

Lesson Plan(s) Rationale

The following lessons were designed for use primarily in Honors or AP World History classes. There are a number of historical periods in the course of the year in which lessons about Japan receive little attention. It is almost as if Japan enters the world stage only after its rapid industrialization in the latter half of the 19th century. Not only does this approach teeter on Eurocentrism, it neglects the rich urban and economic development Japan enjoyed and encouraged at various times in history.

The lessons highlight two energetic periods in cultural advancement and imperial rule: The adoption of Buddhism and other cultural practice from mainland Asia, and the flourishing of Edo during the Tokugawa Shogunate. Each lesson is adaptable to longer or shorter timeframes and to standard academic classes. Not only will students gain an understanding of urban development in Japan, each lesson can be used to elicit comparisons to urban developments in other parts of the world in the same eras.

Lesson Plan – City of Nara

Objectives:

Students will understand that, "As states and empires increased in size and contacts between regions intensified, human communities transformed their religious and ideological beliefs and practices" (AP College Board 49).

Students will be able to explain how Chang'an's influence on Nara demonstrates thematic strands of culture, global connections, and power, authority, and governance.

Students will describe particular similarities and differences between the Tang capital of Chang'an and the Japanese capital city of Nara.

Summary of Tasks/Actions:

1. Remind students of their learning regarding the Tang capital -- its site, cultural and economic activities, and political status, etc.
2. Distribute maps of Chang'an's layout and Nara's. Prompt students to identify the key features in each map that look similar (e.g. the imperial palace, the wide south to north avenue, the grid system). If time permits, project images of important Buddhist sites in and around Nara (e.g. Todai-ji, Horyu-ji, and Kasuga Taisha).
3. Distribute readings about the origins of Nara. Students will complete readings in preparation for the AP style short answer question to be completed in class. Allow approximately five minutes for silent reading.
4. Project the Short Answer Question prompts. Students are to complete answers in 12-15 minutes.
5. If time remains, discuss the particular differences between the two cities (no heavily fortified walls in Nara) and the importance of Buddhism as an institution to reinforce political authority.
6. Extension Activity: Students will, with reference to origin and purpose, evaluate the Confucian and state-building principles in Clauses 1, 2, 4 and 6 of the Constitution of Prince Shotoku.

Materials/Equipment:

Printed handouts, projection equipment,

See attachments

References:

See attachment

Handout—The Japanese Capital of Nara

Nara, officially named Heijo-kyo, was established in 710 as Japan's first imperial capital city. Today it reflects the deep roots of Japan's indigenous religion, Shinto, as well as the expanding contact Japan maintained with the Tang Dynasty of China.

Although 710 marks the beginning of Nara as a capital, the circumstances leading to its existence began much earlier. Japan had adapted Chinese writing methods for imperial recordkeeping as well as literary works. By the latter part of the sixth century, Japan's ruling elites, led by Prince Shotoku (574-622) had adopted Buddhism from China as well.

In order to obtain Buddhist texts and teachers and to learn Chinese administrative techniques, the Japanese sent nineteen missions (*Kentoshi*) to China between 607 and 839. They were not alone. The Tang capital of Chang'an was much admired by rulers throughout the eastern hemisphere, and missions arrived from as far away as Persia and the Byzantine Empire. It was common practice for the Chinese court to give the emissaries from faraway lands gifts of silk and other luxuries. Chronicles from China indicate that the Japanese exchanged the silk and other goods for Buddhist texts before returning to China (Moriyasu).

Within a century, the Japanese built Nara almost as a copy of Chang'an. The layout of the cities is strikingly similar with imperial palace compounds and a broad avenue running north to south. Nara had decorative gates and walls but not the heavily fortified walls of the Chinese capital city. A number of factors may explain the lack of strong fortifications. Nara is famous for its numerous and historically very wealthy Buddhist temples. The largest is Todai-ji, housing a bronze statue of the Buddha over fifty feet tall (McKay, *et al.* 202).

Heijo-Kyo, or Nara, remained the imperial capital until the court moved to what is now Kyoto, also directly modeled after Chang'an.

