic Community (EEC).

They believed that economic cooperation would reduce the likelihood of war between the member countries and would bring prosperity to the peoples of

Europe. Since that time, more countries have joined, and the EEC has been renamed the European Union (EU). Today it consists of 25 member states and in addition to closer economic cooperation, there are moves to encourage greater political union.

Section Two

Africa

Questions:

How was the great rift valley formed?

What does Lake Victoria provide the who live around it?

What parts of Africa have the highest population densities?

Where do most Africans live? How do they make their living?

What percentage of Tanzania is under 15 years old?

What raw materials is African famous for exporting?

Why has exporting raw materials hurt many of Africa's economies?

What region of the world has the MOST access to safe water? Which has the LEAST?

How many different ethnic and tribal groups are their in Africa? THINK:
Why does this often cause problems?

Bonus Questions (use the web):

What African city has the largest population?

What is the highest point in Africa?

What African country has the hottest temperature ever recorded?

What country in Africa has the MOST people with HIV/AIDS?



[answer online](#)

AFRICA

THE SECOND LARGEST CONTINENT, Africa is a land of contrasts. To the north lies the great Sahara, the largest desert in the world, yet the central equatorial area is covered by dense tropical rain forests, while farther south a series of grassy plateaus (areas of flat highland) give way to narrow coastal plains. Major mountain ranges include the Atlas in the north and the Ruwenzori range on the Uganda-Democratic Republic of Congo border. Africa's highest mountain is Kilimanjaro, a dormant volcano, in Tanzania. To the east is the Great Rift Valley, which contains several huge lakes. Some of the world's longest rivers drain the continent, including the Nile, Niger, Congo, and Zambezi.



GREAT RIFT VALLEY

The Great Rift Valley stretches from Mozambique in the south, through eastern Africa and the Red Sea, into Syria. In most places the valley is 19–62 miles (30–100 km) wide, with steep sides rising up to 6,562 ft (2,000 m). The valley was formed as blocks of land sank between faults in the Earth's crust. In eastern Africa, the valley has two main branches. The Rift Valley is marked by volcanoes, hot springs, and a long chain of lakes.



LAKE VICTORIA

Lake Victoria is Africa's largest lake and the second largest freshwater lake in the world. Lying on the Equator, between Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, it covers about 26,828 sq miles (69,484 sq km) and reaches 269 ft (82 m) at its deepest point. The Nile River flows out of the northern end of the lake. Lake Victoria is rich in fish, which provide an important source of income for the large numbers of people living along the lake shores.



The cracking creates long faults. Some blocks of land slip down between parallel faults to create a rift valley.

Millions of flamingos flock to Lake Turkana and other Rift Valley lakes to nest and feed on tiny water plants.

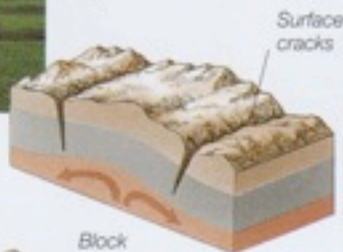


DESERTS

Africa has three huge deserts. The vast Sahara is the world's largest desert and dominates the northern third of the continent. Thousands of years ago the Sahara had a moist climate. Today, the path of wet winds blowing in from the sea is blocked by other winds blowing outward from the desert. The Namib and Kalahari deserts cover vast areas of southwestern Africa. Although it lies along the coast, the Namib Desert (shown here) is particularly barren and dry.

Formation of a rift valley

Movements deep within the Earth's crust cause stretching, and cracks appear on the surface.



RAIN FORESTS

The world's second largest rain forest, after the Amazon, lies in central Africa. The Congo teems with plant and animal life, including rare creatures such as okapis. It was also the home of groups of pygmies, but many now live in settled villages, because vast areas of forest have been destroyed for logging and farming. One group, the Bambuti, still live in the northeastern forest of Democratic Republic of Congo.



DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAINS

The highest mountains in southern Africa are the Drakensberg. They form part of the rim of a saucer-shaped plateau of high land called the Great Escarpment. In the local Zulu language, the mountains are known as *Quathlamba*, which means the "barrier of pointed spears." The highest peak, Thabana Ntlenyana, rises 11,424 ft (3,482 m) above sea level and is capped with snow in winter.



PEOPLES OF AFRICA

Population: approximately
849,000,000 people
Number of countries: 53

AFRICA IS HOME TO about 849 million people – more than one in eight of the world's population. The most densely populated areas are along the northern and western coasts, especially in the fertile valleys of the Nile, Niger, Congo, and Senegal rivers. The population of Africa is growing rapidly, as birth rates in many African countries are extremely high. Families are often large, and about half the population is young, below the age of 15. Although most Africans live in the countryside, a growing number are now found in towns and cities. Many people have moved because of poverty and lack of work in country areas; others have gone to escape civil wars, droughts, and famines.



