

Geography and History Activity

networks

Civilizations of Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia

Lesson 1 *Korea: History and Culture*

Understanding Borders:

Korea

The Yalu River forms part of the northern border between modern North Korea and China. It flows some 500 miles (800 km) from its source in the Changbai Mountains, emptying into Korea Bay. The river became a political boundary in the 1300s near the end of the Koryŏ dynasty.

In addition to creating a political boundary, the Yalu also divides Chinese and Korean cultures. In the sixteenth century, a tribe called the Yojin was driven out of Korea and into Manchuria. Since that time, only Koreans have lived on the Korean side of the river. Manchu and Han Chinese populate the opposite side of the river in China.

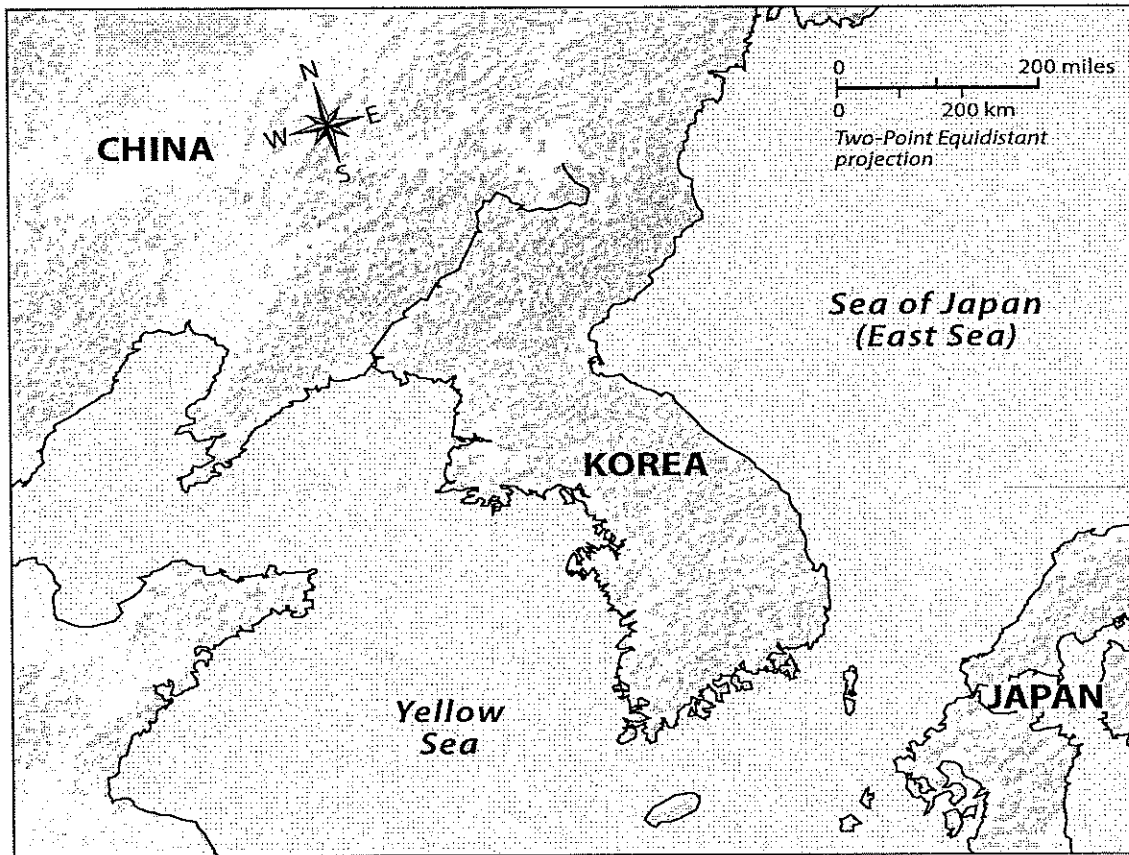
The upper Yalu Rver has fast currents and many waterfalls. It flows through deep valleys with mountains rising from either bank. The middle section of the river, on the other hand, is so shallow in places that during the dry season even rafts carrying timber cannot pass downstream. As it nears Korea Bay, the current slows. Deposits of sediment form a huge delta with numerous islands.

In modern times, the Yalu River serves as a transportation route and supplies fish to people living along its banks. Its most important use, however, is as a resource for hydroelectric power. The largest dam on the river is 320 feet (100 meters) high and 2,880 feet (880 meters) long. This dam creates a reservoir of 133 square miles (345 square km), generating about 7 million kilowatts of electric power.

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The Yalu River, a Border Between Korea and China



The Yalu River has formed the northwestern border between China and Korea since the 1300s.

Directions Answer the following questions.

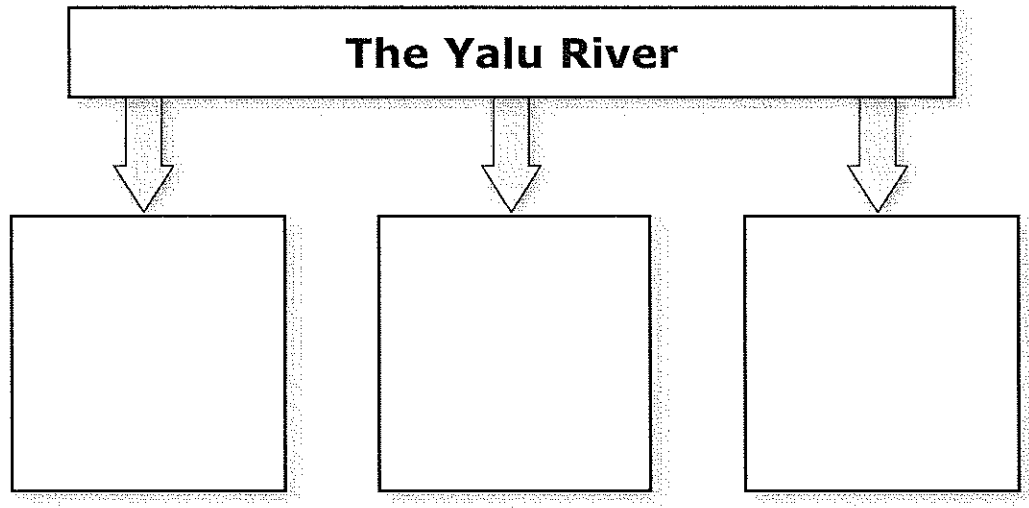
Understanding the Concept

- 1. Labeling** Use information from your textbook to label the Yalu River, Changbai Mountains, and Korea Bay on the map on the previous page.
- 2. Drawing Conclusions** When and where was it probably easiest for the Chinese to cross the Yalu River?

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3. Identifying What are the three principal uses of the Yalu River in modern times? Write your answers in the graphic organizer below.



Applying the Concept

4. Analyzing How has the importance of the Yalu River changed over time?

5. Making Connections What are some other rivers you have learned about that form boundaries between nations or states?
