

Curriculum Project for East Asia. Origins to 1800, Spring 2021

Rationale. The purpose of this lesson is to teach about the political structure in Tokugawa era Japan and Japanese relationships with foreigners in order to meet the teaching/learning content in the national standards below.

Skills and Content Objectives.

National Standards in World History, Era 6, Standard 5B

The student understands the transformations in India, China, and Japan in an era of expanding European commercial power. Therefore, the student is able to.

5-12. Explain the character of centralized feudalism in Japan under the Tokugawa shogunate and the reasons for Japan's political stability, economic growth, and cultural dynamism.

[Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

5-12. Analyze Japan's relations with Europeans between the 16th and 18th centuries and the consequences of its policy of limiting contacts with foreigners. [Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration]

Lesson Activities.

Day 1 Plan

Introduction. Ask students questions to engage their interest and imagination about Japan such as the following. Who were the samurai? In what East Asian country did the samurai live? When did they live there? What did they do and who did they work for? Are Ninja's real or imagined by Hollywood and manga? Have a class discussion about student answers.

Context. Students will be shown pictures of Samurai and Japanese castle to visually engage and reinforce understanding.

Video. Watch PBS video Life in Edo: Samurai

Comprehension check. Have students write down what they think about Samurai and their role in Japan society. Have students share what they wrote in their summary.

Reading. Read description of Tokugawa Japan class structure and the place of samurai preserving domestic order. (text: http://www.pbs.org/empires/japan/entered_8.html)

Reflection. Have students write about the period and society where samurai lived. Compared to the USA, are samurai more like city-level policemen, state-level National Guard, or like a national military? Do they work for a local Lord or the national government?

Day 2 Plan

Introduction. Ask students to write a few sentences about Tokugawa Japan and the social role of the Samurai. Have Q&A and encourage students to ask questions. Have a discussion about responses.

Video. Watch PBS video Life in Edo: Daimyo

Comprehension check. Ask questions about video like “What is the relationship between the samurai and the daimyo? Then discuss what students saw and understood. Ask what they did not understand or want to better understand...Discuss.

Reading. Students read PBS text that accompanies video.

Reflect. Have students draw a conclusion about the life of the samurai and daimyo. Would they want to be a samurai or a daimyo? What are the pros and cons of each role.

Day 3 Plan

Introduction. Ask students to list some of the benefits of living in the Edo period in terms of jobs, lifestyle, personal freedom.

Video. Watch PBS video Open and Closed: The Tokugawa Shogunate

Reading. Students read PBS text that accompanies video.

Comprehension check. Have students write down what they think about “open and closed” societies. Have some students share what they wrote in their summary.

Reflection. Have students write about the period and society where armed samurai lived. Are there modern parallels to the samurai? Would they like to live then? Was the society more stable and predictable than modern Japan or the USA?

PBS Learning Material References (<https://vegas.pbslearningmedia.org/>)

1. PBS video Life in Edo: Samurai | Empires: Japan: Memoirs of a Secret Empire

1a. PBS text. https://www.pbs.org/empires/japan/entered_8.html

2. PBS video Life in Edo: Daimyo | Empires: Japan: Memoirs of a Secret Empire

2a. PBS text. https://www.pbs.org/empires/japan/entered_4.html

3. PBS video Open and Closed: The Tokugawa Shogunate

3a. text: http://www.pbs.org/empires/japan/entered_9.html

<https://vegas.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/social-studies-177-ws2-r1-grades-6-12/open-and-closed-the-tokugawa-shogunate/>

Other References

<https://www.wonderopolis.org/wonder/are-ninjas-real#>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ninja>