**The World in 1750 3– Tokugawa Empire**

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| **Aim:** | **Date:** |
| **Key Words:**  **1.**  **2.** |  |

**A. Unifying Japan**

In 1467, civil war shattered Japan’s old feudal system. The country collapsed into chaos and centralized rule ended. Powerful samurai seized control of old feudal estates and offered peasant protection in return for loyalty. There warrior-chieftains were called Daimyo (great name) and became lords in a new kind of feudalism in Japan. A number of daimyo hoped to gather power to take control over the entire countries. Oda Nobunaga did this in 1568 and ruled by his motto “rule the empire by force.” He attempted to crush his enemies but was not able to unify Japan. Nobunaga’s best general Toyotomi Hideyoshi continued the mission of a united county. By 1590, he controlled most of the country and planned to conquer China and invaded Korea. Hideyoshi died in 1598 and Tokugawa Ieyasu (an ally of Hideyoshi) completed the unification of Japan. He became the sole ruler, shogun, and moved Japan’s capital to his power base at Edo, which would late become of the city of Tokyo. The Tokugawa Shogunate would hold power until 1867 and ruled by the motto “Take care of the people. Strive to be virtuous. Never neglect to protect the country.”

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| *Daimyo* | *Goals and Achievements* |
| Oda Nobunaga |  |
| Toyotomi Hideyoshi |  |
| Tokugawa Ieyasu |  |

**B. Life in Tokugawa Japan**

By the 1750s, Japan began to shift from a rural to an urban society. Edo had a population of 1 million, perhaps the largest city in the world. The Japanese economy grew significantly during the Tokugawa period. In addition to an emphasis on agricultural production (including the staple crop of rice as well as sesame oil, indigo, sugar cane, mulberry, tobacco and cotton), Japan’s commerce and manufacturing industries also expanded, leading to the rise of an increasingly wealthy merchant class and in turn to the growth of Japanese cities. The rise of large commercial centers also increased employment opportunities for women such as in entertainment, textile and manufacturing. However, the majority of Japanese women were restricted, peasant house wives. Entertainment was important as well. Samurai attended nohs, dramas, about ancient warriors and their courage in battle. Townspeople read haiku poetry which represents images rather than ideas and attended Kabuki Theater. Actors in elaborate costumes, used music dance and mime o perform skits about modern day life.

“On a journey, ailing – My dreams roam about Over a withered moor.”

- *Matsuo Basho (the greatest haiku poet), 1694*

*How is Matsuo Basho’s haiku a poem about death?*

*Select one economic change and explain how this strategy unified, stabilized or centralized Japan.*

*Select one social change and explain how this strategy unified, stabilized or centralized Japan.*

**C. Contact Between Europe and Japan**

The Japanese first encountered Europeans in 1543, when shipwrecked Portuguese sailors washed up on ten shores of southern Japan. Portuguese merchants soon followed. They brought clocks, eyeglasses, tobacco, firearms, and other unfamiliar items from Europe. Japanese merchants, eager to expand their markets were happy to receive the newcomers and their goods. Christian missionaries arrived in 1549. By 1600, missionaries had converted about 300,000 Japanese to Christianity. The success of missionaries upset the Tokugawa shoguns because they scorned traditional Japanese beliefs and involved themselves in politics, which made them fearful of uprisings. In 1612, Christianity was banned and Christians were ruthlessly persecuted. European missionaries were killed or driven out of Japan. All Japanese were forced to demonstrate faithfulness to some branch of Buddhism. In 1639, Tokugawa shoguns sealed Japan’s borders and instated a closed country policy. Most commercial contacts with Europeans ended. For more than 2000 years, Japan remained closed to Europeans and the Japanese were forbidden to leave.

“In their hands they carried something two or three feet long, straight on the outside with a passage inside and made of a heavy substance… This thing with one blow can smash a mountain of silver and a wall or iron. If one sought to do mischief in another man’s domain and he was touched by it, he would lose his life instantly.

-*Anonymous Japanese Writer*

*Why did the Japanese policy toward Christians change from acceptable to repression?*

*Do you think Japan’s closed country policy effectively kept Western ideas and customs out of Japan?*