Teaching history from
DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

AAVEd
Asian American Voices for Education

1st Grade Lesson Plan on
K-Pop Demon Hunters

Georgia Social Studies Standards

SS1G2 Identify and locate the student's city, county, state, nation (country), and continent on a simple map or a globe.

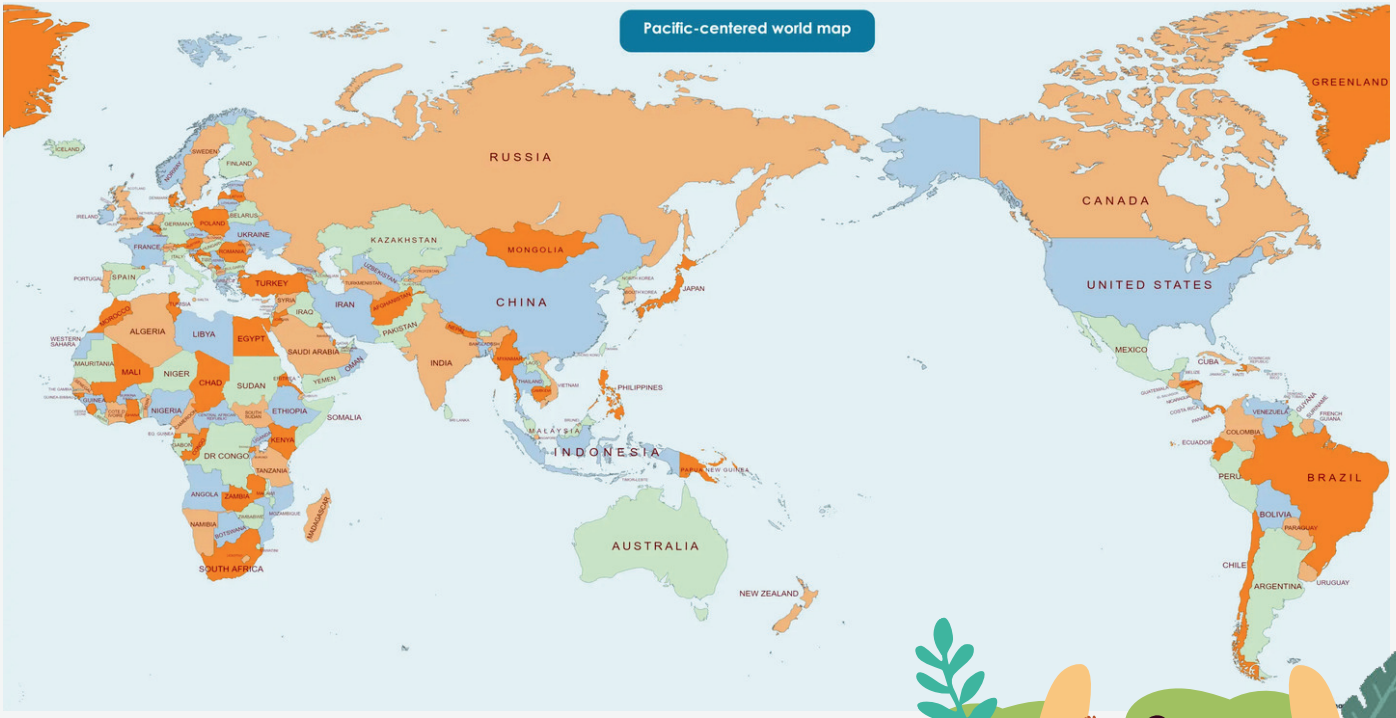
SS1G3 Locate major topographical features of the earth's surface.
a. Locate all of the continents: North America, South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, Antarctica, and Australia.
b. Locate the major oceans: Arctic, Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Ocean.
c. Identify and describe landforms (mountains, deserts, valleys, and coasts).

Long before K-pop became a global sensation, the vibrant landscape of Korea was filled with rich folklore, towering landforms, and storytelling traditions passed down through generations. The hit animated musical-fantasy film K-Pop Demon Hunters reflects both.



Geography

This lesson helps young learners contextualize Asia within the world's seven continents.Nestled on the eastern edge of Asia, South Korea is on a peninsula surrounded by beautiful coasts. South Korea is famous for rolling mountains and deep green valleys, in contrast to flat deserts found in other regions. These mountains and valleys became the backdrop for centuries of Korean art and storytelling.





Hojakdo



Within the animated world of K-Pop Demon Hunters, two characters named Derpy and Sussie bring laughter and joy to the screen. These two characters are walking, talking examples of Korean folk art. Their playful banter and unlikely friendship are modeled directly after minhwa (pronounced meen-whah), a style of traditional painting created by ordinary people.

Specifically, they are a modern twist on a famous type of folk art called hojakdo (pronounced ho-jahk-doh), or "painting of tigers and magpies".

During the late Joseon Dynasty (17th-19th centuries), Korean society was organized under a strict class system separating wealthy aristocrats from ordinary commoners. As the economy changed, ordinary people gained new opportunities and wealth, giving them the chance to make, buy, and enjoy art that reflected their lives.

Every New Year, families would hang hojakdo paintings in their homes to welcome good fortune and keep their households safe. In these beautiful paintings, two animals always took center stage.



Sussie mirrors the traditional magpie, a clever bird who acts as a cheerful messenger bringing good news. Derpy embodies the traditional tiger, a magnificent creature representing strength and guardianship.

These paintings also carried a secret, humorous message. Because commoners were often treated unfairly by powerful rulers, artists used hojakdo to safely poke fun at authority. They would paint the mighty tiger looking a bit silly or clumsy, while the tiny magpie was painted looking brave, confident, and even scolding the giant beast.

This clever reversal allowed ordinary people to use humor as a form of quiet strength and resilience. Just like the ancient paintings, the film brings this tradition to life by making Sussie bold and witty, while Derpy balances his massive strength with a lovable, silly heart.

Complete Article and Lesson Plan

Photo Credit: (Top to Bottom, Left to Right)

1. Netflix, 2025
2. Pacific Centered Map created with mapchart.net
3. Korea: 2000 Years of Creativity
4. Netflix, 2025

Contact us at info@aaved.org

History is the context of "**now**", "**why**", and "**how**".

Teach interwoven history.



AAVEd

Asian American Voices for Education

aaved.org AAVEd.org @aaved_org