



STUDY GUIDE

Chapter 26, Section 1

For use with textbook pages 645–650.

The Land

Terms to Know

archipelago An island chain (*page 646*)
tsunami A huge tidal wave produced by undersea earthquakes (*page 646*)

loess A yellowish topsoil deposited by the wind (*page 648*)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Have you ever experienced an earthquake? Where did it occur? Why do earthquakes occur?

This section focuses on the land and natural resources of East Asia.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the chart below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the landforms, the river systems, and the natural resources of East Asia and list at least two facts about each.

	Facts
Landforms	
River systems	
Natural resources	

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READ TO LEARN

Introduction (page 645)

The physical geography of East Asia has many contrasts. It includes mountains, rugged highlands, rivers, barren deserts, fertile deltas, and countless islands.

1. How would you describe the physical geography of East Asia?

Land and Sea (page 645)

The People's Republic of China makes up about 80 percent of the land area of East Asia. At more than 1.25 billion people, China has the world's largest population. The other countries that make up East Asia are Mongolia, Japan, Taiwan, North Korea, and South Korea.

The coast of East Asia includes many peninsulas and islands. These landforms divide the western edge of the Pacific Ocean into smaller bodies of water, such as the Sea of Japan, Yellow Sea, the East China Sea, and the South China Sea. Four mountainous islands and thousands of smaller islands form the **archipelago**, or island chain, of Japan.

A curving line of islands east of China marks the meeting place of three tectonic plates. These islands form part of the Ring of Fire, a circle of volcanoes that border all sides of the Pacific Ocean. Most of these islands, including those of Japan and Taiwan, were formed through volcanic activity. Movements of the tectonic plates cause earthquakes. Japan experiences more than 1,000 small earthquakes every year. Occasionally, major earthquakes damage Japan's cities. An undersea earthquake in the region can result in a **tsunami**, a huge tidal wave that gets higher and higher as it approaches the coast.

2. Why do some countries in East Asia experience earthquakes and tsunamis?

Mountains, Highlands, and Lowlands (page 647)

Mountains and highlands cover much of East Asia. In the western part of the region lie the **Kunlun Shan** and **Tian Shan** ranges. In the southern and western part of the region are the Himalaya, the highest mountains in the world. The **Himalaya** separate China from South Asia. The **Changbai Mountains** of Manchuria extend into the Korean Peninsula. Mountains make up the interior of Japan and Taiwan.

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The **Plateau of Tibet**, in southwestern China, is East Asia's highest plateau. In the far north lies the huge **Mongolian Plateau** beside the vast **Gobi** desert. Between these high plains are the desert and marshes of the **Tarim Basin**. Further south is the fertile Sichuan Basin, one of the region's most important agricultural areas.

3. What kinds of landforms make up East Asia?

 **River Systems** (page 648)

The major rivers in China have their source in the Plateau of Tibet. The **Yellow River** twists across the **North China Plain**. It receives its name from the windblown yellowish soil called **loess**, which covers the plain. The fertile soil makes the plain an important wheat-farming region. The **Xi River** in southern China forms a huge fertile delta where it meets the sea. The **Yangtze River** flows through central China. It is China's longest river and a major transportation route.

The rivers in Japan and Korea flow down the mountains to the sea, often forming waterfalls. They provide hydroelectric power.

4. Where do China's major rivers start?

 **Natural Resources** (page 649)

East Asia's mineral resources are unevenly distributed throughout the region. China has the greatest share, including iron ore, tungsten, coal, and oil. North Korea also has rich deposits of iron ore and tungsten. South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan have very few mineral reserves.

Farmland and forests are also unevenly distributed. Only 10 percent of China's land is suitable for farming, but it is still the world's leading rice producer. South Korea produces two major crops—rice and barley. Other countries of the region have very limited farmland. The island countries and coastal areas of East Asia depend on the sea for food. These countries have developed seafood farming and deep-sea fishing industries.

5. What do the island countries and the coastal areas depend on for food?



STUDY GUIDE

Chapter 26, Section 2

For use with textbook pages 651–655.

Climate and Vegetation

Terms to Know

monsoon Prevailing wind that brings seasonal weather patterns to East Asia (*page 654*)

Japan Current Warm-water current that flows northward along the southern and southeastern coasts of the Japanese islands (*page 655*)

typhoons Violent storms that form in the Pacific and blow across coastal East Asia (*page 655*)

