

DIVERSITY IN JAPAN

Organizing Questions

- What is the basis of identity and how is it related to discrimination?
- How are boundaries between identity groups drawn and enforced in society?
- How diverse is Japan's population?
- What kinds of discrimination have Japan's minority groups faced, and are their circumstances changing?
- How do the experiences of Japan's minority groups parallel those of minority groups in other societies?

Introduction

As a precursor to studying about diversity in Japan, students need to be able not only to become familiar with minority issues on a general level, but also to understand them from a more personal perspective. The lesson begins by challenging students to reflect on their own sense of identity and to think about what defines them both as individuals and as members of particular groups. Students learn to make connections between the ways in which they think about their own identities and how these identities provide them with a feeling of belonging and with criteria for categorizing themselves and others.

Students then read about different minority groups in Japan, discuss minority-related issues such as discrimination, and conduct research in small groups on one of 10 minorities in Japan. Students share their research with each other through oral presentations. The lesson concludes with an individual writing assignment that encourages students to reflect on minority issues in Japan, in their own society, and around the world.

Objectives

In this lesson, students will

- learn about minority groups in Japan broadly and in Tokyo specifically;
- identify factors that define us as individuals and as members of a particular group;
- understand the complexities of identity and discrimination;
- research minority issues in Japanese society;
- maintain an open-minded approach to discussing sensitive issues such as identity, minority-group issues, and discrimination; and
- respect the differences in people that make us unique.

**Connections
to Curriculum
Standards**

This lesson has been designed to meet certain national history, social studies, and common core standards as defined by the National Center for History in the Schools, the National Council for the Social Studies, and the Common Core State Standards Initiative. The standards for the lesson are listed here.

National History Standards (from the National Center for History in the Schools)

World History

Era 9, Standard 3A: The student understands major global trends since World War II.

- Grades 5–12: Compare causes, consequences, and major patterns of international migrations in the late 20th century with world population movements of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th. [Draw comparisons across eras and regions]
- Grades 5–12: Assess the degree to which both human rights and democratic ideals and practices have been advanced in the world during the 20th century. [Formulate historical questions]
- Grades 9–12: Analyze causes of economic imbalances and social inequalities among the world’s peoples and assess efforts made to close these gaps. [Employ quantitative analysis]
- Grades 9–12: Analyze connections between globalizing trends in economy, technology, and culture in the late 20th century and dynamic assertions of traditional cultural identity and distinctiveness. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

World History Across the Eras, Standard 1: Long-term changes and recurring patterns in world history.

- Grades 5–12: Analyze how ideals and institutions of freedom, equality, justice, and citizenship have changed over time and from one society to another.

National Social Studies Standards (from the National Council for the Social Studies)

- Culture; Thematic Strand I: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.
- Time, Continuity, and Change; Thematic Strand II: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.
- People, Places, and Environments; Thematic Strand III: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.
- Individual Development and Identity; Thematic Strand IV: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.

- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Thematic Strand V: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.
- Global Connections; Thematic Strand IX: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.
- Civic Ideals and Practices; Thematic Strand X: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic.

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies (from the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

- Standard 2, Grades 11–12: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- Standard 6, Grades 9–10: Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- Standard 7, Grades 11–12: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Standard 9, Grades 11–12: Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (from the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

- Standard 2, Grades 6–12: Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
- Standard 4, Grades 9–12: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Standard 7, Grades 9–12: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Standard 9, Grades 9–12: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Materials	Handout 1, <i>Perceptions Survey</i> , 60 copies Handout 2, <i>Introduction to Japan's Minority Groups</i> , 15 copies Handout 3, <i>Diversity in Japan</i> , 30 copies Handouts 4A–J, <i>Research Project</i> , 3 copies each Handout 5, <i>Diversity in Japan Quiz</i> , 30 copies (optional) Projection 1, <i>Sources of Identity</i> Projection 2, <i>Reflection</i> Teacher Information, <i>Research Project Rubric</i> Answer Key 1, <i>Diversity in Japan</i> Answer Key 2, <i>Diversity in Japan Quiz</i>
Equipment	Computer, projector, and screen (for teacher) 10–30 computers with Internet access (for student use) Whiteboard/chalkboard
Teacher Preparation	Instructions and materials are based on a class size of 30 students. Adjust accordingly for different class sizes. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make the appropriate number of copies of handouts.2. Become familiar with the content of the handouts, projections, teacher information, and answer keys.3. Set up and test the computer and projector.4. Before Day Two, have Internet-ready computers available for student research. Alternatively, you may want to arrange for your class to visit the computer lab or library so that students can have access to computers.
Time	At least three 50-minute class periods
Procedures Day One	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Write on the whiteboard the following question: “What five things are important in defining who I am?” Ask students to think about the question for a few minutes and then jot down their answers.2. Display Projection 1, <i>Sources of Identity</i>, and ask students to compare their own lists to the list on the projection. Discuss the following questions.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does your list compare to the list on the projection?• Does anything on your list not appear on the projection?• Which elements in the list are usually used to define an individual? To define groups of people?• What parts of our identities feel innate? Which feel acquired or learned?

