

Substitute Guide: Comparing Two Societies with Maps and Data

Grade: 6 **Subject:** Social Studies (World Cultures & Geography) **Time:** ~45 min core + ~15 min extension
Social Studies

Learning goal (plain language)

Students learn to **compare two real societies** — Japan and Kenya — using two short profiles and a simple comparison table. They practice **reading maps/data**, finding **similarities and differences**, and explaining a difference with **geography and economics** (cause and effect). They also sort statements into **fact, interpretation, and opinion**, and finish by writing a short evidence-based comparison. **You do not need a geography background to run this.** Everything students need is printed in their packet.

Standards alignment

Framework: 19 TAC §113.18 (Grade 6 Social Studies, Contemporary World Cultures).

- **Primary — geography/society (provisional):** comparing the ways different societies use their physical environment, and how geographic factors influence economic activities and where people live.
- **Skills — social studies skills (provisional):** analyzing information from maps, tables, and other visuals, and distinguishing fact from interpretation and opinion.

Provisional — pending educator verification against the current official TAC source.

(Standards are paraphrased here, not quoted. Please confirm the codes and wording against your official source. Prompts are kept non-partisan.)

Setup Before class (5 min)

- Count and hand out one **student packet** per student.
- Confirm each student has a **pencil**. No calculators, computers, atlases, or textbooks are needed.
- Write the date on the board and remind students to fill in the name line.
- Keep the **answer key** with you — it is a separate file and is **not** in the student packet.

Materials What's needed

- Printed student packet (4–6 pages) per student.
- Pencil per student.
- This guide and the separate answer key (teacher only).
- No technology, no calculator, no textbooks, no safety hazards.

Timing Suggested pacing (~45–60 min)

Segment	Time	What students do
Start — Notice & Predict	5 min	Q1–Q2 warm-up
Build — Read the profiles	5–10 min	Read Profile A (Japan), Profile B (Kenya), word bank, comparison table; Q3
Apply — Read & compare	20–25 min	Q4–Q7 (compare/contrast, explain a difference, fact/interpretation/opinion, evaluate a claim)
Explain — CER	5–10 min	Q8 claim/evidence/reasoning
Close — ACE	5 min	Articulate / Connect / Extend
Continue — early finishers	optional ~15 min	"Change one factor and predict"

Script Read aloud to start

"Today's assignment is a paper geography investigation called *Comparing Two Societies with Maps and Data*. You will work by yourself with just a pencil — no computers, atlases, or textbooks. First read the two short country profiles — one for Japan, one for Kenya — and study the comparison table. Then answer the questions in order; if one is tricky, skip it and come back. Write in complete sentences where it asks you to explain. Everything you need is printed in the packet — you do not need to know any outside facts. You may quietly read the profiles aloud to yourself. Put your name, class period, and date at the top now. You have about 45 minutes; raise your hand if you need help understanding a word."

Support When students ask for help

- **You may read any part aloud** to a student or the class.
- If they are stuck on a similarity or difference (Q4), point them to the **comparison table** — each row lines up the same indicator for both countries.
- For "explain a difference" (Q5), prompt: "What does the land and climate let people grow or make in each place?"
- For "fact / interpretation / opinion" (Q6), point to the **Word Bank** definitions; an "opinion" usually states a preference, an "interpretation" says "probably" or "because."
- Encourage the printed **sentence stems** for the CER (Q8) and ACE sections.
- Do **not** give answers; prompt with "What do the profiles say?" or "Which row of the table shows that?"
- It is fine if a student cannot finish the optional early-finisher task.

Access Accommodations & language support

- **Read-aloud** of any passage or question is allowed for all students.
- Point students to the **sentence stems** and the **Word Bank** (society, climate, landform, economy, manufacturing, republic, fact, interpretation, opinion are defined).
- Extended time is fine; the core can stop after Q8 if time runs short.
- Students may answer in phrases if writing full sentences is a barrier, as long as the idea is clear.
- The packet is grayscale-safe — it prints and reads clearly in black and white.

Tools Allowed & not allowed

Allowed: pencil, the printed packet, quiet self-read-aloud. **Not needed / not allowed:** calculator (no math required), phones, computers, atlases, textbooks or outside sources (everything needed is in the packet).

Collect at the end: Collect every packet, whether finished or not, with names on them. Stack them for the teacher. Note on a sticky how far most students got and any questions that caused confusion. Answer key: The **answer key is a separate file** (answerkey.html) and is for the teacher only. Please do not hand it to students.

Teacher follow-up (for the returning teacher)

Watch for students who list a **difference** where a **similarity** was asked, or who mark a reasoned "probably..." statement as a plain fact in Q6. A quick next-day discussion sorting a few statements into fact / interpretation / opinion, plus reviewing how land and climate shape whether people farm or manufacture (Q5), would reinforce this well. The CER (Q8) responses show who can name a factor and back it with two pieces of evidence from the profiles or table.

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