



Say Hello to South Korea



Image by Wilson Wong

In just a couple of weeks, the XXIII* Winter Olympic Games will begin in South Korea (koh-REE-ah). This week, The Mini Page learns more about this faraway place where athletes will compete to make sports history.



map courtesy Chris 73/Wikimedia Commons

South Korea

The Republic of Korea lies on the southern end of the Korean Peninsula in East Asia. Its capital is Seoul (sole). The Olympics will take place in Pyeongchang (pie-yon-chang) County, about 110 miles east of Seoul.

Korea was founded more than 4,000 years ago and has a long and complicated history. Beginning in 1910, it was occupied by Japan. But when World War II ended in 1945, Japan surrendered the territory to the Soviet

* Do you know your Roman numerals? When using these numerals, I = 1, V = 5, and X = 10. Can you figure out which Winter Olympics this will be?

XX = 20, and III = 3. This will be the 23rd Winter Olympics.

Union and the United States. In 1948, two governments were put in place.

Leaders of both North and South Korea wanted to reunify, or join, their governments, but they ruled very differently. In 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea, starting the Korean War. More than a million people died during the war, but the two Koreas never signed a peace treaty. Officially, they are still at war.

Geography and climate

South Korea's land is mountainous. Plains, river basins and rolling hills are seen along the western coast. Pyeongchang is home to two ski resorts, and Koreans enjoy hiking in the mountains.



Image © Pyeongchang 2018

Sheep graze in the mountains near Pyeongchang.

The weather in South Korea is hot and humid during the rainy season in June and July. During the winter, temperatures in Seoul drop down into the mid-20s for lows, but in the mountains it's much colder.

Sports

Do you practice taekwondo (tie-kwon-DOH)? This martial art started in Korea. Football (soccer), baseball and basketball are also popular in South Korea.

In 1988, Seoul hosted the Summer Olympics, and South Korea has won more medals during Winter Olympic Games than any other Asian country.

School kids

Education is important to South Koreans, and nearly all of the country's people can read and write.

Children in South Korea go to school from kindergarten through high school. Similar to many schools in the United States, the South Korean school year is divided into two semesters. However, kids there start their school year in March and continue through mid-July. The second semester begins in late August and ends in mid-February.

Most middle and high school students wear uniforms to school — pants and white shirts for boys, skirts and white shirts for girls.

Food in South Korea

Dishes are different in South Korea depending on which province you visit. Most dishes begin with rice, noodles, tofu, vegetables, fish and meats. Kimchi, a traditional side dish, is made with salted and fermented, or pickled, vegetables. Spices such as salt, garlic, ginger and sesame oil give Korean dishes their flavor. Soups are served after the main course instead of before. And South Koreans use metal chopsticks rather than wooden!



Resources



On the Web:
• bit.ly/MPSKorea

At the library:
• "Welcome to South Korea" by Patrick Ryan

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of South Korea are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ATHLETES, BASEBALL, | E D A W A R G B S C H O O L S |
| FERMENTED, GAMES, HOT, | P S E M A G G R E C C O S L E |
| HUMID, JAPAN, KIMCHI, | R V R P M O U N T A I N S U T |
| MOUNTAINS, OLYMPICS, | E T O F E R M E N T E D T O E |
| PYEONGCHANG, REUNIFY, | U K K S D I M U H T J Y R E L |
| SCHOOL, SEOUL, | N I H O L Y M P I C S A O S H |
| SOCCER, SOUTH KOREA, | I M T J K W I N T E R T P G T |
| SPORTS, TAEKWONDO, | F C U D B A S E B A L L S A A |
| WAR, WINTER. | Y H O D N O W K E A T T O H N |
| | J I S F G N A H C G N O E Y P |

Cook's Corner

Korean Beef and Potato Soup

You'll need:

- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 1/2 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- 5 cups water



* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

What to do:

1. Place all ingredients except potatoes and water in a large pot. Cook over low heat for 15 minutes or until beef is browned. Stir often.
2. Add potatoes and water to pot. Cook over medium heat 30 minutes, or until potatoes are soft. Serves 6.

Puzzling

Unscramble the words below that remind us of South Korea.



nuelpnsai _____

anais _____

siepcs _____

oclsch _____

Answers: peninsula, Asian, spices, school.

Mini Jokes



- Bon-Hwa:** Why didn't Cinderella make the basketball team?
- Chin-Sun:** She ran away from the ball!

Eco Note



Migrating cranes that used to stop only briefly in Israel before flying farther south are now staying for the winter, thanks to climate change, say experts. The 40,000 cranes eat corn and peanuts growing around Agamon Hula Lake, forcing the government to feed them corn to keep them away from the crops. "It's harder for the birds to cross a much larger desert, and they just cannot do it," said ornithologist Shay Agmon.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles about South Korea in advance of the Winter Olympics.

Teachers: For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards. And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



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