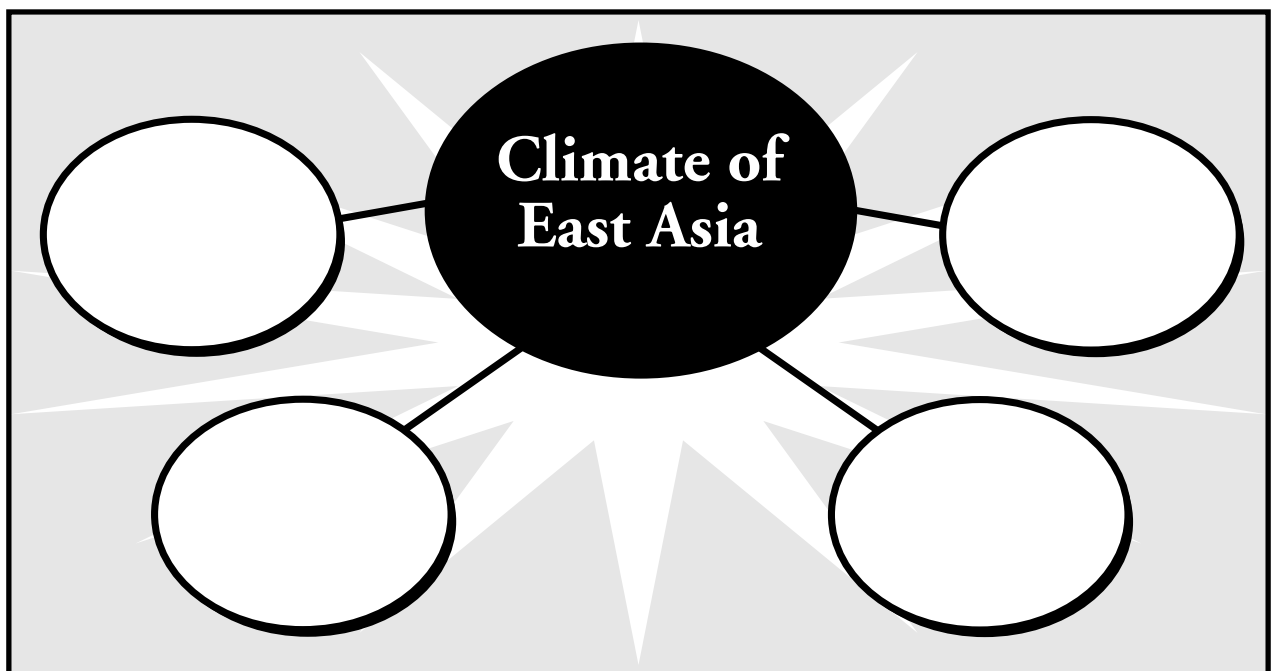
DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

What kind of climate is found in your community? What kind of climate do you like best? Why?

In the last section, you read about the landforms and natural resources of East Asia. This section focuses on the region's climate and vegetation.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the web below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the climates found in East Asia and the kinds of vegetation found in each climate.



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READ TO LEARN

Introduction (page 651)

Some groups of people in East Asia, such as Mongolian herders, have adapted to living in the region's harshest climates. Winds, ocean currents, latitude, elevation, and landforms influence the climate and vegetation of East Asia.

1. What factors contribute to East Asia's climate and vegetation?

Climate Regions (page 651)

Latitude and physical features shape the climate regions of East Asia.

- A. East Asia has two mid-latitude climate regions. A humid subtropical climate covers the southeastern quarter of East Asia. This region has warm summers and receives heavy rains. The northeastern quarter of East Asia has a humid continental climate. Summers are warm, but winters are cold and snowy. Vegetation in mid-latitude climates consists of evergreens and deciduous trees. Some vegetation in the humid subtropical region, such as bamboo and the mulberry tree, plays a major role in the culture and economy of East Asia.
 - B. A desert and steppe climate is found in Mongolia and northern China. The deserts in this part of East Asia are often cold and windy. Grasses and sparse trees make up the vegetation in this climate region.
 - C. The highland climates of East Asia are usually cool or cold. The climate in mountainous areas changes with the elevation—the higher the elevation, the cooler it is. Grasses, flowers, and trees are found on the lower slopes of mountains. Mosses and lichens are found above the timberline, where no trees grow.
 - D. A tropical rain forest climate is found in southern Taiwan and on the island of Hainan off China's southern coast. Temperatures are hot year-round with a very rainy summer monsoon. Vegetation includes palms, hardwoods, evergreens, and tropical fruit trees.
2. What mid-latitude climates are found in East Asia?

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**STUDY GUIDE****Chapter 26, Section 2****Monsoons** (page 654)

In East Asia the air mass above the world's largest continent meets the air mass above the world's largest ocean. The movement of these air masses results in prevailing winds called **monsoons**. These winds blow in one direction for about six months of the year and then they switch direction for the other six months. In summer, the monsoons bring most of the region's annual rainfall. The winter monsoons bring cold air and snow to parts of the region. The monsoons are important to the economy of East Asia. Too little rainfall from the summer monsoons can result in crop failure. Too much rain can bring flooding. The region's mountains act as barriers and weaken the effects of the monsoons in parts of East Asia.

3. How do monsoons affect climate in East Asia?

Ocean Currents (page 655)

Ocean currents also affect climate in East Asia. The **Japan Current** is a warm-water current that flows northward along the southern and southeastern coasts of the Japanese islands. This current provides moisture to the winter monsoons and warms the land. The *Kuril Current* is a cold-water current that flows southwest along the Pacific coasts of the northernmost islands of Japan. Violent storms called **typhoons** develop as a result of the interaction of ocean currents and monsoons.

4. What causes typhoons?
