



JAPAN



POPULATION
126.2 million



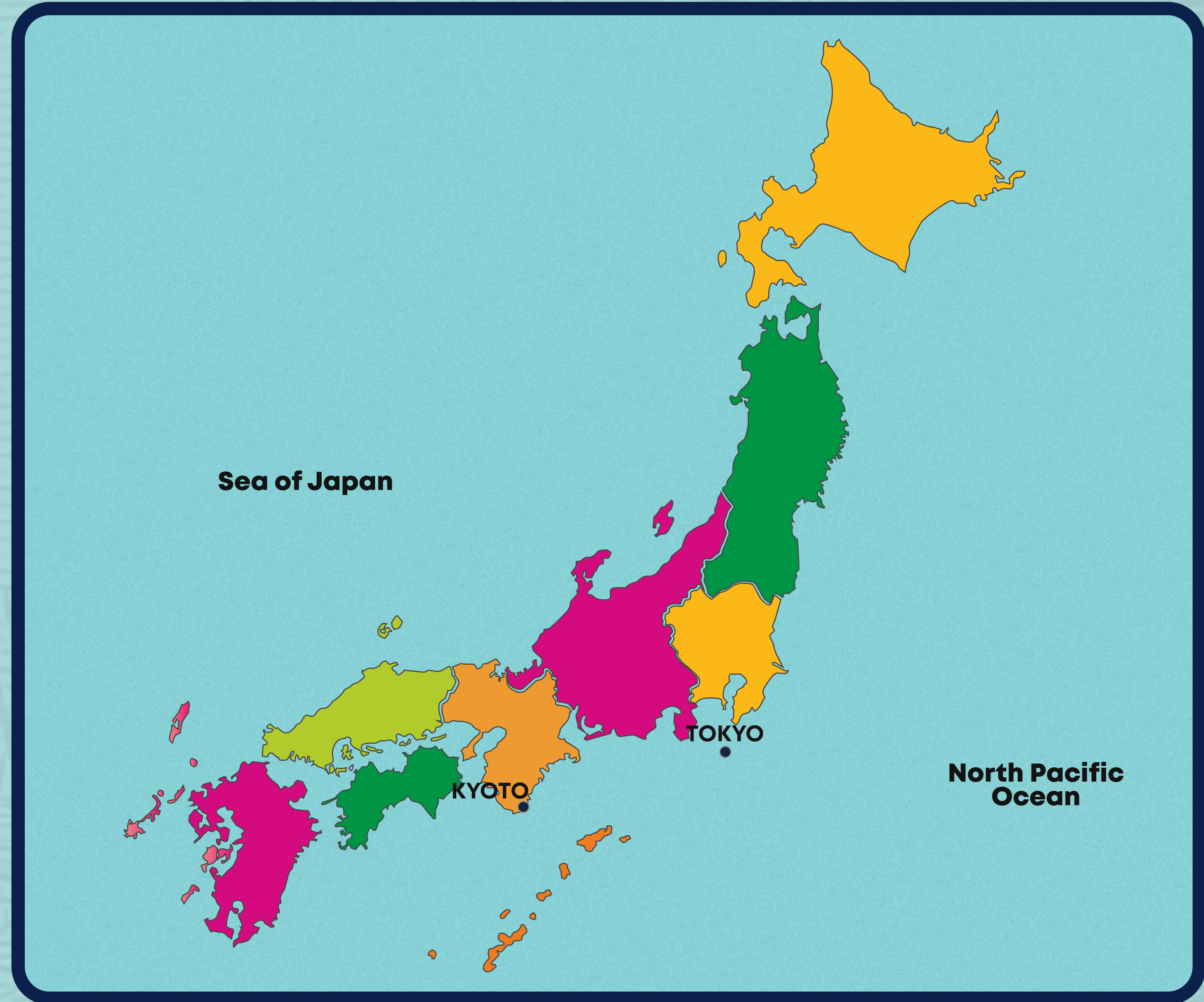
