

Japan



California Standards

History–Social Science

7.5 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of Medieval Japan.

English–Language Arts

Writing 7.1.2 Support all statements and claims with anecdotes, descriptions, facts and statistics, and specific examples.

Reading 7.2.6 Assess the adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness of the author's evidence to support claims and assertions, noting instances of bias and stereotyping.

FOCUS ON WRITING



Writing a Travel Brochure You've been hired to create a travel brochure called "Japan's Rich History." Your brochure will describe tourist attractions in Japan that show the country's fascinating past. As you read this chapter, think about how you might encourage people to visit Japan.



CHAPTER EVENTS

c. 550
Buddhism is introduced into Japan.



550

WORLD EVENTS

632–661
Arab armies conquer Southwest Asia.

History's Impact

► video series

Watch the video to understand the impact of the samurai tradition on Japan today.



What You Will Learn...

In this chapter, you will learn about the geography and history of early Japan. This photo shows Mount Fuji, a snow-covered volcano that has long been a symbol of Japan.



c. 1000

Lady Murasaki Shikibu writes *The Tale of Genji*.

825

768–814

Charlemagne rules much of western Europe.

1100

1192

The first shogun rules Japan.



1279

The Mongols take over China.



1603–1868

The Tokugawa shoguns rule Japan.

1375



1650

1588

England defeats the Spanish Armada.

Economics

Geography

Politics

Religion

Society and
Culture

Science and
Technology

Focus on Themes As you read this chapter, you will step into the world of early Japan. You will learn about the first Japanese people and their religion, Shinto, and about how the people of Korea and China began to influence the growth

of Japanese culture. As you read about the history of Japan, you will learn how the development of their **politics** not only affected the laws of the land but also shaped the **society and culture** of the people.

Stereotypes and Bias in History

Focus on Reading Historians today try to be impartial in their writing. They don't let their personal feelings affect what they write.

Writers in the past, however, didn't always feel the need to be impartial. Their writings were sometimes colored by their attitudes about other people, places, and ideas.

Identifying Stereotypes and Bias Two ways in which writing can be colored by the author's ideas are stereotypes and bias. A **stereotype** is a generalization about whole groups of people. **Bias** is an attitude that one group is superior to another. The examples below can help you identify stereotypes and bias in the things you read.

Examples of Stereotypes

- Japanese people are hardworking, dedicated, and proud of their history.
- Japanese daimyo were selfish, greedy rulers who didn't care about anyone but themselves.
- Japan's early emperors were wise men who deserved to rule the country.

Stereotypes suggest that all members of a group act, think, or feel the same.

Stereotypes can often hurt or offend members of a group.

Some stereotypes encourage the reader to think about a group in a certain way.

Examples of Bias

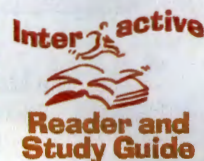
- The Japanese culture is far superior to other cultures that developed in Asia.
- Personally, I think that the Japanese created the best form of government in all of history.
- Compared to the Japanese, the Koreans were weak and culturally backward.

A biased statement obviously favors one person or group over another.

Bias is based on the author's opinions, not facts.

Bias is often the result of an author's dislike of a particular group.

Additional reading
support can be found
in the





ELA Reading 7.2.6 Assess the adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness of the author's evidence to support claims and assertions, noting instances of bias and stereotyping.

You Try It!

The following passage is taken from the journal of a noble woman who lived in Japan in the 1000s. As you read the passage, look for signs of stereotypes and bias in her writing.

The Pillow Book

Often the common people who come to Hasadera show a gross lack of respect for the better sort of visitors, lining up in front of one's pew so close that they brush one with the tails of their coats . . . impatient to gaze at last upon the glorious countenance [face] of Buddha, it is exasperating to find my view barred by a parcel of common white-robed priests and country-people, swarming like caterpillars, who plant themselves there without the slightest regard for those behind them. Often, while they were performing their prostrations [bows], I have come near to rolling them over sideways!

—Sei Shonagon, *The Pillow Book*,
translated by Arthur Waley

Review the graphic organizer on the previous page. Then answer the following questions about the passage you just read.

1. Does the author show a bias in favor of one group within Japanese society?
2. What opinion of Japan's common people does the first sentence of the passage suggest the author holds?
3. What stereotypes about non-nobles did the author include in her writing?
4. How do you think a Japanese priest or country person would feel about this passage? Why?

Key Terms and People

Chapter 8

Section 1

clans (p. 200)

Shinto (p. 200)

Prince Shotoku (p. 202)

regent (p. 202)

Section 2

court (p. 204)

Lady Murasaki Shikibu (p. 205)

Zen (p. 208)

Section 3

daimyo (p. 212)

samurai (p. 212)

figurehead (p. 213)

shogun (p. 213)

Bushido (p. 214)

Academic Vocabulary

Success in school is related to knowing academic vocabulary—the words that are frequently used in school assignments and discussions. In this chapter, you will learn the following academic words:

structure (p. 199)

values (p. 215)

As you read Chapter 8, notice how the authors of this book have avoided making stereotypes about the Japanese people.

Geography and Early Japan

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Geography shaped life in Japan.
2. Early Japanese society was organized in clans, which came to be ruled by an emperor.
3. Japan learned about language, society, and government from China and Korea.

The Big Idea

Japan's early societies were both isolated from and influenced by China and Korea.

Key Terms and People

clans, p. 200

Shinto, p. 200

Prince Shotoku, p. 202

regent, p. 202



HSS 7.5.1 Describe the significance of Japan's proximity to China and Korea and the intellectual, linguistic, religious, and philosophical influence of those countries on Japan.

7.5.2 Discuss the reign of Prince Shotoku of Japan and the characteristics of Japanese society and family life during his reign.

If YOU were there...

You live in a small farming village on one of the islands of Japan. You're very happy with your life. The sea is nearby and food is plentiful. You have a large, extended family to protect and take care of you. Your grandmother says that life in your village has not changed for hundreds of years, and that is good. But now you have heard that some people from across the sea are coming to your village. They are bringing new ideas and new ways of doing things.

How do you feel about these changes?

BUILDING BACKGROUND Japan is a large group of islands located east of the Asian mainland. Life in Japan has always been influenced by many factors. The islands' geography and location shaped how people lived there, and as you read above, visitors from other lands also affected Japanese society.

Geography Shapes Life in Japan

The islands of Japan are really just the tops of undersea mountains and volcanoes, sticking up out of the ocean. Those mountains, as you can see on the map, cover nearly all of Japan. Only about 20 percent of the land is flat. Because it is difficult to live and farm on mountain slopes, most Japanese people have always lived in those flat areas, the coastal plains.

In addition to the mountains and the lack of flat land, the nearness of the sea shaped the lives of Japanese people. Their homes were never far from the sea. Naturally, they turned to the sea for food. They learned to prepare all kinds of seafood, from eel to shark to octopus to seaweed. As a result, seafood has been a key part of the Japanese diet for thousands of years.

The islands' location affected the Japanese people in another way as well. Because they lived on islands, the Japanese were separated from the other people of Asia. This separation allowed

Japan: Physical



GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

INTERPRETING MAPS

- Place** What are Japan's four main islands?
- Location** Are most of Japan's major cities in the interior or on the coast? Why do you think this is so?

