

Asian Language & Culture
Awareness

**Korean
Language & Culture**



*New York State Asian Languages Bilingual/ESL
Technical Assistance Center
(ALBETAC)*

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KOREAN:

Korea is located in the eastern part of Asia. It is divided into North and South Korea at the Military Demarcation Line, which is located within the four kilometer wide Demilitarized Zone.

Please see the following chart for pertinent information on both countries.



Maps courtesy of www.theodora.com/maps used with permission.

FACTS ON NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA (from the CIA World Factbook https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/)		
	North Korea	South Korea
Area	120,540 sq. km.	98,480 sq. km.
Population	22,757,275 (July 2010 est.)	48,379,392 (July 2008 est.)
Capital	Pyongyang	Seoul
Administrative Divisions	9 provinces, 2 municipalities	9 provinces, 7 metropolitan cities
Chief of State	Kim Jong Il, Chairman of the Natn'l Defense Commission	Lee Myung bak, President
Government	Communist state one- man dictatorship	Republic
Exchange Rate	140 N.K won = 1 U.S. dollar (2007)	1,296.88 S.K won = 1 U.S. dollar (2009)
GDP* (per capita)	\$1,900 (2009 est.)	\$29,000 (2009 est.)
Flag		

Note to Teachers: Most Korean immigrants are from South Korea.

*Gross Domestic Product

For additional maps and information on Korea, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/asia/south-korea/>

Lonely Planet

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/kr.htm>

WorldAtlas.com

<http://www.Korea.net>

Korea.net: Gateway to Korea

EDUCATION:

EDUCATION AND LITERACY RATES IN KOREA				
Country	Years of Compulsory Schooling	Literacy Rate ² <i>(Age 15 and over can read and write in these countries)</i>		
		Total %	Male	Female
North Korea	11 years ¹ (elementary and secondary school, grades K-10)	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%
South Korea	9 years (elementary and middle school grades 1-9)	97.9%	99.2%	96.6% (2002)

Sources:

¹ North Korea - History & Background

² The CIA's *World Factbook*- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

DEMOGRAPHICS:

- *Korean Speaking Population in the USA, NYS and NYC*

➤ Facts and Figures

KOREAN SPEAKING POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND NEW YORK STATE ¹	
	<i>Number of people, five years and older, who speak Korean at home</i>
United States	1,048,173
New York State	106,949

According to the 2008-2009 NYC BESIS, there are 1,124 ELLs whose native language is Korean. These students comprise 0.8% of New York City's total ELL population of 149,255 students.²*

** Bilingual Education Student Information Survey*

Sources

1 U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey

2 The 2008-2009 Demographics of New York City's English Language Learners, The Chief Achievement Office-Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, New York City Department of Education, Fall 2009

Note to Teachers: *The school year in South Korea is different than the school year in New York. It begins in March and ends in February. This information should be taken into account when determining appropriate grade placement for newly arrived students from Korea.*

KOREAN LANGUAGE AND WRITING:

Korean is the official language of both North and South Korea. It is also spoken in the Northeastern part of China. Korean is a member of the Ural-Altaic language group that includes Turkic, Mongolic, Tungusic, Finnish, Hungarian, and Japanese languages.

Some features of the Korean language are:

- The Korean alphabet consists of 24 letters; 10 vowels and 14 consonants;
- Word order in Korean follows the pattern subject/object/verb;
- The articles “the” and “a” do not exist in Korean;
- Korean has no grammatical gender markers or plural markers.

Note to Teachers: Korean English language learners may have difficulty pronouncing words in English because many English consonant sounds do not exist in the Korean language. The “th” sound in thunder, then and clothes is an example. In addition, one symbol (letter) represents both the “l” and the “r” sound in Korean. The pronunciation of the letter depends on its position in the word. This also causes difficulty for Korean students learning English.

THE KOREAN ALPHABET

Consonants:

ㄱ (g, k), ㄴ (n), ㄷ (d, t), ㄹ (r or l),
ㅁ (m), ㅂ (b, p), ㅅ (s), ㅇ (ng), ㅈ (j),
ㅊ (ch), ㅋ (k), ㅌ (t), ㅍ (p), ㅎ (h)

Vowels:

ㅏ (a), ㅑ (ya), ㅓ (eo), ㅕ (yeo), ㅗ (o),
ㅛ (yo), ㅜ (u), ㅠ (yu), ㅡ (eu), ㅣ (i)

The following chart provides some useful phrases in Korean that will help create a welcoming and supportive environment for your Korean English language learners.