Richard Leakey discovered some of the earliest known human remains in Africa's Rift Valley.

THE FIRST PEOPLE

The history of human beings would seem to have begun in Africa. The skeletons of people who walked upright and lived up to 2 million years ago have been found in the Rift Valley that runs through Tanzania and Ethiopia. Archeologists now believe that this region was the birthplace of our human ancestors. From here, these early human beings, known as *Homo Erectus*, soon moved into other parts of the continent and rapidly spread even farther afield.

Percentage of population under 15 years of age



Egypt:
49%

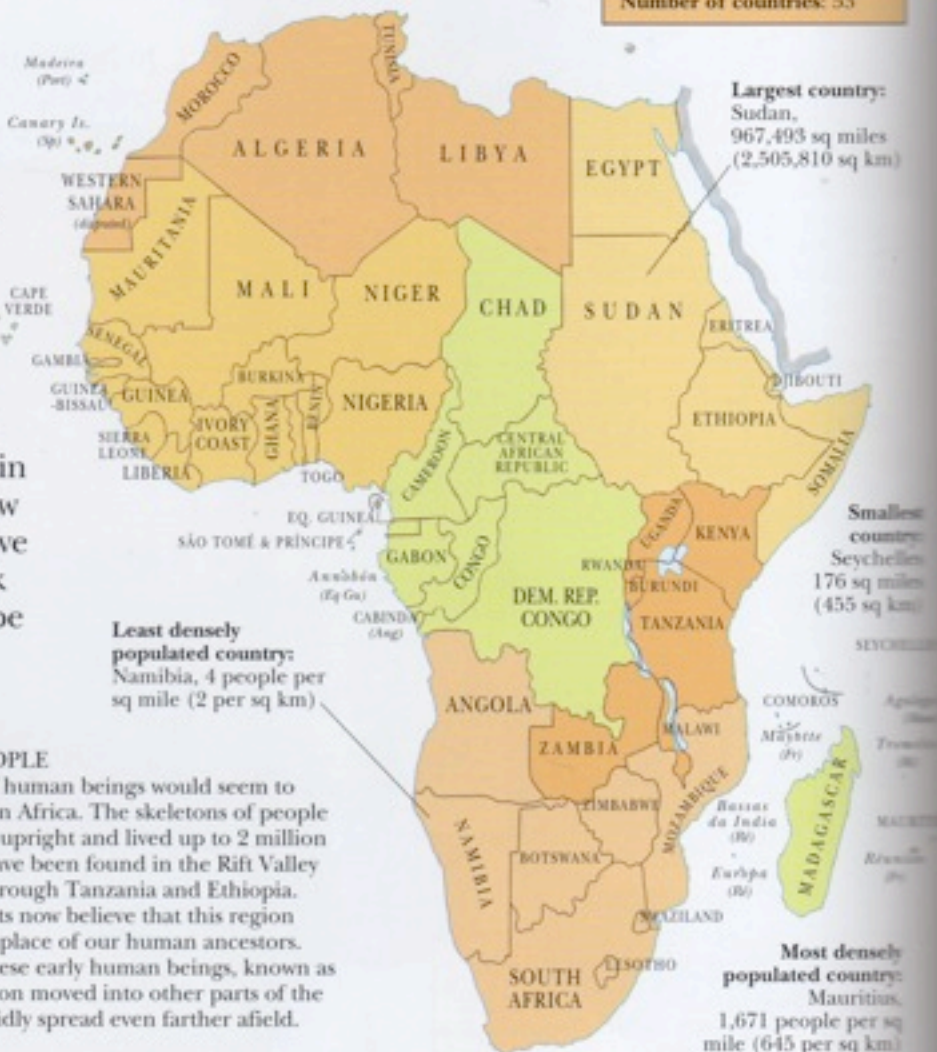
Ghana:
55%

Ethiopia:
60%

Tanzania:
62%

YOUNG POPULATION

The population of Africa is growing rapidly. Improved medicine has generally decreased death rates, while birth rates remain very high. Women in countries such as Angola and Burkina have six children each on average, whereas in North America and Europe they have only one or two. However, HIV infection is fast becoming widespread among young people and is likely to kill many in the near future.