- How does this list contribute to or take away from your sense of uniqueness?
3. Divide the class into small groups of four or five students each, and ask each group to do the following activity together: “List five characteristics that your group members have in common. Ideally these characteristics should relate to items on the projection.” Ask one person from each group to share his or her group’s list with the class.
 4. It is crucial to properly debrief this portion of the lesson because of the sensitive nature of the subject. Allow your students to express themselves and share their thoughts, but lead the discussion toward the acknowledgment that individuals’ and groups’ differences are what make us who we are. Encourage a class discussion around the following questions. Or, if you think students would feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts on paper, you might want to use these questions as guidelines for a writing assignment.
 - Consider the five common characteristics you listed as a group. In a way, these characteristics help define your group’s identity. How central are these elements in defining your *personal* identity? Does this list overlap at all with your list of the five things that help define you?
 - Think more broadly about groups you are a member of, both large (e.g., race, gender, nation) and small (e.g., neighborhood, school, club/team). In what ways does our membership in certain groups shape our sense of personal identity?
 - In what ways does our membership in certain groups affect the way others perceive us?
 - What is the difference between being “labeled” by other people and “identifying” ourselves?
 - In what ways can a deep understanding of our identities help us to understand other people’s perspectives?
 5. Inform students that they will be exploring these broad topics of identity and group membership in the specific context of Japan. Distribute one copy of Handout 1, *Perceptions Survey*, to each student, and allow students several minutes to fill out the survey. Collect and save the surveys to reevaluate after the lesson is completed so students can see how their views may have changed.
Optional: Before collecting surveys, go through each statement as a class and ask some students to share their responses and explanations. Do most students agree with each other or are there many statements for which students had mixed reactions?
 6. Divide the class into pairs. Distribute one copy of Handout 2, *Introduction to Japan’s Minority Groups*, to each pair to read and discuss.
Optional: After students have discussed the handout in pairs, lead a class discussion around the questions on Handout 2, reprinted below for reference.

- Is there anything you would add to the definition of a “minority group” that you think is important?
 - The reading defines a minority group as not necessarily being a numerical minority. Can you think of examples where this is so?
Example: Blacks in South Africa are the numerical majority, but are still politically and socially subordinate to whites.
 - Were many of your previous perceptions about Japan inaccurate?
7. Distribute one copy of Handout 3, *Diversity in Japan*, to each student, and allow the rest of the period for silent reading and work on the assignment. Students who do not finish in class should complete the assignment for homework.

Day Two

1. Collect homework assignment for assessment.
2. Lead a class discussion around the discussion points below, reviewing the homework assignment and segueing into the research project.
 - What is the most surprising or interesting thing you have learned about minorities in Japan so far?
 - What parallels can you draw between minority groups in Japan and minority groups in our own society? What similarities do they share?
 - Soon you will work together in groups to conduct research on one of the minority groups in Japan. As we continue to learn and think about minority groups in Japan and in general, it is important to remember two things:
 - Within every group exists a wide diversity of individual experiences and circumstances. Not all people in a group are the same nor experience the same things. What examples of this intra-group diversity can you think of in the context of Japan? Outside of Japan?
Japanese context: Student answers will vary. One example are the kikokushijo, who spend varying amounts of time outside of Japan. Their linguistic abilities, culture, behaviors, experiences abroad, and experiences upon returning to Japan (e.g., being bullied or not) vary greatly.
Non-Japanese context: Student answers will vary.
 - Minority groups are not mutually exclusive; people can be members of more than one group. What examples of this can you think of in the context of Japan? Outside of Japan?
Japanese context: Student answers will vary. Examples mentioned in Handout 3 include zainichi Korean hibakusha and Okinawan nikkeijin/kikokushijo.
Non-Japanese context: Student answers will vary but can include any example combining multiple minority statuses. In a U.S. context, examples might include Hispanic women, Muslim immigrants, LGBT African Americans, and so on.