USEFUL PHRASES FOR THE CLASSROOM: KOREAN

English	Pronunciation	Korean (Writing)
Hello!	Ahn-yong-ha-se-yo	안녕하세요.
My name is ...	Je Ireum-eun _____im-ni-da	제 이름은 _____입니다.
What is your name?	Dang-shin-ay Sung-ham-un-Moo-ut-shim-ni-ka?	당신의 성함은 무엇입니까?
How are you?	Uh-tuh-gey Ji-nay-shut-suh-yo	어떻게 지내셨어요?
Fine (answer to "How are you?")	Jal-ji-net-sum-mi-da	잘지냈습니다.
Thank you.	Kam-sa-ham-ni-da	감사합니다.
You're welcome. (answer to "thank you")	Chun-man-hey-yo	환영합니다.
Welcome. (as a greeting)	Hwan-young-ham-ni-da	천만해요.
Good-bye.	Ahn-yong-hee-gey-say-yo. (when you are leaving) Ahn-yong-hee-ga-say-yo. (when the other person is leaving)	안녕히 계세요. (when you are leaving) 안녕히 가세요. (when the other person is leaving)
Please sit down.	Ahn-juh-say-yo	앉으세요.
Please stand up.	Suh-joo-say-yo	서주세요.
Let's begin.	Shee-jak-hap-shee-da	시작합니다.
Good.	Jal-het-sum-ni-da	잘했습니다.
Very good.	Ah-joo Jal-het-sum-ni-da	아주 잘했습니다
Try again.	Da-si-hey-bo-say-yo	다시 해보세요.
This is the homework.	Yee-gey Sook-jeh-im-ni-da	이게 숙제입니다.
Please open your book.	Chek-ul-pyuh-say-yo	책을 펴세요.
Do you understand?	Yee-hey-ha-say-yo	이해 하세요?

For more information on the Korean language, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/korean.htm>

Omniglot: Writing Systems and Languages of the World

<http://www.korea.net/promotion.do?code=eng020043>

Korea.net: Gateway to Korea (Hangeul: The Korean Alphabet)

<http://esl.fis.edu/grammar/langdiff/korean.htm>

A Guide to Learning English: Frankfurt International School

KOREAN LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN NEW YORK CITY:

- *Dual Language Program at PS 32*

PS 32, located in Flushing, Queens, is the site of a Korean-English Dual Language Program. The program started in 2005 with one kindergarten dual language class. Currently the program has expanded through the fourth grade, with one dual language class at each grade level.



Students, parents and staff celebrate the Korean New Year at PS 32.

Dual language programs are bilingual programs that provide half of the instruction in English and half of the instruction in the native language of the ELLS participating in the program. Students become bicultural and fluent in both languages.



Students are learning Korean in PS 32's kindergarten dual language class.

- ***Foreign Language Program at MS 142***

Under the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP), schools are provided with funding to teach languages other than English and their cultures as part of the school's foreign language program. MS 142, located in District 11 in the Bronx, applied for and was awarded a FLAP grant to teach Korean as its foreign language.



These students at MS 142 are participating in the Korean Tea Ceremony, a tradition which has been practiced in Korea for over one thousand years. The focus of this ceremony is the enjoyment of tea in a natural, relaxed, yet formal, setting. Panyaro, a green tea, is usually served.

Students are wearing traditional Korean dress known as Hanbok. The top, which is short for women and girls and longer for men and boys, is called jeogori. The girls are wearing skirts called chima, while the boys are wearing baggy pants called baji.

- ***Foreign Language Program at the East West School of International Studies***

The East West School of International Studies prepares students for professional careers in an international world by providing a firm academic foundation and a thorough understanding of the Asian world. An important part of their education and preparation includes the study of Chinese, Japanese or Korean. Students become proficient in the language and thoroughly knowledgeable about the cultures and customs related to the language that they have chosen to study.



A Korean language class at the East West School of International Studies

For more information on Korean Language Programs in New York City, you may visit the following website:
<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/005/053/NYC%20PHS%20KOREAN%20programs.pdf>
ALBETAC- Summary of New York City Public Schools with Korean Language Programs

CULTURE:

- **Religion**

Among the many religions practiced in Korea, the four major religions are Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, and Shamanism.

Some interesting facts about these religions are:

- Buddhism was the official religion of Korea during the Shilla Dynasty. Many temples that were built during that time are still standing today;
- Christianity was introduced to Korea during the 17th Century and gained its followers through hospitals and universities;
- Although Confucianism is considered an ethical system, its ideologies are infused throughout Korea;
- Shamanism is the oldest and has the smallest number of followers.