SAQ Style I – Secondary Source, Periods 2-3

Use the maps, readings, and your knowledge of world history to answer all parts of the question that follows.

1. Describe two specific similarities between the layout of capital city Chang'an and the capital of Japan, Nara.
2. Explain one difference in the construction of the two capitals and the reason(s) for the difference.
3. Explain two reasons the Japanese rulers were able to reinforce their own power and authority through cultural borrowing from Tang China.

What Built Edo? Coercion, Classes, Commercialism, Conservation

Goal:

Students will gain an understanding of the complexities of Tokugawa era Edo and demonstrate knowledge regarding 17th century state building, economic structures, social classes, and interactions with the environment in Japan.

Objectives:

1. Students will investigate and accurately describe the political power of the daimyo and samurai under the rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate.
2. Students will identify the four official social classes under the Tokugawa Shogunate.
3. Students will explain the importance of rice markets in 17th century Japan and the growth of a cash economy.
4. Students will identify and explain how the residents of the city of Edo and the peasants in the surrounding countryside that supported it used principles of conservation to sustain population and commercial growth in the 17th century.

Vocabulary:

Shogun, daimyo, samurai, peasant, artisan, alternate residence system

Motivation and Discussion:

Remind students that after years of civil strife, Japan has been unified under the rule of Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1600. Like other early modern rulers he sought to control the power of the warrior/noble classes.

Use images of Versailles and St. Petersburg to elicit discussion from students regarding their prior learning about the ways European rulers used imposing architecture and elegant palaces to reinforce their requirements that nobles live nearby where their movements could be controlled.

Ask students to explain general economic effects of building palaces, cities, and large groups of people moving to those locations.

Activities:

Day One – After the discussion outlined above, assign students to read textbook or online encyclopedia accounts of the Tokugawa Shogunate in the 17th and 18th centuries. Students are to take notes on the particular status enjoyed by the daimyo and the samurai, what the “alternate residence system” entailed for the military class and their families, as well as the growth of rice markets and production by artisans in the urban areas of the Tokugawa era. If the readings suffice, students should take further notes on the growth of urban entertainments such as *kabuki* theater.

Homework – Complete reading and notetaking.

Day Two – After a few warm up questions to check for student understanding of the vocabulary and concepts described above, distribute to each student long pieces of drawing paper. Students are to fold the sheets in half, and then in half again so that the sheet can be folded and unfolded like a pamphlet, longer than it is wide when closed. Students will use their notes to complete the following sections.

The left-hand (cover) section is to be labeled “17th and 18th Century Edo” and list a few general facts about the city and era. The second will be labeled “Alternate Residence System” and list pertinent facts about the rules to which the warrior class was subject. The third will be labeled “Peasants and Artisans” and bullet points will explain why peasants traditionally had higher status than artisans, and also explain what each group produced. The last section will be labeled “Commercial Rice Trade”, and bullet points will explain how it grew in Osaka and other cities as well as the status of merchants in Japanese society.

If the students adequately completed notes the day’s activities should not take more than 30 minutes. Encourage students to illustrate each section, but they may have to complete the illustrations after class.

Use remaining class time to have students discuss these questions with their study partners:

1. What characteristics of the Tokugawa government were most distinctive? What characteristics showed similarities to other states and rulers of the 17th and 18th centuries?
2. Is social status enforceable by the state? Use examples from the warriors, peasants, artisans, and merchants to support your answer.
3. How did Japan support significant population growth and commercial expansion on very limited land and with somewhat limited overseas trade?

Distribute a “Handout” to each student. Students will have a text-driven discussion on Day Three as the culminating activity, so remind them to check the instructions. They must read the handout carefully, watch the assigned videos, and fill in conservation activities that groups in society took part in. Those will be listed on the back of each appropriate panel of the pamphlet. Students may use their pamphlets during the class discussion. Students must prepare in order to effectively discuss the questions on Day Three.