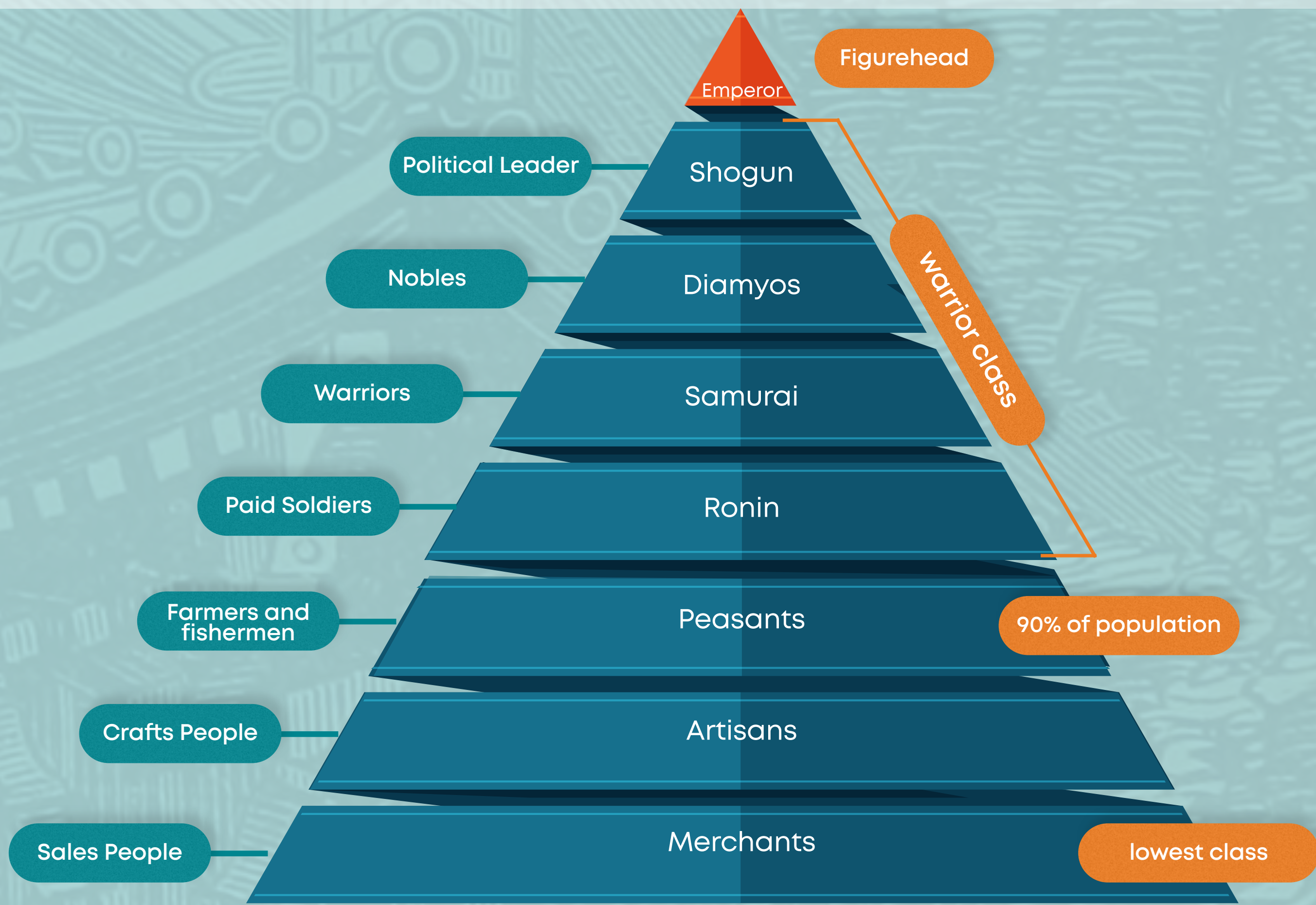
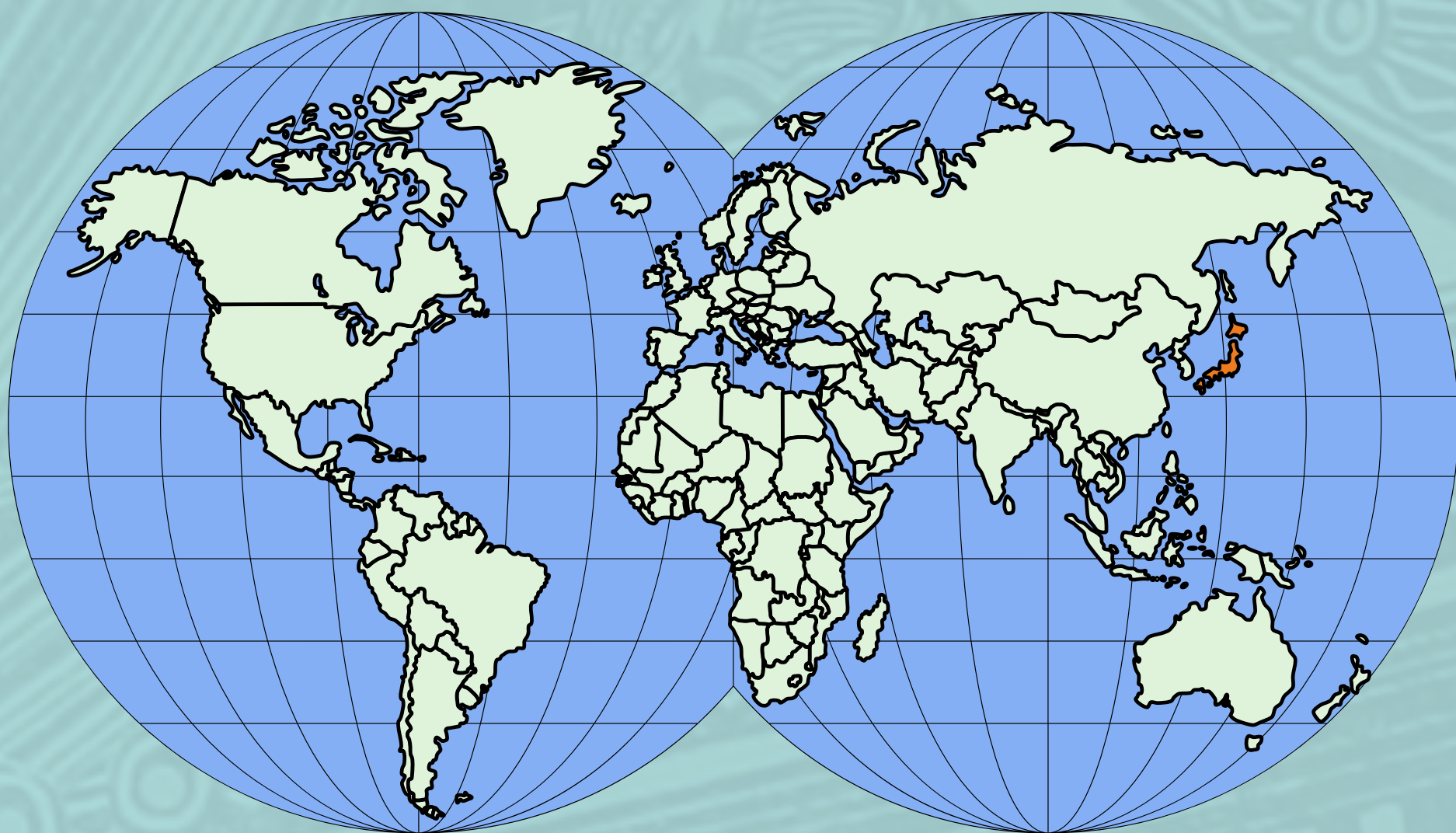
MAIN LANGUAGE
Japanese (日本語)