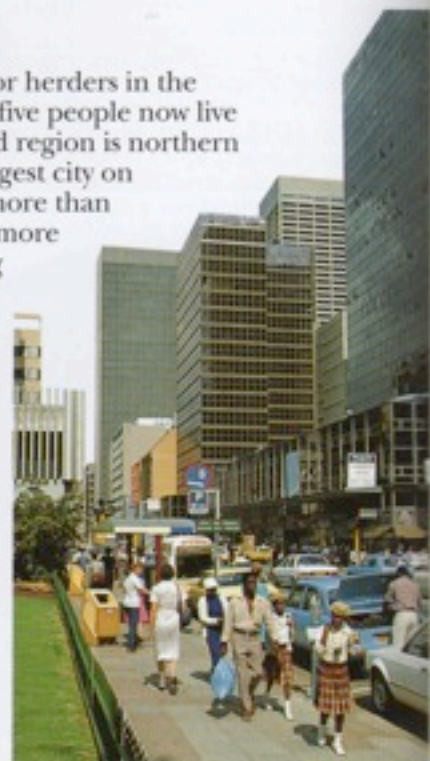


TOWN AND COUNTRY

Most African people live as farmers or herders in the countryside. However, about one in five people now live in towns. The most heavily urbanized region is northern Africa, and Cairo, in Egypt, is the largest city on the continent with a population of more than 15 million. Several other cities have more than a million inhabitants, including Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, Kinshasa in the Congo, and Johannesburg in South Africa. The poor often live on the outskirts of the cities, in shantytowns.

BIGGEST URBAN POPULATION	
Libya	88%
Djibouti	84%
Gabon	83%
Tunisia	67%
Republic of the Congo	67%

SMALLEST URBAN POPULATION	
Rwanda	6%
Burundi	10%
Uganda	15%
Malawi	15%
Ethiopia	16%



Many people go to the cities on a temporary basis in search of work. In Johannesburg, shown here, migrants seek work in the gold and diamond mines.

THE PEOPLE

The vast Sahara separates the peoples of northern Africa, who are mostly Berbers and Arabs, like these Tunisian men, from those to the south, who are mostly Negroid. Northern Africa is predominantly Islamic, but south of the Sahara people follow a variety of religions, including Christianity and traditional animist beliefs. Two other groups are also important: there are about 8 million people of European descent, who live mainly in southern Africa, as well as a large number of Indians, who live along the eastern coast and in South Africa.



PEOPLES AND COUNTRIES

There are more than 600 ethnic or tribal groups in Africa, and only 53 countries. Many of today's national boundaries were created in the late 19th century by colonial rulers. Borders sometimes follow natural features, such as rivers, but often they just follow straight lines on a map. As a result, tribes are often split between different countries. The Ewe people, for example, are divided between Ghana and Togo. After independence, it has often proved difficult to create unity among the different peoples in one country.

Groups of nomadic Fulani people are found throughout the area shaded brown on this map of western Africa. They roam across many countries.



ART

Africa has produced a great variety of art from prehistoric times to the present. Often, art was related to ritual or tribal ceremonies, as well as being used for decoration. In many tribes the artist was given high status and art was often regarded as an essential part of religion. It is possible to isolate different areas and different practices of African art. From around 7000 BC rock drawings include representations of animals and hunters. Tribal art has become a way of distinguishing one tribe from another and can take many forms, including body painting and sculptural masks.



Bronze head of the Queen Mother of Benin, made by taking a clay mold from a wax sculpture.

Peanuts are one of the main export crops in western Africa.



These refugees at a camp in Rwanda are Hutu people from neighboring Burundi. War between the Hutu and Tutsi peoples has forced thousands of people in this region to leave their homes.

Percentage of people with access to safe water



FRESH WATER

Only around 62 percent of Africans have access to safe water. Often people must make long journeys to collect it and millions are forced to drink water that is contaminated by dangerous bacteria. The situation is worst across central Africa where the hot climate and lack of investment makes clean water scarce. Aid agencies have made access to clean water a key issue and have used funding to build safe water wells and educate people about the importance of hygiene.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Most African countries rely on exporting raw materials, such as coffee, cocoa, or oil. In recent years, the prices of these products have fallen. In contrast, the cost of importing machinery and other manufactured goods has risen. Thus the amount that African countries can earn from their exports is often less than what they have to spend on imports. These factors, along with the growing population and the effects of drought and war, mean that the economies of many African countries are in difficulty.

Section Three

Asia

Questions:

How are the central deserts of Asia (Gobi & Takla Makan) different from most other deserts?

How were the Himalaya Mountains formed? What parts of Asia do they separate?

What is the “Ring of Fire” Where is it located?

Where did the earliest civilizations begin in Asia?

Why are many areas of Asia unsettled?

How has China tried to slow down its population growth?

Why is rice so important to Asia?

How has oil affected countries in the Middles East?

What countries are the “Little Tigers”? Why are they called that?

Bonus Questions (use the web):

How strong on the richter scale was the 2011 earth quake in Japan?

If I gave you 10,000 Japanese yen, how much would it be worth in dollars?

How many Communist countries are their in Asia?

How many mega cities (over 10 million people) does Asia have?



