

ASIA

**Location, Population Distribution, Climate,
Phys. Characteristics, and Nat. Resources (33)**
(India, China, Japan, North & South Korea)

Standard SS7G11a.b

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IMPACTS OF LOCATION, CLIMATE, PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- ◎ **SS7G11**- The student will explain the impact of location, climate, physical characteristics, distribution of natural resources, and population distribution in Southern and Eastern Asia.
 - a. Describe the impact of climate and location on population in Southern and Eastern Asia.

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The climates of most of the countries in Southern and Eastern Asia vary depending on each country's geography. Nearby oceans, mountains, deserts, latitude and wind patterns affect climate.

INDIA

India has many types of climate. Snow and ice are in the northern mountains, hot dry plains in the central plateau, and steamy tropical weather is along the southern coast. Some of the highest mountain peaks are covered with glaciers and snow year round.

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A large desert borders Pakistan, while the Ganges Plain is humid and almost tropical.

The Deccan Plateau in the center of the country is more moderate, with a subtropical coastal plain along the Indian Ocean.

Most of India's people rely on farming and other agricultural work, so most of the people live along the great rivers in fertile river valleys.

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Some of India's largest cities are also located along the Ganges River and/or near the coast.

Fewer people live in the Deccan Plain in the higher center of the country.

The climate of India is shaped by seasonal winds known as **monsoons**.

These winds blow hot, dry air across the continent from the northeast during the winter.

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In the spring and summer, the winds come from the opposite direction and bring heavy rains from the ocean.

These monsoon winds can be a blessing when they bring much needed rain. On the other hand, monsoon rains can cause destructive flooding. The monsoons are very unpredictable.

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CHINA

The same variety of climates found in India are also found in China. A country as large as China has nearly every type of climate.

High mountain ranges to the south cut China off from India and the moisture that might come from the Indian Ocean. (i.e. monsoons)

The Gobi and Taklimakan desert regions in the center of the country are harsh and dry.

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Mongolia to the north is semi-arid, and the areas to the east and south are humid and even tropical.

Most of China's one billion people live in the areas of the country that have the milder climates. It is also where one finds the great river valleys and most of China's fertile farmland.

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JAPAN

Japan, an island nation on the far eastern edge of East Asia, has a climate affected by ocean currents.

The Japan current coming from the south brings warm water to the southern and eastern coasts of Japan, while the Oyashio current coming from the north cools the northern coast.

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The warmer parts of the country are able to have longer growing seasons for farmers, while those living in the cooler north rely on fishing.

*Japan experiences monsoon rains and even tropical hurricanes called **typhoons**.*

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NORTH KOREA

North Korea shares a border with China and has short summers and long, cold winters.

The land is mountainous and not as heavily populated as South Korea.

SOUTH KOREA

South Korea has fewer mountains and a milder climate than North Korea, primarily due to the warm winds that come from the ocean.

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South Korea also has a larger population than North Korea. The country's largest city is its capital Seoul. Farming is more widely practiced here than in mountainous North Korea.

VIETNAM

Country's further to the southeast like Vietnam are warmer and tropical.

Here climate and geography join to create rich farmlands where 90% of the world's rice is grown.

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◎ **SS7G11**- The student will explain the impact of location, climate, physical characteristics, distribution of natural resources, and population distribution in Southern and Eastern Asia.

b. Describe how the mountains, desert, and water features of Southern and Eastern Asia have affected the population in terms of where people live, the type of work they do and how they travel.

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INDIA

India is separated from the rest of Asia by three mountain ranges: the Hindu Kush, the Himalayas, and the Karakoram. Because of this India is often called a **subcontinent** (a division of a continent).

Just south of the large mountain ranges, *most of India is made up of a broad plain between the Indus River and the Ganges River.*

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The land in this plain is very fertile, because the rivers provide tons of silt to enrich the soil.

South of this great plain is an area of higher plateau called the Deccan Plateau.

