

Title: Japan's Population Pyramids

Theme/Topic: Global Issues, Population, Demographics, Public Policy

Introduction (2-3 sentence summary of lesson): In this lesson students will read and analyze population pyramids. Students will compare and contrast population pyramids of Japan from different years and predict public policy initiatives that could result from their analysis.

Subject(s)/Grade level(s): Grades 10-12. Global Issues (Social Studies Elective Class)

Duration of lesson: 1-2 days (~90 mins) -Extension activities noted below

Essential Questions (2-3 questions):

- How do population pyramids help us understand Japanese demographics?
- How does Japan's population compare and contrast over time?
- What public policy initiatives could result from the observations of Japanese demographics?

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to compare the population structures of Japan's population pyramid.
 - Students will be able to analyze a population pyramid of Japan based on age and gender.
 - Students will be able to predict possible outcomes of changing government policies related to population pyramids.
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Materials Needed: Chromebook, Pen/Pencil, Paper, Internet

Pre-Assessment of Prior Knowledge: Students will complete this lesson as part of a more extensive unit about Southeast Asia. During the unit, students will utilize book chapters, articles, online modules, discussion activities and writing assignments to learn about key concepts, historical context and current events in Southeast Asia.

Lesson Activities/Instructional Strategies:

1. Brainstorming/Introductory Question: Why do populations change?
 - a. Students will conduct a think-pair-share activity. First, they will write a response, then share with a partner, then the teacher will lead a whole class discussion.
2. The whole class will use their Chromebooks (or other device) to access <https://www.populationpyramid.net/> The teacher will project the World 2023 population pyramid as an example and review reminders about how to read the graphic.
 - a. Discuss: What patterns do you notice about age and gender? Which age range has the largest populations of men and women?
3. Students will then work independently or with a partner to analyze the following population pyramids of Japan.
 - a. 2053 <https://www.populationpyramid.net/japan/2053/>
 - b. 2023 <https://www.populationpyramid.net/japan/2023/>
 - c. 1993 <https://www.populationpyramid.net/japan/1993/>
 - d. 1963 <https://www.populationpyramid.net/japan/1963/>
4. For each population pyramid, students will address the following questions:
 - a. Describe the population pyramid. What patterns stand out about the country's age and population?
 - b. Which age range has the largest population of men and which has the largest population of women?
5. Discuss and compare findings. How has Japan's population changed over time?

Resources:

<https://www.populationpyramid.net/>

Closing/Reflection Activity: In conclusion, students will consider their responses and discussion as small groups related to the closing question: How has Japan's population changed over time?

Extension Activities/Extending the Lesson: As an extension activity, students will review their findings and analysis of the population pyramids. They will brainstorm 3-5 public policy issues that could arise from the changes in population over time in Japan. Students will identify one issue or theme and write a policy brief about it. Per the class standard operating procedure, policy briefs are one paragraph of background and analysis and one paragraph of suggested action. The target audience is an elected official or policy advisor. For example, students who choose to further explore the aging Japanese population could suggest the increased need for medical services. Students will be asked to include two outside sources in their policy briefs, including appropriate citations.

Additionally, students could utilize the similar investigative format to look at another country. Students could pick countries from various regions of the world or within a region to conduct a comparative analysis of demographics. What is similar about the populations? What is different? How have they changed over time?