

SECTION
2

Reading for Understanding

▶ Key Ideas

BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

Japan is a chain of islands that lies off the coast of China and the Korean Peninsula.

NOW YOU WILL LEARN

Over the centuries, Japan has adapted ideas and technologies from other lands and created a unique culture.

▶ Vocabulary

TERMS & NAMES

Heian (hay•ahn) **period** the era in Japanese history from A.D. 794 to 1185; arts and writing flourished during this time

samurai (SAM•uh•RY) professional soldiers of Japan

shogun the leader of the military government of Japan beginning in 1192

daimyo (DY•mee•OH) powerful samurai who became warrior-chieftains

Tokugawa Ieyasu (TOH•koo•GAH•wah EE•yeh•YAH•soo) shogun who unified Japan

Shinto Japan's original religion; involves worshipping gods believed to be found in nature

BACKGROUND VOCABULARY

clan a group of families related through a common ancestor

REVIEW

emperor a man who is the ruler of an empire



Visual Vocabulary statue of daimyo draped with war flag

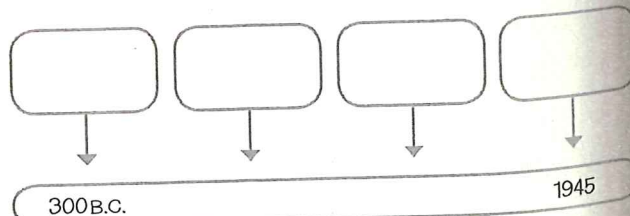
▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the time line shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the time line to keep track of some of Japan's important historical and cultural events.



See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R6

SEQUENCE EVENTS



GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Go to Interactive Review @ ClassZone.com



SECTION
2

HISTORY & CULTURE



Samurai to Animé

Connecting to Your World

Have you ever played a video game or watched an animated film? If so, you have probably used a product from Japan. Japanese culture has strongly influenced culture in the United States and throughout the world. But the reverse has also been true. Hundreds of years ago, several cultures played an important role in shaping Japanese culture. In this section, you will learn what these cultures were and how they affected Japan.



Isolated Nation to World Power

KEY QUESTION How did Japan change from an isolated nation to a world power?

The first influences on Japanese culture probably arrived from China and Korea around 300 B.C. At this time, Japanese families were organized into **clans**, who fought over land. Eventually, the Yamato family became the leading clan and established a member of its family as ruler, or **emperor**. The Yamato line of emperors continues to this day.

Video Games Only the United States sells more video games than Japan.

Influence from China Buddhism arrived in Japan from China. This statue of Buddha in Kyoto reflects China's influence.



Heian Period In the late 700s, the emperor moved his court from the capital of Nara to Heian (hay•ahn), which is modern Kyoto (kee•OH•toh). Heian remained the center of Japan's government for about 400 years. This era in Japanese history, which lasted from 794 to 1185, is called the **Heian period**.

Art and writing flourished during this period. Men and women of the nobility filled their days by painting and writing poetry and prose. In fact, one of the best accounts of Heian society was written by Lady Murasaki Shikibu (MOO•rah•SAH•kee SHEE•kee•boo). Her masterpiece, *The Tale of Genji*, is an account of the life of a prince in the emperor's court. The work is considered the world's first novel.

Samurai and Shoguns During the Heian period, the central government was relatively strong. However, by the mid-1000s, this power had begun to decrease. Wealthy clans bought large areas of land and set up private armies. The countryside became lawless and dangerous. As a result, smaller landowners sold parts of their land to strong warlords in exchange for protection. With more land, the lords gained more power. Soon, wars between rival lords became commonplace. To defend himself, each lord surrounded himself with a bodyguard of loyal warriors called **samurai** (SAM•uh•RY).

COMPARING Samurai & Knights

Samurai were similar to knights, a class of warriors that formed in medieval Europe. Here is how the two groups compare.



JAPANESE SAMURAI

Live by code of honor and value bravery and loyalty to their lord above all else

Prefer death to defeat

Expect women to live up to same values of honor and courage; women can fight as samurai

Enter into battle with iron and leather armor, swords, and bows and arrows

EUROPEAN KNIGHTS

Value bravery and loyalty to heavenly God, earthly lord, and chosen lady

Show humility

Regard women as weak creatures to be idolized and defended

Fight battles with chain mail or plate armor, broadsword, and lance



CRITICAL THINKING

Compare and Contrast What are some similarities and differences between Japanese samurai and European knights?

During the 1100s, two powerful clans fought for control—the Taira (TY•rah) and the Minamoto. Each clan had a large samurai army. After about 30 years of war, the Minamoto gained control. This clan set up a military government in Kamakura. In 1192, the leader of this government was given the title of **shogun**, which means “supreme general of the emperor’s army.” Although the emperor still reigned, the shogun held real power. This pattern of government, in which shoguns ruled through puppet emperors, lasted until 1867.