Day Three—Depending on the size of the class, students may be in one large group or two smaller groups for discussion. Assign one student to be the secretary who marks which students volunteered answers, encouraged others to contribute to the discussion, or asked further questions than those provided on the handout. During the discussion, students should demonstrate knowledge about the Tokugawa era in Edo but should also be willing to reflect on what information they need to fully understand the growth of Edo in the 17th and 18th centuries. Asking pertinent questions is as important as answering prompts.

Assessment:

Did students complete the brochure with adequate and accurate information?

Did students fully participate in the discussion with partners on Day Two?

Did students fully participate in the class discussion on Day Three?

Some consideration/extension for illustrations of the pamphlet.

Handout

Complete all instructions before class discussion on Day Three.

1. Read this handout thoroughly.
2. View and take notes on Azby Brown's "Lessons from Pre-Industrial Japan" available at this address. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pBOJuqjtjM>
3. View and take notes on Azby Brown's TEDxTokyo Talk available at this address. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1D7qc8nc2Ng>
4. Add information about conservation efforts in Edo to your pamphlet before the class discussion on Day Three. Place information about the samurai and daimyo on the back of the panel labeled "Alternate Residence System". Information about peasants and artisans goes on the back of that panel. Information about merchants and traders engaged in conservation should be placed on the back of the section labeled "Commercial Rice Trade".
5. Consider the following questions for discussion on Day Three. Bring in your own questions as well.
 - A. What were the benefits and drawbacks of a distinctive class system in Tokugawa Japan?
 - B. In what ways did the alternate residence system promote economic growth in 17th and 18th century Japan?
 - C. To what extent were conservation efforts important in promoting economic growth in 17th and 18th century Edo?
 - D. In your judgment, did people in Edo and its environs react more to orders from those above or more to other incentives in pursuing economic and conservation activities?

Writer Azby Brown argues that after decades of civil strife in the 16th century, Japan faced numerous environmental and economic stresses, yet the country, and especially the city of Edo, was able to turn around the potential for disaster and build an essentially self-sustaining and comfortable way of life through extensive conservation efforts.

One of the first efforts involved conserving and expanding much-depleted forest resources. Some of this was accomplished from the top down. The Tokugawa government organized a count of trees by type and location throughout the land. Then a sensible program of re-forestation could be undertaken, and the government distributed printed texts with instructions concerning the best forestry practices. In the meantime, traditional practices of peasants and other workers in Japan taking only fallen wood from forests for fuel and other uses prevailed. Logging businesses established procedures to move wood with the least loss and damage to sites where it would be used. It became common practice to build houses and other structures according to standard measures and practices so that logged wood could be used most efficiently. With standardization, it became possible to reuse portions of older buildings on new sites.

Recycling was not restricted to logging. In fact, recycling and repairing goods became a way of life for residents on all levels of the social hierarchy. Tinkering and locksmithing trades grew from the reuse of metal objects. Others specialized in repairing broken pottery or cabinetry in homes. Used paper, umbrellas, and even human waste were collected by entrepreneurs to be reworked into useful items or distributed to farms for fertilizer. Kimonos are particularly suited to being taken apart, dyed again, and reassembled into usable garments. No cloth was thrown away. Worn pieces could be used as rags, and smaller pieces in good condition could be used as bags and other items. Even the worn out straw sandals, hats, and rain capes of the peasants could be used as mulch or in composting piles.

Brown explains much about water use and food production in the two videos you will watch. It is interesting to note that land use was important in the cities, too. Edo provides a good example. There

were approximately 650,000 residents of the samurai-daimyo class in Edo, occupying over sixty percent of the land. On the other hand, another 600,000 commoner residents occupied slightly less than 20% of the land in Edo. As rice stipends provided less and less for the samurai and daimyo families to live on, urban farming became more of a necessity. Large plots in the city allowed members of this class to cultivate fruit trees, pine trees for nuts, and extensive vegetable gardens. Merchants often made their way into the privileged neighborhoods of Edo, not to set up shop, but to deliver foodstuffs and other goods that the women of the upper classes would not be able to obtain in the marketplace because of restrictions on their movements.

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