[answer online](#)

ASIA

STRETCHING FROM THE frozen Arctic to the hot Equator, Asia is by far the world's largest and most mountainous continent. Much of the land is barren, with vast, empty deserts in southwest and central Asia, and the remote, windswept plateau of Tibet to the north of the Himalayan mountains. Asia also has some of the world's most fertile plains and valleys beside rivers that include the Mekong, Indus, and Euphrates. In Southeast Asia, the land is mainly mountainous or covered in tropical rain forests that are teeming with wildlife.

Away from the mainland, scattered on either side of the Equator, lie thousands of islands, many of them volcanic.



THE YANGTZE RIVER

From its source in the Tanggula Mountains on the plateau of Tibet, the Yangtze River flows through mountainous land for most of its course. On its final stages, it follows the southern edge of the Great Plain of China until it reaches the East China Sea. In the flatter areas, the Yangtze supplies water for irrigation. In the past, flooding has caused thousands of deaths.

CENTRAL DESERTS

Unlike most deserts, the Takla Makan and Gobi in central Asia have hot summers, but extremely cold winters. Much of their landscape is made up of bare rock, with huge expanses of shifting sand. Vegetation is sparse, except in river valleys, as shown here in the Takla Makan. Some animals, including wild camels, can survive cold winters in the Gobi.



A Bactrian camel has two humps.



SIBERIA

Most of Siberia, the Asian part of Russia, is bitterly cold in winter. In the north lies the tundra, where part of the soil has been frozen since the end of the last Ice Age. Beneath its surface there are vast supplies of minerals. To the south lies the world's largest coniferous forest. This cold forest makes way for a dry grassland area, known as steppe, which forms Russia's main farming region.



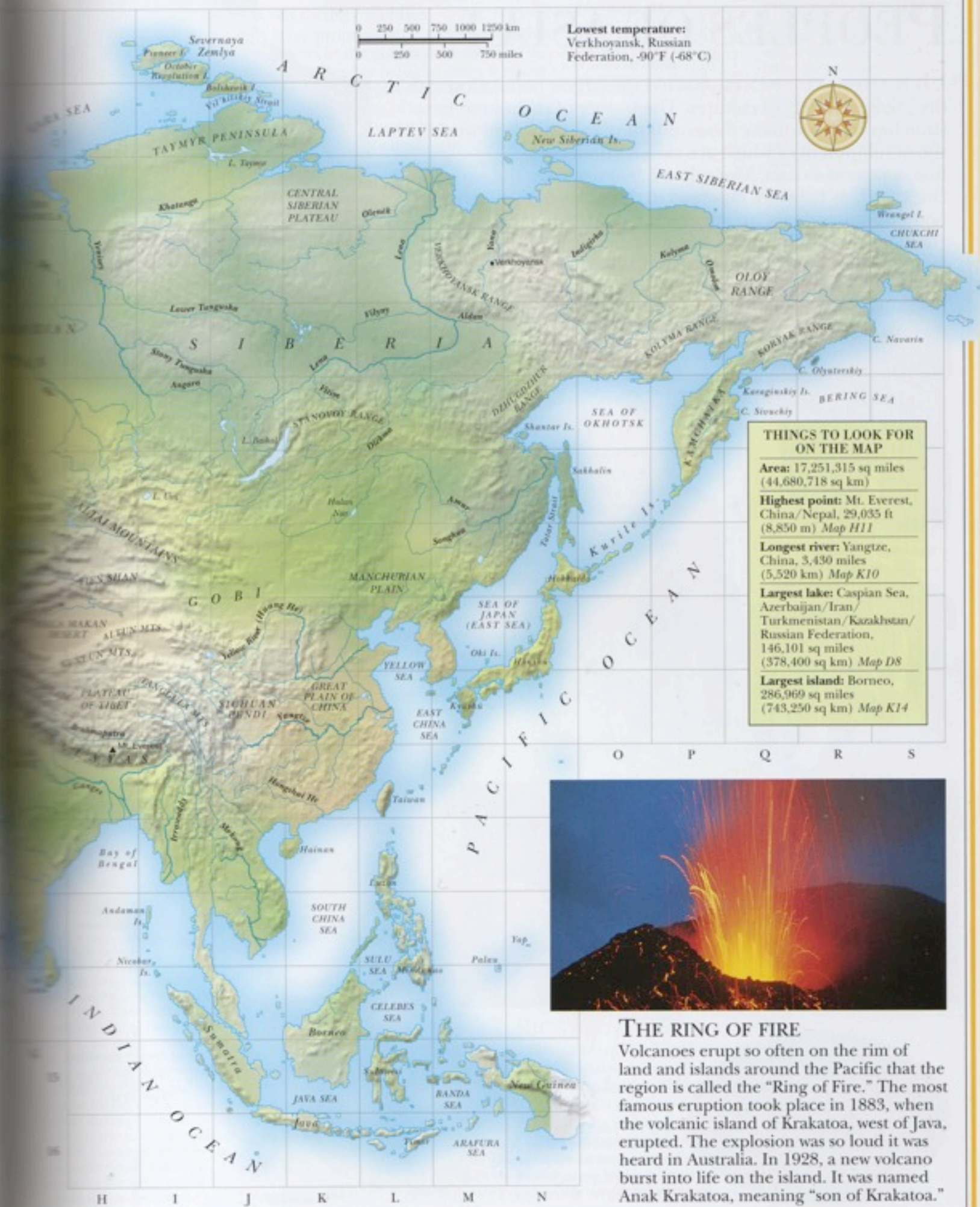
Highest temperature:
Tirat Zevi, Israel,
129°F (54°C)



