

Lesson Plan: Let's Go See the Black Ships!

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Introduction

Even though we live in a world of Internet and global community, many people feel uncomfortable when they encounter different cultures. How, then, did American and Japanese people feel and react when they encountered each other for the first time about 150 years ago? In this lesson, students simulate the situations and feelings of both the Japanese and Americans during the visit of Commodore Perry in 1853—an extremely significant event in the history of Japan-U.S. relations. Students will explore MIT's *Visualizing Cultures* site, the port of Yokohama's 150-anniversary site, and primary sources of the late 1800s to the early 1900s.

Guiding Questions

- How did Japanese perceive Commodore Perry?
- How did Japanese react and express their emotions upon the arrival of the black ships?
- How did Americans react and express their emotions when they first arrived in the Bay of Edo?

Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Describe (in the target language, Japanese) the scene of arrival of the black ships, characteristics of Commodore Perry, and how the black ships were depicted.
- Translate Japanese articles about the arrival of the black ships into English.
- Compare and contrast visuals and information in Japanese.
- Rephrase the translated and/or researched information in Japanese.
- Identify, in English, the point of view of the creators of visuals, including both Japanese and American works.

Background Information for the Teacher

Teachers can gain necessary background for this lesson by reading the “[Introduction](#)” to the MIT *Visualizing Cultures* unit “Black Ships and Samurai.”

Preparing to Teach This Lesson

- Obtain the following visuals from the MIT *Visualizing Cultures* website:
 - [The Arrival of American Ships: The Defense by Samurai Soldiers Sent from Various Fiefs](#)
 - [Portrait of Perry](#) (detail)
 - [Portrait of Perry, a North American](#)
 - [U.S. Japan Fleet, Com. Perry Carrying the “Gospel of God” to the Heathen](#)
 - [A Foreign Ship](#)
- Print the Japanese poem (see Lesson Plan below) on the board or an overhead.
- Arrange for the necessary technology for the Internet research phase of the lesson; cue the [City of Yokohama](#) website on the computers.
- Make copies of Handouts 1, 2, and 3 for all students.
- If you have access to a video showing the arrival of an exchange student, that could be a useful “hook” for starting the lesson.

Lesson Plan

Steps	Activities	Material Needed
Step 1 <i>Setting stage</i>	Ask: How did you feel when you first saw a foreign object or foreigner? Encourage students to talk about their experiences. For students who have not had such experiences, ask about the impressions of their first day of high school or another new environment.	Optional: Show the exchange student’s arrival video to stimulate discussion.
Step 2 <i>Input</i>	1. Show the visual of facing west, The Arrival of America Ships: The Defense by Samurai Soldiers Sent from Various Fiefs . Ask questions to prompt students to describe the visual. 2. Read the poem to help students understand Japanese reactions. (direct translation) “Jyokisen (=expensive tea) awakes tranquil world of sleep with only four cups we can not sleep.”	MIT visual Poem below printed on board or overhead: たいへいのねむりをさま すじょうきせん、たった 4はいでよるもねむれず

	<p>(pun) ↓ “Steamship (=jyokisen, in another meaning) break the tranquil world of the Pacific only four ships, make us not sleep.”</p>	
<p>Step 3 Guided Practice</p>	<p>1. Have students use Handout 1 to compare two images of Perry, one by the U.S. photographer Mathew Brady and one by an unknown Japanese artist. You may want to help students begin the analysis through guided questions. They should then complete the handout individually. Finally, they should share their diagrams in pairs or small groups.</p> <p>2. Have students use Handout 2 to compare two visuals of Perry’s ships, one by James G. Evans and the other by an unknown Japanese artist.</p> <p>3. Discuss what students have found out from the above activities (conduct the discussion in English; in an AP class, you may want to conduct the discussion in Japanese).</p>	<p>MIT visuals Handout 1</p> <p>MIT visuals Handout 2</p>
<p>Step 4 Independent Practice</p>	<p>1. Students use the Internet to conduct research on Perry’s visit to Japan. Tell students to go to the City of Yokohama website. Under the first title, <i>Kurofune ga yattekita</i>, they should click to see these scenes: “<i>Perii Kantai Joriku no Yousu</i>” and “<i>Kurofune o Mini Ikou!</i>” Under the title, “<i>Enerugisshu na machi, Yokohama,</i>” they should click to see other screens.</p> <p>2. Using Handout 3, students should make notes of what they see and learn in English in order to prepare to write the articles in Step 5.</p>	<p>Computer City of Yokohama website Handout 3</p>

