

Feudalism in Japan and Europe

Grade 7

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Purpose:

Compare political, economic and social characteristics of feudalism in Japan and Europe.

Ohio Academic Content Standards:

Social Studies

History

- Grade 6-8, Benchmark C: Describe the characteristics of feudal societies and the transition to the Renaissance and Reformation in Europe.
- Grade 7, Grade-Level Indicator 3: Describe the conditions that gave rise to feudalism, as well as political, economic and social characteristics of feudalism, in Asia and Europe.

Essential Question:

How was the structure of feudalism similar in Japan and Europe?

Rationale:

Students will see similarities between eastern and western political, social and economic development.

Post-Assessment:

Have students complete the Post-Assessment Graphic Organizer comparing feudalism in Europe and Japan. This assessment can be assigned to individual students or the pairs from Day One.

Scoring Guidelines:

Outstanding, 4 points:

Completed graphic organizer shows understanding of all of the following:

- basic structure of feudalism in Japan and Europe;
- political, social and economic similarities and differences between the two systems;
- the terms political, social and economic;
- related vocabulary.

Very Good, 3 points:

Completed graphic organizer shows some understanding of all of the following:

- basic structure of feudalism in Japan and Europe;
- political, social and economic similarities and differences between the two systems;
- the terms political, social and economic;
- related vocabulary.

Fair, 2 points:

Completed graphic organizer shows understanding of at least one of the following:

- basic structure of feudalism in Japan and Europe;
- political, social and economic similarities and differences between the two systems;
- the terms political, social and economic;
- related vocabulary.

Needs Improvement, 1 point:

Completed graphic organizer shows little understanding of all of the following:

- basic structure of feudalism in Japan and Europe;
- political, social and economic similarities and differences between the two systems;
- the terms political, social and economic;
- related vocabulary.

Activities:

Days One and Two:

1. As a pre-assessment, discuss and define the following terms:
 - feudalism
 - lord
 - vassal
 - fief
 - warrior
2. Divide the class into pairs and assign half of the pairs to research feudalism in either Japan or Europe.
3. Direct students to work in pairs to research the characteristics of feudalism in their assigned region. Explain to students that they will be looking for information on the following aspects of feudalism:
 - lord/vassal relationship
 - fiefs given in return for military service
 - warrior ethic
4. Distribute one copy of the graphic organizer to each student. Have students label the title of the organizer for the society they will be researching, either Japan or Europe.

Instructional Note: Feudalism in Japan spanned hundreds of years and different cultural periods. It may be necessary to limit student research to a single time period: Heian, Kamakura or Tokugawa. Some texts at the middle school level make a distinction between the time periods and the differing characteristics, while others refer to a general “feudal age.”

5. Allow time for students to conduct their research. Explain to students that they are to become “experts” on feudalism in their assigned region.

Day Three:

6. Create small groups of four students with two Japan experts and two European experts in each group (students can remain with their partners or partners can be divided).
7. Distribute a second graphic organizer to each student, either Japan or Europe as appropriate.
8. Have students work in groups to share the information they found and complete their graphic organizers.

Day Four:

9. Discuss and define the following terms:
 - political characteristics
 - social characteristics
 - economic characteristics
10. Have students highlight (or circle) the political characteristics of each region’s feudal system on their graphic organizers. Have students discuss and compare the political characteristics looking for similarities and differences.
11. Lead a whole group discussion of the political similarities and differences students found.
12. Next, using a different color highlighter, have students identify, discuss and compare the economic characteristics of each system. Lead a whole group discussion of the similarities and differences students identified.
13. Repeat the same process with the social characteristics of each system of feudalism.

Day Five:

14. Assign the post-assessment.

Grade Adaptations:

To increase the depth of the research assignment, students can be required to research the conditions that allowed feudalism to develop in each culture. Similarly, students can explore the reasons for the decline and end of feudalism.

Extensions:

- Have students illustrate an aspect of feudalism with images of Japan and Europe. Students can also illustrate the feudal structure in each system.
- Have students research and report on feudalism in China and other cultures/regions.

Feudalism in Japan and Europe Research Graphic Organizer

Directions: Work with a partner to research the specific characteristics of feudalism in either Japan or Europe. You and your partner will become experts on your topic and will then share your information with others.

Title: _____

Land Ownership
Creation and Enforcement of Laws
Social Levels
Relationship between Lords and Vassals
Duties and Rights of Peasants and Serfs

**Feudalism in Japan and Europe
Research Graphic Organizer (pg. 2)**

Duties and Rights of Military Warriors

Warriors' Pledge to Lords

Warriors' Training and Weaponry

Duties and Rights of Women

Role of Religion

Feudalism in Japan and Europe
Post-Assessment Graphic Organizer

Directions: Complete the graphic organizer with descriptions of how feudalism was similar or different in Japan and Europe. Think about the political, social and economic characteristics of each society.

	Similarities	Differences
Political Characteristics		
Social Characteristics		
Economic Characteristics		