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

structure the way something is set up or organized

the Japanese to develop their own culture. For example, they created a religion and a social **structure** very different from those in other parts of Asia. This separation has always been an important part of Japanese society.

Japan isn't totally isolated, however. Look at the inset map above to find Korea and China. As you can see, neither country

is very far from the Japanese islands. Korea is only about 100 miles away from Japan. China is about 400 miles away. Those short distances allowed the older Korean and Chinese cultures to influence the new culture of Japan.

READING CHECK Summarizing What is Japan's geography like?



A Shinto Shrine

Entering a Shinto shrine, these people walk through a gate called a torii (TOR-ee). The torii marks the boundary of a shrine or other sacred Shinto site. Over time, the torii has become a symbol of Shinto, Japan's ancient religion.

What elements of nature can you see in this painting?

Early Japanese Society

Korea and China did play a major part in shaping Japanese society, but not at first. Early Japan was home to two different cultures, neither of which had any contact with the rest of Asia.

The Ainu

One culture that developed in Japan was the Ainu (EYE-noo). Historians aren't sure exactly when or how the Ainu moved to Japan. Some people think they came from what is now Siberia in eastern Russia. Wherever they came from, the Ainu spoke a language unlike any other language in eastern Asia. They also looked different from the other people of Japan.

Over time, the Ainu began to fight with other people for land. They lost most of these fights, and so they lost their land as well. Eventually the Ainu were driven back onto a single island, Hokkaido. Over time the Ainu culture almost disappeared. Many people gave up the Ainu language and adopted new customs.

THE IMPACT TODAY

Few Ainu remain in Japan today, and most of them live on Hokkaido.

The First Japanese

The people who lived south of the Ainu eventually became the Japanese. They lived mostly in small farming villages. These villages were ruled by powerful **clans**, or **extended families**. Other people in the village, including farmers and workers, had to obey and respect members of these clans.

At the head of each clan was a chief. In addition to his political power, each chief also had religious duties. The Japanese believed that their clan chiefs were descended from nature spirits called *kami* (KAH-mee). Clan chiefs led their clans in rituals that honored their *kami* ancestors.

Over time, these rituals became a central part of **the traditional religion of Japan, Shinto**. According to Shinto teachings, everything in nature—the sun, the moon, trees, waterfalls, and animals—has *kami*. Shintoists believe that some *kami* help people live and keep them from harm. They build shrines to *kami* and perform ceremonies in which they ask the *kami* to bless them.

The First Emperors

The clans of early Japan weren't all equal. Some clans were larger and more powerful than others. In time a few of these powerful clans built up armies and set out to conquer their neighbors.

One clan that gained power in this way lived in the Yamato region, the western part of Japan's largest island, Honshu. In addition to military might, the Yamato rulers claimed to have a glorious family history. They believed they were descended from the most powerful of all *kami*, the goddess of the sun.

By the 500s the Yamato rulers had extended their control over much of Honshu. Although they didn't control the whole country, the leaders of the Yamato clan began to call themselves the emperors of all Japan.

READING CHECK Sequencing How did emperors take power in Japan?

Japan Learns from China and Korea

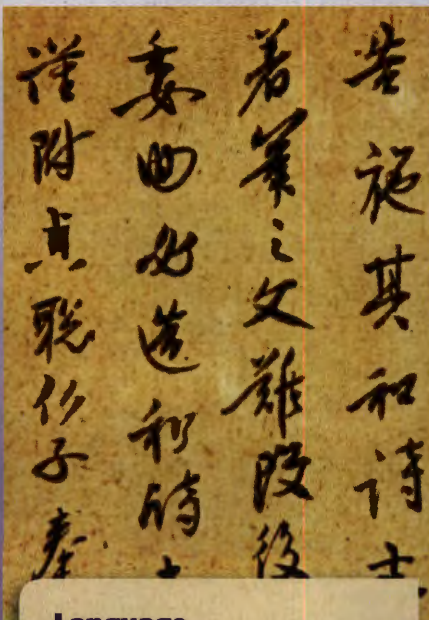
Early Japanese society received very little influence from cultures on the Asian mainland. Occasionally, officials from China, Korea, or other parts of Asia visited Japan. For the most part, however, these visits didn't have a great impact on the Japanese way of life.

By the mid-500s, though, some Japanese leaders thought that Japan could learn a great deal from other cultures. In particular, they wanted to learn more about the cultures of China and Korea.

To learn what they wanted to know, the rulers of Japan decided to send representatives to China and Korea to gather information about their cultures. They also invited people from China and Korea to move to Japan. The emperors hoped that these people could teach the Japanese new ways of working and thinking.

Influences from China and Korea

QUICK FACTS



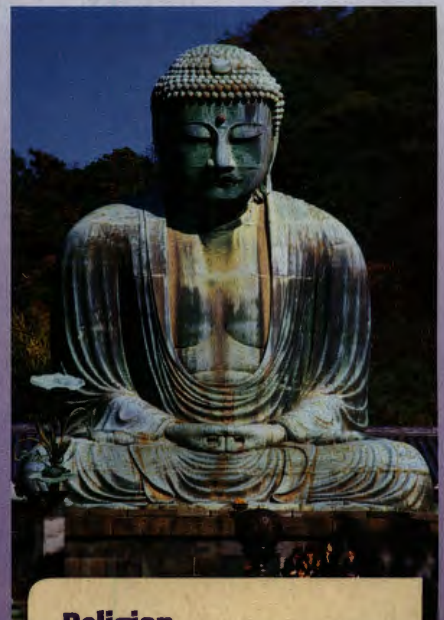
Language

The earliest Japanese writing used Chinese characters.



Philosophy

The ideas of the Chinese philosopher Confucius helped shape Japanese culture and family life.



Religion

Buddhism came to Japan from Korea.

Changes in Language

One of the first things the Japanese learned from China and Korea was language. The early Japanese didn't have a written language. Therefore, many learned to write in Chinese. They continued to speak in Japanese, however, which is very different from Chinese. It wasn't until about 200 years later that people devised a way of writing in Japanese. They used Chinese characters to represent the sounds used in Japanese.

As Japan's contact with China increased, some Japanese people—especially rich and well-educated people—began to write in the Chinese language. Japanese writers used Chinese for their poems and stories. One of the first histories of Japan, written in the 700s, is in Chinese. For many years Chinese was even the official language of Japan's government.

Changes in Religion and Philosophy

One of the people most influential in bringing Chinese ideas to Japan was **Prince Shotoku** (shoh-toh-koo). He served from 593 to 621 as regent (REE-juhnt) for his aunt, the empress. A **regent is a person who rules a country for someone who is unable to rule alone.**

All his life, Prince Shotoku admired Chinese culture. As regent, Shotoku saw a chance for Japan to adopt more Chinese ideas. He sent scholars to China to learn all they could about Chinese society.

The ideas these scholars brought back changed Japanese society. For example, they taught the Japanese about Confucianism.

Prince Shotoku's Japan

Under Prince Shotoku, Buddhism spread across Japan. Shotoku ordered beautiful Buddhist temples to be built, such as the one below in Nara, Japan. The spread of Buddhism changed many areas of Japanese culture during Prince Shotoku's time.