THE HIMALAYAS

The Himalayas, right, form a massive land barrier between the Indian Subcontinent and Tibet. The range is permanently snow-capped and contains the world's highest peak, Mount Everest. The mountains began to form about 50 million years ago when a moving plate, carrying the Subcontinent, began to push against the Eurasian plate. When the plates collided, the edge of the Indian plate was forced under the Eurasian plate, and the seabed in between was folded up to form the Himalayas.





PEOPLES OF ASIA I

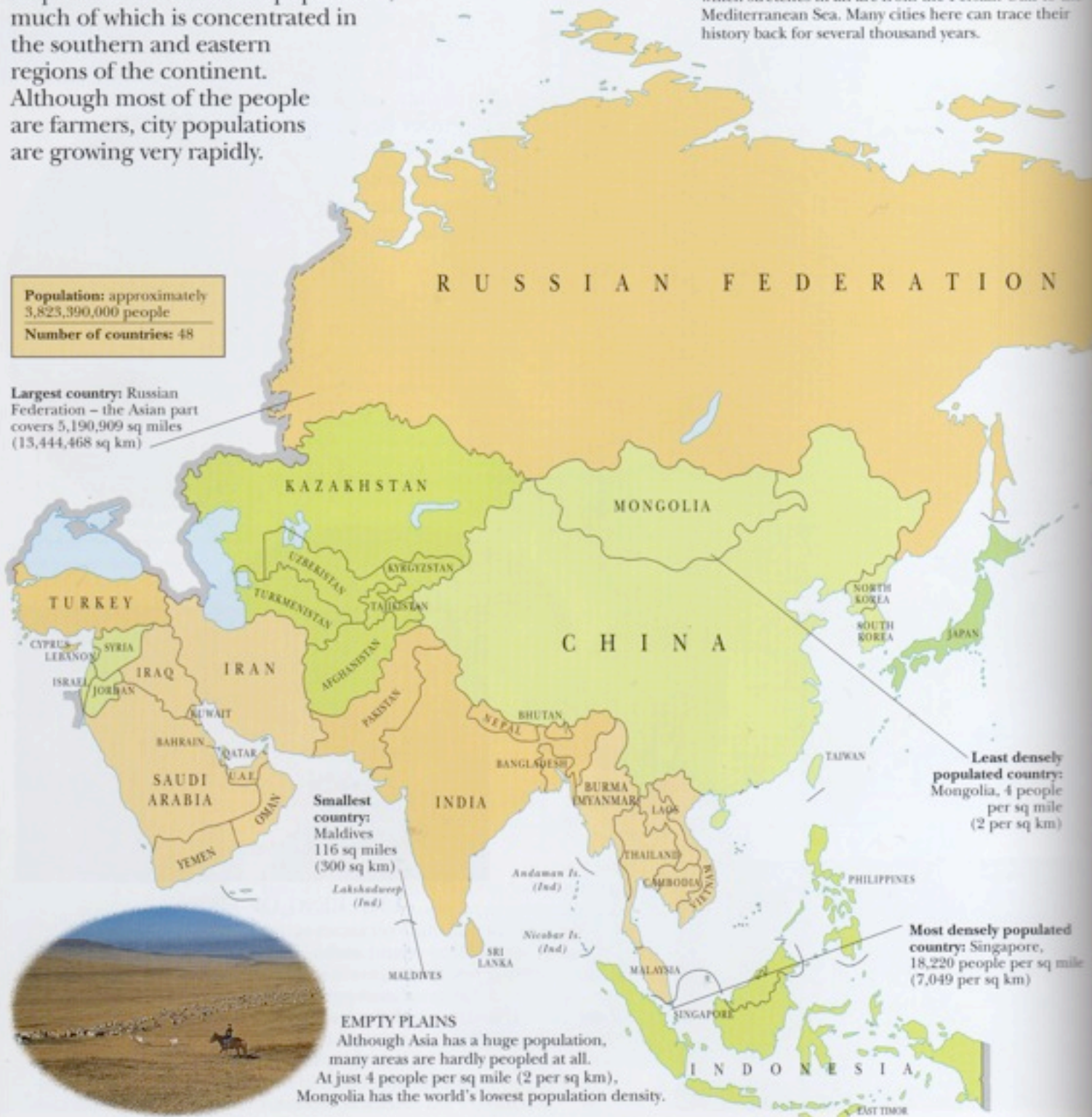
OF ALL THE CONTINENTS, Asia has the largest population with the greatest variety of cultures. The history of civilization here stretches back for many thousands of years. Cities and writing, the development of which are closely connected, first appeared in Asia. More than 5,000 years ago the earliest cities, such as Babylon, emerged in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, an area known as Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq). Today, Asia contains over 60 percent of the world's population, much of which is concentrated in the southern and eastern regions of the continent. Although most of the people are farmers, city populations are growing very rapidly.