3. Divide the class into 10 groups, and explain that each group will research a minority group in Japan and present its findings during the next class period. Distribute one version of Handout 4A–J, *Research Project*, to each group. (One group should receive Handout 4A, another should receive Handout 4B, and so on.)

Optional: If a student group is particularly interested in researching a different minority group in Japan—including one that was mentioned but not profiled in this lesson (e.g., LGBT community, Chinese community, Taiwanese community, women)—allow students to trade topics.

4. Make computers available for student use. Allow the remainder of class time for groups to divide responsibilities, conduct research, and plan their presentations. Instruct students to complete their projects for homework and be prepared to deliver their presentations next class period.

Day Three

1. Allow groups five minutes to reconvene and discuss their presentation plan one more time.
2. Direct students to take notes while other groups are presenting. In particular, they should focus their notes on the three main research questions from Handout 4 (i.e., history of minority group, challenges faced historically, challenges faced today). Their notes will be collected for assessment.
3. Facilitate group presentations, ensuring that groups stay within the four-minute time limit.
4. Collect group presentation materials for assessment.
5. Distribute one copy of Handout 1, *Perceptions Survey*, to each student to complete for homework. This is the same survey students completed on Day One, but their responses now may reflect a change in their perception of Japanese and U.S. societies. (When students return to class next period with completed surveys, redistribute their original surveys and ask students to compare their responses.)
6. Conclude the lesson by assigning a written reflection for homework. Display Projection 2, *Reflection*, for a list of suggested questions.

Assessment

The following are suggestions for assessing student work in this lesson:

1. Assess student responses to questions on Handout 3, *Diversity in Japan*, based on Answer Key 1, *Diversity in Japan*.
2. Evaluate group research projects and presentations based on Teacher Information, *Research Project Rubric*.
3. Collect the notes students took during the group presentations, and informally assess student level of attention during the presentations as demonstrated by quality of notes taken.
4. Collect and assess the final writing assignment based on clarity of expression, content knowledge demonstrated, and quality of thought.

5. Optional: Test student knowledge of Japan's minority groups by administering Handout 5, *Diversity in Japan Quiz*, at the end of the lesson. Score and correct quizzes based on Answer Key 2, *Diversity in Japan Quiz*.
6. Assess student participation in group and class discussions, evaluating students' ability to
 - clearly state their opinions, questions, and / or answers;
 - provide thoughtful answers;
 - exhibit sensitivity toward different cultures and ideas;
 - respect and acknowledge other students' comments; and
 - ask relevant and insightful questions.

PERCEPTIONS SURVEY

On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being *strongly disagree* and 5 being *strongly agree*, rate your feelings regarding these statements and explain your choice.

Statement	Rating					Explanation
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Japan is a homogeneous country.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The United States is a homogeneous country.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Japan is a classless society.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The United States is a classless society.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. There are many minorities in Japan.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. There are many minorities in the United States.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Poverty does not exist in Japan.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Poverty does not exist in the United States.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Everyone in Japan speaks Japanese.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. Everyone in the United States speaks English.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Japan is a meritocracy.*	1	2	3	4	5	
12. The United States is a meritocracy.*	1	2	3	4	5	

***meritocracy**—a system in which advancement is based on individual ability or achievement

INTRODUCTION TO JAPAN'S MINORITY GROUPS

subordinate—placed in or occupying a lower class, rank, or position; inferior

homogeneous—of uniform composition

social hierarchy—a system of classification of social groups based on ability or economic or social standing

contingent—a group of people united by some common feature, forming part of a larger group

dichotomy—a division or contrast between two things that are or are represented as being opposed or entirely different

pariah—outcast

marginalize—to treat (a person, group, or concept) as insignificant or peripheral

Generally defined, a minority group is a category of people who are differentiated from the social majority. This differentiation can be based on ethnicity, race, culture, language, caste, gender, sexual orientation, or other traits.¹ As a term used by politicians and social scientists, a minority is necessarily subordinate to the dominant group within a society; it is less politically powerful. This subordination, rather than a numerical minority, is the chief defining characteristic of a minority group.

