Geography Skills

Analyze the maps in "Setting the Stage" in your book. Then answer the following questions and fill out the map as directed.

1. Locate the Japanese islands of Honshu, Kyushu, Hokkaido, and Shikoku. Label them. About how far does Japan extend from north to south? About how many miles wide is Japan at its widest point?

2. Label the countries that are closest to Japan. At what point is the distance between Japan and the Asian continent the shortest? Is the distance from Japan to the Asian continent shortest between Japan and Korea, or is it shortest between Japan and China?

3. Locate the Kanto Plain. Label it. On which Japanese island is it located?

4. Locate and label the ancient cities of Nara and Kyoto.

5. Which percent—90 percent, 60 percent, or 15 percent—do you think best expresses the amount of land Japan can use for agriculture?

6. Label the Sea of Japan (East Sea), the East China Sea, and the Pacific Ocean. In what ways did these bodies of water influence Japan’s history?

7. Locate the Chugoku Range, the Japanese Alps, and the Hidaka Range. Label them.

8. Use the “Political Features of the World” map in the back of your book to answer the following question: What present-day country lies to the east of Japan, across the Pacific Ocean?
Critical Thinking
Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

9. Which of the Japanese islands do you think became the center of power in Japan? Explain your answer.

10. Describe one advantage and one disadvantage of Japan's geography.

11. The Kanto Plain is the most populated area in Japan. Why do you think this is so?

12. As you have learned, Japan first developed in isolation because it is surrounded by water. Do you think oceans and seas are significant barriers to the movement of people, goods, and ideas today? Explain your answer.
Japan