CAPITAL CITY
Tokyo



CURRENCY
Yen



Mount Fuji

KEY VOCABULARY

Tokyo

Kyoto

climate

weather

tsunami

monsoon

Samurai

kimono

origami

The name sometimes given to Japan because of the sun rising in the east and it being the most Eastern area in Asia.

The **capital city** of Japan

A large city in Honshu, Japan. It **was the capital city** of Japan.

The **average weather in a place** over many years.

The **condition of the atmosphere** at a particular time e.g rain, snow, sunny.

Unusually **large sea waves** caused by either earthquakes, seaquakes or underwater volcanic eruption.

Wind systems that bring **heavy rains** in summer and winter.

Japanese army **warriors**.

A long, loose **traditional Japanese robe** with wide sleeves and tied with a sash.

A Japanese **art of folding paper** to make decorative shapes and figures.

Asia: Japan

Year 4

In Year 3 children studied the continent of Asia, focussing on India and China. In this unit, children will study the physical and human geographical features of Japan. They will begin by identifying Japan's location in the Northern Hemisphere. They will learn about Japan's position on tectonic plate boundaries and what the consequences are for the islands of Japan and the people who live there. Children's understandings of earthquakes gained from studying Japan, will be built upon in Year 5 when they study New Zealand.

Looking to meteorology, children will learn that Japan is located at a position where two large air masses meet; one from the Asian continent that has travelled over land and one from the Pacific Ocean that has travelled over the sea. Children will study meteorology in more detail in Science in Year 5. Understanding the meeting and interaction of these two air masses will help children to understand how Japan's climate can be so varied. When studying physical geographical features of Japan, children will look at Mount Fuji, Mount Asama and Mount Sakurajima, some of Japan's volcanoes. They will revisit Japan's location on a tectonic plate boundary and will learn about the undersea earthquakes that can cause tsunamis in Japan.

Building on their knowledge of cities around the world, children will learn about the capital of Japan, Tokyo, and its second city and former capital city; Kyoto. Children will learn about the bullet train that carries passengers around Japan at high speeds. As part of understanding some of Japan's cultural traditions, children will learn about Feudal Japan and the class system that was important in the past. Children will understand that traditions from the past are still valued and celebrated in Japan.

This unit will give children an opportunity to apply their geographical skills of using an atlas, reading maps, reading climate graphs and considering the impact of geographical location on a country.



Lesson Series

1. Location of Japan
2. Weather and Climate in Japan
3. Geographical features of Japan
4. Architecture in Japan (Human Features)
5. Feudal Japan
6. Assessment

National Curriculum Coverage

Describe and understand key aspects of:

- Physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
- Human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water
- There is more specific reference to Asia in KS3

