

## The Effects of Limited Space on a Culture

### Purpose:

To help students understand that population density influences culture.

### Target Grade Levels: 6-9

### Essential Question:

How does high population density affect the life of the people who live in that country?

### Objective:

Students will predict the impact of population density on shelter, transportation, recreation, land use, and social skills and then research that impact on Japan.

### Materials:

- Copies of graphic organizers (Handouts A & B)
- Reference materials or Internet access

### Activities:

1. Present problem: "Does limited space affect the way of life in a culture?" Have the students share their thoughts about this.
2. Pass out a copy of the graphic organizer "How would limited space affect a culture?" (Handout A) to each student. Students are to predict the impact of limited space on shelter, transportation, recreation, land use, and social skills and list them on the organizer.
3. Students then get together in groups to compare their predictions.
4. Put a copy of the graphic organizer on the overhead and have groups share their predictions.
5. Pass out the graphic organizer "How has limited space affected the people of Japan" (Handout B). Students research individually or in groups the impact of limited space on Japanese shelter, transportation,

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land use, recreation, and social skills using reference materials or the Internet.

6. Have the students discuss the following questions:

- Given Japan's population density and geography, how do you think Japan produces its food?  
*Possible conclusions: Japan uses every available space and imports much of its food.*
- In what ways do you think Japan's population density and geography affect housing?  
*Possible conclusions: Japan uses all available space. Houses and buildings are small. Many Japanese live in apartments in the cities. Conditions are very crowded in the cities.*
- How might Japan's population density and geography affect manners and behavior?  
*Possible conclusions: Because people live in crowded conditions, they have learned to get along with others. Japanese are very polite people.*
- How does population density affect the price of land?  
*Possible conclusions: Land is very expensive in Japan. The cost of housing and the cost of living are both very high.*
- How does population density affect land use?  
*Possible conclusions: In countries such as the United States and Australia where population densities are low, people tend to spread out. People do not think about living space. Homes and buildings are large. In countries such as Japan, where population density is high, people have to use all available space. Rice paddies are found between buildings in many cities. Shops are located under train rails. People live in crowded conditions. Houses and buildings are smaller.*
- In what ways has population density and geography affected transportation?  
*Possible conclusions: In Japan extensive rail systems and subway systems have been developed. This helps move many people at one time. The train system makes it possible for people to cross the Japanese Alps easily and to move from one island to the next as well as move from town to town. The subway systems in the larger cities*

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*help people travel easily from one side of the city to the other. This helps cut down on car traffic. In countries with lower population density such as the United States, some of the larger cities have subway systems, but the majority of people travel by car. Planes are used for long distance travel.*

### Assessment:

- Class Discussion
- Completed Handouts A & B
- Student Written Response - Students write a response about the impact of population density on food production, the cost of housing, and social behavior.

### Grade Adaptation:

**Lower grades** - Give each student only one area to research.

### Relationship to Social Studies Standards:

Grade 6, Geography, Grade-level Indicator 7

Describe ways humans depend on and modify the environment and the positive and negative consequences of the modifications including: (a) dam building, (b) energy production/usage, (c) agriculture, and (d) urban growth.

Grade 7, Geography, Grade-level Indicator 4

Use physical and historical maps to analyze the reasons that human features are located in particular places.

Grade 7, Geography, Grade-level Indicator 5

Describe the geographic factors and processes that contribute to and impede the diffusion of people, products and ideas from place to place including: (a) physical features, (b) culture, (c) war,

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(d) trade, and (e) technological innovations.

Grade 9, Geography, Grade-level Indicator 3

Explain how political and economic conditions, resources, geographic locations and cultures have contributed to cooperation and conflict.