Japan has long held the reputation of being an ethnically homogeneous and harmonious nation. For many years, this view was widely accepted without question and promoted by Western scholars as well as the Japanese people and government. However, a more focused analysis reveals the inner workings of a complex social hierarchy, and it becomes clear that Japanese society is sharply divided along distinct lines of status and power, majority and minority. Exposed is the uncomfortable coexistence of the overwhelmingly large majority of “Japanese” people and a much smaller contingent of minority groups. This uneasy social dynamic between the majority and minorities makes apparent the dichotomous nature of Japanese society, the insider versus outsider mentality, majority versus the minorities, the official policies versus unofficial practice.

Japan’s population is in fact overwhelmingly homogeneous. Over 96 percent of the people belong to the majority, and all of these people are ethnic Japanese. The rest of the population is loosely categorized as “minorities,” most of whom are of non-Japanese descent such as the Chinese, Taiwanese, Koreans, Ainu, and Okinawans. Still, not all minorities are non-Japanese; there are also ethnic Japanese in this category, such as the *burakumin* whose pariah status was established centuries ago. Although Japan’s feudal caste system has long since been abolished, they can still face discrimination. Another example is the Japanese immigrants from Latin America whose distinctly Latin American culture sets them apart. Many also consider Japanese women to be a minority because their rights and privileges are limited compared with those of their male counterparts. While these groups may not share much in common with each other on a superficial level, they do share the common experience of living in Japan as marginalized members of society.

Discussion Questions

Discuss the following questions with your partner.

- Is there anything you would add to the definition of a “minority group” that you think is important?
- The reading defines a minority group as not necessarily being a numerical minority. Can you think of examples where this is so?
- Were many of your previous perceptions about Japan inaccurate?

DIVERSITY IN JAPAN

BY DR. JANE H. YAMASHIRO

Most Americans do not think about Japanese society as being diverse; they imagine only people of Japanese ancestry who look, speak, and act Japanese. In Japan, too, most Japanese think of their society in this way. But in reality, Japanese society includes many different kinds of people. Some people in Japan experience discrimination due to not only issues of race, culture, and nation, but also perceived contamination.

Indigenous Groups: Ainu and Okinawans

In Japan, similar to the United States and other nations, there are indigenous populations who are not part of the ethnic majority. Two such major groups of native people are Ainu and Okinawans.

Ainu (“AI-noo”) historically inhabited what is currently known as the island of Hokkaido in the northernmost part of Japan. They had their own language and culture before colonization laws in the late 19th century focused on converting Ainu into Japanese were passed. Now Ainu have Japanese citizenship and have assimilated into Japanese society. While Ainu history, culture, and populations are most visible in Hokkaido with an estimated Ainu population of almost 25,000,² about 5,000–10,000 Ainu also live in Tokyo.³ Ainu were officially recognized by the Japanese government as an indigenous population in Japan in 2008.

Okinawans have historically lived in what is currently known as the prefecture of Okinawa in the southernmost part of Japan. These islands previously made up the main islands of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Okinawans have their own languages (there are six Ryukyuan languages and multiple dialects) and culture, but similar to Ainu faced assimilation policies and are now all Japanese citizens with most young Okinawans speaking only Japanese.⁴ The population of Okinawa Prefecture is 1.3 million, though approximately 300,000 Okinawans are residing in other parts of Japan and many also go abroad.⁵

Ryukyu Kingdom—an independent kingdom that ruled most of the Ryukyu Islands from the 15th to the 19th century

Burakumin

Burakumin (“boo-RAH-koo-MEEN”) are the largest minority group in Japan with an estimated population of 1.5 to 3 million people, concentrated primarily in the western region. What makes them different from the majority of Japanese people is not their ancestry, but the occupations that their ancestors held—as tanners, cobblers, butchers, and undertakers—that involved killing or death and were associated with “uncleanliness” or “pollution.” Part of the discrimination against burakumin, who were in the lowest tiers of a stratified status system in Japan, included residential segregation. Though the feudal caste system was officially abolished in 1871, people from neighborhoods that are known as historically burakumin continue to experience discrimination, having a harder time finding jobs and marriage partners.