Stone reliefs in Persepolis, capital of the ancient Persian Empire

EARLY CIVILIZATIONS

The world's earliest civilizations grew up around river valleys in Asia in an area known as the fertile crescent, which stretches in an arc from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea. Many cities here can trace their history back for several thousand years.



EMPTY PLAINS

Although Asia has a huge population, many areas are hardly peopled at all. At just 4 people per sq mile (2 per sq km), Mongolia has the world's lowest population density.



GROWING CITIES

A large proportion of Asia's population still lives in the countryside as farmers, but the number living in cities is rising steeply. The largest cities in Asia now have populations of more than 10 million. These megacities, along with many other cities in the continent, are destined to grow even faster as people move from the countryside to towns.

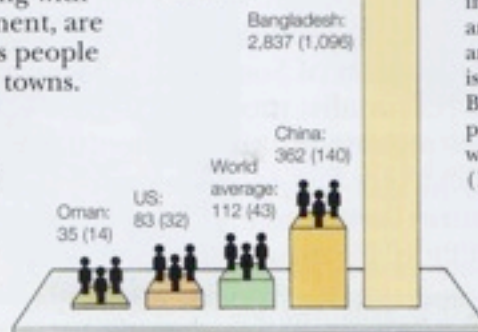
This crowded street scene is in India's capital, New Delhi. India is one of the world's most densely populated countries.

LARGEST CITIES IN ASIA

Tokyo, Japan	35,510,000
Seoul, South Korea	21,740,000
Mumbai, India	19,470,000
Jakarta, Indonesia	17,590,000
Osaka, Japan	17,510,000

Population density

The figures on the chart show the number of people per sq mile (per sq km). Countries outside Asia are included as a comparison.



POPULATION DENSITY
Large areas of the Middle East and central Asia are empty wilderness, unsettled by people because of their extreme dryness or cold temperatures. Most of the population is concentrated in the fertile river valleys and coastal lowlands of south and east Asia. Aside from the island city-state of Singapore, Bangladesh is the most densely populated country in Asia with 2,837 people per sq mile (1,096 per sq km).

A Bedouin man in Jordan may have more than one wife and many children.



POPULATION GROWTH

Three out of every five people in the world live in Asia. Seven of the world's 10 most populated countries are located here, with China and India heading the list. Between them these two countries account for about 40 percent of the world's population. In mainland China a strictly enforced government policy to restrict family size to just one child has slowed the rate of population growth, but elsewhere in the continent it is still very high. In 2000, India's population rose to over 1 billion and Indonesia's passed over 210 million.

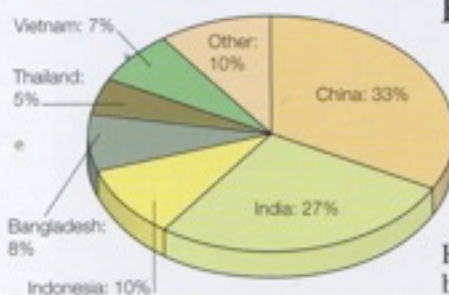
In China, a family with just one child receives free education and a housing allowance.



RIVER VALLEYS

The first peoples settled in fertile river valleys where they could grow crops. They built irrigation systems to channel water from rivers to the crops. Today, rivers are still important to the people of southern and eastern Asia. In addition to irrigation, rivers are used for fishing and for drinking, and are dammed to produce hydroelectric power. Rivers often provide a country's main means of transportation, and some are the focus around which countries have developed.

World's top rice-growing countries (2003)



RICE

Half the world's population depends on rice as a principal source of food, so a rice shortage can cause terrible famine. This plant, native to Southeast Asia, has been cultivated in the region for at least 7,000 years. In recent decades, new varieties of rice have been developed to help feed Asia's growing population. These new strains of rice are part of the "Green Revolution," which applies scientific knowledge to plant breeding and uses technology to increase productivity.

