Taiwan
(Republic of China)

Here are some basic facts about Taiwan:

- **Capital:** Taipei (臺北市)
- **Currency:** New Taiwan dollar (NT$)
- **President:** Tsai Ing-wen (7th)
- **Government:** Unitary semi-presidential republic; multiparty unicameral legislature
- **Official Language:** Mandarin (Chinese; 普通話); other significant national languages: Holo (Taiwanese); Hakka; Austronesian languages
- **Population:** 23,812,627 (as of 2020)
- **Land Area:** 32,260 sq km (slightly larger than New Mexico)
- **Population Density:** 673 per Km² (about 18 times larger than the United States)
- **Writing Systems:** Traditional Chinese (繁体字)

Taiwan is the 7th largest economy in Asia. The People's Republic of China (PRC) have identified Taiwan as part of its territory and its most important core interest since the Kuomintang (KMT; the Nationalist Party) government retreated to the island in 1949 following its defeat in the Chinese Civil War. Taiwan is surrounded by states such as the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the west, Japan to the northeast, and the Philippines to the south. The island of Taiwan has an area of 35,808 square kilometres (13,826 sq mi). Taiwan's mountain ranges dominate the eastern two thirds and plains in the western third, where its highly urbanised population is concentrated. Taipei is the capital and largest metropolitan city of Taiwan.

From as far back as six thousand years ago, the Taiwanese indigenous peoples settled the island of Taiwan. In the 17th century, Dutch rule opened the island to mass Han immigration. After a brief rule by Spain and later the Kingdom of Tungning, the island was annexed in 1683 by the Qing dynasty of China, and ceded to the Empire of Japan in 1895. Following the surrender of Japan in 1945 after World War II, the Republic of China, which had overthrown and succeeded the Qing in China in 1911, took control of Taiwan on behalf of the World War II Allies. The PRC has claimed sovereignty over Taiwan since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949, when the defeated Nationalist government fled to the island as the Communists, under Mao Zedong, swept to power.

Taiwan is a semi-presidential republic with a popularly elected president - currently Dr. Tsai Ing-wen, who appoints the head of government. It is a developed country which ranks 15th in GDP per capita. Its export-oriented industrial economy is the 21st-largest in the world, with major contributions from steel, machinery, electronics and chemicals manufacturing. The state is ranked highly in terms of political and civil liberties, education, health care and human
development. The United States is one of Taiwan's most important economic and security partners. Despite its diplomatic isolation, Taiwan has become one of Asia's major economic players, and one of the world's top producers of computer technology.

References


K-12 RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

HISTORY, CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND TRADITIONS

- **History Timeline**
  *History Timeline* is a thorough historical timeline about Taiwan that focuses on recorded history dating from about 400 years ago to the present, assembled by the Taiwan government.

- **Taiwan: Facts & History**
  Taiwan: Facts & History is a friendly pocket guide for quick facts on Taiwan including its government, population, religion, language, climate, geography, economy, and history.

- **Huang, Alexander C.Y. "Contested (Post)coloniality and Taiwan Culture: A Review Article of New Work by Yip and Ching." CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 8.3 (2006)**
  An interesting peer-reviewed article on post-colonial Taiwan and issues that propelled new theoretical development. This article examines the idiosyncrasies and cover two recent monographs on colonial Taiwan (1895-1945) and postcolonial Taiwan (1960s-1990s) by two US-based scholars: June Yip's *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in the Cultural Imaginary* and Leo T.S. Ching's *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation*.

- **Religions in Taiwan**
  *Religions in Taiwan* is a brief introduction to Taoism (Daoism), Buddhism, Christianity, and other religions in Taiwan. In Taiwan, some people practice ‘pure’ Buddhism and some follow ‘pure’ Taoism. Far more, however, follow one, or both, blended with folk beliefs.

- **Taiwan’s Culture & Festivals**
  *Taiwan’s Culture & Festivals* insights into Taiwan’s indigenous festivals, parades, events, and public holidays. Modern Taiwanese culture blends Chinese, Austronesian, Japanese and Western influences. Because Taiwan never experienced Communist oppression, visitors have opportunities to witness traditional religious practices and ancient customs that have disappeared from the Chinese mainland.

- **Languages Spoken in Taiwan**
  What languages do people speak in Taiwan? *Languages Spoken in Taiwan* provides a quick introduction to the different languages spoken in Taiwan.

- **Beautiful Landscapes in Taiwan**
  Taiwan is blessed with some of the highest mountains on any island in the world, stunning coastal scenery and forests exceptionally rich in wildlife and birdlife. Its towns and cities showcase a fascinating blend of modernity and tradition. This wonderful resource provides you details on different regions of Taiwan. A great travellers guide!
Taiwan Culture Toolkit
Taiwan’s Ministry of Culture has designed and created the Taiwan Culture Toolkit, a multilingual website platform that includes literature, cinema, fine arts and traditional performing arts.

