

## WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM A SET OF DATA: COMPARING AND CONTRASTING LIFE IN THE TWO KOREAS

**Grade level:** 6-12

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**Subject:** Social Studies

**Time required:** One to two class periods

**Sequence:** This lesson fits into a unit on contemporary issues, or after lessons on the Korean War.

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will examine and analyze reasons why people risk their lives to leave North Korea through comparing and contrasting data from North and South Korea, reading articles about North Korean life, through viewing pictures of North Korean life, and through class discussion
2. Students will learn about a young woman whose parents risked everything, including never seeing her again, by smuggling her out of North Korea

### **Standards:**

#### **National Council of Social Studies Standards:**

Standard 7: Production, Distribution and Consumption

#### **Common Core Standards:**

RH 7 Integrate quantitative or technical analysis with qualitative analysis or digital text

SL 1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

SL 3 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats

WHST 1 Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content

### **Materials:**

1. Teacher background notes
2. Handout A: article by Sharon LaFraniere, "Views Show How North Korea Policy Spread Misery"
3. Handout B: article by Merrill Perlman, "From One Korea to Two"
4. Handout C: data sheet on North and South Korea from the CIA World Factbook
5. Video clip from PBS: "Field Trip to the DMZ"

**Procedure:** Handouts A and B may be distributed ahead of time for homework, or may be read aloud in class. Distribute data sheet on the two Koreas in class.

**Anticipatory Set:** Ask students to predict what they think life is like in North Korea. Have students write down their predictions with a partner. Briefly discuss as a class. Explain that they will be examining primary source documents (photographs), articles, and data to learn if their predictions are correct.

**Input:**

**Step 1** -- Distribute Handout C and ask students to look at the information carefully. Students may need definitions for gross domestic product (the total value of all goods and services produced in an economy in a given year), per capita, etc. Ask them to compare the data and draw some conclusions with their partner about why people may want to leave North Korea. For example: per capita income in South Korea is many times more than in North Korea. Students should be able to infer from the data that the quality of health care is quite different between North and South Korea by looking at the data on infant mortality and life expectancy. The Internet is virtually non-existent in North Korea – what does that say about North Koreans’ ability to communicate with the outside world? Even paved airport runways and roads are an indicator of economic health. Airports are usually drivers of economic activity: can a country import or export goods easily if there are few decent airports?

**Step 2** -- Class discussion can follow using information from the two articles. Have students find, highlight, and list as many instances as they can in the articles how life in North Korea has gotten appreciably worse in the last two decades. For example, infant and maternal mortality has jumped 30% since the 1990’s; one child in three under the age of five is malnourished. They may again work in pairs.

**Step 3** -- Show pictures from the Boston Globe on an overhead or off of the Internet. What is going on in the photographs? Examine them carefully. What do the houses, people, landscape look like? Some of the pictures were provided to the photographer by the North Korean government. Ask if they believe that they are an accurate representation of reality. The photographs were taken by a photographer for The Boston Globe.

**Step 4** – Show the video from PBS titled “Field Trip to the DMZ”, about a 20-year-old young woman who now lives in South Korea. She was smuggled out of North Korea a number of years prior by her parents so that she could have a better life. The video is approximately nine minutes long. Students may need explanation of such words as defector, reunification, etc. Explain afterward that people visiting the demilitarized zone have left mementos at a bridge that separates the two countries with written prayers, photographs, and small gifts. Many of the prayers are for reunification.

**Closure:** Ask students to synthesize what they have learned about the two Koreas into a short letter written from the perspective of the girl in the film clip to her parents. It should include ten facts about the two countries, taken from the articles, the data sheet, the photographs, or the video. It should also include their perspective about what it would feel like to never see your parents or homeland again.

There should also be something in the letter about the reasons why her parents wanted her to have a better life in South Korea. Ask them to predict what kinds of economic and educational opportunities they think she may get by living in South Korea instead of North Korea. They can be creative with this, but do maintain standards in spelling, grammar, organization, etc.

**Sources:**

For the PBS film clip -- <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/field-trip-to-the-dmz/video/4530/>

(or Google "Field Trip to the DMZ" to access the video)

**Handout A:**

LaFraniere, Sharon. "Views Show How North Korea Policy Spread Misery." *New York Times* 10 June 2010, Print.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/10/world/asia/10koreans.html>

**Handout B:**

Perlman, Merrill. "From One Korea to Two." *New York Times Upfront* 10 May 2010: n. pag. Web. 7 Aug 2010.

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/features/index.asp?article=f051010\\_korea](http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/features/index.asp?article=f051010_korea)

Photos from *The Boston Globe* by Eric Lafforgue:

"Recent Scenes from North Korea." *boston.com*. Web. 7 Aug 2010.

[http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2008/09/recent\\_scenes\\_from\\_north\\_korea.htm](http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2008/09/recent_scenes_from_north_korea.htm)

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CIA World Factbook, found at [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)

## Teacher Background Notes on The Two Koreas

Prior to the Korean War up until 1945, Korea was one country – one homogenous group of people living on the Korean Peninsula, sandwiched between China and Japan. Both Koreas are still ethnically very homogenous. Both speak Korean, and use an alphabet called hangul. Sadly, after the war, Korea was divided into two countries, North and South, at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel.

South Korea is a modern, industrial country with a population of approximately 48 million people. It is about the size of the state of Indiana. About 25% of the population has family across the DMZ in North Korea. The pain of living in a divided country is a daily reality. It is something that affects all Koreans on both sides of the line.

Since the war, South Korea has experienced a true economic miracle. The country was devastated, and had very little infrastructure in terms of factories, mines, or railroads. South Korea has turned itself around by a strong desire for success and a willingness to work hard. Koreans are incredibly industrious people who highly value education. They attribute their monumental success to hard work and education, and the country has benefitted greatly. Parents make great sacrifices to ensure that their children receive the best education they can provide. For Koreans as a whole, the hard work has paid off. They now export Korean products all over the world, and it is anticipated that the size of the Korean economy will be second to the United States within the next few years.

By contrast, prior to the war, North Korea was the more industrialized country. Because of the policies of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, North Korea has become more and more isolated and has fallen further and further behind the rest of the world in general, and certainly behind South Korea in particular. It is painful for South Koreans to realize that starvation and deprivation are all too common in North Korea, and will remain so until the communist regime fails.

### HANDOUT C: Data Sheet on North and South Korea

Data	North Korea	South Korea
Life expectancy	Male: 61.5 years Female: 66.9 years	Male: 78.8 years Female: 82.28 years
Infant mortality	50.15 deaths/1000 births	4.24 deaths/1000 births
Gross Domestic Product	\$28.2 billion	\$809.7 billion
GDP/per capita	\$1,900	\$28,000
Internet hosts	3	301,270
Telephone lines	1.18 million	45.6 million
Television stations	4	57
Total paved roads	724 km	80,642 km
Airports with paved runways	37	72
Population	22.75 million	48.6 million