What you need to know

- Japan is a country located in the Asian continent and is in the Northern Hemisphere. It is made up of four main, small islands- Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu and many other smaller islands.
- Japan is known as the 'Land of the Rising Sun' because it is the most Eastern country in Asia and the sun rises in the East.
- The Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan surround Japan.
- About 80% of Japan is covered in mountains. The Japanese Alps runs down the centre of largest island, Honshu. Mount Fuji is the most well known mountain in Japan due to its high peak and shape.
- The population of Japan is estimated at about 126.2 million people and Yen is the currency. The main language in Japan is Japanese and the capital city is Tokyo.
- Japan has a great variety of climatic conditions. This is partly because its islands extend across a large north-south distance. The islands are also in the zone where the conflicting air masses of the Asian continent and of the Pacific Ocean meet and interact. Japan's climate is generally governed by wet and dry seasonal winds, called monsoons.
- The islands of Japan are the exposed tops of massive undersea ridges that rise from the floor of the Pacific Ocean on the eastern edge of the Asian continental shelf. Japan has numerous volcanoes and frequent earthquakes because of the instability of the tectonic plates underlying the country. The country has about 200 volcanoes, of which 60 have been active in recorded history. Mount Fuji, the famous volcanic cone, is the highest peak in Japan. Japan experiences some 1,000 tremors each year, most of them minor. Major earthquakes have caused considerable loss of life and widespread destruction. Undersea earthquakes in the North Pacific basin stir up unusually large tsunamis, a type of giant sea wave, that are very destructive when they reach the Japanese coast.
- The Imperial Palace is well known in Tokyo and is where the emperor lives. The emperor no longer holds any power and is more of a figure head. Kyoto is another city in Honshu, Japan. For over 1000 years, Kyoto was the capital city of Japan and then in 1869 Tokyo became the new capital city. Tokyo is a large city with skyscrapers and bullet trains, In contrast to Tokyo, Kyoto is a traditional city. There are more traditional wooden style buildings, Buddhist temples, elaborate gardens and Shinto shrines.
- Feudalism is a type of government where a weak monarchy, in Japan, the emperor, tries to control an area of land through making agreements with wealthy landholders. The feudal period of Japanese history was a time when powerful families (daimyo) and the military power of warlords (shogun), and their warriors, the samurai ruled Japan.



Teacher Knowledge

Japan is a country located in the Asian continent and is in the Northern Hemisphere. It is the easternmost country in Asia. (Children learned about China and India in Year 3) It is made up of four main, small islands- Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. Honshu is the largest island and is home to the modern capital city of Tokyo and also Japan's tallest mountain peak; Mount Fuji. Aside from the four main islands, there are about 4000 other smaller islands in Japan. Japan is also known as the 'Land of the Rising Sun' because it is the most Eastern country in Asia and the sun rises in the East. The Japanese Flag is a red circle on a white background which represents the rising sun. The Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan surround Japan. About 80% of Japan is covered in mountains. Mount Fuji is the most well know mountain in Japan due to its high peak and cone shape. The population of Japan is estimated at about 126.2 million people and the country is densely populated.

Knowledge Objective

To locate Japan on a map of the world.

Knowledge Goals

Japan is located in the Northern Hemisphere.

Japan is located in the continent Asia.

Japan is made up of four main islands and many smaller islands.

Lesson Detail

Prior Learning: Ask children to identify Northern and Southern Hemispheres and to locate Asia on a map of the world. Recall prior learning from Year 3: India and China. Recall compass directions and ensure children are confident describing locations in relation to each other. E.g. Japan is located to the east of China.

Vocabulary: Orally rehearse island names; Hokkaido (hokkaidou), *Honshu (Honshuu)*, *Shikoku* and *Kyushu (kaiooshuu)*.

Teach: Look at a world map and locate Japan. Discuss that Japan is in Asia, that Asia is in the Northern Hemisphere and surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and Sea of Japan. Explain that Japan is also known as the 'Land of the Rising Sun' because of the sun rising in the East and Japan being the most Eastern country. Explain that Japan is made up of four small islands- Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. Locate the Japanese Alps and Mount Fuji. Explain that Mount Fuji, a distinctive geographical feature of Japan, is the country's tallest peak. It is famous because of its snow-capped symmetrical cone shape and features in many works of art. It is considered an active volcano, but it hasn't erupted since the 1700s. (Show images of Mount Fuji in art works and also in images taken from space by the International Space Station). Watch video from beginning to 2.34mins: <https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/00000144-0a41-d3cb-a96c-7b4dce6a0000>

Talk task: In pairs, using an atlas, identify capital city, population, currency, language and flag of Japan.

Task: Label a map of Japan; Tokyo, Mount Fuji, four main islands, Sea of Japan, Pacific Ocean and any other relevant locations.

Partner teach/Plenary: Describe the location of Japan to your partner. Describe the location of Tokyo in Japan. *Why is Japan also known as the 'Land of the Rising Sun'?*

Step for Depth: *If we flew on an aeroplane from England to Japan, which countries would we fly over?* Use an atlas to help you.

Vocabulary

- Japan
- Tokyo
- Land of the Rising Sun
- Hokkaido
- Honshu
- Shikoku
- Kyushu

Suggested Resources

World map and blank map of Japan.

Teacher Knowledge

Japan is not a large country, but its climate varies greatly, partly due to the islands extending across a large distance from north to south. Japan is located where two large air masses, one from the Asian Continent and one from the Pacific Ocean, meet and interact. The air mass from the continent of Asia creates extreme temperatures, both in winter and summer. The air mass from the Pacific Ocean creates high humidity and lots of rainfall. Japan has wet and dry seasonal winds called monsoons. During the winter, Japan experiences the effects of cold air masses from Siberia and Russia, these bring cold winds across the Sea of Japan and to the Japanese islands. The air masses pick up moisture from the Sea of Japan and deposit this moisture as snow on Japan's western coast. In contrast, during the summers, Japan experiences the effects of air masses from the Pacific Ocean. Winds come from the South-east making the summer months hot and humid. Japan has rainy seasons in June and September, though there is some precipitation throughout the year. The main, June rainy season is called the baiu, or tsuyu, and has many days of continuous rain. The September rainy season is called the shurin. It is associated with occasional typhoons, tropical storms like the hurricanes of south-eastern North America. When they strike Japan, they cause destructive floods and landslides. However, the typhoons also restore water levels, which drop during the dry days of the summer.

