

People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere

Population Density of Japan

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Grade Level	6th – 7th Grade	**Time Frame**	1 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	55 minutes
Course	World Geography		

Essential Question

Can too many people live in one area? How does city planning help accommodate large numbers of people living in one area?

Summary

In this lesson, students learn about the effects of high population density and explore what it would be like to live in one of the world's most densely populated areas—Tokyo, Japan—and its suburbs. Students will analyze pictures, population density maps, and a short article to grow their understanding of Japan's population and population density. Students will also watch an interview with an Oklahoma City planner to learn about what city planners do and their career paths.

Snapshot

Engage

Students consider a personal experience in which they were in a densely populated area and discuss what precautions were taken to accommodate that high population density.

Explore

Students analyze pictures and maps of Tokyo Prefecture, then deduce what those pictures and maps mean in terms of the area's high population density.

Explain

Students read a short article about measures taken by Tokyo Prefecture to accommodate its dense population. Students then discuss their thoughts with an Elbow Partner.

Extend

Students watch an interview with a real city planner from Oklahoma and take notes using the Window Notes strategy.

Evaluate

Students apply their learning from the lesson by comparing the city planning of Tokyo with city planning

in less populated areas.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR301: Locate simple details at the sentence and paragraph level in somewhat challenging passages
CLR302: Draw simple logical conclusions in somewhat challenging passages

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Science (6-12)

IOD202: Identify basic features of a table, graph, or diagram (e.g., units of measurement)

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Writing (6-12)

I&A 401: Understanding the task and writing with purpose. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Generate a clear thesis that establishes a perspective on a contemporary issue -Engage with other perspectives on the issue
D&S 201: Building and strengthening the argument. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: - Arrive at a weak understanding of the issue and differing perspectives on it through inadequate reasoning and examples - Offer a rationale that fails to clarify the argument - Provide elaboration of ideas and analysis that is illogical, disjointed, or circular

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies Practices (7th Grade))

7.3.4: Evaluate and summarize the impact of geography on population distribution, density, growth, change, settlement patterns, the availability of resources,and migration, including push and pull factors.

Attachments

- City Planning in Tokyo—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere - Spanish.docx
- City Planning in Tokyo—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere - Spanish.pdf
- City Planning in Tokyo—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere.docx
- City Planning in Tokyo—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere.pdf
- Lesson Slides—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere.pptx
- Window Notes—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere - Spanish.docx
- Window Notes—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere - Spanish.pdf
- Window Notes—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere.docx
- Window Notes—People Here, People There, People, People Everywhere.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- City Planning in Tokyo reading (attached; one per student)
- Window Notes graphic organizer (attached; one per student)

10 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Display **slides 3–4** and introduce the essential questions. Ask students to consider what kind of issues they have experienced when a small area or event is suddenly packed with people. Move to **slide 5**, which features an image of a large crowd of people. Ask students to think about a time when they went to a place with large numbers of people (for example, the county fair, the mall on Black Friday, a concert, an amusement park, a sporting event, etc.) and if they noticed any problems that resulted from many people being in one place.

Teacher's Note: Addressing Prior Knowledge

This activity is intended to facilitate connections between students' prior knowledge and population density. If you have previously introduced population density to students, you could consider asking students to discuss what they have already learned about the subject.

Allow students approximately two minutes to consider the above scenario, then have them share their experiences with an Elbow Partner. Have partners discuss their responses for approximately two or three minutes, then invite pairs to share their answers with the class in a Collective Brain Dump. As students share, create a list of problems that might occur when there are large groups of people in a small area.

Transition to the next activity by telling students that this lesson examines how these problems are addressed in the most populated city in the world, Tokyo. Tell students that Japan and Tokyo manage high population density through city planning.

15 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 6.** Ask students to examine the map of Japan and read the population facts about the population of both Japan and Tokyo. Ask students to share out any observations. If students do not address the topic, address how small the island nation of Japan is. Draw students' attention to the dark green area on the map and tell students that it represents the Greater Tokyo Area around Tokyo Bay, which includes the city of Tokyo and its surrounding suburbs.

Pass out one copy of the attached **Window Notes** graphic organizer to each student. Tell students to keep this handout with them throughout the lesson and tell them to take Window Notes when prompted.

Display **slide 7**, which links out to three different pictures. Show each picture individually and have students record what they noticed about each image and what is happening in each photo in the upper-left box of their Window Notes graphic organizer.

Teacher's Note: Links to Pictures

Each picture on slide 7 shows a different place in Tokyo Prefecture. The first picture is of subway pushers in Tokyo, who are people tasked with packing as many people on to the subway as possible. The second picture is of a sleeping capsule hotel, which is a type of hotel designed to take up substantially less space than other hotels. The third picture is of the congested Shibuya Crossing in the Shibuya district of Tokyo.