PEOPLES OF ASIA II

ALTHOUGH SOME ASIAN COUNTRIES, such as Japan and China, have been independent for a long time, others have only recently emerged from colonization. At the start of the 20th century, much of the Middle East, the whole Indian Subcontinent, and large areas of Southeast Asia were controlled by European powers. Nationalist movements grew up across Asia and the countries regained their independence. Many countries here have had very fast economic growth. Together with the recent pressures for change, this means that societies across the region are now evolving rapidly.



INDEPENDENCE

Each year, many countries in the region celebrate their freedom from colonial rule in independence day celebrations, like those in Pakistan shown above. Some countries, like India, gained their independence through largely peaceful protest, while fierce fighting occurred in others, such as Indonesia. These countries are now struggling to forge a sense of national unity.



The former USSR

This map shows the former USSR and the 15 republics that it divided up into.



BREAKUP

The Soviet Union, or USSR, was the world's largest nation. However, in 1991, the USSR split up into 15 republics, which set up their own governments. Nine of the republics are in Europe and the other five are in Asia, while Russia straddles both. They are no longer part of a large, centralized economy, and so are struggling to compete in a world market. The USSR's collapse also freed some eastern European countries from Soviet control.



Chechnya's capital Grozny was heavily bombed by the Russian Federation in 1994-95 and again in 1999-2000.

WORLD RELIGIONS

Asia was the birthplace of all the main world religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Religious beliefs still have a strong influence on the people of the region today. Religions often emphasize modesty in wealth and the importance of donating to charity for spiritual reward rather than any personal gain.

This temple is in Thailand, where Buddhism is the main religion.

ETHNIC GROUPS

Fighting between ethnic groups is still continuing in several parts of the former USSR. The Russian Federation, for example, includes some regions where the Russian population is in the minority and greater numbers of people belong to native ethnic groups. In Chechnya, only about a third of the population is Russian. Since the breakup of the USSR, the Chechens have been fighting for independence. However, the Russian Federation is not prepared to grant independence to any of these territories. It could lead to the breakup of Russia itself.



Most young men in Thailand live in a monastery as monks for a few months.

PRESSURES FOR CHANGE

In Asian societies today, the traditional rural ways of life and religious beliefs conflict with an increasingly money-oriented way of life, influenced by the West. As Asian societies become more open to western influences, so the pressures on traditional ways of life will intensify. Societies react to pressures for change in different ways. In Afghanistan, for example, religious leaders violently opposed western ideas, leading to the setting up of a hardline republic based on a strict interpretation of Islamic law.

The influence of the US and capitalism can be seen on the streets of Tokyo, in Japan.



WESTERN INFLUENCE

In some societies, change happens gradually and without violent demonstrations. In Japan, for example, economic development was seen by its rulers as a way of avoiding becoming dependent on European nations. Japan has therefore accepted Western capitalism while still managing to preserve many traditional Japanese values. Even China, so long closed to Western ideas, is now enthusiastically embracing capitalism.

Kazakh people in northern China outside a tent known as a yurt.



NOMADIC EXISTENCE

The collapse of the USSR has led to a revival of traditional ways of life among the nomads of central Asia. Goods that were made in factories, such as felt, which is used to line the inside of nomads' tents, ceased to be available and now have to be made by hand using traditional methods. The same is true when it comes to moving. In recent years, many nomads have moved their belongings around in vehicles, but gasoline is now in very short supply, so nomads have returned to using camels and horses.



In Afghanistan, the hardline Islamic Taliban government banned videos and ordered them all to be destroyed.



OIL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Before oil was discovered, many desert countries in the Middle East were very poor. Oil has transformed their fortunes. More than two-thirds of the world's known reserves of crude oil and a third of all the natural gas occur here. Countries have become wealthy through the export of oil and natural gas throughout the world. New cities have sprung up, such as Dubai (shown above), and foreign workers have arrived in great numbers.

Shaded areas on the map show Southeast Asia's newly industrializing countries.



LITTLE TIGERS

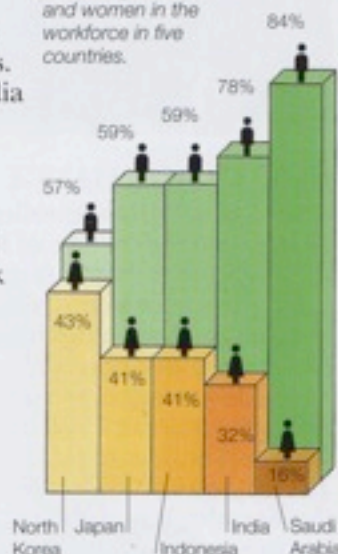
Following in the footsteps of Japan, a number of Southeast Asian countries looked to make the most of their cheap and plentiful supply of workers to rapidly boost their economies. These "Little Tigers" achieved great success in the final decades of the 20th century. However, they are now having to deal with the side effects of rapid industrialization – pollution, unemployment, poverty in rural areas, and new cheaper competition that has begun to emerge elsewhere.

