

Lesson 1: Location

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Learning Objectives:

- Locate Japan on a world map
- Locate and name Japan's capital city and four main islands

Curriculum Links:

National Curriculum in England for **Geography** KS1 and KS2:

- Use maps to locate Japan, identifying some of its environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries and major cities; Understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography in Japan; Describe and understand key aspects of human and physical geography.
- Identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, the Prime/Greenwich Meridian and time zones (including day and night)

See the National Curriculum for further details:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425601/PRIMARY_national_curriculum.pdf

Keywords:

Continent, equator, northern and southern hemisphere, archipelago

Resources:

Presentation: Location

Worksheet: Task 1 worksheet (KWL), Task 2 worksheet

NB: In addition, pupils will need access to world atlases and/or online world maps.

Starter

- **Slide 1:** Explore the various images on the first slide and ask pupils to guess what country they will be learning about. Reveal the answer to be Japan.
- **Slide 2:** Using the cartoons as prompts, ask pupils to TYP (talk to your partner) about what they already know about Japan. Ask pairs to feedback to the rest of the class.
- Next, ask the pupils to TYP about what they would like to learn about Japan. Again, ask pairs to feedback their answers.

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Task 1

- **Slide 3:** Introduce Task 1 and the KWL sheet. Explain that the first column is to record things we already know about Japan and the second column is where we can write down the things we want to find out about Japan. Tell pupils we will return to the sheet at the end of our topic to write down what we actually learned about Japan.
- Give pupils 5 minutes at their desk to add two or three items to the first and second columns. Remind pupils how to correctly punctuate statements (what I know) and questions (what I want to know). Once complete, bring pupils back to the carpet.

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Introduce Learning

- **Slide 4:** Introduce the Learning Objectives, explaining any key words as necessary.
- **Slide 5:** Ask pupils to locate the UK on the world map. KQ: In which continent is the UK?
- Identify Europe on the map and explain that a continent is a large area of land, often containing several different countries, separated from other continents by water or another geographical feature (e.g. mountains). Explain that there are seven continents.
- TYP: Name the 6 remaining continents and try to locate them on the map. (Note: Australia is the name of the continent, as this is the large landmass. However, the wider region, including New Zealand, New Guinea and some Pacific islands, is known as Oceania. For this reason, some people use these terms interchangeably).
- Ask pupils to locate Japan on the map. KQ: In which continent is Japan? Indicate the equator and explain that this is an imaginary line that runs around the middle of Earth. The half of the Earth north of the Equator is called the Northern Hemisphere and the half below is called the Southern Hemisphere. Use a globe to model this if available. KQ: Is Japan in the Northern or Southern Hemisphere? What about the UK? Can you name any countries in the Southern Hemisphere?
- **Slide 6:** Look at the map of Japan. KQ: What can you tell me about Japan just by looking at this map? Prompt students to notice that Japan is a chain of islands and introduce the term 'archipelago'. Point out the four main islands and explain that there are thousands of smaller islands that altogether make up Japan.*

*You may like to explain that until very recently it was thought that Japan was made up of 6,852 islands. However, a new survey announced in 2023 that the number of islands that make up Japan is in fact 14,125 which is 7,273 more than previously thought! The old figure came from a survey released in 1987 by the Japanese coast guard, which used paper maps to tally the islands. The new survey was performed by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan using digital mapping technology.

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Task 2

- **Slide 7:** Provide pupils with a range of world maps, atlases and globes. Explain that they must work in pairs to find Japan and identify the names of its four main islands and capital city. As an additional challenge, ask children to label the sea and ocean that surround Japan, as well as any other main cities.
- **Slide 8:** Once children have had sufficient time to complete the task, reveal the answers on the board. Ask pupils who completed the additional challenge to share what they discovered.

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Extend Learning

- **Slide 9:** Explain that as Japan's most northern main island, it has very cold winters. The main city of Sapporo hosts an annual snow festival (yuki matsuri), when people make enormous snow and ice sculptures. People from all over Japan and many foreign visitors attend the festival every year.
- **Slide 10:** Japan's largest island is Honshu – in fact it is the seventh largest island in the world! It is home to Japan's capital city, Tokyo, as well as its most famous landmark, and tallest mountain, Mount Fuji. Fuji-san is actually an active volcano. Because there are a lot of volcanoes in Japan, there are also lots of hot springs. A hot spring is a pool of naturally hot water from the ground. People can relax in them, like in the picture.
- As the central island, Honshu is connected to the rest of Japan by bridges, undersea tunnels and the shinkansen high-speed rail network.
- **Slide 11:** Shikoku is the smallest of Japan's main islands and is famous for its many Buddhist temples. Many people visit Shikoku to do the Shikoku Henro, a famous pilgrimage around 88 temples and many other sacred Buddhist sites on the island.

- **Slide 12:** Kyushu, in southern Japan, is home to Mount Aso and Sakurajima, two of Japan's most active volcanoes. Due to so much volcanic activity in Kyushu there are many hot spring resorts, such as in the town of Beppu, famous for its 'Hells of Beppu' springs. Some parts of Kyushu have a subtropical climate. This means hot summers and mild winters.
- **Slide 13:** Japan has hot places like Okinawa, where it is never cold – not even in the winter. Winter in Okinawa is usually between 15 – 20 degrees, similar to May or June in the UK. There are lots of beaches and many people visit to go diving.

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Plenary

- **Slide 14:** TTYP: Where would you like to visit in Japan and why? Do you think Japan is similar to the UK or different? Explain your answer.
- By the end of the lesson, children will probably have some additional questions to add to the W column on their KWL sheet. Give them a few moments to do this now.

Estimated Time: 5 minutes