Knowledge Objective

To know that air masses from land and from sea create a varied climate in Japan.

Knowledge Goals

An air mass from Asia brings cold weather to Japan.

An air mass from the Pacific Ocean brings warmth and lots of rainfall to Japan.

Japan experiences rainy seasons that bring typhoons and tropical storms.

Lesson Detail

Prior Learning: *Where is Japan located?* Recall location of Mount Fuji and Tokyo. Recall the countries and seas/ocean around Japan.

Vocabulary: Recall the difference between climate and weather. (Climate being weather over time, weather being the conditions on a given day). Introduce the word air mass; explain it is a large body of air, where the conditions are the same. This means the air mass contains air that is a similar temperature and humidity (moistness). Air masses can cover thousands of miles and effect our climate and weather. Explain that an air mass that has moved over land is often dry, but an air mass that has moved over sea often brings moisture.

Teach: Discuss the difference between weather and climate. Show children Japan on a map, discuss the shape of the islands (long and thin). Why might there be a varied climate within the country? Teach children that the islands fall between two large air masses, one from the Asian continent and the other from the Pacific Ocean. Explain that during Japan's winter, there is an air mass that comes from Russia and Siberia bringing cold winds and snow. In contrast, during the summer, an air mass moves from over the Pacific Ocean bringing warmer and wet weather. Explain that between these two dominant air masses, Japan can experience rainy seasons. These can be extreme and can cause floods and landslides, but the rainfall is also needed to restore water levels from the drier months. Show children a relief map, teach that the rugged terrain also causes local variations in weather. Look at a climate graph for Tokyo.

Talk task: *How do air masses effect the climate in Japan?*

Task: 'Japan's weather is the same all year around'. Annotate a map and write an explanation to show why this statement is wrong.

Partner teach/Plenary: Share explanations and agree as to the reasons why the statement is wrong.

Step for Depth: *How are location (of a country) and climate linked?*

Vocabulary

- Weather
- Climate
- Air mass
- monsoon
- typhoon
- humid

Suggested Resources

Blank map of Japan, images of typhoon in Japan and west coast snows. Climate graph: <https://en.climate-data.org/asia/japan/tokyo/tokyo-3292/#climate-graph>



Teacher Knowledge

The islands of Japan are the exposed tops of massive undersea ridges that rise from the floor of the Pacific Ocean on the eastern edge of the Asian continental shelf. The land surface of the Japanese islands is rugged. Mountains and hills cover more than 80 percent of the land surface and divide the islands into hundreds of subunits. The largest and highest mountain mass, part of which is known as the Japanese Alps, is in central Honshu. The mountain chains are gouged by many short river valleys. Japan has numerous volcanoes and frequent earthquakes because of the instability of the tectonic plates underlying the country. The country has about 200 volcanoes, of which 60 have been active in recorded history. Mount Fuji, the famous volcanic cone, is the highest peak in Japan. It rises to 12,388 feet (3,776 meters). Mount Fuji has been dormant since 1707. Mount Asama in central Honshu and Mount Sakurajima in southern Kyushu are well-known active volcanoes. There are many hot springs in the country's volcanic zones. Japan experiences some 1,000 tremors each year, most of them minor. However, major earthquakes have caused considerable loss of life and widespread destruction. Severe earthquakes that cause damage over small areas occur about every five or six years in Japan. Undersea earthquakes in the North Pacific basin stir up unusually large tsunamis, a type of giant sea wave, that are very destructive when they reach the Japanese coast.

Knowledge Objective

To recognise physical geographical features of Japan.

Knowledge Goals

80% of Japan is covered with mountains and hills, the peak of Mount Fuji is the highest point.

Japan falls on tectonic plate boundaries which cause earthquakes and volcanic activity.

Undersea earthquakes can cause tsunamis which can be devastating.

Lesson Detail

Prior Learning: Recall location, weather and climate in Japan. Use Knowledge organiser to recap key vocabulary covered in previous two lessons.

Vocabulary: Introduce the words 'tectonic plate' explain that scientists think Earth is made of layers and that the crust is made up of plates that move and rub up against each other- refer to it being like a jigsaw puzzle. Look at a world map with tectonic plates identified. What do you notice about the tectonic plates and Japan? (Children will return to this concept in later units, including South America in Year 6). Explain that at **plate boundaries** mountains and volcanoes often form as one plate is pushed up over another. (Children are not expected to fully understand this scientific process at this stage, they just need to begin to understand that mountains and volcanoes often form at plate boundaries).

Teach: Teach children that 80% of Japan is covered with mountains. The Japanese Alps run down the centre of the largest island, Honshu. The highest peak and Japan's most famous mountain is Mount Fuji, a cone-shaped volcano considered sacred by many Japanese.