tanner—a person who tans animal hides, especially to earn a living

cobbler—a person who mends shoes as a job

Zainichi Koreans

In Japanese, *zainichi* (“ZAI-nee-chee”) literally means residing in Japan. People of Korean ancestry have been in Japan for over a century, dating back to the Japanese colonial period. Most zainichi Koreans are third- or fourth-generation, born and raised in Japan, speak only Japanese, and have never lived outside of Japan. Despite being indistinguishable from majority Japanese in everyday life, zainichi Koreans still experience discrimination due to their ethnic difference. Moreover, since Japanese citizenship is typically passed down from parent to child (i.e., those born in Japan are not automatically citizens), most zainichi Koreans are foreign national residents unless they naturalize to Japanese citizenship. As of 2014, the South Korean foreign national resident population is reported to be approximately 500,000.⁶

naturalize—to acquire citizenship in an adopted country

Foreign Workers

People who migrate to Japan and take on unskilled work are typically referred to as “foreign workers” or “migrant workers.” Large numbers of foreign workers began being attracted to Japan in the 1980s. At that time, unskilled work was plentiful because with Japan’s “bubble economy,” Japanese men and women could find other kinds of easier work that paid well, so foreign workers were welcome to do the “3D” jobs—dirty, difficult, and dangerous. While male foreign workers tend to work in 3D jobs such as construction, female foreign workers tend to work in service industries, such as nursing, or in “entertainment” at nightclubs or sex work. As of 2014, the largest foreign national resident populations were citizens of China, South Korea, the Philippines, and Brazil.⁷

bubble economy—a situation in which the prices of assets exceed their fundamental market values

Nikkeijin

Nikkeijin (“NEEK-kay-jeen”) refers to the descendants of Japanese emigrants. From the late 1980s, Japanese government officials sought to attract nikkeijin from Brazil (since many Brazilians were leaving Brazil for economic reasons) instead of foreign workers not of Japanese ancestry by developing a special visa for people of Japanese ancestry. In 1990, a new visa for foreign nationals of Japanese ancestry up to the third generation was established. As a result, Japanese Brazilians became the third largest foreign resident population in Japan by 2009. Their numbers have since declined due to a combination of ongoing economic stagnation in Japan and a repatriation encouragement policy.

emigrant—a person who leaves his or her own country in order to settle permanently in another

repatriate—to return someone to his or her country of origin, allegiance, or citizenship

Hafu

Hafu (“HAH-foo”) refers to the child of a “Japanese” and a “foreigner.” Since Japanese national identity includes notions of race, culture, and language, mixed-heritage Japanese are generally treated as different from majority Japanese, even when they are born and raised in Japan and speak fluent Japanese. The demographics and image of mixed Japanese have changed over time: in the immediate postwar period, most were the children of U.S. military personnel and Japanese women, perceived as lower class, while in the 2000s the image is of bilingual ability and

physical attractiveness as the children of white global elites and Japanese. The crowning of Ariana Miyamoto, the daughter of an African-American man and a Japanese woman, as the 2015 Miss Universe Japan provides hope that mainstream Japanese society is embracing and normalizing mixed-heritage Japanese, although negative reactions within Japan also reflect ongoing racism. In reality, many mixed Japanese are also the children of Japanese and other Asians, as Japanese men in rural areas are increasingly marrying foreign women from China, Korea, and the Philippines to help them carry on family farms and businesses based on a system of primogeniture.

primogeniture—the right of the eldest child, especially the eldest son, to inherit the entire estate of one or both parents

Kikokushijo

Japanese “returnees,” or *kikokushijo* (“kee-KOH-koo-SHEE-joh”), are the children of two Japanese nationals who have spent some of their childhood living abroad. They are different from Japanese who have moved abroad as adults because *kikokushijo* did not choose to live abroad; they followed their parents. In addition, since part of their primary socialization was outside of Japan, their linguistic abilities, thinking, and behavior are typically different from majority Japanese, though this varies depending on the ages during which they lived abroad. While not a clearly defined minority group, *kikokushijo* often experience bullying in school due to their difference.

Hibakusha

Atomic bomb survivors, or *hibakusha* (“hee-BAH-koo-sha”), have experienced discrimination in Japan due to fears about the effects of radioactive contamination. In 1945, due to beliefs that the effects of radiation exposure might be contagious or passed down from generation to generation, *hibakusha* were limited in their access to jobs and marriage. In addition to Japanese who were living in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, *hibakusha* include ethnic Koreans, many of whom were forced to work in Japan.