Unified Japan Between 1192 and 1600, Japan was torn by internal warfare. Peasants had to fight to defend their villages. Sometimes, they hired samurai to protect them. Very powerful samurai arose and became warrior-chieftains called **daimyo** (DY•mee•OH), who became lords in their own right. The daimyo formed armies and fought for military supremacy.

Finally, in 1600, a daimyo named **Tokugawa Ieyasu** (TOH•koo•GAW•wah EE•yeh•YAH•soo) restored order. Three years later, he became shogun and unified Japan. He then moved the capital to his base at Edo, a small fishing village that would later become the city of Tokyo.

The Tokugawa shogunate held power until 1868. During this time, Japan enjoyed a period of stability—and isolation. For more than 200 years, the country was closed to Westerners.

Himeji Castle Tokugawa Ieyasu’s son-in-law built the castle after he helped win the battle that brought Ieyasu to power.



HISTORY MAKERS

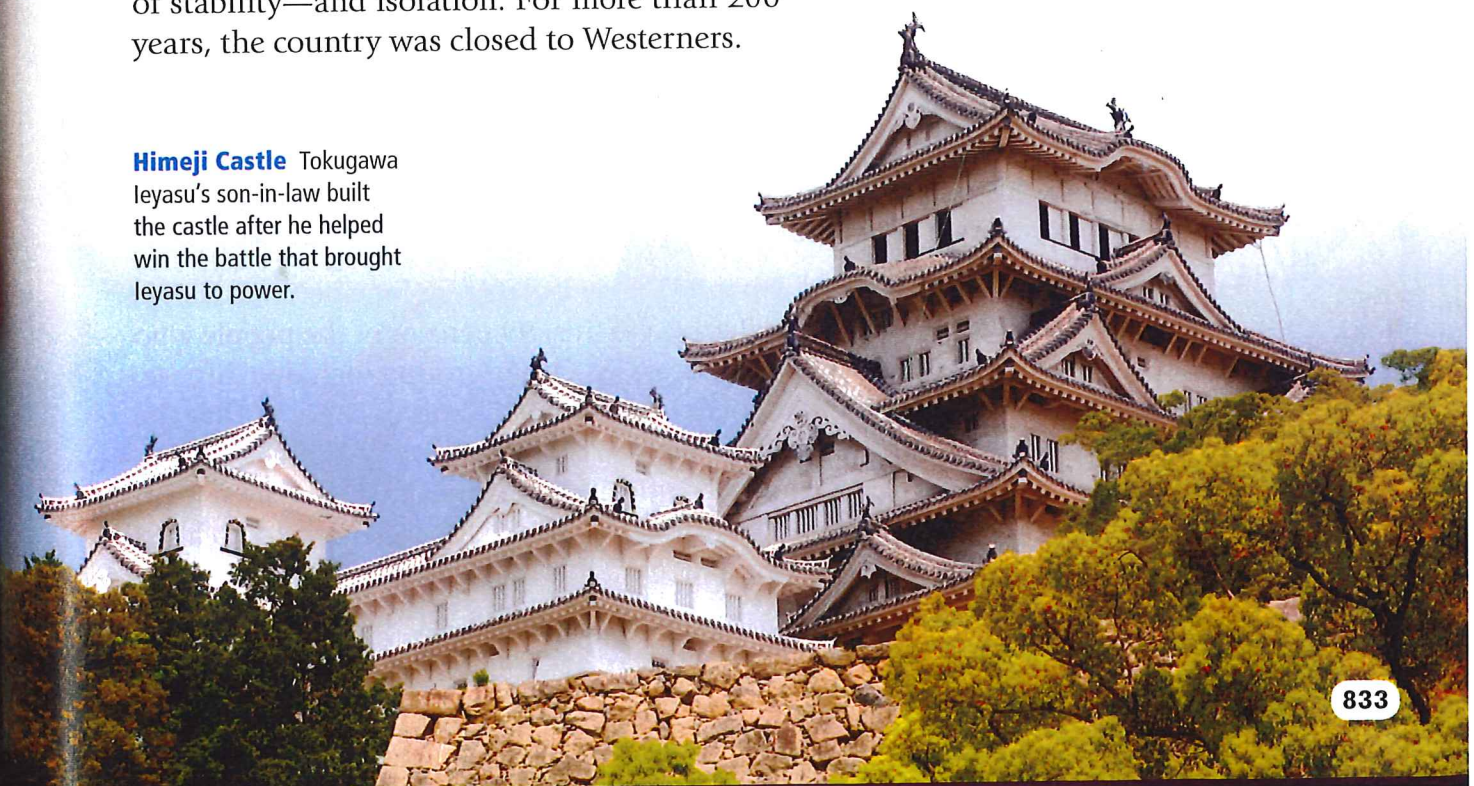
Tokugawa Ieyasu 1543–1616

Tokugawa Ieyasu could be merciless in the defense of his clan. In the late 1500s, his wife and eldest son were accused of conspiring against the family. As a result, Ieyasu ordered his son to commit suicide and had his wife executed. He also never forgot a grudge. As an adult, he executed a prisoner who had insulted him in childhood. On the other hand, Ieyasu could also be kind and generous. He rewarded those who were loyal to him and even showed compassion to his enemies.