BIOGRAPHY

Prince Shotoku

573–621

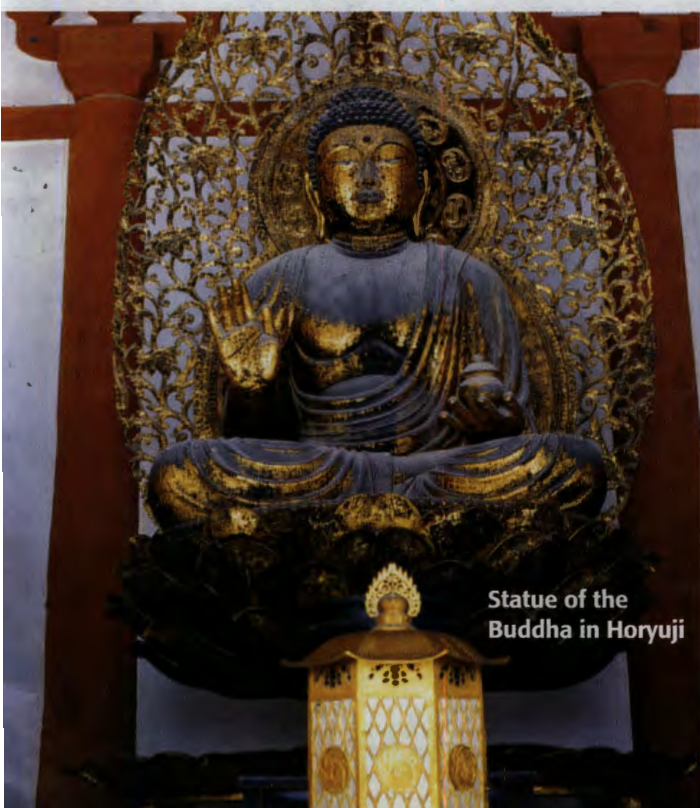
Prince Shotoku was one of Japan's greatest leaders. He helped rule Japan when he was only 20 years old. For many centuries, people have admired him. Legends have developed about his wisdom. According to one early biography, Shotoku was able to talk as soon as he was born and never made a wrong decision.

Horyuji
Temple in
Nara, Japan

Among other things, Confucianism outlined how families should behave. Confucius taught that fathers should rule their families. He believed that wives should obey their husbands, children should obey their parents, and younger brothers should obey older brothers. Families in China lived according to these rules. As Confucian ideas spread through Japan, the Japanese began to live by them as well.

More important than these social changes, though, were the vast religious changes Shotoku made in Japan. He was a Buddhist, and he wanted to spread Buddhism throughout his country. Buddhism wasn't new to Japan. Korean visitors had introduced the religion to Japan about 50 years earlier. But it was not very popular. Most people preferred to keep their traditional religion, Shinto.

Shotoku worked to change people's minds about Buddhism. He built a grand Buddhist temple that still stands today. He also wrote commentaries on Buddhist teachings. Largely because of his efforts, Buddhism became very popular, especially among Japanese nobles.



Statue of the Buddha in Horyuji

Changes in Government

Shotoku also wanted to change Japan's government to be more like China's. He especially wanted Japan's emperors to have more power, like China's emperors did.

Afraid that they would lose power to the emperor, many clan leaders opposed Shotoku's government plans. As a result, Japan's emperors gained little power.

READING CHECK Categorizing What aspects of Chinese society did Shotoku bring to Japan?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW In this section, you learned how early Japan grew and developed. Next you'll see how Japan's emperors encouraged nobles to create great works of art and literature.

Section 1 Assessment

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Online Quiz

KEYWORD: SQ7 HP8

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People HSS 7.5.1, 7.5.2

- Recall** What types of landforms cover most of Japan?
 - Explain** How did Japan's location both separate it from and tie it to China and Korea?
- Define** What is **Shinto**?
 - Sequence** How did the Yamato rulers gain power?
- Explain** How did **Prince Shotoku** help spread Buddhism in Japan?
 - Rate** What do you think was the most important idea the Japanese borrowed from China or Korea? Why?

Critical Thinking

- Categorizing** Draw a graphic organizer like this one. In the circle, list ideas that developed in Japan with no outside influence. In the arrow, list ideas that the Japanese borrowed from other people.



FOCUS ON WRITING

- Taking Notes on Early Japan** Think about the section you have just read. Which details from this section might be appealing to tourists? Write down some thoughts in your notebook. Plan to include them in a section of your travel brochure called "Fun Facts."

Art and Culture in Heian

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Japanese nobles created great art in their court at Heian.
2. Buddhism changed in Japan during the Heian period.

The Big Idea

Japanese culture experienced a golden age during the Heian period of the 800s to the 1100s.

Key Terms and People

court, p. 204

Lady Murasaki Shikibu, p. 205

Zen, p. 208



HSS 7.5.4 Trace the development of distinctive forms of Japanese Buddhism.

7.5.5 Study the ninth and tenth centuries' golden age of literature, art, and drama and its lasting effects on culture today, including Murasaki Shikibu's *Tale of Genji*.

If YOU were there...

You are a noble, serving the empress of Japan and living in the capital city. While walking in the garden one day, she gives you a small book with blank pages. When you ask her why, she says the book is a diary for you to write in. She tells you that nobles, both men and women, keep diaries to record their lives.

What will you write in your new diary?

BUILDING BACKGROUND In 794 the emperor and empress of Japan moved to Heian (HAY-ahn), a city now called Kyoto. Many nobles, like the one you just read about, followed their rulers to the new city. These nobles loved art and beauty, and they tried to make their new home a beautiful place.

Japanese Nobles Create Great Art

The nobles who followed Japan's emperor to Heian wanted to win his favor by living close to him. In Heian, these nobles created an imperial **court**, a group of nobles who live near and serve or advise a ruler.

Members of the noble court had little to do with the common people of Heian. They lived apart from poorer citizens and seldom left the city. These nobles enjoyed their lives of ease and privilege. In fact, their lives were so easy and so removed from the rest of Japan that many nobles called themselves "dwellers among the clouds."

The nobles of this court loved beauty and elegance. Because of this love, many nobles were great supporters of the arts. As a result, the court at Heian became a great center of culture and learning. In fact, the period between 794 and 1185 was a golden age of the arts in Japan.



JOURNAL ENTRY

The Pillow Book

Sei Shonagon (SAY shoh-nah-gohn), author of The Pillow Book, served Japan's empress from 991 to 1000. The Pillow Book was her journal. In it she wrote poems and thoughts about nature as well as descriptions of daily events. Here she describes the first time she met the empress.

“When I first entered her Majesty's service I felt indescribably shy, and was indeed constantly on the verge of tears. When I came on duty the first evening, the Empress was sitting with only a three-foot screen in front of her, and so nervous was I that when she passed me some picture or book to look at, I was hardly capable of putting out my hand to take it. While she was talking about what she wanted me to see—telling me what it was or who had made it—I was all the time wondering whether my hair was in order.”

—Sei Shonagon, from *The Pillow Book*

ANALYSIS
SKILL

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

How did Sei Shonagon feel when she met the empress?