Fukushima 3/11 Survivors

On March 11, 2011, a triple disaster struck Fukushima Prefecture in the form of an earthquake, a tsunami, and a nuclear reactor meltdown. As a result, many people were forced to evacuate and move to other areas of Japan. Whether they leave or remain in Fukushima, survivors have been experiencing discrimination similar to the *hibakusha*, with outsiders stigmatizing them due to fears about radiation exposure.⁸

stigmatize—to describe or regard (something, such as a characteristic or group of people) in a way that shows strong disapproval

Diversity in Tokyo

In addition to the diversity in Japan found nationally, pockets of diversity can be found in the greater Tokyo area. For example, the San’ya area of Tokyo is known for having a large day-laborer population. Shinjuku Ni-chome or “Nicho” is known as a gay district in Tokyo that dates back to the 1950s. Near Shin-Okubo station in Tokyo, a large Koreatown has

developed since the 1980s. In Yokohama, Chinese immigrants began settling from the late 1800s in what is now Chinatown.

Regardless of how one sees the population of Japan, it is undeniable that a demographic shift is occurring. With a rapidly aging population and a low birthrate, Japan will need to find ways to replace its working population. The Japanese government has already increased the number of international students, and many are staying in Japan to work. It will be interesting to see how the changing demographics of Japanese society will affect perceptions of difference and treatment of minorities in Japan in the future.

Assignment

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Think about the 10 minority groups profiled above: Ainu, Okinawans, burakumin, zainichi Koreans, foreign workers, nikkeijin, hafu, kikokushijo, hibakusha, and Fukushima 3/11 survivors. Although they are all minorities, they are differentiated from—and sometimes identical to—the Japanese majority in different ways.
 - a. Which of the 10 groups are indigenous groups?
 - b. Which are ethnically identical to the Japanese majority?
 - c. Which are differentiated due to their association with perceived “contamination”?
 - d. Which have, by definition, lived at least part of their life outside of Japan?
 - e. In your opinion, which group(s) is/are most culturally similar to the Japanese majority? Explain.
 - f. In your opinion, which group(s) is/are least culturally similar to the Japanese majority? Explain.
2. What is the most surprising or interesting thing you have learned about minorities in Japan?
3. What parallels can you draw between minority groups in Japan and minority groups in our own society? What similarities do they share?

RESEARCH PROJECT: AINU

Your assigned minority group: Ainu

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: OKINAWANS

Your assigned minority group: Okinawans

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: BURAKUMIN

Your assigned minority group: burakumin

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: ZAINICHI KOREANS

Your assigned minority group: zainichi Koreans

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: FOREIGN WORKERS

Your assigned minority group: foreign workers

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: NIKKEIJIN

Your assigned minority group: nikkeijin

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: HAFU

Your assigned minority group: hafu

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: KIKOKUSHIJO

Your assigned minority group: kikokushijo

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: HIBAKUSHA

Your assigned minority group: hibakusha

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

RESEARCH PROJECT: FUKUSHIMA 3/11 SURVIVORS

Your assigned minority group: Fukushima 3/11 survivors

Introduction

As a group, you will research your assigned minority group, compile your findings, and create a presentation to share with the class. Your presentation must include visuals (e.g., photographs, videos, maps, graphs) and address the questions below.

- What is the history of this minority group? (Provide a brief historical overview. For example, how or why did this group of people come to be?)
- What kinds of discrimination or other challenges has this group faced historically?
- What challenges does this group face today? Have its conditions improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time?

Assignment Instructions

- Conduct research on the questions above, consulting two or more primary or secondary sources.
- Write two or three paragraphs describing your assigned minority group and answering the research questions. You will share this information during your presentation and turn it in to your teacher for assessment.
- Find or create at least two visuals to use to inform the class about your topic.
- Prepare a three- to four-minute presentation and present it to the class.

Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

- All members of your group must present information and actively participate during the presentation.
- Your presentation must be between three and four minutes in length.
- Your presentation and visuals will be evaluated on content as well as appearance and use of correct mechanics. Make sure your visual information is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, free from errors, and easy to read and understand. Use appropriate body language, voice, and eye contact, and present information in a logical, organized way.

DIVERSITY IN JAPAN QUIZ

Match each description below with the correct minority group term.