<p>Step 5 Assessment</p>	<p>1. Explain that students will be going back to the 19th century to create a newspaper (<i>kawaraban</i>) in Japanese based on their researched information (Step 4). Students will be writing articles on Perry's arrival.</p> <p>Divide the class into two groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group A will describe Perry's arrival from the Japanese people's point of view. • Group B will describe the event from an American reporter's point of view. <p>2. With Groups A and B, have students form small working groups of three or four people. In their small groups, students should generate their version of a newspaper (<i>kawaraban</i>) in Japanese.</p> <p>Post the newspapers on the wall and share.</p> <p>3. In order to understand the perception gaps between two different points of views, students write a paragraph in English on what they have learned from this lesson by comparing their understandings of different cultures before and after this lesson. (They may reflect on questions from Step 1.)</p>	<p>Poster paper Markers</p>
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Assessment

Students will create and design a newspaper reporting Perry's arrival either from the Japanese point of view or the American point of view.

Extending the Lesson

Ask students to go to City of Yokohama website sections "[Perii Kantai Joriku no Yosu](#)" and "[Kurofune o Mini Ikou!](#)" Lower-level students can translate the narratives into English. Level 3 students may

paraphrase the narratives using Japanese. Upper level/AP students can write and discuss the entire assignment in Japanese.

NCSS Standards Alignment

I – Culture

II – Time, Continuity, and Change

III – People, Places, and Environments

IV – Individual Development and Identity

VI – Power, Authority, and Governance

IX – Global Connections

ACTFL Standards Alignment

1.2 – Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

1.3 – Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

2.1 – Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

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3.1 – Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

3.2 – Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

4.2 – Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

5.1 – Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

5.2 – Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Additional Information

Grade Level: Grades 10-12

Subject Area: Japanese Language

Time Required: 3 class periods of 90 minutes each

Skills:

- Interpreting and analyzing primary sources.
- Translating written texts and visuals.
- Creating and designing a newspaper.

Handouts

Handout 1, “Venn Diagram”

Handout 2, “Comparing Visuals of Perry’s Ship”

Handout 3, “Covering the Story”

Links to Online Sources

Step 2

The Arrival of America Ships: The Defense by Samurai Soldiers Sent from Various Fiefs: http://oki-dev.mit.edu:8080/narravision-web/large_view.jsp?assetId=42_371_samurai&largeURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/42_371_samurai_lg.jpg&mediumURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/42_371_samurai

Step 3

Portrait of Perry (detail): http://oki-dev.mit.edu:8080/narravision-web/large_view.jsp?assetId=18_000a_detail_Perry&largeURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/18_000a_detail_Perry_lg.jpg&mediumURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/1

Portrait of Perry, a North American: http://oki-dev.mit.edu:8080/narravision-web/large_view.jsp?assetId=06_066a_Perry&largeURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/06_066a_Perry_lg.jpg&mediumURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/06_066a_Perry_m

U.S. Japan Fleet, Com. Perry Carrying the “Gospel of God” to the Heathen: http://oki-dev.mit.edu:8080/narravision-web/large_view.jsp?assetId=10_010_GospelOfGod&largeURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/10_010_GospelOfGod_lg.jpg&mediumURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/10_01

A Foreign Ship: http://oki-dev.mit.edu:8080/narravision-web/large_view.jsp?assetId=06_065_AmericanWarship&largeURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPEG/06_065_AmericanWarship_lg.jpg&mediumURL=http://www.visualizingcultures.com/BSS_COLLECTION_JPE

Step 4

City of Yokohama website:

<http://www.city.yokohama.jp/me/keiei/kaikou/kids/trip/>

Links to Additional Online Resources (for Teacher Background or Extensions)

“Black Ships and Samurai” essay, “Introduction” section:

http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/black_ships_and_samurai/bss_essay01.html

City of Yokohama website, “*Perii Kantai Joriku no Yosū*” section:

<http://www.city.yokohama.jp/me/keiei/kaikou/kids/trip/kurofune01.html>

City of Yokohama website, “*Kurofune o Mini Ikou!*” section:

<http://www.city.yokohama.jp/me/keiei/kaikou/kids/trip/kurofune02.html>