Teach children that the location of Japan means that it can experience serious geographical events. Three of the tectonic plates that form the Earth's crust meet nearby and often move against each other, causing earthquakes. More than a thousand earthquakes hit Japan every year. Japan also has about 200 volcanoes, 60 of which are still active. Explain that sometimes, when an earthquake occurs deep in the ocean, it can cause tsunamis. In 2011 there was a devastating tsunami in Japan. Watch video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWzdgBNfhQU>

Talk task: Look at a map of Japan showing the tectonic plate boundaries. Discuss their location. (map at end of unit)

Task: Why does Japan have mountains and volcanoes, and experience earthquakes and tsunamis? Draw a diagram or label a map in your answer.

Partner teach/Plenary: Describe the Geographical features of Japan

Step for depth: *How does Japan's landscape compare to the landscape in the UK?*

Vocabulary

- Tectonic plate
- Volcano
- Earthquake
- Tsunami
- Mount Fuji

Suggested Resources

Map showing tectonic plates, images of Japanese mountains and volcanoes, images from Tsunami in 2011.



Teacher Knowledge

Tokyo is one of the largest cities in the world and is known for how tradition and history meet modernity and cutting edge technology. Tokyo is the modern capital city of Japan, but for over 1000, Kyoto was the capital city. Kyoto is a more traditional Japanese city with wooden style buildings, Buddhist temples, elaborate gardens and Shinto shrines. In contrast, Tokyo has many skyscrapers, modern buildings and is home to bullet trains, or Shinkansen, that speed over the country. The Japanese bullet trains reach up to 375mph, in England our fastest train is the Eurostar which has reached 219 mph. The bullet train system connects many places across Japan to Tokyo, aiding economic growth. The bullet train network has an earthquake detection system which brings the trains to a rapid halt if necessary. There has never been a fatality in a crash on the bullet train network which has carried over 10 billion passengers. The Imperial Palace in Tokyo is where the emperor of Japan lives. The Emperor of Japan is the head of state, and the highest authority in the Shinto religion. The Emperor no longer holds political power but is defined as 'the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people.'

Knowledge Objective

To know Tokyo and Kyoto are important cities in Japan.

Knowledge Goals

Tokyo is a modern, busy city and is the capital city of Japan.

Kyoto was previously the capital city of Japan, and is a more traditional city.

The bullet trains (Shinkansen) are very fast trains that connect locations in Japan.

Lesson Detail

Prior Learning: Check Knowledge Organisers and complete a MCQ on previous learning.

Vocabulary: Explain the difference between modern and traditional. Explain that modern means something that relates to the present and traditional means something that relates to the past.

Teach: Discuss Tokyo as the capital city. Explain that it is busy, crowded, fast-paced, densely populated. Using visuals, show the skyscraper buildings of Tokyo and explain that these building would be popular for businesses and residential spaces. Discuss the Imperial Palace being a well-known place where the emperor lives today. Explain that Tokyo is a modern city and Kyoto is a traditional city. Kyoto used to be the capital city, but in 1869, Tokyo became the new capital city. Discuss Kyoto as a more traditional place with more traditional wooden style buildings that have rice paper walls, Japanese baths, more space, less people and a slower pace of life. Show contrasting images. Explain that the bullet train system, or Shinkansen, is a modern feature of Japan that has linked places with high speed trains. This allows people to travel, for work or leisure, to faraway places in Japan in short times. (Kyoto to Tokyo in 2 hours 15 mins and is a distance of 215 miles)

Talk task: What are the differences between Tokyo and Kyoto?

Task: Compare and contrast Tokyo and Kyoto. Include a map and/or sketches. Use the words 'modern' and 'traditional'.

Partner teach/Plenary: Why is the bullet train important in Japan?

Step for depth: Which city in Japan would you like to visit and why?

Vocabulary

- Tokyo
- Kyoto
- Imperial Palace
- Bullet Train

Suggested Resources

<https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/shinkansen-bullet-trains-japan/index.html> (images and short video) Images of Tokyo and Kyoto.

Teacher Knowledge

Like China, Japan has had a long line of emperors. In the past, Japan had a very rigid class system. The emperor was similar to a king, but they were mainly religious and cultural leaders. Political power was held by the daimyos (DIME-yos), who fought each other for more power. The most powerful daimyos pressed the emperor to make them a shogun, which means great general. This way there could be more than one leader, instead of one person having control over everything. As warfare was so important to this way of life, a special class of swordsmen arose- samurai. They followed a strict code called bushido (bush-EE-do), which required self-control, bravery and loyalty to their daimyo. The class system was very important- the samurais, from which the shoguns and daimyos came, were above the peasants who farmed, followed by artisans (who made things) and then merchants. Merchants were on the lowest rung of the social ladder because they did not produce anything, they only traded. Today, traditions from the past are still celebrated and valued in Japan. A kimono is a traditional robe with long sleeves and tied at the waist. Origami is the art of folding paper into beautiful and intricate shapes.

Knowledge Objective

To understand that in the past, Japan had a feudal system.

Knowledge Goals

A long time ago, Japan had a feudal system.

The emperor, daimyos and shoguns were important, powerful people under the feudal system.

Samurai were important warriors and needed to show self-control and bravery.

Origami and wearing a kimono are traditions from the past that are still practiced today in Japan.

Lesson Detail

Prior Learning: Review all content of previous units, check knowledge organiser. Show a knowledge organiser with parts blanked out, ask children to fill in the blanks.