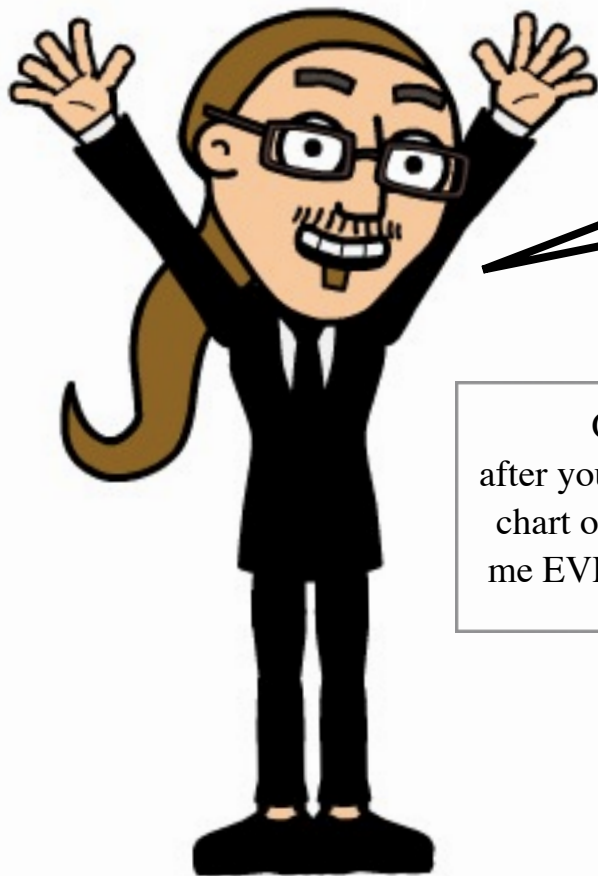
ROLE OF WOMEN

Women's lives differ hugely over such a large continent, influenced by each nation's culture, religion, and politics. In some areas, such as in India and the Islamic countries of the Middle East, the vast majority of the workforce is male. Yet Islamic women in Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia often work outside the home. In other areas, such as communist China and North Korea, women make up a large proportion of the workforce and carry out most household chores.

Women in the workforce

This chart shows the percentage of men and women in the workforce in five countries.





Prove you learned it!

Choose and complete one of the following after you have researched and filled out your country info chart on the next two pages. Your “Prove it” should tell me EVERYTHING there is to know about your country.

Give a presentation

Create and give a presentation that gives a brief introduction to your country and covers all the info from your country sheet.

You must be able to answer follow up questions from the class.

Make a cartoon

Use domo.goanimate.com to create a cartoon that gives a brief introduction to your country and covers all the info from your country sheet.

Make a comic

Use bitstrips.com to create a comic that gives a brief introduction to your country and covers all the info from your country sheet.

Make a travel website

Use google sites, [webs](http://webs.com), [wix](http://wix.com), [jux](http://jux.com) or any other free website creator to make a site that gives me a brief introduction to your country and covers all the info from your country sheet.

COUNTRY INFO SHEET

This should be **FINISHED** before you start your **PROVE IT!**

Helpful sites to get you started:

[BBC country profiles](#)

[CIA world factbook](#)

Physical Geography: <i>What is the land like?</i>	
Population statistics <i>Men/women/old people/ young people/ birth rate</i>	
Ethnic/Racial Make up <i>What races and ethnicities are in your country</i>	
Urban/Rural <i>what percent of people live in cities? on farms?</i>	
Gross Domestic Product <i>How much are your countries total good and services worth? Should be a big number.</i>	
Cost of living <i>How much does it cost to live? You might have to search by city.</i>	
Economy <i>How do they make their money? You should find MORE THAN ONE way.</i>	

Natural Resources <i>What stuff is provided by nature?</i> <i>i.e. oil, gold, bananas, fish</i>	
Government <i>What type of government do they have?</i> <i>How does it work (briefly).</i> <i>Who is in charge (can be more than one person)</i>	
Military <i>How big is their military? How much money do they spend on it a year? Are they involved in any wars or conflicts?</i>	
Freedom <i>What is their freedom house rating? If it is high explain why.</i> freedomhouse.org	
Culture <i>language</i> <i>religion</i> <i>famous foods</i> <i>music/art/artists/movies/tv</i>	
Tourist stuff <i>what are some cool things to do?</i> <i>interesting places to visit?</i> lonelyplanet.com tripadvisor.com	
Current events <i>What is happening in your country RIGHT NOW?</i>	