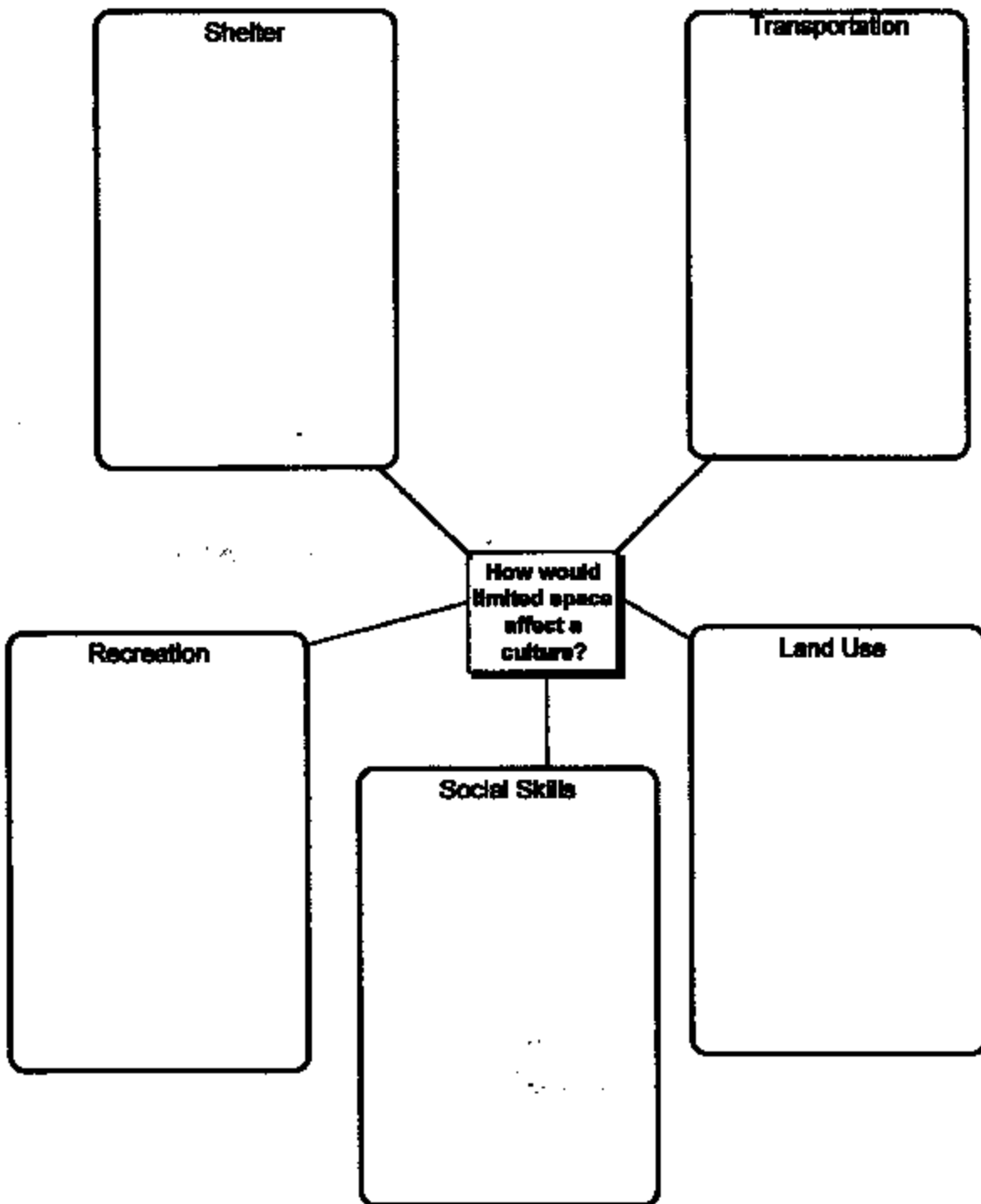
Grade 9, Geography, Grade-level Indicator 4

Explain the causes and consequences of urbanization including economic development, population growth and environmental change.

