Understanding Medieval Japan ‖ Experiencing Japanese Feudalism

## Goals & Objectives

I want students to understand the various roles of the social classes of medieval Japan.

Students will explore the social classes of medieval Japan by participating in a role playing simulation and will compare their experience from the simulation to what they learned from the textbook using a T-Chart.

## California State Content Standards

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 in 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.

## Common Core Literacy Standards

CCSS.WHST.6-8.2. d. Use precise language and domain specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic

## Driving Historical Question

### How did medieval Japan’s class structure lead to constant warfare?

### Lesson Introduction (Anticipatory Set/Hook/Accessing Prior Knowledge) ‖ **Time: 5 min.**

The lesson will be introduced by having students complete an anticipation guide. The guide will ask the students questions that will require them to remember the previous day’s lecture on the Japanese feudal system. The anticipation guide will be given to them in the form of a worksheet and the students will work on it individually.

### Vocabulary (Content Language Development) ‖ **Time: 0 min.**

The vocabulary for this lesson includes the following terms: Samurai, Daimyo, Shogun, Estate, Peasant, and Ryo coin. Samurai, Daimyo, and Shogun were covered in the previous lesson. Estate, Peasant, and Ryo coin will be defined during the explanation of the simulation.

### Content Delivery (Method of Instruction) ‖ **Time: 35 min.**

The content of this lesson will be delivered in the form of a simulation activity. The activity will have students simulate the various classes of medieval Japan’s feudal system. Students will either be the shogun, daimyo, samurai, or peasant/farmer. These roles will be randomly given to the students, and they can not trade roles with another student. The teacher will act as the Emperor and will oversee the simulation. Each role has a specific task to perform during the simulation that will provide the students with a basic representation of what these social classes did during Japan’s medieval period. The classroom will contain six desk clusters that will act as estates for each daimyo. Each cluster will have one daimyo, at least two samurai, and at least three peasants/farmers. The shogun will be seated at the front of the classroom. The emperor will be walking around the class overseeing the simulation. The simulation will be broken up into three ten-minute cycles. Each cycle is comprised of two sections. The following activities will be performed during section one:

* The peasant/farmer will draw as many Ryo coins as they can on a sheet of paper. This will act as currency for their daimyo, which can be used to “hire” more samurai for their army.
* The daimyo will attempt to attack and defeat the other daimyo in order to take their land, thereby giving them more power.
* The samurai will attack or defend by rolling dice.
* The shogun is in charge of the currency and will be attempting to use diplomacy in order to prevent the daimyo from fighting each other.

The second section will contain the following activities:

* The peasant/farmer will give their daimyo all of the Ryo coin drawings they did during section one.
* The daimyo will spend the Ryo coins. They need to provide the Shogun with five coins, provide two coins for each samurai they employ, and one for each peasant/farmer. They can then hire more samurai for two coins each.
* The Shogun needs to ensure that each daimyo has produced enough Ryo coins. If they have not, then the Shogun begins taking away samurai until the daimyo has the appropriate number of Ryo coins to pay for them.

These roles will provide students with context for what these social classes actually did during this period of time.

### Student Engagement (Critical Thinking & Student Activities) ‖ **Time: During content delivery.**

During the lesson students will be performing one of the tasks listed in the previous section. The students that are the peasant/farmer will be drawing Ryo coins. This activity represents the farming that this social class performed during Japan’s medieval period. These students will get a sense of how difficult, monotonous, and important this class was during this time. The students that are the samurai will follow the daimyo’s orders and attack his/her enemies or defend their estate. These students will gain an understand of how the larger the daimyo’s army, the more powerful the daimyo. The student that is the daimyo will be in charge of their estate and make all of the decisions. These students will understand the pressure put on this class and how they desired power. The student that is the shogun will be the banker and ensure that the daimyo have enough currency to pay their debts. They will also have to be aware of what the daimyo are doing and attempt to prevent them from gaining power by using diplomacy. After the simulation students will fill out a T-Chart that will ask them to compare their experience from the simulation to the historical reality.

### Lesson Closure ‖ **Time: 5 min.**

The lesson will be closed by having students answer reflection questions that are based on the anticipation guide. Students will have to reflect on their experience from the simulation and relate it to the questions they answered before the simulation.

### Assessments (Formative & Summative)

This lesson includes several assessments. The anticipation guide at the beginning of the lesson will serve as an entry level assessment. The simulation itself will serve as an informal formative assessment. The reflection questions at the end of the simulation will also serve as a formative assessment. The summative assessment for this lesson will be the T-Chart.

### Accommodations for English Learners, Striving Readers and Students with Special Needs

The simulation itself is designed to effectively engage and accommodate English Learners, Striving Readers, and Students with Special Needs. Since students are performing actions, there should very few barriers preventing students from taking part in the simulation.

### Resources (Books, Websites, Handouts, Materials)

The resources required for this lesson are the following:

* At least 30 dice
* 40 copies of the simulation instructions
* Role cards and estate cards
* 40 copies of the T-Chart
* 40 copies of the anticipation guide
* 40 copies of the reflection guide