An actress playing Sei Shonagon in the 1800s



Fashion

The nobles' love of beauty began with their own appearances. They had magnificent wardrobes full of silk robes and gold jewelry. Nobles loved elaborate outfits. For example, women wore long gowns made of 12 layers of colored silk cleverly cut and folded to show off many layers at once.

To complete their outfits, nobles often carried delicate decorative fans. These fans were painted with flowers, trees, and birds. Many nobles also attached flowers and long silk cords to their fans.

Literature

In addition to how they looked, Japanese nobles took great care with how they spoke and wrote. Writing was very popular among the nobles, especially among the women. Many women wrote diaries and journals about their lives at court. In their diaries, these women carefully chose their words to make their writing beautiful.

Unlike men, who usually wrote in Chinese, noble women wrote in the Japanese language. As a result, many of the greatest works of early Japanese literature were written by women.

One of the greatest writers in early Japanese history was **Lady Murasaki Shikibu** (moohr-ah-sahk-ee shee-kee-boo). Around 1000, she wrote *The Tale of Genji*. Many historians consider this book to be the world's first full-length novel. Many readers also consider it one of the best.

The Tale of Genji is the story of a prince named Genji and his long quest for love. During his search he meets women from many different social classes.

Many people consider *The Tale of Genji* one of Japan's greatest novels. The characters it describes are very colorful and seem real. In addition, Lady Murasaki's writing is clear and simple but graceful at the same time. She describes court life in Japan with great detail.

Most early Japanese prose was written by women, but both men and women wrote poetry. Nobles loved to read and write poems. Some nobles held parties at which they took turns writing poetry and reading their poems aloud to each other.

Poems from this time usually had only five lines. They followed a specific structure that outlined how many syllables each line could include. Most were about love or nature, but some described everyday events. Here is an example of a nature poem about the end of winter:

“The breezes of spring
Are blowing the ripples astray
Along the water—
Today they will surely melt
The sheet of ice on the pond.”

—Kino Tomonori, from the *Gosenshu*

Visual Art


Besides literature, Japan's nobles also loved the visual arts. The most popular art forms of the period were painting, calligraphy, and architecture.

In their paintings, the nobles of Heian liked bright, bold colors. They also liked paintings that illustrated stories. In fact, many of the greatest paintings from this period illustrate scenes from literature, such as *The Tale of Genji*. Other paintings show scenes from nature or from court life. Many artists painted on doors and furniture rather than on paper.

Another popular form of art in Heian was calligraphy, or decorative writing. Calligraphers spent hours carefully copying poems. They wanted the poems to look as beautiful as they sounded.

The Arts in Heian

Heian was Japan's capital for many centuries. The wealthy nobles who lived there were great supporters of the arts. With their support, literature, painting, calligraphy, and other arts flourished in Heian.



A favorite theme in Japanese painting was *The Tale of Genji*. In this illustration of a scene from the novel, Genji's son is reading a letter as his wife approaches.

Architecture

The nobles of Heian worked to make their city beautiful. They greatly admired Chinese architecture and modeled Heian after the Chinese capital, Chang'an. They copied Chinese building styles, especially in the many temples they built. These styles featured buildings with wooden frames that curved slightly upward at the ends. The wooden frames were often left unpainted to look more natural. Thatched roofs also added to the natural feel.

For other buildings, the nobles liked simple, airy designs. Most buildings were made of wood with tiled roofs and large, open spaces inside. To add to the beauty of these buildings, the nobles surrounded them with elegant gardens and ponds. Similar gardens are still popular in Japan.

Performing Arts

The performing arts were also popular in Japan during the Heian period. The roots of later Japanese drama can be traced back to this time. People often gathered to watch performances by musicians, jugglers, and acrobats. These performances were wild and fun. Especially popular were the plays in which actors skillfully mimicked other people.

In later centuries, these types of performances developed into a more serious form of drama called Noh. Created in the 1300s, Noh plays combine music, speaking, and dance. These plays often tell about great heroes or figures from Japan's past.

THE IMPACT TODAY

Noh plays are still popular in Japan today.

READING CHECK Categorizing What forms of art were popular in the Heian period?



The Buddha was a popular subject for statues in the Heian period.



Japanese writing could be an art form in itself. This album made in the shape of a fan is covered in text and pictures.

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING VISUALS

How does art from this period reflect the culture of Heian?



Many Zen gardens like this one include raked gravel shaped to look like water and small boulders arranged like mountains.

Buddhism Changes

Religion became something of an art form in Heian. The nobles' religion reflected their love of elaborate rituals. Most of the common people in Japan, though equally religious, didn't have the time or money for elaborate rituals. As a result, different forms of Buddhism developed in Japan.

One new form of Buddhism was very popular with Japan's common people. It was called Pure Land Buddhism and didn't require any special rituals. Instead, Pure Land Buddhists chanted the Buddha's name over and over to achieve an enlightened state.

In the 1100s another popular new form of Buddhism called **Zen** arrived from China. Zen Buddhists believed that neither faith nor good behavior led to wisdom. Instead, people seeking wisdom should practice self-discipline and meditation, or quiet thinking. These ideas appealed to many Japanese, especially warriors. As these warriors gained more influence in Japan, so did Zen Buddhism.

READING CHECK Finding Main Ideas How did Buddhism change in Japan?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW At Heian, Japan's emperors presided over an elegant court. In the next section, you'll learn what happened when emperors and the court lost power and prestige.

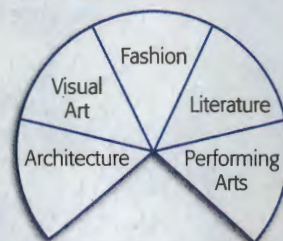
Section 2 Assessment

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People **HSS** 7.5.4, 7.5.5

1. **a. Recall** Where did Japan's court move in the late 700s?
- b. Make Generalizations** Why are the 800s to the 1100s considered a golden age for Japanese literature and art?
- c. Evaluate** Do you think women in Heian had more rights and freedoms than women in other societies? Why or why not?
2. **a. Identify** What were two forms of Buddhism that developed in Japan?
- b. Compare and Contrast** How was religion among Japan's nobles different from religion among the common people?
- c. Elaborate** Why do you think Pure Land Buddhism was popular with common people?

Critical Thinking

3. **Summarizing** Draw a Japanese fan like the one shown here. In each section of the fan, list two contributions that the Japanese made in one of the arts.



FOCUS ON WRITING

4. **Writing about Japanese Art** Japan's nobles left a legacy of beautiful art that today's visitors can still enjoy. Choose two art forms described in this section and take notes for your brochure. What kinds of pictures could you use to illustrate your text?

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Online Quiz

KEYWORD: SQ7 HP8

Lady Murasaki Shikibu

How would you describe the people you observe in life every day?

When did she live? around 1000

Where did she live? Heian

What did she do? Lady Murasaki was a noble and a servant to the Empress Akiko. While in the empress's service, she wrote lively observations of court life in her diaries. She also wrote the novel *The Tale of Genji*.

Why is she important? *The Tale of Genji* is one of the world's oldest novels, and—some would argue—one of the best. Besides entertaining readers for hundreds of years, *The Tale of Genji* describes the daily lives, customs, and attitudes of Japanese nobles of the time.

Drawing Conclusions What qualified Lady Murasaki to comment on upper-class life in Japan?

