

WHaG

Meiji Restoration

Name:

Use the resources provided to answer the following questions in the spaces provided.

Japan, under the rule of the Tokugawa clan (1603 to 1867), experienced more than 200 years of isolation. During this period, the emperors ruled in name only. The real political power was in the hands of the shoguns all of whom were from the Tokugawa family. The Tokugawa maintained a feudal system in Japan that gave them and wealthy landowners called daimyo power and control. After negative experiences with Europeans in the 1600s, the shoguns were extremely resistant to trade because they viewed outsiders as a threat to his power.

Japan's isolation came to an end in 1853 when **Commodore Matthew Perry** of the United States Navy, commanding a squadron of two steam ships and two sailing vessels, sailed into Tokyo harbor. He sought to force Japan to end their isolation and open their ports to trade with U.S merchant ships. At the time, many industrialized nations in Europe and the United States were seeking to open new markets where they could sell their manufactured goods, as well as new countries to supply raw materials for industry. The Japanese, because of their years of isolation, had no navy with which to defend themselves, and thus they had to agree to the demands of the United States. In 1854, the Treaty of Kanagawa was signed which permitted trade and opened Japanese ports to merchant ships.



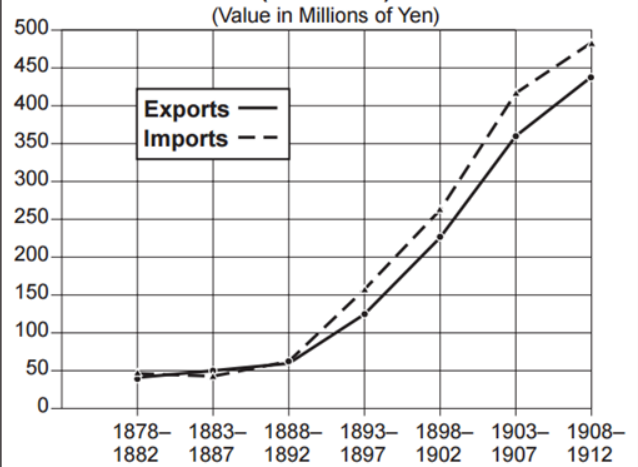
Commodore Matthew Perry's actions showed that Japan's ruling Shogunate was weak and unable defend the nation against a threat from the Western powers. Convinced that modernization depended on abolishing the Shogunate and the feudal order, a group of middle-ranking samurai overthrew the military government of the Shogun in 1868 and set Japan peaceably on a course of radical modernization perhaps unparalleled in history. Carried out in the name of restoring rule to the emperor, who then took the reign name "Meiji" meaning "enlightened rule," the **Meiji Restoration** was in many ways a profound revolution.

1. Before 1867, what was the political structure of Japan like? Who had the power?
2. Why didn't the shoguns want to trade with foreigners?
3. What was Commodore Perry's goal when he entered Tokyo Harbor?
4. What effect did Commodore Perry's arrival have on the government in Japan?

Tokugawa Laws of Japan in 1634

- * Japanese ships shall not be sent abroad.
 - * No Japanese shall be sent abroad. Anyone breaking this law shall suffer the penalty of death...
 - * The arrival of foreign ships must be reported to Edo (Tokyo) and a watch kept over them.
 - * The samurai shall not buy goods on board foreign ships.
- Source: January 2002 Global History and Geography Regents Exam.

Exports and Imports During the Meiji Rule (1868–1912)



Source: January 2002 Global History and Geography Regents Exam.

5. Based on the **Tokugawa Laws of Japan** in 1634 above, how did the Tokugawa government in Japan view foreigners?
6. How do you think the Tokugawa laws affected the people of Japan?
7. Based on the Export and Import **graph** above, how did the views on trade of the Meiji government in Japan differ from the Tokugawa?
8. When a nation **exports more than they import**, they are said to have a **trade surplus**. When a nation **imports more than they export**, they are said to have a **trade deficit**. Using the graph, in the years 1908–1912, did Japan have a trade surplus or a trade deficit? Explain.

The arrival of warships from the United States and European nations, their advanced and formidable technology, and their ability to force the Japanese to agree to trade terms that were unfavorable for Japan sparked a period of rapid industrialization and modernization called the **Meiji Restoration**. This reaction was called the Meiji Restoration because *Meiji* (meaning “enlightened rule”) was the name taken by the emperor, and during this period the emperor was “restored” as the leader of the nation, though like in monarchs of England or France at the time, he had very little real power. Under the slogan of “National Wealth and Military Strength,” the Meiji government adopted a number of ideas from European countries and the United States relating to government, and technologies to bolster industry, communication, and transportation that greatly impacted Japanese and global history.



9. Why do you think the emperor chose the name *Meiji* for his rule?