POLITICS AND CONTEMPORARY TOPICS

- **Advancing 21st Century Competencies in Taiwan**
The nine-year curriculum and twelve-year curriculum are two of the major education innovations in the past 20 years in Taiwan. Advancing 21st Century Competencies in Taiwan is a very detailed resource on the evolving Taiwan’s schooling system, competency framework, policy & practices, issues and challenges.

- **Global Taiwan Brief - Global Taiwan Institute (GTI)**
The Global Taiwan Brief is a bi-weekly publication released every other Wednesday and provides insight into the latest news on Taiwan. Each brief will contain about 4 short policy-oriented articles plus an Editor’s column.

- **Taiwan - Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS)**
Part of CSIS’ China Power Project, this program studies the economic, political, and security dimensions of relations between and among Taiwan, the U.S. and mainland China. The program draws particular focus on U.S.-Taiwan political and security relations, cross-strait economic and political ties, China’s growing regional influence, Taiwan’s role in the global community, and the impact of leadership transitions in Taiwan, the U.S. and China on U.S.-China-Taiwan relations.

- **American Institute in Taiwan (AIT)**
The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) is a non-profit, private corporation established shortly after the United States Government changed its diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing on January 1, 1979. Servicing the roles that parallel a traditional U.S. embassy, the AIT website has a wealth of information on the U.S.-Taiwan relationship.

- **What is behind the China-Taiwan divide?**
China sees Taiwan as a breakaway province that will eventually be part of the country again, but many Taiwanese want a separate nation. The dispute with China has left relations frayed and a constant threat of a violent flare up that could drag the US into the fray. You can learn where they are at now from What is behind the China-Taiwan divide?

- **Politics in Taiwan**
The Republic of China was founded by Dr. Sun Yat-sen in 1912 and is a sovereign state, which is described in the Constitution as “a democratic republic of the people, by the people, and for the people.” You can learn a detailed description of the political and electoral system in Taiwan from Politics in Taiwan.

- **DIGI+ Taiwan**
Aligning with the national policy directory “Digital Nation, Smart Island,” the Taiwanese government has promoted the “Digital Nation & Innovative Economic Development Program (DIGI+) 2017-2025,” which is intended to enhance digital infrastructure, re-construct a service-based digital government, and realize a fair and active internet society with equal digital rights.

**NEWS, MAGAZINES, AND JOURNALS**

- **Taipei Times**  
  *The Taipei Times* launched on June 15, 1999, with the mission of presenting a voice long absent in the Taiwanese media: an English-language journal of record for national and international readers, presented from a Taiwanese perspective.

- **Taiwan Today**  
  *Taiwan Today* is a relaunch of Taiwan Journal, an English-language weekly newspaper first published in 1964. Taiwan Today covers various aspects of Taiwan including arts, economics, environment, politics and society.

- **Taiwan News**  
  *Taiwan News* began publication in 1949 as “China News.” Founded by James Wei, It was the first English-language newspaper in Taiwan. Its ongoing mission is to report on both Taiwanese society as well as modern global trends, building a bridge of communication between cultures and nations.

- **Taiwan Review**  
  *Taiwan Review* is a general-interest monthly publication providing in-depth discussion of various aspects of Taiwan including arts, economics, environment, politics and society. TR was first published in April 1951 as Free China Review. It changed its name to Taipei Review in April 2000 and its current moniker in March 2003.

- **Focus Taiwan (CNA English News)**  
  *The Central News Agency (CNA)* is the national news agency of the Republic of China (ROC) and the most influential news organization in Taiwan. Since its establishment, CNA has maintained a high standard of professionalism while keeping up with the times by adopting new technology in the digital era.
## LESSON PLANS AND ACTIVITY IDEAS

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<td>Taiwan Country Study Distance Learning (fee-based)</td>
<td>Colonial Taiwan and Japan, Birth of Taiwanese Identity-30 slide PPT, CCSS (fee-based)</td>
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## EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

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<th>ASSE High School Exchange Program Taiwan</th>
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**Program Description:**
As an ASSE exchange student in Taiwan you will have the unique opportunity of experiencing first hand the amazing contrast created by the beauty and serenity of the Taiwanese countryside, and the hustle and bustle of the rapidly growing city of Taipei. Spend an ASSE exchange year in a land of such fascinating polarity, learning the language and immersed in the culture, gain a priceless insight into a culture so vastly different from your own.

**Eligibility:** High School
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<td>Meiji’s internships are individually customized to suit students’ needs. You will have the chance to further deepen your expertise in your current professional field or equip yourself with a completely new skillset. Learn more about the different industries and their emphasis on certain areas of business.</td>
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<td>Scholarship: <a href="#">Available</a></td>
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For Teachers:

Teach in Taiwan

Foresight International Education Center is a Taiwanese company specializing in international education experiences for Taiwanese students and international teachers. They partner with leading international education specialists to deliver educational programs within Taiwanese schools while also creating opportunities for teachers from around the world.