KEY IDEAS

Observations of Lady Murasaki Shikibu

“Lady Dainagon is very small and refined . . . Her hair is three inches longer than her height.”

“Lady Senji is also a little person, and haughty . . . She puts us to shame, her carriage is so noble.”

“Lady Koshosho, all noble and charming. She is like a weeping-willow tree at budding time. Her style is very elegant and we all envy her her manners.”

—from *The Diary of Lady Murasaki Shikibu*, in *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, edited by Donald Keene

This painting from the 1600s is an illustration of court life from *The Tale of Genji*.



from The Tale of **Genji**

by **Lady Murasaki Shikibu**

translated by *Edward G. Seidensticker*

GUIDED READING

WORD HELP

unprecedented having no equal

equestrian related to horses

mustered gathered together

brocades rich cloths with designs woven into them

cormorants large diving birds

inferiority lower rank

1 What kind of modern-day American event might be compared to the emperor's visit?

2 What do Genji's thoughts and actions tell you about his attitude toward his guests?



HSS 7.5.5 Study the ninth and tenth centuries' golden age of literature, art, and drama and its lasting effects on culture today, including Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji*.

ELA Reading 7.3.3 Analyze characterization as delineated through a character's thoughts, words, speech patterns, and actions; the narrator's description; and the thoughts, words, and actions of other characters.

About the Reading The Tale of Genji was written by Lady Murasaki Shikibu at the height of Japan's golden age. This thousand-page novel traces the life and adventures—especially in love—of a noble known as “the shining Genji.” Although Genji is the favorite son of the emperor, his mother is only a commoner, so Genji cannot inherit the throne. Instead, it passes first to his half-brother Suzaku (soo-zah-koo) and then to Genji's own son. Here, Genji's son and his half-brother Suzaku visit Genji's mansion in Rokujo (roh-koo-joh), a district of Heian.

AS YOU READ Look for details that describe the lives of Japanese nobles.

The emperor paid a state visit to Rokujo late in the Tenth Month. **1** Since the colors were at their best and it promised to be a grand occasion, the Suzaku emperor accepted the invitation of his brother, the present emperor, to join him. It was a most extraordinary event, the talk of the whole court. The preparations, which occupied the full attention of everyone at Rokujo, were unprecedented in their complexity and in the attention to brilliant detail.

Arriving late in the morning, the royal party went first to the equestrian grounds, where the inner guards were mustered for mounted review in the finery usually reserved for the iris festival. There were brocades spread along the galleries and arched bridges and awnings over the open places when, in early afternoon, the party moved to the southeast quarter. The royal cormorants had been turned out with the Rokujo cormorants on the east lake, where there was a handsome take of small fish. Genji hoped that he was not being a fussy and overzealous host, but he did not want a single moment of the royal progress to be dull. **2** The autumn leaves were splendid, especially in Akikonomu's southwest garden. Walls had been taken down and gates opened, and not so much as an autumn mist was permitted to obstruct the royal view. Genji showed his guests to seats on a higher level than his own. The emperor ordered this mark of inferiority dispensed with, and thought again what a satisfaction it would be to honor Genji as his father.

The lieutenants of the inner guards advanced from the east and knelt to the left and right of the stairs before the royal seats, one presenting the take from the pond and the other a brace of fowl taken by the royal falcons in the northern hills. To no Chujo received the royal command to prepare and serve these delicacies. ❸ An equally interesting repast had been laid out for the princes and high courtiers. The court musicians took their places in late afternoon . . . The concert was quiet and unpretentious and there were court pages to dance for the royal guests. It was as always the excursion to the Suzaku Palace so many years before that people remembered. One of To no Chujo's sons, a boy of ten or so, danced "Our Gracious Monarch" most elegantly. The emperor took off a robe and laid it over his shoulders, and To no Chujo himself descended into the garden for ritual thanks . . .

The evening breeze had scattered leaves of various tints to make the ground a brocade as rich and delicate as the brocades along the galleries. The dancers were young boys from the best families, prettily dressed in coronets and the usual grayblues and roses, with crimsons and lavenders showing at their sleeves. They danced very briefly and withdrew under the autumn trees, and the guests regretted the approach of sunset. The formal concert, brief and unassuming, was followed by impromptu music in the halls above, instruments having been brought from the palace collection. As it grew livelier a koto was brought for each of the emperors and a third for Genji. ❹ . . . It was cause for general rejoicing that the two houses should be so close.



A painting of Lady Murasaki Shikibu from around 1700

GUIDED READING

WORD HELP

brace pair

repast meal

unpretentious simple; modest

coronets small crowns

❸ To no Chujo is Genji's best friend. During the Heian period, food preparation was considered an art, and chefs were highly honored for their skill.

❹ A koto is a stringed instrument sometimes called a Japanese harp.

CONNECTING LITERATURE TO HISTORY

1. **Summarizing** The nobles of the court at Heian loved beauty and elegance. Because of this love, many nobles were great supporters of the arts. Based on this passage, what specific arts did Japanese nobles enjoy?
2. **Generalizing** The nobles enjoyed their lives of ease and privilege. What details suggest that Japanese nobles lived lives of luxury?
3. **Evaluating** After reading this passage, what is your overall impression of Japanese court life?

Growth of a Military Society

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Samurai and shoguns took over Japan as emperors lost influence.
2. Samurai warriors lived honorably.
3. Order broke down when the power of the shoguns was challenged by invaders and rebellions.
4. Strong leaders took over and reunified Japan.

The Big Idea

Japan developed a military society led by generals called shoguns.

Key Terms and People

daimyo, p. 212

samurai, p. 212

figurehead, p. 213

shogun, p. 213

Bushido, p. 214



HSS 7.5.3 Describe the values, social customs, and traditions prescribed by the lord-vassal system consisting of *shogun*, *daimyo*, and *samurai* and the lasting influence of the warrior code throughout the twentieth century.

7.5.6 Analyze the rise of a military society in the late twelfth century and the role of the samurai in that society.

If YOU were there...

You are a Japanese warrior, proud of your fighting skills. For many years you've been honored by most of society, but you face an awful dilemma. When you became a warrior, you swore to protect and fight for both your lord and your emperor. Now your lord has gone to war against the emperor, and both sides have called for you to join them.

How will you decide whom to fight for?

BUILDING BACKGROUND Wars between lords and emperors were not uncommon in Japan after 1100. Closed off from society at Heian, emperors had lost touch with the rest of Japan. As a result, order broke down throughout the islands.

Samurai and Shoguns Take Over Japan

By the late 1100s, Heian was the great center of Japanese art and literature. But in the rest of Japan, life was very different. Powerful nobles fought each other over land. Rebels fought against imperial officials. This fighting destroyed land, which made it difficult for peasants to grow food. Some poor people became bandits or thieves. Meanwhile, Japan's rulers were so focused on courtly life, they didn't notice the many problems growing in their country.

The Rise of the Samurai

With the emperor distracted by life in his court, Japan's large landowners, or **daimyo** (DY-mee-oh), decided that they needed to protect their own lands. They hired **samurai** (SA-muh-ry), or **trained professional warriors**, to defend them and their property. The samurai wore light armor and fought with swords and bows. Most samurai came from noble families and inherited their positions from their fathers.