1. _____—Japanese emigrants and their descendants. From the late 1980s, the Japanese government sought to attract them to Japan as laborers through a special visa program.
2. _____—children of a “Japanese” and a “foreigner,” i.e., ethnically half-Japanese. They are generally treated as different from majority Japanese, even when they are born and raised in Japan and speak fluent Japanese.
3. _____—an indigenous population that historically lived in what is currently the southernmost prefecture of Japan. They have their own Ryukyuan languages and culture but are now largely assimilated, with most youth speaking only Japanese.
4. _____—“returnees” who are the children of two Japanese nationals and spent some of their youth living abroad. Because they are socialized partly outside of Japan, their linguistic abilities, thinking, and behavior are typically different from majority Japanese.
5. _____—survivors of the atomic bombings of 1945. They have experienced discrimination, including limited access to jobs and marriage, due to fears about the effects of radioactive contamination.
6. _____—an indigenous population that historically inhabited what is currently known as the island of Hokkaido in the northernmost part of Japan. They had their own language and culture before the introduction of colonization laws in the late 19th century.
7. _____—the descendants of Japanese whose occupations were associated with “uncleanliness” and “pollution” (e.g., tanners, cobblers, butchers, and undertakers). They are Japan’s largest minority group.
8. _____—survivors of the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear reactor meltdown of 2011. They have experienced discrimination due to fears about radiation exposure.
9. _____—people of Korean ancestry who reside in Japan. Most are third- or fourth-generation, born and raised in Japan, speak only Japanese, and have never lived outside of Japan.
10. _____—people who migrate to Japan for work, typically unskilled work. Also called “migrant workers,” they often labor in so-called “3D” jobs such as construction or in the service industry.

Terms		
Ainu	Okinawans	burakumin
zainichi Koreans	foreign workers	nikkeijin
hafu	kikokushijo	hibakusha
Fukushima 3/11 survivors		

Sources of Identity

Age	Language
Class	Lineage
Country of origin	Money/Socioeconomic class
Culture	Occupation
Disability	Personality
Education	Physical appearance
Ethnicity/Race	Place of residence
Family	Religion
Family background	Sexual orientation
Gender	Skills
Health	Weight
History	Other
Hobbies	

Reflection

Respond to the following questions thoughtfully on a separate sheet of paper.

- What common aspects do Japan's minority groups share (e.g., in terms of history, experiences, patterns of treatment, modern-day circumstances)?
- What aspects do Japan's minorities share with minority groups around the world? With minorities in our own society? (Some factors to consider: source of identity, perception by the majority, patterns of treatment, history, and socioeconomic status.)
- What are the key concepts you learned in this lesson?
- Has this lesson changed your perception of Japan? How?
- Has this lesson changed how you think about minority groups and/or minority issues? How?

RESEARCH PROJECT RUBRIC

Criteria	1	2	3	Score
Content	Demonstrates little knowledge of topic, or content is incomplete and/or inaccurate	Demonstrates some knowledge of topic; some content is incomplete and/or inaccurate	Demonstrates knowledge of topic; content is complete and accurate	
Organization of Information	Information is presented in an illogical, uninteresting, and/or disorganized format that confuses the audience	Information is presented in a somewhat logical, interesting, and organized format that audience can mostly understand	Information is presented in a logical, interesting, and organized format that audience can understand	
Visual Appeal	Does not include images, or images detract from the content or are inappropriate	Includes appropriate images that somewhat enhance and do not detract from the content	Includes appropriate images that enhance the content	
Mechanics	Contains three or more spelling and/or grammatical errors	Contains one or two spelling and/or grammatical errors	Free from spelling and/or grammatical errors	
Presentation	Uses distracting body language; and/or does not speak loudly or clearly; and does not make eye contact with audience	Uses distracting body language; and/or does not speak loudly or clearly; and makes occasional eye contact with audience	Uses appropriate body language; speaks loudly and clearly; and maintains eye contact with audience	

<p>Comments</p>	<p>Total Score</p>
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DIVERSITY IN JAPAN

