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DBQ Practice

*AP-Style Document-Based Questions Designed to Help
Students Prepare for the World History Examination*

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DBQ #8
Japan and the West

WORLD HISTORY
SECTION II
(Suggested writing time—40 minutes)

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying documents. (The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.)

This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents. Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with evidence from the documents.
- Uses all or all but one of the documents.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. **Does not simply summarize the documents individually.**
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the authors' points of view.

You may refer to relevant historical information not mentioned in the documents.

1. To what extent, and in what ways, did contact with the West impact Japan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries? What additional document(s) would help in determining both the extent and the ways in which contact may have impacted Japan?

Historical Background: The Meiji restoration of 1868 brought with it a transformation of Japanese society. The new rulers wanted to achieve political and economic equality with foreign powers such as the United States and Great Britain. The changes begun with the restoration would lead Japan to become the major power of east Asia.

Document 1

Source: This letter was written in 1909 by President Theodore Roosevelt to incoming Secretary of State Knox.

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/trjapan.htm>

My Dear Senator Knox:

You are soon to become secretary of state under Mr. Taft. At the outset both he and you will be overwhelmed with every kind of work; but there is one matter of foreign policy of such great and permanent importance that I wish to lay it before the President-to-be and yourself. I speak of the relations of the United States and Japan.

. . . She is a most formidable military power. Her people have peculiar fighting capacity. They are very proud, very warlike, very sensitive, and are influenced by two

contradictory feelings; namely, a great self-confidence, both ferocious and conceited, due to their victory over the mighty empire of Russia; and a great touchiness because they would like to be considered as on a full equality with, as one of the brotherhood of, Occidental nations, and have been bitterly humiliated to find that even their allies, the English, and their friends, the Americans, won't admit them to association and citizenship, as they admit the least advanced or most decadent European peoples. Moreover, Japan's population is increasing rapidly and demands an outlet; and the Japanese laborers, small farmers, and petty traders would, if permitted, flock by the hundred thousand into the United States, Canada, and Australia.

Document 2

Source: Photograph of Mie Prefectural Normal School built in 1888
<http://www.meijimura.com/english/index-e.html>



Document 3

Source: Excerpts from The Constitution of the Empire of Japan, 1889
<http://history.hanover.edu/texts/1889con.html>

Article 11. The Emperor has the supreme command of the Army and Navy.

Article 12. The Emperor determines the organization and peace standing of the Army and Navy.

Article 13. The Emperor declares war, makes peace, and concludes treaties.

Article 29. Japanese subjects shall, within the limits of law, enjoy the liberty of speech, writing, publication, public meetings and associations

Article 35. The House of Representatives shall be composed of members elected by the people, according to the provisions of the law of Election.

Article 37. Every law requires the consent of the Imperial Diet.

Article 58. The judges shall be appointed from among those, who possess proper qualifications according to law.

- (2) No judge shall be deprived of his position, unless by way of criminal sentence or disciplinary punishment.
- (3) Rules for disciplinary punishment shall be determined by law.

Document 4

Source: A picture of the Johnson family home. The Johnson's of Syracuse, New York, were missionaries in Japan in the 1890s and the early 20th Century.

http://www.cmp.ucr.edu/exhibitions/asia/japan/johnson_albums/johnson_family.html



Document 5

Source: Imperial Proclamation of War, February 10, 1904

<http://www.russojapanesewar.com/imp-proc-04.html>

We, by the Grace of Heaven, Emperor of Japan, seated on the Throne occupied by the same Dynasty from time immemorial, do hereby make proclamation to all Our loyal and brave subjects as follows:

We hereby declare war against Russia and We command our army and navy to carry on hostilities against that Empire with all their strength, and We also command all Our competent authorities to make every effort in pursuance of their duties, and in accordance with their powers, to attain the national aim with all the means within the limits of the law of nations.

. . . The integrity of Korea is a matter of constant concern to this Empire, not only because of Our traditional relations with that country, but because the separate existence of Korea is essential to the safety of Our realm. Nevertheless, Russia, in disregard of her solemn treaty pledges to China, her repeated assurances to other powers, is still in occupation of Manchuria and has consolidated and strengthened her hold upon three provinces, and is bent upon their final annexation. And since the absorption of Manchuria

by Russia would render it impossible to maintain the integrity of Korea and would in addition compel the abandonment of all hope for peace in the Extreme East, We determined in those circumstances to settle the question by negotiation, and to secure thereby permanent peace. With that object in view, Our competent authorities, by Our order, made proposals to Russia, and frequent conferences were held during the course of six months. Russia, however, never met such proposals in a spirit of conciliation, but by her wanton delays put off the settlement of the question and by ostensibly advocating peace on the one hand while she was on the other extending her naval and military preparations, sought to accomplish her own selfish designs.