The word *samurai* comes from the Japanese word for “to serve.” Every samurai, from the weakest soldier to the most powerful warrior, was supposed to serve his lord. Because all lords in Japan were supposed to serve the emperor, all samurai were required to be loyal to him.

An army of samurai was expensive to support. Few lords could afford to buy armor and weapons for their warriors. As a result, lords paid their samurai with land or food.

Only the most powerful samurai got land for their service. Most of these powerful samurai didn’t live on the land they received, but they did profit from it. Every year, the peasant farmers who worked on the land gave the samurai money or food. Samurai who received no land were given food—usually rice—as payment.

Shoguns Rule Japan

Many of the nobles outside Heian were unhappy with the way Japan’s government was being run. Frustrated, these nobles wanted a change of leadership. Eventually a few very strong noble clans decided to try to take power for themselves.

Two of these powerful clans went to war with each other in the 1150s. For almost 30 years, the two clans fought. Their fighting was terrible, destroying land and property and tearing families apart.

In the end, the Minamoto clan won. Because he had a very powerful army, and because the emperor was still busy in Heian, the leader of the Minamoto clan was the most powerful man in Japan. He decided to take over ruling the country.

He didn’t, however, want to get rid of the emperor. He kept the emperor as a **figurehead**, a person who appears to rule even though real power rests with someone else. As a samurai, the Minamoto leader was supposed to be loyal to the

emperor, but he decided to rule in the emperor’s place. In 1192 he took the title **shogun**, a general who ruled Japan in the emperor’s name. When he died, he passed his title and power on to one of his children. For about the next 700 years, one shogun would rule in Japan.

READING CHECK Sequencing How did the shogun rise to power in Japan?

Samurai Society

QUICK FACTS



Emperor

The emperor was a figurehead for the powerful shogun.



Shogun

A powerful military leader, the shogun ruled in the emperor’s name.



Daimyo and Samurai

Daimyo were powerful lords who often led armies of samurai. Samurai warriors served the shogun and daimyo.



Peasants

Most Japanese were poor peasants who had no power.

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING VISUALS

Who was the most powerful person in Japan’s samurai society?

FOCUS ON READING

As you read this section, notice how the author avoids using bias or stereotypes.

Samurai Live Honorably

Under the shogun, who were military rulers, samurai warriors became more central to Japanese society. As a result, samurai enjoyed many social privileges. Common people had to treat the samurai with respect. Anyone who disrespected a samurai could be killed.

At the same time, tradition placed restrictions on samurai. For example, they couldn't attend certain types of entertainment, such as theater, which were considered beneath them. They also couldn't take part in trade or commerce.

Bushido

More importantly, all samurai had to follow a strict code of rules that taught them how to behave. **The samurai code of rules was known as Bushido** (BOOH-shi-doh). This name means "the way of the warrior." Both men and women from samurai families had to follow Bushido rules.

Bushido required samurai to be brave and honorable fighters. Both men and women of samurai families learned how to fight, though only men went to war. Women learned to fight so they could protect their homes from robbers.

Japan's Samurai

The samurai were bold, highly trained warriors. They followed a strict code of behavior called Bushido, or "the way of the warrior."

What equipment did samurai have to protect themselves?



Samurai were often called on to fight, like in the scene above. They were expected to serve with honor and loyalty in battle. The samurai in the scene to the right is writing a poem on a cherry tree. Writing poetry helped train the samurai to concentrate.



Samurai wore armor and special helmets. Many carried two swords.



Samurai were expected to live simple, disciplined lives. They believed that self-discipline made them better warriors. To improve their discipline, many samurai participated in peaceful rituals that required great concentration. Some created intricate flower arrangements or grew miniature bonsai trees. Others held elaborate tea ceremonies. Many samurai also adopted Zen Buddhism, which stressed self-discipline and meditation.

More than anything else, Bushido required a samurai to be loyal to his lord. Each samurai had to obey his master's orders without hesitation, even if it caused the samurai or his family to suffer. One samurai expressed his duties in this way:

“If one were to say in a word what the condition of being a samurai is, its basis lies first in seriously devoting one's body and soul to his master.”

—Yamamoto Tsunetomo, from *Hagakure*

Obedying his lord was important to the samurai's sense of honor. Honor was the most important thing in a samurai's life. If he did anything to lose honor, a samurai was expected to commit suicide rather than living with his shame. Such shame might be caused by disobeying an order, losing a fight, or failing to protect his lord.

Bushido and Modern Japan

Although it was created as a code for warriors, Bushido influenced much of Japanese society. Even today, many Japanese feel a connection to the samurai. For example, the samurai's dedication and discipline are still greatly admired in Japan. Values such as loyalty and honor, the central ideas of the samurai code, remain very important in modern Japan.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

values ideas that people hold dear and try to live by

READING CHECK Finding Main Ideas What customs did samurai follow?

LINKING TO TODAY

Modern Samurai

Although the samurai class disappeared from Japan at the end of the 1800s, samurai images and values live on. Fierce samurai appear on posters, in advertisements and movies, and in video games, challenging foes with their sharp swords and deadly skills.

Many people study the same martial arts, such as sword fighting, that the samurai practiced. In addition, the loyalty that samurai felt toward their lords is still a key part of Japanese society. Many Japanese feel that same loyalty toward other groups—their families, companies, or favorite sports teams. Samurai values such as hard work, honor, and sacrifice have also become deeply rooted in Japanese society.



ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING INFORMATION

How are Japan's samurai values still alive today?

Mongol Invasions of Japan



In 1281 the Mongols invaded again. This time they sent two huge armies and threatened to overwhelm the Japanese warriors. For weeks, the two armies were locked in deadly combat.

Once again, though, the weather helped the Japanese. A huge storm swept over Japan, sinking most of the Mongol fleet. Many Mongol soldiers drowned, and many more returned to China. The grateful Japanese called the storm that had saved them the *kamikaze* (kah-mi-kah-zee), or “divine wind.” They believed the gods had sent the storm to save Japan.

But many nobles were left unhappy by the war. They didn’t think the shogun gave them enough credit for their part in the fighting. Many came to resent the shogun’s power over them.

Order Breaks Down

For about a century, the shoguns kept order in Japan. Supported by the samurai, the shoguns were able to put down challenges to their authority. Eventually, however, more serious challenges arose that brought this order to an end.

Foreign Invasion

One of the greatest challenges to the shoguns was an invasion by the Mongols from China. China’s emperor, Kublai Khan, sent an army to conquer the islands in 1274. Faced with invasion, the shogun sent troops to fight the Mongols. In addition, Japan’s warring nobles put aside their differences to fight the enemy. The Japanese warriors were aided by a great storm. The storm sank many Mongol ships and forced the Mongols to flee.

Internal Rebellion

After the Mongol invasion, new problems arose for the shogun. The emperor, tired of having no say in the government, began to fight the shogun for control of the country. At the same time daimyo, the nobles who owned much of Japan’s land, fought to break free of the shogun’s control. During these struggles for power, small wars broke out all over Japan.

By the 1400s the shoguns had lost most of their authority. The emperor was still largely powerless, and daimyo ruled much of Japan. Each daimyo controlled his own territory. Within that territory, he made laws and collected taxes. There was no powerful central authority of any sort to impose order in Japan.

