

Topic: Economic Effects of Population Decline in Japan

Objective: Describe the economic impact of the declining population in Japan.

Social Studies TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills):

9.16C-describe life in a variety of urban and rural areas in the world to compare political, economic, social, and environmental changes.

9.2B-explain how changes in societies such as population shifts, technological advancements, and environmental policies have led to diverse uses of physical features over time such as terrace farming, dams, and polders

Essential Question: What is the economic impact of the declining population in Japan?

Time Needed: Three 90 minute block classes

Materials:

1. The CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>
2. Population Pyramids: <https://www.populationpyramid.net/>
3. “Shrinkanomics: Lessons From Japan” article:
<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2020/03/shrinkanomics-policy-lessons-from-japan-on-population-aging-schneider>
4. CIA Factbook paper: [Link](#)
5. “The Japanese Economy: Strategies to Cope With a Shrinking and Aging Population” Article
6. “Shrinkanomics: Lessons from Japan” Article

Procedure:

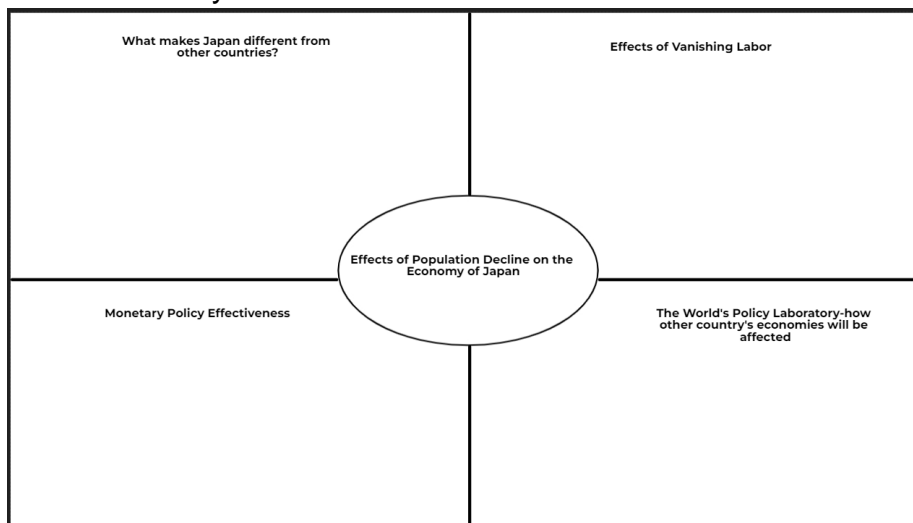
Day 1:

1. Students meet in groups of 4. Brainstorm ideas for what might happen to a country when the population declines. Ideas can be shown in class through www.padlet.com, Canvas discussions, or the teacher’s choice.
2. Students go to www.populationpyramid.net and find Japan’s population pyramid for 2010 and for the most recent year. Answer questions about Japan’s population:
 - a. According to the current population pyramid what demographic transition stage is Japan currently in? How do you know?
 - b. What trends are noticeable with regards to the birth rate? Death rate? Aging population? Working population?
3. Students find Japan’s population pyramid for 2050 and answer the above 2 questions, as well as:

- a. If this population trend continues, what economic consequences do you think it will have on Japan? On the rest of the world?
4. Students go to: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/japan/#economy>
Fill out the CIA Factbook paper. [Link](#)
4. Students watch “Why Japan is Shrinking” [Link](#) or news link [Link](#)

Day 2

1. Students read, “The Japanese Economy: Strategies to Cope With a Shrinking and Aging Population.” [Link to Article](#)
2. Give 2 minutes to write down what they notice about the information read (silent reflection).
3. With a partner, students share their reflections. Whole group discussion.
4. In pairs, students create questions based on the information. Some possible questions are: What is the government of Japan doing to encourage population increase? Why do you think the marriage rate is declining? What is happening to the elderly population with regards to the working-age population? What are some ideas for how Japan can deal with the shrinking population?
5. Students post these questions on chart paper. Students participate in a gallery walk to answer the questions.
6. In groups of 4 students read the article, “Shrinkanomics: Lessons from Japan” article. [Link to Article](#)
7. Fill out the Frayer Model:



Day 3

1. Ask the question, "What is climate change?" Discuss.
2. Students watch "Japan rolls out 'last-chance' efforts to curb population decline" [Link](#)
3. Give students 2 minutes to write down what they learned from the presentation and their thoughts. Share with a partner. Whole group discussion. Discuss why Japan in particular would be leading the initiative on climate change and how that relates to the shrinking population.
4. Show video, "Japan's Green Actions for Achieving Carbon Neutrality" [Link](#)
5. Students read about Japan's 2050 carbon-zero plan [Link](#) With 14 fields expected to grow in Japan and a declining population how will the carbon-zero plan be implemented efficiently?

Assessment:

8. Student groups create a slideshow (Blendspace, Prezi, Peardeck, Google Slides, are some examples) that shows the consequences of population decline on the economy of Japan and other countries, as well as solutions, using the resources provided. Some possible impacts are:
 - a. Difficulties in finding care for the elderly
 - b. Not enough laborers to support the economy
 - c. Decline in infrastructure due to lack of laborers
 - d. Decline in military strength
 - e. Decline in innovation and entrepreneurial activity
 - f. Deflation
 - g. Mental health issues
3. Groups present slideshow to class. As a class, draw conclusions and discuss solutions.