*This lesson was developed by Kay Tomesek, teacher, Gahanna Middle School West, Gahanna-Jefferson City Schools.*

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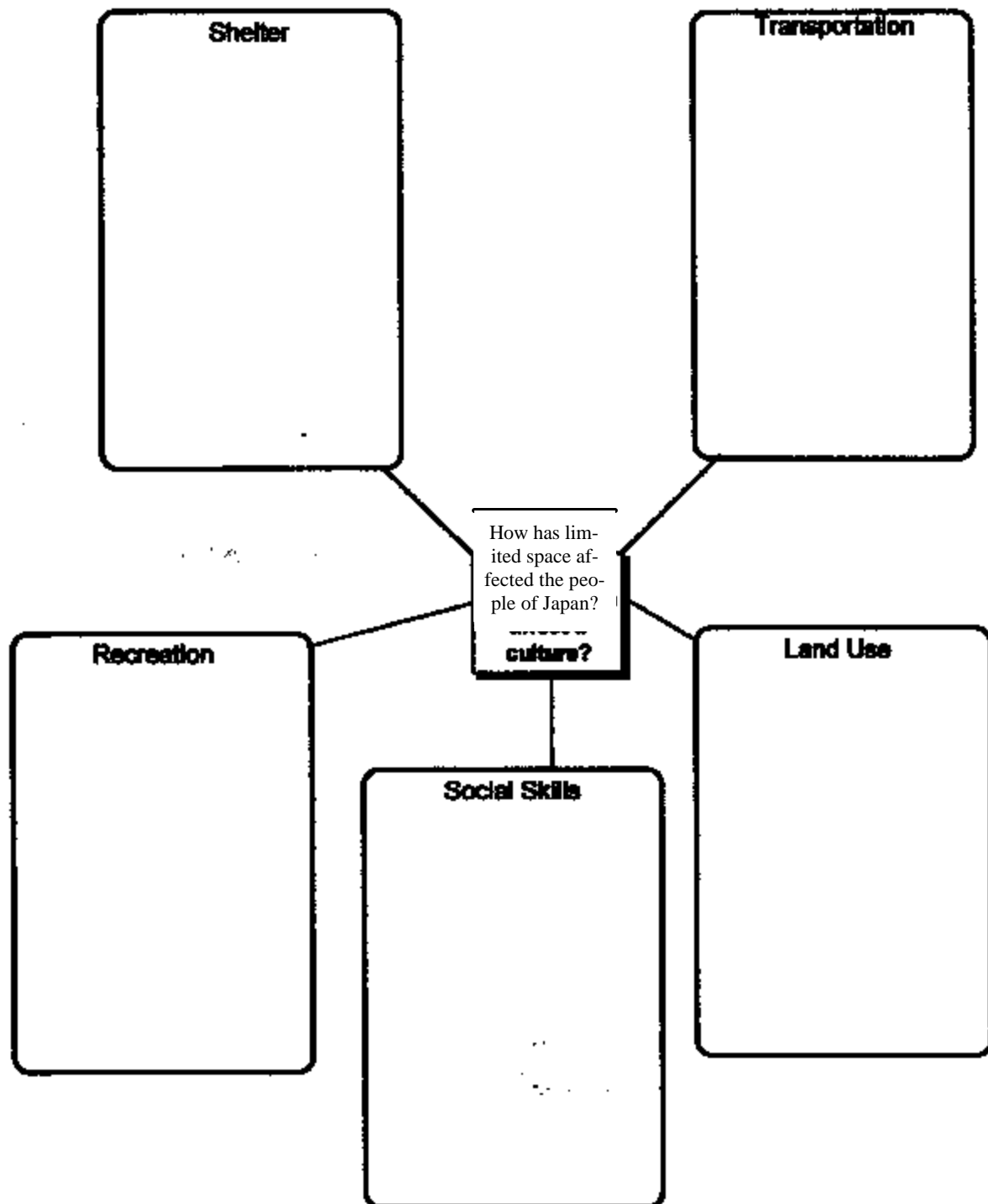
### Handout A



*This handout was developed by Kay Tomesek, teacher, Gahanna Middle School West, Gahanna-Jefferson City Schools.*

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### Handout B



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