READING CHECK Summarizing What challenges appeared to the shogun’s authority?

Strong Leaders Take Over

Soon new leaders rose to power. They began as local rulers, but these men wanted more power. In the 1500s, each fought to unify all of Japan under his control.

Unification

The first such leader was Oda Nobunaga (ohd-ah noh-booh-nah-gah). Oda gave his soldiers guns that had been brought to Japan by Portuguese traders. This was the first time guns had been used in Japan. With these new weapons, Oda easily defeated his opponents.

After Oda died, other leaders continued his efforts to unify Japan. By 1600, one of them, Tokugawa Ieyasu (toh-kooHg-ah-wuh ee-e-yahs-ooh), had conquered his enemies. In 1603 Japan's emperor made Tokugawa shogun. From his capital at Edo (AY-doh)—now Tokyo—Tokugawa ruled all of Japan.

Tokugawa's rise to power began the Tokugawa shogunate (SHOH-guhn-uht), or rule by shoguns of the Tokugawa family. Early in this period, which lasted until 1868, Japan traded with other countries and let Christian missionaries live in Japan.

Isolation

Not all of the shoguns who followed Tokugawa liked this contact with the world, though. Some feared that Japan would become too much like Europe, and the shoguns would lose their power. To prevent such a thing from happening, in the 1630s the ruling shogun closed Japan off from the rest of the world.

Japan's rulers also banned guns. They feared that peasants with guns could defeat their samurai armies. The combination of isolation from the world and limited technology helped extend the samurai period in Japan until the 1800s, far longer than it might have otherwise lasted.

READING CHECK Drawing Conclusions How did Japan change in the Tokugawa shogunate?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW By the 1100s, the growing power of shoguns, daimyo, and samurai had turned Japan into a military society. In the next chapter you will read about a similar military society that developed in Europe.

Section 3 Assessment

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Online Quiz

KEYWORD: SQ7 HP8

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

HSS 7.5.3,
7.5.6

1. **a. Recall** What was the relationship between **samurai** and **daimyo**?
b. Elaborate Why do you think the first **shogun** wanted to keep the emperor as a **figurehead**?
2. **a. Define** What was **Bushido**?
b. Explain Why did samurai take up pursuits like flower arranging?
3. **a. Identify** Who invaded Japan in the 1270s and 1280s?
b. Summarize How did the daimyo help weaken the shoguns?
4. **Identify** What strong leaders worked to unify Japan in the late 1500s?

Critical Thinking

5. **Analyzing Information** Draw a word web like the one here. In the center, write a sentence that describes the samurai. In each outer circle, write one of the samurai's jobs, duties, or privileges.



FOCUS ON WRITING

6. **Describing the Samurai** A Japanese history museum will offer a special exhibit on the samurai warrior. Add notes about the samurai to encourage tourists to visit the exhibit. Tell who they were, what they did, and how they lived.

Social Studies Skills

Analysis

Critical
Thinking

Participation

Study

Solving Problems

Understand the Skill

Problem solving is a process for finding good solutions to difficult situations. It involves asking questions, identifying and evaluating information, comparing and contrasting, and making judgments. It is useful in studying history because it helps you better understand problems a person or group faced in the past and how they dealt with those issues.

The ability to understand and evaluate how people solved problems in the past also can help in solving similar problems today. The skill can be applied to many other kinds of difficulties besides historical ones. It is a method for thinking through almost any situation.

Learn the Skill

Using the following steps will help you to better understand and solve problems.

- 1 Identify the problem.** Ask questions of yourself and others. This first step helps you to be sure you know exactly what the situation is. It also helps you understand why it is a problem.
- 2 Gather information.** Ask other questions and do research to learn more about the problem. For example, what is its history? What caused the problem? What contributes to it?
- 3 List options.** Based on the information you have gathered, identify possible options for solving the problem. It will be easier to find a good solution if you have several options.
- 4 Evaluate the options.** Weigh each option you are considering. Think of the advantages it has as a solution. Then think of its potential

disadvantages. It may help you to compare your options if you make a list of advantages and disadvantages for each possible solution.

- 5 Choose and apply a solution.** After comparing the advantages and disadvantages of each possible solution, choose the one that seems best and apply it.
- 6 Evaluate the solution.** Once the solution has been tried, evaluate how effective it is in solving the problem. This step will tell you if the solution was a good one, or if you should try another of the options instead. It will also help you know what to do in the future if you happen to face the same problem again.

Practice and Apply the Skill

Read again the "If you were there" in Section 3. Imagine that you are the samurai warrior with this problem. You can apply the steps for solving problems to help you decide what to do. Review the information in the section about the samurai and this time period in Japan's history. Then, in the role of the samurai warrior, answer the questions below.

1. What is the specific problem that you face? Why is it a problem?
2. What events led to your problem? What circumstances and conditions have contributed to it?
3. What options can you think of to solve your problem? List the advantages and disadvantages of each.
4. Which of your options seems to be the best solution for your problem? Explain why. How will you know if it is a good solution?

Standards Review

Visual
Summary

Use the visual summary below to help you review the main ideas of the chapter.



Japan's early culture was influenced by China and Korea.



A golden age of Japanese art and culture occurred during Japan's Heian Period.

QUICK
FACTS

After the Heian Period, the Japanese created a military society.

Reviewing Vocabulary,
Terms, and People

Unscramble each group of letters below to spell a term that matches the given definition.

1. etrgne—a person who rules in someone else's name
2. misaaru—a Japanese warrior
3. aclsn—large, extended families
4. elauvs—ideas that people hold dear
5. uctro—a group of nobles who surround a ruler
6. nguosh—a great Japanese general who ruled instead of the emperor
7. enz—a form of Japanese Buddhism
8. osnith—a nature religion that began in Japan
9. odmiya—Japanese lords who gave land to samurai
10. kosouth—prince who introduced many Chinese ideas to Japan
11. rctusrteu—the way something is set up

Comprehension and
Critical ThinkingSECTION 1 (Pages 198–203) **HSS 7.5.1, 7.5.2**

12. **a. Identify** Who was Prince Shotoku, and what did he do?
- b. Compare and Contrast** Why was Japan isolated from China and Korea? How did China and Korea still affect Japan?
- c. Predict** How would Japan's physical geography affect the development of Japanese government and society?

SECTION 2 (Pages 204–208) **HSS 7.5.4, 7.5.5**

13. **a. Recall** Why is Murasaki Shikibu a major figure in the history of Japanese culture?
- b. Analyze** What made the period between the 800s and the 1100s a golden age of the arts in Japan?
- c. Evaluate** Would you like to have been a member of the imperial court at Heian? Why or why not?

- 14. a. Define** What was the Tokugawa shogunate?
- b. Analyze** How did Japan develop into a military society? What groups made up that society?
- c. Elaborate** What was daily life like for the samurai?

Reviewing Themes

- 15. Politics** What role did warriors play in Japan's government after the 1100s?
- 16. Society and Culture** How was society under the shoguns different from society during the Heian period?
- 17. Society and Culture** How did Bushido affect modern Japanese culture?