Have students discuss their observations with their Elbow Partner and add any observations to their notes. Invite a few pairs to share out some of their observations. Transition to the next activity by notifying students that the maps on the following slides offer more information about Tokyo's population density.

Show **slide 8** and have students examine the population density map of Tokyo Prefecture. Have students record their observations about the map in the upper-right box of their Window Notes graphic organizers. Repeat the process with **slides 9–10** which contain a map of Tokyo subway routes and a map that highlights countries with smaller populations than Tokyo Prefecture.

Possible Student Observations

This activity is meant to give students another perspective on how many people are living in such a small area. Assist students in making connections between population sizes.

- On slide 7, students may observe that the population is densest around the coast and central area of Tokyo Prefecture.
- On slide 8, students may infer that the subway system is designed to offer more railway services in the areas where the most people are concentrated.
- On slide 9, students may make observations about specific countries that have smaller populations than that of Tokyo Prefecture. Help students understand that Tokyo Prefecture, which includes the metropolis and surrounding suburbs, has a higher population that the total population of some countries.

Teacher's Note: Map of Countries

The data used to create the map was obtained from the Central Intelligence Agency's *World Factbook* in 2024. Mention to students that the data presented by the map may change depending on the year.

Have students share and discuss their observations with their Elbow Partners once more. Ask them to once again add any information to their graphic organizers that they gained from their discussion. Invite pairs to share out what they observed.

Display **slide 11** and invite students to draw conclusions about what they observed in the pictures and graphics with their partner. Tell them that their conclusions should address the two questions present on the slide, "What do you know about Tokyo's dense population?" and "How do Tokyo officials deal with population issues?" Have them record their responses in the lower-left box of their Window Notes.

Possible Student Conclusions

Students may make the following conclusions about the **pictures**:

- Tokyo Prefecture has a lot of people in a small area.
- Most of the area is extremely crowded.
- The sleeping capsule hotels help create more space.
- The subway pushers help as many people get on the train as possible.

Both the subway pushers and sleeping capsule hotels are examples of how Tokyo has accommodated its dense population.

Students may make the following conclusions about the **maps**:

- There are a lot more people surrounding the coast of Tokyo Bay.
- Tokyo Prefecture is incredibly populated.
- The subway map has a multitude of rail options and is super crowded.
- There are many countries much larger in land size than Japan with smaller populations than Tokyo Prefecture.

Transition to the next activity by notifying students that they will read about Tokyo to learn more about population density.

15 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 12** and pass out one copy of the attached **City Planning in Tokyo** reading to each student. The short reading on population density in Tokyo explores how the prefecture accommodates a large population.

Before students begin reading, have them read the following question in the lower-right box of their Window Notes: "According to the reading, how does Tokyo plan and prepare for population-related issues?" Ask them to consider a response to that question as they read and jot down a response in that box of the Window Notes.

After students read the article, have them share their answers with a partner. Invite a few pairs to share out their responses with the class. Fill in any gaps in knowledge as students share their responses.

Possible Student Responses: Additional Information from the Reading

Students may respond that Tokyo plans for population-related issues by creating reliable transportation, building tall buildings with multiple floors rather than wide buildings, creating small houses close together, and building smaller hotels.

Students may also mention that Tokyo and its suburbs are adding services like restaurants and medical care closer to where people live, so that they won't have to travel long distances. Students may also respond that Tokyo is trying to address air quality and environmental issues associated with concentrated populations by implementing indoor and outdoor smoking bans.

Transition to the next phase of the lesson by telling students that many of these decisions were made by Tokyo officials who understand city planning.

10 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 13.** Before showing the city planner interview, ask students to listen for responses to the following questions present on the slide:

- What does a city planner do? What does their daily work look like?
- How does city planning help manage large populations?
- What other factors contribute to city planning?

Have them record their responses in the left column of the second page of their Window Notes as they watch the video. Encourage them to take notes over any other information they learn.

Display **slide 14** and play the video *ICAP - People Here, People There, People Everywhere* on the slide.

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=neRA3yz7bwQ

10 minutes

Evaluate

Have students consider how the city planning discussed in the video relates to what they know about city planning in Tokyo. Invite them to share their thoughts with an Elbow Partner.

Display **slide 15** and have students consider the following questions present on the slide, “Can too many people live in one area?” and “If so, how can people in an area work and live together comfortably?”

Ask them to respond to the two questions in the right column of the second page of their Window Notes graphic organizer. Have students share their responses with their Elbow Partner. Invite students to share out their responses to the city planner interview. Students to not need to share responses to the questions on slide 15.

Resources

- Central Intelligence Agency. (n.d.). *The world factbook*. https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Collective brain dump. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/111
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.) Window notes. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/189
- K20 Center. (2020, May 26). *ICAP – People here, people there, people everywhere* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=neRA3yz7bwQ