ONLINE BIOGRAPHY

For more on the life of Tokugawa Ieyasu, go to the Research & Writing Center @ ClassZone.com



Rise of Modern Japan In 1853, the United States forced Japan to end its isolation. The government sent Commodore Matthew Perry to Japan with several warships to frighten the Tokugawa shogun. He soon agreed to open several Japanese ports to Western powers.

The Japanese people were angry that the shogun had given in to the foreigners' demands. As a result, the emperor was restored as head of government in 1868. The emperor chose the name *Meiji* (MAY•jee), which means "enlightened rule," for his reign. In an effort to counter Western influence, the emperor began a policy of modernization. Before long, Japan became a powerful nation.

As Japan's power grew, the nation sought to obtain an empire. In the early 1900s, Japan gained control of Korea. By 1937, Japan had invaded China and formed an alliance with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Between 1939 and 1945, Japan joined and fought with these powers during World War II—and lost.

After the United States and the Allies won the war, they occupied Japan for several years and set up a democracy. In time, Japan developed into an economic superpower.

SUMMARIZE Explain how Japan changed from an isolated nation to a world power.

Japanese Empire 1942



CONNECT Geography & History

- 1. Location** What part of mainland China did Japan control?
- 2. Region** What body of water borders all of the conquered territories?

Traditional and Modern Japanese Culture

KEY QUESTION How does Japanese culture blend traditional and modern influences?

As you have learned, Japan has been isolated for long periods of time throughout its history. Because of this, 99 percent of the people who live there are of Japanese descent. Other groups include Chinese, Koreans, and the Ainu (EYE•noo). Some historians believe that the Ainu were Japan's original people. Most Ainu live on Hokkaido.

Japanese is the country's only official language. The written form reflects the influence of China on Japan. Chinese characters, called *kanji*, are used for nouns. Japanese characters, known as *kana*, can be used for changing nouns into adjectives and verbs.

Religious Traditions Japan's religious traditions also demonstrate China's influence—and Japan's ability to take in new ideas and make them its own. The two major religions of Japan are Shinto and Buddhism. **Shinto** is Japan's original religion and is rarely practiced anywhere else in the world. Followers of this belief worship many gods, called *kami*. These gods are believed to be found in aspects of nature, such as rivers, trees, and rocks.

Buddhism, which originated in India, spread from China to Japan during the 500s. A form of this religion, called Zen Buddhism, became important in Japan. Zen stresses strict discipline of the body and mind as the path to wisdom. Many Japanese use rituals from both religions in their daily lives.

Japanese Arts The arts in Japan blend traditional and modern influences. Kabuki is a traditional form of Japanese drama that features colorful costumes and an exaggerated acting style. Other traditional Japanese arts include flower arranging and the tea ceremony. Both reflect the importance of traditional Japanese virtues such as simplicity, discipline, and love of nature.

Modern arts are also popular in Japan. These include animated films called *animé*, which often feature characters with large, expressive eyes, and comic books called *manga*. Japan has many manga cafes, where people can read manga over a cup of tea or coffee.



Torii Gate Like all torii gates, this one on Miyajima Island near Hiroshima serves as an entry to a Shinto shrine. **How does the gate reflect the importance of nature in Shinto?**

CONNECT to Culture

Origami is an art form that involves folding paper into decorative shapes. Although origami started in China, it has thrived in Japan. One of the most popular origami shapes is the crane, shown here. The crane is considered a sacred bird in Japan. A finished sailboat is also shown.

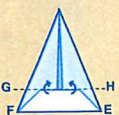
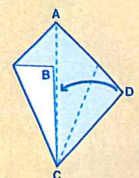
Activity

Create an Origami Sailboat

Materials

- colored paper

1. With colored side down, fold your paper on line A–C. Open and fold point B to the diagonal crease. Then fold D to the crease.
2. Turn your paper around so that A is nearest to you. Fold A so that it meets points D and B. Then fold G–H up and crease on line E–F.
3. Finally, fold E–F up and crease on line G–H.





Woodblock Print Haiku convey images of nature that are often illustrated with landscape prints.