Reading Skills

Identifying Bias and Stereotypes *The passage below is from a Chinese history written in the 500s. It describes Japan, which the Chinese called Wa. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.*

“During the reigns of Huan-di (147–168) and Ling-di (168–189), the country of Wa was in a state of great confusion, war and conflict raging on all sides. For a number of years, there was no ruler. Then a woman named Pimiko appeared. Remaining unmarried, she occupied herself with magic and sorcery and bewitched the populace. Thereupon they placed her on the throne. She kept one thousand female attendants, but few people saw her.”

- 18.** Do you think the writer of this passage shows bias against Pimiko as a ruler?
- 19.** What words or phrases from the passage support your opinion?
- 20.** What does this passage suggest about ancient Chinese stereotypes of unmarried women?

Using the Internet

go.hrw.com
KEYWORD: SQ7 WH8

- 21. Activity: Drawing a Comic Strip** A strong military influence affected the governing structure of Japan. Eventually, warriors and generals gained power in Japan as emperors lost some of it. Enter the activity keyword and create a comic strip, similar in style to Japanese anime, about the people who held power. Your characters should include a shogun, a daimyo, a samurai, and an emperor.

Social Studies Skills

- 22. Solving Problems** Imagine that you are a samurai warrior who has been called upon to help fight the Mongol invasion. You are stationed in a small village that is directly in the path of the Mongol army. Some people in the village want to stay and fight the Mongols, but you know they will be killed if they try to fight. The town's leaders want your opinion about what they should do. Write down one or two ideas you might suggest for how to save the people of the village. For each idea, make notes about what consequences your proposed action may have.

FOCUS ON WRITING

- 23. Creating Your Travel Brochure** Look back over your notes from this chapter, and then create a travel brochure that describes Japan's historic attractions. Keep your writing brief—remember that you have to get your audience's attention with just a few words. To help get their attention, draw or find pictures to illustrate your travel brochure.

Standards Assessment

DIRECTIONS: Read each question, and write the letter of the best response.

1

I was brought up in a distant province which lies farther than the farthest end of the Eastern Road. I am ashamed to think that inhabitants of the Royal City will think me an uncultured girl.

Somehow I came to know that there are such things as romances in the world and wished to read them. When there was nothing to do by day or at night, one tale or another was told me by my elder sister or stepmother, and I heard several chapters about the shining Prince Genji.

From the content of this passage, it can be concluded that its author was a

- A samurai warrior.
- B noble woman from Heian.
- C farmer from northern Japan.
- D daimyo.

2 The importance of loyalty, honor, and discipline in Japanese society today are *mainly* the result of what influence in Japan's history?

- A the code of the samurai
- B the teachings of Shinto
- C the reforms of Prince Shotoku
- D the spread of Chinese Buddhism

3 Most great works of early Japanese literature were written by

- A Buddhist scholars.
- B samurai warriors.
- C Shinto priests.
- D noble women.

4 The influence of China and Korea on Japan's history, culture, and development is found in all of the following *except*

- A Japan's first writing system.
- B the traditional Japanese diet.
- C early rules for family behavior.
- D the practice of Buddhism.

5 The main function of samurai in Japanese society was to

- A write poetry.
- B manage farmland.
- C defend lords.
- D conquer China.

Connecting with Past Learnings

6 Early Japanese society under the clans was not a single unified country but many small states. This type of government *most* resembled that of

- A the early city-states of ancient Greece.
- B the Roman Empire during the Pax Romana.
- C the Old Kingdom of ancient Egypt.
- D the New Kingdom of ancient Egypt.

7 The nobles of Heian placed great emphasis on art and learning, just like the people of which ancient Greek city-state that you learned about in Grade 6?

- A Sparta
- B Athens
- C Macedonia
- D Troy

Assignment

Write a paper comparing and contrasting one of the following: (1) the achievements of the Tang and Song dynasties in China, (2) the life of nobles in the Heian court and the life of samurai warriors.

Comparing Cultures and People

To understand people and events of the past, we often compare and contrast them. When we study how two things or people are alike and different, we learn more about each of them. We begin to see them both more clearly.

1. Prewrite

Getting Started

Begin by choosing one of the topics in the assignment. Then collect some information on the topic you have chosen. Use that information to decide on your big idea. Here are two examples of big ideas on these topics:

- Both the Tang and the Song dynasties brought technical and cultural advancements to China.
- Both the nobles of Heian and the samurai had many social privileges, but they lived very different lives.

Organizing Your Information

Essays that compare and contrast usually are organized one of two ways.

- **Block Style** For example, write everything you have to say about the Tang dynasty. Then write everything you have to say about the Song dynasty. Discuss the points of comparison in the same order for each dynasty.
- **Point-by-Point Style** Discuss the points of comparison one at a time. Explain how the dynasties are alike and different on one point of comparison, then another, then another. Discuss the two dynasties in the same order for each point of comparison.

2. Writing

Here is a framework you can use to write your first draft.

TIP Looking for Points of

Comparison As you collect information, look for two or three characteristics you can compare. For example, you might compare Tang and Song art, inventions, and government. You might compare the pastimes, privileges, and contributions to society of the Heian nobles and the samurai.



ELA Writing 7.2.0 Students write expository text of at least 500–700 words.

A Writer's Framework

Introduction

- Begin with a question or interesting fact related to the two subjects you are comparing and contrasting.
- State your big idea, or thesis, about the two subjects.

Body

- Use block or point-by-point organization.
- Use three points of comparison.
- Support your points with specific historical facts, details, and examples.

Conclusion

- Summarize the points you made.
- Restate your big idea in different words.

3. Evaluate and Revise

Evaluating

Use these questions to discover ways to improve your draft.

Evaluation Questions for a Comparison/Contrast Paper

- Do you begin with a question or interesting fact related to the two subjects?
- Do you state your big idea, or thesis, in the introduction?
- Do you use at least three points of comparison/contrast?
- Do you organize your points of comparison with either the block style or point-by-point style?
- Do you support your points of comparison with appropriate historical facts, details, and examples?
- Do you summarize your points of comparison in the conclusion?
- Do you restate your big idea in different words?

Revising

Read your essay out loud. If you run out of breath before you get to the end of a sentence, you may have some “stringy” sentences. Stringy sentences have many ideas connected with *and*, *but*, *or* or *so*. You can fix a stringy sentence by breaking it up into separate sentences.

Stringy The Ainu began to fight with other people for land but they lost most of these fights and so they lost their land and were driven back to an island.

Not Stringy The Ainu began to fight with others for land. Because they lost most of these fights, they lost their land as well. They were driven back to an island.

4. Proofread and Publish

Proofread

If you break a stringy sentence up into separate sentences, be sure to use correct end punctuation and capitalization. Check to be sure you have capitalized the first word in each new sentence and ended with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.

Publish

Compare your paper with another student’s paper on the same topic. How are your papers similar? How are they different?

Practice and Apply

Use the steps and strategies outlined in this workshop to write your comparison/contrast paper.

TIP

Using Relevant Facts

When you read your draft, look for and remove irrelevant facts. These are facts that are not directly related to the topic.

One culture that developed in Japan was the Ainu. Historians aren’t sure exactly when or how the Ainu moved to Japan.

[*relevant*] The people who lived south of the Ainu were farmers.

[*irrelevant*] Wherever the Ainu came from, they spoke a language unlike any other in eastern Asia.

[*relevant*]