Vocabulary: Introduce the word feudal. Explain that the word describes a system where some people have power, and others do not. Explain it is not a system like democracy, where people can vote. Show Japanese feudal system pyramid and explain there are a small number of important people, and a large number of less important people. Orally rehearse; emperor, daimyo, shogun, samurai, peasants, artisans, merchants. Explain this system is a hierarchy. A hierarchy is a system where things are ranked from most important to least important.

Teach: Building on the content taught in the vocabulary introduction, explain each section of the Japanese feudal system. Explain there was one emperor. The emperor would have agreements with Daimyos who owned land. Sometimes the emperor would make certain daimyos into shoguns, these were very important generals. There were many civil wars at this time in Japan (recap civil war from Year 3 history) and samurais were great warriors. Explain that Samurai needed to be brave, self-controlled, and loyal to their daimyo. Explain that artisans crafted things and peasants farmed, then the lowest class of people, the merchants, traded these goods. They were the lowest class because they didn't make anything themselves. Explain this was a long time ago, and Japan does not have a feudal system now. But Japan's past is important to its people and past traditions are remembered today, for example through wearing a kimono and practicing origami, two traditions from the past.

Talk task: Give children the pyramid showing the feudal system but cut into strips. Children to put the strips into order to re-make the pyramid.

Task: Give children an image of; an emperor, daimyo and shogun, samurai, peasants and artisans, merchants. Ask them to write a sentence describing each (group of) people and what they did.

Partner teach/Plenary: *How would you explain the feudal system to someone who didn't know anything about it?*

Step for Depth: *Describe the skills that were useful to people living under the feudal system in Japan?*

Vocabulary

- Emperor
- Samurai
- Daimyos
- Shoguns
- Rank
- Class system
- Hierarchy
- Feudal

Suggested Resources

Printed feudal system pyramids, cut into strips. Images of each section of the pyramid for descriptions to be stuck in books.



Assessment Outcome

To know that Japan has varied physical and human geography.

Japan is located in the Northern Hemisphere in the continent of Asia.

Japan is made up of four main islands and many smaller islands.

Japan has a varied climate, influenced by air masses from the continent and from the ocean.

Japan has many cities, including Tokyo and Kyoto.

In the past, Japan had a feudal system.

Suggested Assessment Tasks

(May need to be taught over more than one lesson/ linked with English to allow children more time to write at length)

Knowledge Organiser: Blank out sections of the knowledge organiser for children to fill in. For example, leave a key word but blank out the definition and vice versa.

Multiple Choice Quiz: Children complete the MCQ and mark their own immediately afterwards to provide instant feedback.

Locational knowledge: Label a map of Japan.

Essay: Describe Japan's human and physical geography.

Suggested structure:

- Location
- Climate and weather (Air masses from the continent and from the ocean)
- Physical features (Mount Fuji, Earthquakes, Tsunamis)
- Human Features (Tokyo, Kyoto, Bullet Train)
- Traditions and Culture (Feudal system of the past, samurai, origami and kimonos)
- Conclusion including personal response

Concepts

Interconnection

Feudal System

Suggested Resources

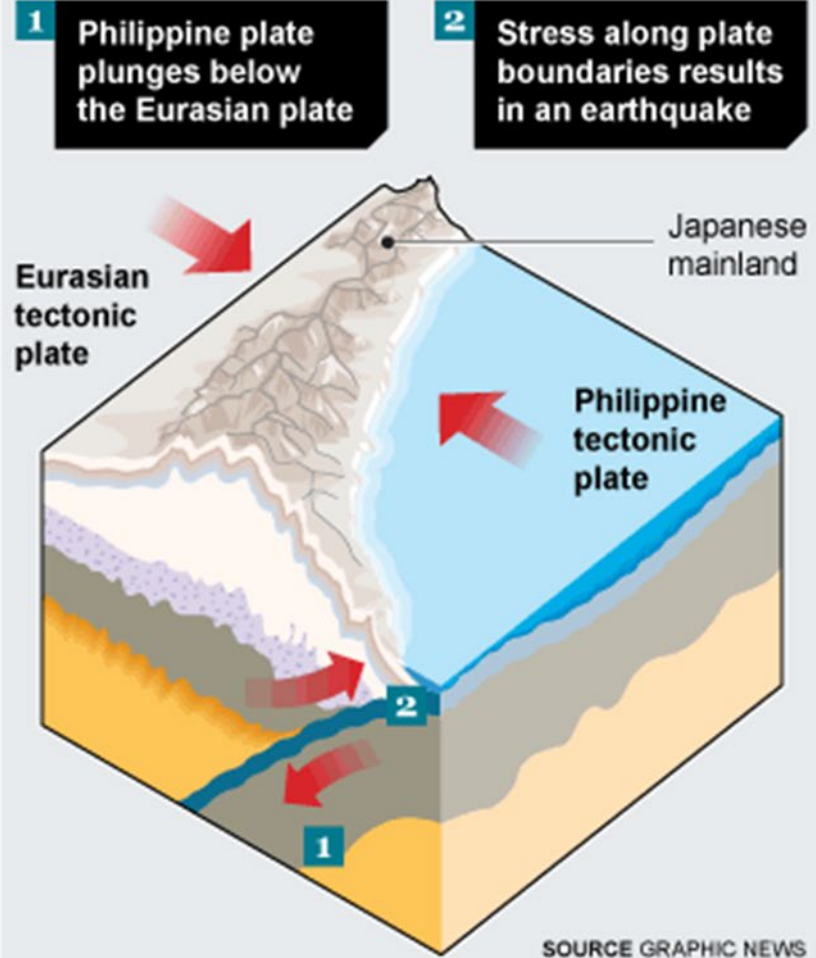
Knowledge organiser, MCQ, structure strips to scaffold writing, example essay