Christian Church – Flushing, Queens



Buddhist Temple - Seoul, Korea

Note to Teachers: *The religions practiced in Korea include Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity. Most Korean immigrants living in New York practice Christianity.*

For more information on religion in Korea, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.pbs.org/hiddenkorea/religion.htm>

PBS Online: Hidden Religion/Korea

<http://www.lifeinkorea.com/information/religion.cfm>

Life in Korea

<http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/korea/religion.htm>

Asian Info.org

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/asian/korea/resources/korea-religion.html>

Portals to the World (Resources Selected by Library of Congress Subject Experts)

- **Family**

Traditional Korean families are based on patriarchal rule where men provide for their families and women care for the home and children. Although there has been some shifting of traditional gender roles in Korea, women must still care for the home and children even though they are currently part of the work force.

Some special features about Korean families are:

- Korean children must respect their parents and grandparents, do well in school and reciprocate and care for their parents when they become adults.
- Korean parents place a high value on education and hard work, therefore, poor academic performance is not tolerated.
- It is not uncommon to see Koreans living in extended households. In particular, the paternal grandparents may be living with the family.

Note to Teachers: Koreans believe that children are to be seen and not heard.

For more information on the Korean family, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.pbs.org/hiddenkorea/culture.htm>

PBS Online: Hidden Religion/Korea

http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/korea/family_customs.htm

Asian Info.org

- **Customs and Manners**

Korean customs and manners tend to be very formal, proper, and respectful, especially towards elders. The code of honorifics is infused throughout Korean customs and manners. For example:

- Minors must bow their heads when greeting an elder.
- People may not be called by their first name unless they have given you their permission.
- Koreans are expected to take care of their aging parents...

Note to Teachers: It is not a sign of disrespect if a Korean student does not look at you when being reprimanded. Custom dictates that a child being reprimanded may not make eye contact with the person who is reprimanding him/her.

For more information on Korean customs and manners, you may visit the following websites:

http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/korea/family_customs.htm

Asian Info.org

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/south-korea-country-profile.html>

Kwintessential

- **Cultural Dos and Don'ts**

- ❖ **Do...**

- ...remove your shoes when entering a Korean house.
- ...pass and receive objects with your right hand (supported by the left hand at the wrist or forearm) or with two hands.
- ...slightly bow your head when greeting a Korean as a sign of respect.

- ❖ **Don't...**

- ...compare Korea with Japan.
- ...call a Korean by their given name unless given permission.
- ...touch or pat a Korean who is not a relative or close friend.
- ...expect an apology when shoved, bumped or jostled in the street.
- ...point with your index finger.

For more information on cultural do's and don'ts, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.koreaorbit.com/korea-culture/korean-dos-donts.html>

Korea Orbit.com

http://www.vayama.com/south_korea-etiquette

Vayama

- **Korean Holidays**

The Koreans follow the Gregorian calendar for everyday business and the lunar calendar for major holidays.

A very important holiday in Korea is the Lunar New Year. During this holiday, most people visit their families to wish each other a blessed year.

The second most important holiday in Korea is the Korean Thanksgiving called Chu-Seok. Koreans spend many weeks preparing for this special holiday when ancestral worship ceremonies take place.



Korean Lunar New Year Parade in Flushing, Queens

For more information on Korean holidays, you may visit the following websites:

http://www.asia-pacific-connections.com/korean_holidays.html

Asia Pacific Connections

<http://www.lifeinkorea.com/calendar/holidays.cfm>

Life in Korea

- ***Korean Surnames***

In Korea, the family name is followed by the given name. The names are not separated by commas. Here are some examples.

KOREAN NAMES			
	Name	Surname	Given Name
Boys	Park Dae Hyun	Park	Dae Hyun
	Young Hyun Ki	Young	Hyun Ki
Girls	Choi Eun Sun	Choi	Eun Sun
	Ahn Chun Hei	Ahn	Chun Hei

The following are some of the more common surnames in Korea:

Ahn	Hong	Moon	Park	Yoo
Baek	Hwang	Nam	Rhee	Young
Cha	Jung	Noh	Roh	
Choi	Kim	Oh	Song	
Chung	Lee	Pak	Wong	

To find more common Korean surnames, you may visit the following websites:

<http://genealogy.familyeducation.com/browse/origin/korean>

Family Education

<http://www.koreanwiz.org/understand.html>

Korean Wiz.org

- ***Korean Cuisine***

Korean food is known for its various spices. The basic spices consist of red pepper, green onion, soy sauce, bean paste, garlic, ginger, mustard, vinegar, and wine.

