

A Trip to the Japanese Countryside

Comparing Localities - Rural and Urban Japan

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Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn about features of urban and rural areas and their similarities and differences.
- To identify similarities and differences between a rural area and an urban area in Japan.
- Some students will compare their own area (or another area in the UK) to an area in Japan.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will identify similarities and differences between localities using a venn diagram.
- Some students will identify the benefits and disadvantages of living in different settlements.

Curriculum Links:

Geography for KS1

- Understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country.
- Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical and key human features.

Geography for KS2

- Locate the world's countries
- Describe and understand key aspects of human and physical geography

Keywords:

urban, rural, city, countryside, town, village, settlement, transport, agriculture, farming, mountains, forest, populous/population, similarities and differences, benefits and disadvantages.

Resources:

Video: A Trip to the Japanese Countryside

Presentation: Rural and Urban Japan

Picture sets: Rural and Urban Japan

Additional Resources:

Worksheet: Comparing Localities - Venn Diagram

Video: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zqj3n9q/articles/zr8q7nb> (External resource: *Human and Physical Features*, BBC, 1:59)

Images: Collection of images of your local area or another area to use in Task 4 (not provided)

Map: World map or map of Japan and its neighbours for the warm-up questions (not provided)

Task 1

- Start by asking students about Japan's location e.g. Which continent is it in? Can they identify it on the map? Who are Japan's neighbours? etc. as appropriate for your class.
- Play the short 'vote with your feet' warm-up game in the presentation. Designate one side of the classroom as 'Japan' and one side 'UK'. Students will 'vote' for the answer by moving to the relevant side after each question.

Estimated Time: 5 -10 mins

Task 2

- The final warm-up question is about cities and shows Tokyo and Japan. Ask what adjectives they could use to describe them? How about where they live? How about Japan – as well as cities, what other settlements might there be?
- Play the short video A Trip to the Japanese Countryside, then ask students questions to check their understanding and encourage them to think more about cities versus rural areas.

Suggested Questions KS1

- What did you see in the city clip in the video?
- What did you see in the countryside part of the video?
- What did you see that you would also see in the UK?
- What did you see that you wouldn't normally see in the UK?
- What kinds of transport did you see?
- What differences did you notice between the city and the countryside in the video?
- What differences did you notice between the countryside in Japan and in the UK?

Suggested Questions KS2

- What did you see that you would also see in the UK?
 - What did you see that you wouldn't normally see in the UK?
 - What words could we use to describe the place in the video?
 - Why might people want to live in a rural area in Japan?
 - Why might some people want to move to the city?
- As a think pair share activity, show students the slide with a satellite view of Tokyo and Takasaki (where the video was filmed) side by side. Ask each student to come up with at least one similarity and one difference between the photos and share with their partner.

Estimated Time: 10 mins

Task 3

- Show students more images of rural/urban Japan in the presentation. There are both general images and comparisons of different facilities. Check they are familiar with the key terms as you go. If students have studied human versus physical features, you could ask them to identify these. (See additional resources for the link to a BBC Bitesize video on this topic).

Estimated Time: 5-10 minutes

Task 4

- Split the class into small groups, giving each a set of the images showing both rural and urban Japan which they have seen in the presentation. Students should group the images according to whether they are urban or rural. Then pick 1 or more of the activities below.

Activity 1 (recommended for KS1/lower KS2) Students should write down similarities and differences they notice between the two sets of images, either individually or as a group. See additional resources for a venn diagram template.

Activity 2 (recommended for KS1/lower KS2) Pick one set of images (either urban or rural) to compare to the students' local area or another area chosen by the teacher.

Activity 3 (recommended for upper KS2 or high ability students) Tell students to imagine they have been offered an opportunity to move to Japan and can choose the city or the countryside. Each group will make a list of the benefits and disadvantages of living in their chosen area. The video and images serve as prompts for group discussion.

Estimated Time: 15 minutes +

Plenary

- Ask students: 'Would you like to live in the Japanese countryside or in a city? Why?' You can revisit the 'Vote with your feet' game, this time with a 'Yes' side and a 'No' side.
- Call on several students to share their opinion.

Estimated Time: 3 minutes

Extension Activities

- Watch the video and compare the lives of two children living in Tokyo and London:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/geography-ks1-ks2-your-world-tokyo-london/zv9pbdm> (External resource, BBC, '3:57')
- There is a shrine in the video and photo set. Learn more about the two major religions in Japan, Shinto and Buddhism, and the buildings associated with them:
<https://www.japansociety.org.uk/resource?resource=100>
- Watch videos of walking tours of Japan on YouTube, or use Google Maps to look at different areas of Japan as a class. You could try searching for some of the below and discuss similarities and differences with your hometown, or between different areas:
 - Police Station or Police Box
 - Post Office
 - Fire Station
 - Parks
 - Shopping Streets
 - Fast Food Restaurants
 - Churches