Japanese Literature The earliest known Japanese poetry, called tanka, was the dominant verse form from the 700s until the 1500s. Tanka means “short songs” and consists of 31 syllables divided among five lines. During the Heian period, aristocrats routinely composed and exchanged tanka with their loved ones. In the 1600s, another type of poetry called haiku (HY•koo) developed. This verse has 17 syllables arranged in three lines. The following haiku is by Matsuo Basho, who is considered a master of the form.

*Cool crescent moon
shining faintly high above
Feather Black Mountain*

In addition to poetry, Japanese writers have made many contributions to fiction and drama. As you have learned, Lady Murasaki Shikibu is credited with writing the first novel. Zeami Motokiyo, who wrote in the late 1300s, is one of Japan’s greatest playwrights.

Life in Japan Because of Japan’s shortage of living space, Japanese cities are very crowded. About three-fourths of the Japanese people live in cities. These urban areas are filled with dazzling, high-rise buildings, elegant department stores, and trendy shops. Even though the people live in small houses and apartments, overcrowding remains a constant problem. During rush hour, for instance, white-gloved employees push as many people into subways and trains as possible. Passengers have suffered broken bones from holding their arms in awkward positions in these cramped conditions.

Tokyo at Night Cars and people crowd the Ginza district in Tokyo, a popular area for entertainment and shopping.



In Japan's cities, most Japanese wear clothes that are similar to those worn in the United States. However, for special occasions, Japanese men and women might wear a traditional dress called a kimono. These garments are tied around the waist with a sash and are worn with sandals.

Although Western fast foods are popular in Japan, many Japanese still enjoy traditional fare, including rice with almost every meal. Other traditional foods include tofu (soybean curd cake) and sushi—vinegared rice usually topped with raw fish. Soups made with a soybean paste called *miso* are also popular.

You may be surprised to learn that the number one spectator sport in Japan is baseball. However, traditional sumo wrestling also has a wide following. Other popular traditional sports include *kendo* (fencing with bamboo sticks) and martial arts.



Japanese Baseball Japan won the first World Baseball Classic in 2006. Two of the players on the Japanese team played in the U.S. major leagues during the regular season.

FIND MAIN IDEAS Describe how Japanese culture blends traditional and modern influences.

ONLINE QUIZ
For test practice, go to
Interactive Review
@ClassZone.com

Section 2 Assessment

TERMS & NAMES

1. Explain the importance of

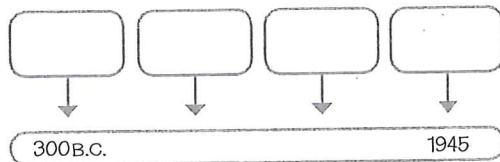
- samurai
- shogun
- daimyo
- Shinto

USE YOUR READING NOTES

2. Sequence Events

Use your completed time line to answer the following question:

During which period was the haiku developed?



KEY IDEAS

3. How did the nobility fill their time during the Heian period?
4. Why did Japan begin to modernize during the mid- to late 1800s?
5. What is daily life like in Japanese cities?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Make Inferences** Why do you think the Japanese wanted to live in isolation from the West for so long?
7. **Synthesize** Reread the haiku in this section. How does the poem reflect the traditional Japanese values of simplicity, discipline, and love of nature?
8. **CONNECT to Today** What aspects of Japanese culture are popular in the United States today?
9. **TECHNOLOGY** **Give a Kabuki Slide Show** Research to learn about kabuki theater. Find pictures of costumes, make-up, and the set designs used. Then give a slide show about the drama form, using authentic kabuki music in the background.

COMPARING Traditional and Modern Japan

Japan is a land of ancient traditions. But it is also an ultra-modern country, where new styles are set. Today, as you can see from these pictures, the past and present live side by side in Japan.

Traditional Japan

Since the 1600s, the Japanese people have enjoyed kabuki drama, with its colorful costumes and revolving stages. The dramas recall a time when the Japanese wore kimonos and musicians played a three-stringed instrument called the *shamisen*. In this traditional Japan, people have time to sit and reflect in the peaceful calm of a Zen garden.



Dress

Many different types of kimonos can be worn by men, women, and children.

Zen garden in Kyoto ▼



Entertainment

All of the roles in a kabuki drama are played by men.



Music

The sound of the *shamisen* is similar to that of a banjo.

Modern Japan

The worldwide popularity of animé attests to Japan's ability to set cultural trends. Other exports include karaoke and stylish, modern fashions. As you can see, modern life in Japan is also characterized by busy rush hours.



Dress

Today, Japanese fashion designers are copied throughout the world.

Crowded Tokyo subway ▼



Entertainment

Many animé films tell sophisticated stories about love, growing up, and female empowerment.



Music

In Japan, people can sing along with a karaoke player in public bars or in private shops.

CRITICAL THINKING

- 1. Compare and Contrast**
Select two corresponding images from traditional and modern Japan. How do they differ? What do they have in common?
- 2. Analyze Causes** Why do you think animé and karaoke have become so popular in other countries?