**GENERAL MATERIALS FOR CLASSES**

- **Council on Foreign Relations**
  The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) is an independent, nonpartisan membership organization, think tank, and publisher dedicated to being a resource for its members, government officials, business executives, journalists, educators and students, civic and religious leaders, and other interested citizens in order to help them better understand the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other countries.
INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DMV AREA

- **Taiwan Resource Center (TRC) at the George Washington University**
The TRC, the only one of its kind in the United States, was established in December 2004 to provide a specialized collection of resources for advanced study and research on Taiwan and is open to all researchers actively engaged in the study of Taiwan regardless of institutional affiliation.

- **Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office**
Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States (TECRO) is the Republic of China's principal representative office in the United States. As such, TECRO in the United States is responsible for maintaining and developing bilateral relations between Taiwan and the United States. TECRO is headed by Representative Stanley Kao with support from Deputy Representative Christine Hsueh and Deputy Representative Louis Huang.

- **Global Taiwan Institute (GTI)**
GTI is a non-profit policy incubator dedicated to insightful, cutting-edge, and inclusive research on policy issues regarding Taiwan and the world. GTI’s mission is to enhance the relationship between Taiwan and other countries, especially the United States, through policy research and programs that promote better public understanding about Taiwan and its people.

- **Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS)**
The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is a bipartisan, nonprofit policy research organization dedicated to advancing practical ideas to address the world’s greatest challenges.

- **The Brookings Institution**
The Brookings Institution is a nonprofit public policy organization based in Washington, DC. Our mission is to conduct in-depth research that leads to new ideas for solving problems facing society at the local, national and global level.

- **The Wilson Center**
The Wilson Center, chartered by Congress in 1968 as the official memorial to President Woodrow Wilson, is the nation’s key non-partisan policy forum for tackling global issues through independent research and open dialogue to inform actionable ideas for the policy community.

- **The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR)**
Our mission is to conduct advanced independent research on strategic, political, economic, globalization, health, and energy issues affecting U.S. relations with Asia. Drawing upon an
extensive network of the world’s leading specialists and leveraging the latest technology, NBR bridges the academic, business, and policy arenas.

- **The Project 2049 Institute**
The Project 2049 Institute is a nonprofit research organization focused on promoting American values and security interests in the Indo-Pacific region. We specialize in open-source research using Chinese language sources to inform policy debate and advance public education. Our core mission is to create and disseminate knowledge that makes the region more peaceful and prosperous.

- **The US-Taiwan Business Council (USTBC)**
USTBC is a membership-based, non-profit trade association founded in 1976 to support investment, trade, and commerce between the United States and Taiwan.

- **The East-West Center**
Established by the U.S. Congress in 1960, the Center serves as a resource for information and analysis on critical issues of common concern, bringing people together to exchange views, build expertise, and develop policy options. The Center is an independent, public, nonprofit organization with funding from the U.S. government, and additional support provided by private agencies, individuals, foundations, corporations, and governments in the region.

- **The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**
In an increasingly crowded, chaotic, and contested world and marketplace of ideas, the Carnegie Endowment - a global think tank with offices in Belgium, China, India, Lebanon, Russia, and Washington, D.C. - offers decisionmakers global, independent, and strategic insight and innovative ideas that advance international peace.

- **Hudson Institute**
Hudson guides public policy makers and global leaders in government and business through a vigorous program of publications, conferences, policy briefings, and recommendations.

- **The Heritage Foundation**
The mission of The Heritage Foundation is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.

- **The Center for a New America Security (CNAS)**
The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation is a national non-partisan, non-profit dedicated to enhancing peace and security through expert policy analysis and thought-provoking research.

- **The United States Institute of Peace (USIP)**
The United States Institute of Peace is a national, nonpartisan, independent institute, founded by Congress and dedicated to the proposition that a world without violent conflict is possible, practical, and essential for U.S. and global security.

**EVENTS IN THE DMV AREA**
DC Chinese New Year Parade – January
Washington, D.C. celebrates the Chinese New Year with a parade in Chinatown featuring traditional Chinese Dragon Dance, Kung Fu demonstrations and live musical entertainment. Each year a parade is held in Chinatown in Washington, D.C. to celebrate the Chinese New Year. The event is held by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA).

KC Chinese New Year – January to February
The Kennedy Center celebrates Chinese New Year with weeks of family fun including Kennedy Center Chinese New Year Family Day. 10,000 twinkling lights will make for a magical experience. Free activities for all ages including arts and crafts, traditional costume photo booth, zodiac stickers, demonstrations of sugar painting and wood block printing, magic shows and more.

Compiled by Shruthi Shree Nagarajan and Aika Okishige
NRC Curriculum Developer