Even further south, the land gives way to a narrow strip along the coast of the Indian Ocean.

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India's mountains have sometimes stopped invaders from the north who wanted India's fertile river valleys to the south.

At other times, invaders have been able to use natural passes through the mountains to make their way into the heart of India and establish new rulers and customs.

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*Most Indians live in the major river valleys,
particularly the Ganges.*

People are moving into the cities from rural areas in large numbers looking for work and better opportunities for their families or future.

The rivers provide transportation, trade routes, water for irrigation, and water to supply the people living in the cities.

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The rivers have become the easiest means of disposing of human, animal, and industrial waste.

As a result nearly all of India's large cities have problems with over-crowding, air and water pollution.

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CHINA

Two great deserts are located in northern China: the Gobi and the Taklimakan. Few people live in these regions, and many of those that do live as nomads or animal herders.

Other parts of northern and eastern China have climates that are more moderate and some farming is possible.

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The northeast, along the route of the Yellow River, is China's most heavily populated region. Beijing is located here.

While agriculture is common, this region of the country is also China's industrial center.

Farming is the most common occupation of the Chinese who live in the southeastern part of the country.

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Here the Yangtze River flows to Shanghai, China's largest seaport.

This region of the country is the site of *the Three Gorges Dam*. *This large hydroelectric project was designed to bring electricity to China's rural areas.*

For Chinese workers, rapid industrialization has meant many have left their rural homes and found work in overcrowded cities.

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NORTH KOREA

The mountains of North Korea have meant that it has had less success with agriculture than many other countries in the region.

There are fast-flowing rivers in the mountains where North Korea have developed hydroelectric plants.

The country earns a profit from mining coal and other minerals like iron and copper.

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Most people live along the western half of the country where the mountains slope down to the sea and farming is more successful.

SOUTH KOREA

South Korea is less mountainous and a large part of the country is excellent farmland.

The population is greater than North Korea with about 25% of the people living in and around the capital city, Seoul.

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People living in and around Seoul have the advantages of markets, jobs, and education that are harder to find in rural areas.

While there are cold winters and warm summers, the climate in South Korea is milder than that of North Korea because of ocean winds.

JAPAN

Almost 80% of Japan is covered with mountains. This leaves a small percentage of land suitable for farming.

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The Japanese have created farmland out of these mountains by building terraces, putting in irrigation channels, and using different fertilizers and farming techniques.

Even so, Japan has to import food for its growing population.

There are many volcanoes in Japan. These volcanoes are often caused by earthquakes. Japan has more earthquakes every year than any other place in the world.

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The Japanese people have adjusted to the threat of earthquakes, even though many cause a lot of damage.

Some parts of the country have developed hot springs around the volcanic areas, and others use the heat to warm water for people to use.

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Because Japan has so little farmland, the Japanese depend on fishing for much of their food.

The country has a very highly developed industrial economy, but no gas or oil. They therefore depend on the world market for their petroleum (oil) products.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Distribution of natural resources throughout southern and eastern Asia plays a major part in determining what sort of work people do and how comfortably they are able to live.

One of the most valuable natural resources in this part of the world is rich farmland. All of the countries of southern and eastern Asia depend on agriculture to feed growing populations.

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India and China are able to claim large areas of rich farmland as an important natural resource. However, these countries have a difficult time producing enough food to take care of their rapidly growing populations.

India, China, North Korea and South Korea also have good supplies of coal. While coal is an important energy source for all of the economies of these countries, coal burning is also a major cause of air pollution.

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Air pollution is one of the greatest environmental and health hazards facing the countries of southern and eastern Asia today.

Both North and South Korea have a number of mineral deposits, including lead and zinc.

Vietnam is able to mine phosphates for export, as well as drill for oil.

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Japan, an industrial powerhouse on the eastern edge of the region, has practically no natural resources at all.

For this reason, Japan must depend on industry and trade to supply its population with all they need.