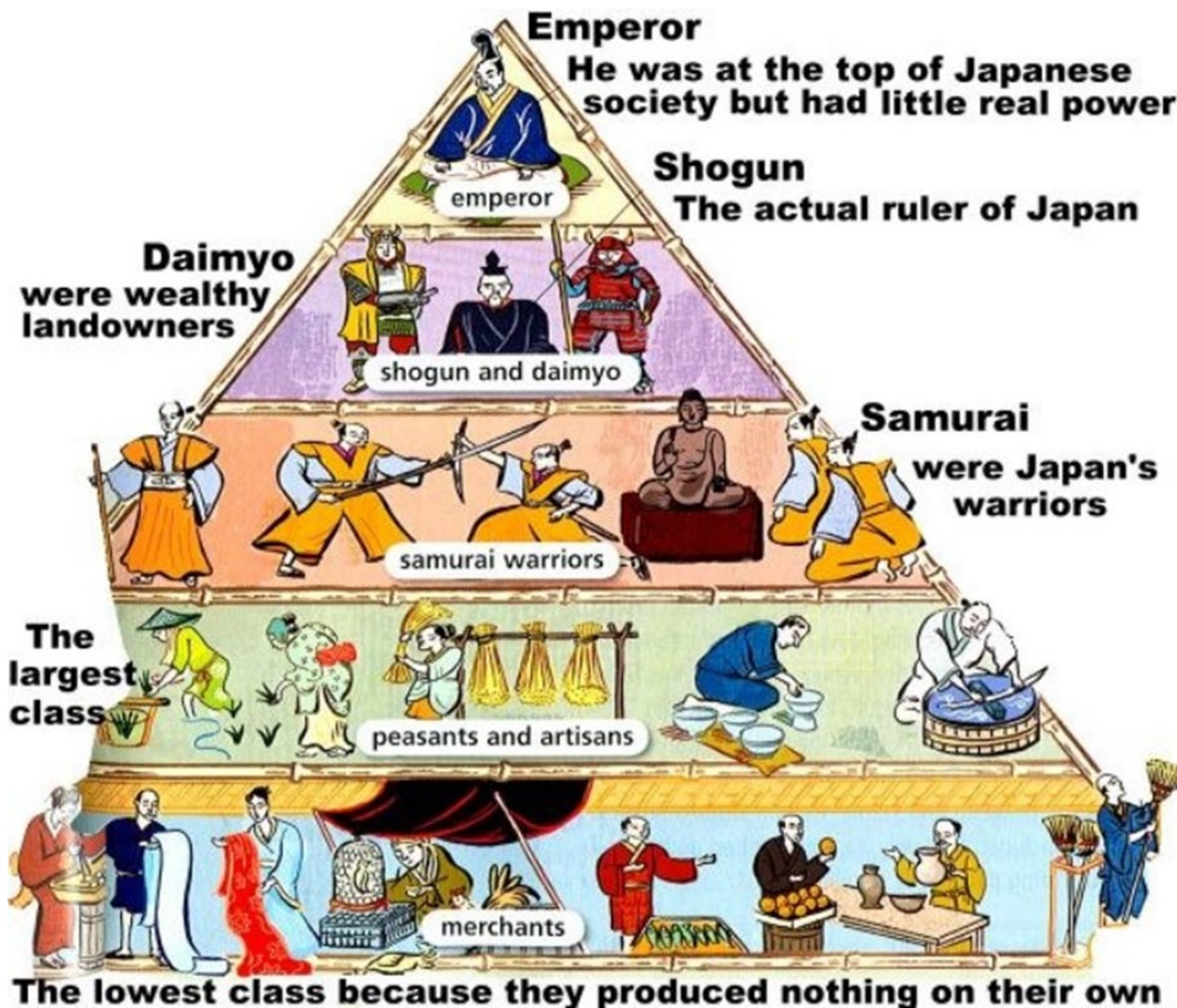


Japan's earthquake zone



Movement of the plates







1. Which continent is Japan located in?	A	North America	
	B	Asia	
	C	Africa	
	D	Europe	
2. Japan is known as:	A	Land of the Setting Sun	
	B	Land of Sunshine	
	C	Land of Thunder Storms	
	D	Land of the Rising Sun	
3. Around 80% of Japan is covered in:	A	Swamp	
	B	Desert	
	C	Mountains	
	D	Jungle	
4. The highest peak in Japan is:	A	Kyoto	
	B	Mount Fuji	
	C	Hokkaido	
	D	Mount Elba	
5. The Samurai were:	A	Japanese Emperors	
	B	Japanese warriors	
	C	Japanese landowners	
	D	Powerful Japanese families	