

Theme

B

How East Asia Became An Economic Power

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PURPOSE

To research, map, and discuss the different aspects of how countries of East Asia became economic powers. Through this exercise, students will gain knowledge of how countries of East Asia developed from rural agricultural economies to major economic forces in the world.

THEME STATEMENT

Technology, Production, Distribution & Consumption (TPDC): Decisions revolving around exchange and economic policies, production, distribution, consumption, and technology (along with well-being) are global in scope.

SUGGESTED TIME

One and a half periods of 90 minutes each, or the equivalent in shorter periods.

KEY VOCABULARY & CONCEPTS

Five-year plans; special economic zones.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- atlases
- encyclopedias
- world almanacs

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Teachers are encouraged to research economic development of various East Asian countries before starting this lesson. A brief outline for three East Asian countries is included (Teacher Background #1).

INITIATION (Inquiry, Preview, Involvement)

1. Bring to class some items that are made in East Asian countries. These can be shoes, computer chips, picture of an automobile, etc. Ask students to guess where each of these items was manufactured, having students explain their reasoning behind their hypotheses.

SUMMARY

Adaptable Levels
Grades 7-12

Related Themes
USGC, CCC, PPE, IPG

Values
Understanding

Skills
Mapping, graphing,
adaptation, analyzing

Integration
Language, social studies

2. Have students look on a map and point out where each of the above countries is located.
3. Have students brainstorm some ideas of how Japan, South Korea, and China came to be the economic powers that they are today. List ideas on a chart for later revisions and additions as the lesson proceeds.

DEVELOPMENT (Instruction, Data Collection, Organization)

1. Divide students into small groups and assign each group an East Asian country.
2. Break down each group further by assigning each person in the group to one of the following tasks (one or two people per group per task):
 - research the background of how the assigned country developed its economic base
 - research the assigned country's type of government and analyze how it affects the economy
 - use a map to display (using symbols) the leading manufactured items that the country produces as well as the leading manufacturing centers/locations within the country
 - use a world almanac to research the country's trade with the United States as well as the country's trade ranking in relation to other trading partners
3. After the groups have finished with their assigned task above, have group members share their findings with other members of their group.
4. Using the information above, have each group prepare a written account of how their assigned country came to be an economic power.
5. Have students present their analyses and conclusions to the class as a group. As each group presents their findings, have the remaining students assess them (see sample rubric in "Assessment of Achievement").
6. After group presentations have been completed, discuss the findings as a class and determine what was common or different with each country's path of economic development.

EXTENSION/ENRICHMENT (Idea Articulation, Ownership, Experimentation)

Students may also want to examine how *education* played a role in the economic transformation of various East Asian countries.

ASSESSMENT OF ACHIEVEMENT

Students will assess each group as they present their material to the class. Assess the students yourself as you lead the class in discussing their findings and asking the key questions.

Students assess other students' performance and products with rubrics adapted from the following:

- 5 = Student fully completed all aspects of the research and presentation, and he/she worked well with other members of the group.
- 4 = Student partially completed the research but did, however, participate in the presentation and group work.
- 3 = Student fully completed all the research, but did not participate in presentation.
- 2 = Student partially prepared the research, presentation, and the group work.
- 1 = Student did not complete or participate in any aspect of this project.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What methods did South Korea use to turn around its economy?
- How is China's economy different from other countries' economies?
- What are some of the stages that China, Japan, and South Korea went through to achieve or begin to achieve their economic goals?
- How has their economic "turn-around" changed their position in the world?
- What information did you find the most interesting? Why?

ALTERNATIVES

This lesson can be adapted to fit any country or group of countries that the class is currently studying.

REFERENCES & RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- *Hammond Comparative World Atlas*. Maplewood: Hammond, Inc., 1997.
- *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997*. Mahwah: Kill Communications, 1997.
- Cannon, Terry, and Alan Jenkins, Eds. *Geography of Contemporary China*. New York: Routledge, 1990, p. 237. (ISBN: 0415001021)

TEACHER BACKGROUND #1:

*Paths of Economic Development in East Asia***JAPAN**

Japan was “opened” (after a formal policy of isolation) after Commodore Perry arrived in 1853. After this, the people of Japan concentrated on education and long-range planning of their economy. After World War II, they again concentrated on education and the re-building/re-structuring of their economy. The Korean War in the early 1950s helped the Japanese economy to grow, since Japan produced materials for both the United States and Korea. As the manufacturing base in Japan grew, Japanese industries expanded into other countries around the world. This expansion was patiently planned and calculated. Today, Japan is a major player in the world economy, owning several companies and banks that are among the largest of their kind in the world.

SOUTH KOREA

After the Korean War in the 1950s, the South Korean people struggled to get their economy going in the right direction. In 1961, General Park Chung Hee led a military coup and overthrew the government. Once in power, President Park Chung Hee set forth several new economic programs that established Korea on the path of economic development. The basis of this development was a special emphasis on education, making it an important part of Korean life. President Park implemented several five-year plans to improve the economy. Korean workers were put into three shifts, working round the clock to complete the work outlined in the various five-year plans. The five-year plans were:

- 1963-68: Five-year plan to improve the infrastructure of the country.
- 1968-74: Five-year plan focused on development of light industry (e.g., textiles, shoes).
- 1974-early 1980s: Five-year plan focused on development of heavy industry (e.g., autos, ship building, farm machinery, chemicals).
- early 1980s-present: Economic development concentrated on high-tech. industries (e.g., computer chips).

Today, South Korea has a fast growing economy and is an up-and-coming economic power.

CHINA (P.R.C.)

Since 1978, China, under Deng Xiaoping, has given more power to several provinces and port cities. Soon after coming to power, Deng put his own people into key government roles, starting China on the path towards becoming an economic power. With long-range planning, Deng established several provinces and port cities as “Special Economic Zones.” These zones were created using laws and ideas, new to previous government precedent in China; these zones were to operate under a capitalistic economy, allowing foreign businesses to enter China and set up their operations. Tax breaks and other incentives were given to these foreign corporations. The new zones soon prospered beyond expectations. China is now a country that holds much economic power; it continues to grow and expand its role in the world’s economy.