Document 6

Source: Francis Ottiwell Adams, Secretary of the American Legation at Yedo, c. 1860.
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/ottwell-japanschools.html>

The Japanese lad began his education at the age of six or seven years. There were three grades of schools, *Sho*, *Chiu*, and *Dai Gakho* [Small, Middle, and Great School].

The Japanese pupil took his first steps in learning by mastering the *hiragana* and *katakana* [alphabet or syllabary]. He must know how to read and write both styles before he began the study of Chinese characters. The average boy spent five years in the *Sho*, or Primary School. During the first year he began the study of the Chinese classics. . . . This is as if an English boy attacking Homer or the Hebrew Bible were to learn to read the book through, pronouncing every word carefully, but knowing nothing of its meaning or the construction of the language. But in the case of the Japanese lad, he must learn nearly two thousand characters and several hundred sounds, before receiving an explanation of their meaning.

. . . During the third year, the Japanese lad learned the four rudimental rules of arithmetic and the use of the abacus, a point at which the mathematical education of the vast majority of Japanese ended.

. . . In the *Sei Do*, or old Chinese college in Yedo, the course of literary study ranged somewhat higher, and original composition in Chinese was made a specialty. The usual time allotted for study in all the schools was six hours a day: from 6 to 12 A.M. in summer, from 8 A.M. to 2 P.M. in the spring and autumn, and from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. in winter. No long vacation was given in summer, but the regular holidays throughout the year were numerous, and at the beginning of the year the schools were closed for several weeks.

Document 7

Source: A Japanese artist designed this print to update a calendar series, c.1904, 1905.
<http://www.nyu.edu/pages/greyart/exhibits/shiseido/meiji10.htm>



Document 8

Source: A photograph of the Emperor Meiji
<http://www2.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/meiji.htm>



Document 9

Source: Lt. Tadayoshi Sakurai describing the Attack upon Port Arthur, 1905
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1905portarthur.html>

Yes, we were all ready for death when leaving Japan. Men going to battle of course cannot expect to come back alive. But in this particular battle to be ready for death was not enough; what was required of us was a determination not to fail to die. Indeed, we were “sure-death” men, and this new appellation gave us a great stimulus. Also a telegram that had come from the Minister of War in Tokyo was read by the aide-de-camp, which said, “I pray for your success.” This increased the exaltation of our spirits.

. . . There was a fight with bombs at the enemy’s skirmish-trenches. The bombs sent from our side exploded finely, and the place became at once a conflagration, boards were flung about, sand-bags burst, heads flew around, legs were torn off. The flames mingled with the smoke, lighted up our faces weirdly, with a red glare, and all at once the battle-line became confused. Then the enemy, thinking it hopeless, left the place and began to flee. “Forward! forward! Now is the time to go forward! Forward! Pursue! Capture it with one bound!” And, proud of our victory, we went forward courageously.

Document 10

Source: Kume Kunitake: *Records of My Visits to America and Europe, 1871-1873*
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1873kume.html>

Thus it seems evident that trade between the Orient and San Francisco will serve to lessen prices of commodities in the latter city and bring about prosperity to both. California has large forests, but it imports wooden products from New York. It has a thriving dairy industry, but it turns to New York for leather goods. It has a long coast line, and yet buys salted fish from Canada. It is famous for mineral resources, and still imports jewels from other States. The situation will remain the same even in the event that California’s population increases to one million; there still will be too much land to be opened up, and the cost of labor will never begin to go down. Thus trade with the Orient will not be confined to tea, silk, and tobacco. California’s natural resources will be limitless, and manufactured products will continue to be expensive. Are these things not important for future trade? I sincerely hope that the reader will pay attention to them.

Document 11

Source: "The Treaty of Portsmouth," 1905
<http://www.russojapanesewar.com/top.html>

ARTICLE II.

The Imperial Russian Government, acknowledging that Japan possesses in Korea paramount political, military and economical interests engages neither to obstruct nor interfere with measures for guidance, protection and control which the Imperial Government of Japan may find necessary to take in Korea. It is understood that Russian subjects in Korea shall be treated in exactly the same manner as the subjects and citizens of other foreign Powers; that is to say, they shall be placed on the same footing as the subjects and citizens of the most favored nation. It is also agreed that, in order to avoid causes of misunderstanding, the two high contracting parties will abstain on the Russian-Korean frontier from taking any military measure which may menace the security of Russian or Korean territory.

Document 12

Source: Hashimoto Sadahide. *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise*, 1861. Color woodblock print.

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/ukiyo-e/images/8538s.jpg>

