

Answer Key: Comparing Two Societies with Maps and Data

Grade: 6 **Subject:** Social Studies (World Cultures & Geography) **For teacher use only** Social Studies

How to use this key

Answers are grouped by section and question number. Many items are open-ended; accept any response that shows correct reasoning even if the wording differs. Notes flag where more than one answer is defensible and list common misconceptions to watch for. Everything students need is in the packet, so answers should draw on the two profiles and the comparison table only. Estimated grading time: ~5–7 min per packet.

Start Notice & Predict grade for effort · ~2 min

1 Notice + predict from the short summary.

Full credit for any reasonable notice + prediction. **Notice** examples: "the two countries are very different," "one has factories and one has farms," "one is islands and one is inland/coastal." **Predict** examples: "people do different kinds of jobs," "one eats/grows different food," "one lives in bigger cities." Accept any on-topic prediction — this is a warm-up graded for effort.

2 Why land and climate might shape how people earn a living.

Accept any reasonable idea in the student's own words: flat, fertile land and rain help farming; mountains and little farmland push people toward factories and cities; a warm climate lets certain crops grow; a place near the ocean may fish or trade. More than one answer is defensible.

Build Read the Profiles ~1 min

3 Read the table — Japan or Kenya.

- a) Manufacturing and technology = **Japan**.
- b) Warm all year with wet and dry seasons = **Kenya**.
- c) Chain of mountainous islands = **Japan**.

Apply Read & Compare ~2–3 min

4 Compare and contrast — two similarities, two differences.

Similarities — accept any two supported by the packet, e.g.:

- Both have a coast / border the ocean (Japan the Pacific, Kenya the Indian Ocean).
- Both sell important goods to other countries (Japan: cars/electronics; Kenya: tea/coffee).
- Both have leaders the people elect (Japan's parliament; Kenya's president/assembly).
- Both have growing cities where more people are moving.

Differences — accept any two supported by the packet, e.g.:

- Landform: mountainous islands (Japan) vs. coast plus inland highlands and plains (Kenya).
- Climate: temperate with four seasons (Japan) vs. warm all year with wet/dry seasons (Kenya).
- Main economic activity: manufacturing/technology (Japan) vs. farming, animals, tea & coffee (Kenya).
- Government type: constitutional monarchy with an emperor (Japan) vs. republic with a president (Kenya).

Watch: a common error is listing a **difference** in the "similarities" blanks (or the reverse). A similarity is something the two share; a difference is something they do not share.

5 Explain a difference (why Kenya has many more farmers) using geography/economics.

Model: "Kenya has warm weather all year and large areas of highlands and plains, so the land and climate are good for growing crops like tea and coffee and for raising animals — this gives many families farming jobs. Japan is mostly steep mountainous islands with little flat farmland and a cooler climate, so instead of farming, many people work in factories and cities. The difference in land and climate leads to a difference in how people earn a living." Award credit for connecting Kenya's warm climate/farmland to farming **and** Japan's mountains/little farmland to factories (a clear cause → effect). See rubric.

6 Fact (F) / Interpretation (I) / Opinion (O).

- a) **F** — checkable in Profile B (the Equator crosses Kenya, so it is warm all year).
 - b) **I** — reasoned conclusion using "probably" (Japan's little farmland → depends more on factories).
 - c) **O** — a personal belief/preference ("far more interesting"); cannot be proven.
 - d) **F** — checkable in Profile A / the table (Japan is a chain of mountainous islands).
- Fact = checkable; interpretation = reasoned from facts (often "because/probably"); opinion = personal belief.*

7 Evaluate the claim "both countries earn a living in exactly the same way."

Correct: B (No). The packet shows Japan's main activity is manufacturing and technology (cars, machines, electronics), while Kenya's is farming, raising animals, and crops like tea and coffee. Reject A (Kenya does not depend mainly on factories) and C (both profiles clearly describe how each earns a living). Explanation must cite one such detail from Profile A or Profile B.

Explain CER (Q8) ~1–2 min

8 Which factor best explains why daily life differs?

Model answer. Claim: Landform best explains the difference in daily life between Japan and Kenya. Evidence: (1) Table/Profile A: Japan is a chain of steep, mountainous islands with little flat farmland, so most people crowd into coastal cities and work in factories. (2) Table/Profile B: Kenya has coast plus inland highlands and plains, so many families can farm and raise animals across the land. Reasoning: Because the shape of the land decides how much farmable space there is and where people can live, it drives the differences in jobs, cities, and daily life — which is why landform best explains the contrast.

Defensible alternates: a student may instead choose **climate** (warm all year vs. four cold seasons shapes crops and life) or **economy** (manufacturing vs. farming shapes daily work) and still earn full marks if two accurate pieces of evidence support the chosen factor. Grade the quality of the evidence and reasoning, not which factor is named.

CER scoring rubric (3 points)

Score	Claim	Evidence	Reasoning
3	Clear claim naming one factor (landform, climate, or economy).	Two accurate, relevant pieces from the profiles and/or table.	Correctly links the factor to how daily life differs and explains why it matters most.
2	Factor named, mostly clear.	One solid piece, or two with a minor error.	Some correct linkage but incomplete or a small misconception.

Score	Claim	Evidence	Reasoning
1	Vague or partly correct claim.	Evidence weak, off-topic, or not from the packet.	Little or flawed reasoning; no clear link to daily life.
0	No/incorrect claim.	No evidence.	No reasoning.

Close ACE ~1 min

ACE Articulate / Connect / Extend.

Articulate: accept any accurate plain-language definition (e.g., "to compare two societies is to look at how they are alike and how they are different").

Connect: the cited row/line must actually show a difference — e.g., landform row (islands vs. highlands/plains), climate row (four seasons vs. warm all year), or economy row (factories vs. farming).

Extend: any reasonable like/unlike comparison of the student's own community with a reason (e.g., "like Japan, my city is crowded"; "unlike Kenya, few people here farm"). More than one answer is defensible; grade the reason, not the choice.

Watch Common misconceptions

- **Similarity vs. difference (Q4).** Students may put a difference where a similarity was asked. A similarity is something both countries share; a difference is something only one has.
- **Fact vs. interpretation (Q6).** A "probably/because..." statement is usually an interpretation, not a plain fact. A preference ("far more interesting") is an opinion.
- **Climate ≠ weather.** Climate is the usual pattern over many years; "warm all year" or "four seasons" describes climate, not one day's weather.
- **"Both earn a living the same way" (Q7).** The packet clearly contrasts manufacturing (Japan) with farming and crops (Kenya).
- **One right factor in the CER.** Q8 has no single correct factor — landform, climate, or economy are all defensible if backed by two pieces of evidence.

Teacher follow-up based on likely errors

If many students confuse similarities and differences in Q4, do a quick "same or different?" sort using the table rows. If Q6 reveals fact/interpretation/opinion confusion, re-anchor with the Word Bank definitions and a few quick examples. If CER (Q8) evidence is thin, model naming a factor and pointing to two specific rows or profile lines aloud. Reinforcing that geography (land and climate) shapes economy and daily life is the highest-value idea to revisit.

G06_SOC_CompareSocieties_01 — Comparing Two Societies with Maps and Data Teacher Answer Key