Korean meals are usually served in multiple settings which consist of many side dishes such as soup, vegetables, meat, or fish. These settings, or side dishes, are referred to as “chop”. For example, you may be served a 3-chop, 5-chop, 7-chop, 9-chop, or 12-chop meal which will consist of the indicated number of side dishes.

“Songpyeon”



Half Moon Shaped Rice Cakes

“Hangwa”



Traditional Korean Confectionary

“Sarngyetang”



Ginseng Chicken Soup

For more information on Korean cuisine, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.cuisinenet.com/glossary/korea.html>

Cuisine Net - Diner's Digest: Korean Cuisine

<http://1stopkorea.com/index.htm?cooking.htm~mainframe>

1 Stop Korea.com: Korean Cuisine

FACTS OF INTEREST:

- ***Did you know that...***

- Korea used to be spelled Coreia. It was the Japanese who changed the spelling of the country's name.
- The name of the South Korean capital, Seoul, means "the capital" in the Korean language.
- Korea has about three thousand islands.
- One fifth of the South Korean population resides in Seoul.
- More than two hundred years before the invention of movable type by Gutenberg of Germany, Korean craftsmen succeeded in molding the first metal movable type in 1232.
- The world's first rain gauge was invented by a court scientist during King Sejong's reign.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS:

- ***Korean Literature in English Translation***

- *Trees on a Slope* by Hwang, Sun-Won - Novel about the Korean War
- *The Record of the Black Dragon Year* by Peter H. Lee- Tales inspired by the Japanese invasion of Korea from 1592-1598
- *Land* by Kyung Ni Park
- *Sixteen Years in Sixteen Seconds: The Sammy Lee Story*- This biography tells of the many challenges, including racial discrimination that Sammy Lee overcomes as he struggles to fulfill his dream of becoming a champion diver.

For a bibliography of Korean and Korean-American children's and young adult's literature, you may visit the following website.

http://www.cynthialeitichsmith.com/lit_resources/diversity/asian_am/korean.html

Cynthia Leitich Smith: Official Author Site and Home of Children's and YA Literature Resources

Note to Teachers: ALBETAC sponsors an annual Korean essay contest. The winning essays have been collected and published on the ALBETAC website.

- ***Korean Wisdom – Proverbs and Sayings***

- Words do not have wings but they can fly a thousand miles.
- If you speak kindly to others, then they will speak kindly to you.

- Even if you know the way, ask for directions.
- When a tiger dies, it leaves its leather behind. When a person dies, he/she leaves his/her name behind.
- Starting the task is half the battle.
- Even a sheet of paper seems lighter when two people lift it together.
- A needle thief will become a cow thief.
- One can repay a lifetime of debt with one word.
- If you want to catch a tiger, you have to go to the tiger's cave.

- ***Famous Quotes***

- Starting the task is half the battle. The soldier who fights to death never dies, but the soldier who fights for existence never truly exists. ~Admiral Sun Shin Lee
- Relationships flourish when individuality, freedom and growth are respected. ~Master Jin Kwon (Martial Arts Master)
- One can repay a lifetime of debt with one word.
- Sometimes when we are generous in small, barely detectable ways, it can change someone else's life forever. ~Margaret Cho (Comedian)

For more Korean proverbs and quotes, you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.worldofquotes.com/proverb/Korean/1/index.html>

World of Quotes.com

http://thinkexist.com/quotes/top/nationality/south_korean/

Think Exist.com

FAMOUS KOREAN AMERICANS:

- Ban Ki-Moon – Eighth Secretary General of the United Nations
- Michelle Wie – Professional golfer
- Hines Ward – Football player for Pittsburgh Steelers and MVP of Super Bowl XL
- Toby Dawson – Olympic Mogul Skier- Bronze medal 2006 Winter Olympics
- Joseph Hahn – Musician- Linkin Park
- Joseph Kahn – Awarding winning music video, advertising, and movie director- MTV Music Award- Best Video
- Sarah Chang - Award winning violinist
- Liz Cho - ABC News anchor and reporter
- Sandra Oh - Film and TV actress - Grey's Anatomy
- Michelle Rhee – Chancellor for the Board of Education of Washington, DC
- Dr. Sammy Lee – 1948 and 1952 Olympic Gold Medal Champion in Platform Diving

For more information on famous Korean Americans, you may visit the following website:

http://www.indopedia.org/List_of_famous_Korean_Americans.html

Indopedia

<http://www.un.org/sg/biography.shtml>

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon: Biography