1. Think about the 10 minority groups profiled above: Ainu, Okinawans, burakumin, zainichi Koreans, foreign workers, nikkeijin, hafu, kikokushijo, hibakusha, and Fukushima 3/11 survivors. Although they are all minorities, they are differentiated from—and sometimes identical to—the Japanese majority in different ways.
 - a. Which of the 10 groups are indigenous groups?
Ainu, Okinawans
 - b. Which are ethnically identical to the Japanese majority?
burakumin, nikkeijin, kikokushijo, hibakusha, Fukushima 3/11 survivors
 - c. Which are differentiated due to their association with “contamination”?
hibakusha, burakumin, Fukushima 3/11 survivors
 - d. Which have, by definition, lived at least part of their life outside of Japan?
nikkeijin, kikokushijo, foreign workers
 - e. In your opinion, which group(s) is/are most culturally similar to the Japanese majority? Explain.
Student responses will vary but may include rationales involving language, thought/behavior, education/socialization, place of residence, etc.
 - f. In your opinion, which group(s) is/are least culturally similar to the Japanese majority? Explain.
Student responses will vary but may include rationales involving language, thought/behavior, education/socialization, country of origin, religion, etc.

2. What is the most surprising or interesting thing you have learned about minorities in Japan?
Student responses will vary.

3. What parallels can you draw between minority groups in Japan and minority groups in our own society? What similarities do they share?
Student responses will vary but may mention factors like social integration, socioeconomic status, geographic segregation, history of official/unofficial discrimination, degree of assimilation, linguistic difference, perception by the majority, stereotyping, etc.

DIVERSITY IN JAPAN QUIZ

1. *nikkeijin*—Japanese emigrants and their descendants. From the late 1980s, the Japanese government sought to attract them to Japan as laborers through a special visa program.
2. *hafu*—children of a “Japanese” and a “foreigner,” i.e., ethnically half-Japanese. They are generally treated as different from majority Japanese, even when they are born and raised in Japan and speak fluent Japanese.
3. *Okinawans*—an indigenous population that historically lived in what is currently the southernmost prefecture of Japan. They have their own Ryukyuan languages and culture but are now largely assimilated, with most youth speaking only Japanese.
4. *kikokushijo*—“returnees” who are the children of two Japanese nationals and spent some of their youth living abroad. Because they are socialized partly outside of Japan, their linguistic abilities, thinking, and behavior are typically different from majority Japanese.
5. *hibakusha*—survivors of the atomic bombings of 1945. They have experienced discrimination, including limited access to jobs and marriage, due to fears about the effects of radioactive contamination.
6. *Ainu*—an indigenous population that historically inhabited what is currently known as the island of Hokkaido in the northernmost part of Japan. They had their own language and culture before the introduction of colonization laws in the late 19th century.
7. *burakumin*—the descendants of Japanese whose occupations were associated with “uncleanliness” and “pollution” (e.g., tanners, cobblers, butchers, and undertakers). They are Japan’s largest minority group.
8. *Fukushima 3/11 survivors*—survivors of the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear reactor meltdown of 2011. They have experienced discrimination due to fears about radiation exposure.
9. *zainichi Koreans*—people of Korean ancestry who reside in Japan. Most are third- or fourth-generation, born and raised in Japan, speak only Japanese, and have never lived outside of Japan.
10. *foreign workers*—people who migrate to Japan for work, typically unskilled work. Also called “migrant workers,” they often labor in so-called “3D” jobs such as construction or in the service industry.

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endnotes

- ¹ "Minority Group," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minority_group [12 September 2016].
- ² Simon Cotterill, "Documenting Urban Indigeneity: TOKYO Ainu and the 2011 Survey on the Living Conditions of Ainu Outside Hokkaido," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 9, Issue 45, No. 2, 16 November 2011.
- ³ TOKYO Ainu Film Production Committee, "Documentary Film TOKYO Ainu," <http://www.2kamuymintara.com/film/eng/top.htm> [6 July 2016].
- ⁴ Fija Bairon, Matthias Brenzinger, and Patrick Heinrich, "The Ryukyus and the New, but Endangered, Languages of Japan," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 7, Issue 19, No. 2, 9 May 2009.
- ⁵ Steve Rabson, *The Okinawan Diaspora in Japan: Crossing the Borders Within* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012).
- ⁶ Statistics Bureau of Japan, "Foreign National Residents by Nationality (2000–14)," <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/nenkan/zuhyou/y650214000.xls> [16 September 2016].
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Mizuho Aoki, "Fukushima Activist Fights Fear and Discrimination Based on Radiation," *Japan Times*, 9 May 2013, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/05/09/national/fukushima-activist-fights-fear-and-discrimination-based-on-radiation/>.