



まきこの
新
世界

Makiko's New World

activities for the high school classroom

A teacher's guide by Gary Mukai



Makiko's New World: Activities for the High School Classroom

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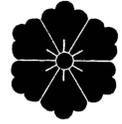
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Introduction

Makiko's New World offers United States high school students a unique glimpse into the latter part of the Meiji Period (1868–1912) in Japanese history. This teacher's guide was developed to provide suggested activities prior to having students view the film, suggested viewing tasks, as well as suggested post-viewing activities.

Connections to National Standards for World History

Makiko's New World is an excellent film to offer high school students studying the Meiji Period in Japanese history. Specific connections between the film and information in this guide and the *National Standards for World History* (Los Angeles, CA: National Center for History in the Schools, UCLA, 1994, p. 224) include:

- analyzing the internal and external causes of the Meiji Restoration
- analyzing the goals and policies of the Meiji state and their impact on Japan's modernization
- assessing the impact of Western ideas on Japan in the Meiji Period

Objectives

Knowledge

- to analyze the internal and external causes of the Meiji Restoration
- to analyze the goals and policies of the Meiji state and their impact on Japan's modernization
- to assess the impact of Western ideas on Japan in the Meiji Period
- to learn that there can be social costs of rapid cultural change

Attitude

- to appreciate the experiences of people as captured through their diaries or other primary sources
- to appreciate the impact of rapid cultural change on individual Japanese citizens during the Meiji Period
- to appreciate the changing role of women during the Meiji Period

Skills

- to critically view the film, *Makiko's New World*
- to work effectively in small groups

Materials

- Film, *Makiko's New World*
- VCR
- Handout #1: Civilization and Enlightenment, one copy per student
- Handout #2: Film Reviewer's Form, one copy per student
- Film Reviewer's Form, for the teacher
- Activity #1: Readers' Theater, one copy; Readers' Theater script, five copies

- Activity #2: Haiku, one copy per small groups of 3–5 students
- Activity #3: Meiji Period Advertisement, one copy per small groups of 3–5 students
- Activity #4: Japanese Calligraphy, one copy per student

Suggested Time

- 3 class periods

In the film, *Makiko's New World*, the experiences of one woman, Makiko, are introduced to students. Students have the opportunity to experience her life during the Meiji Period through the “lens” of her diary. Each Japanese who lived during the Meiji Period has a unique story. It is important to point out to students that although we cannot make generalizations about Japanese life during the Meiji Period solely based on Makiko's diary, the events in her life are reflective of many significant events of this period. Also, the narration of the film provides excellent historical context for Makiko's diary excerpts.

Procedures: Before Viewing the Film

1. Point out to students that they will be examining the Meiji Period (1868–1912) in Japanese history. Many significant events and changes during the Meiji Period surface throughout the film. To set the historical context for the film, distribute Handout #1, *Civilization and Enlightenment*, to each student. Allow students in small groups or in partner pairs 20–30 minutes to read through the handout and consider the questions at the beginning of the handout. Review these questions with the students as a class.
2. Inform students that the film, *Makiko's New World*, is based in large part on excerpts from Makiko's diary. Ask students to describe diaries they have read, e.g., *Diary of Anne Frank*. Ask how these diaries, as primary sources, can help people better understand historical events.
3. Distribute one copy of Handout #2, *Film Reviewer's Form*, to each student. Assign groups of students to each of the sections on the form. Make sure that each section has a group of students assigned to it. During the film, each student should record information from the film under his/her assigned section.

Viewing the Film

1. *Makiko's New World* is approximately 57 minutes long. Depending on the length of class periods, you may want to show the film in two class periods. If so, it is suggested that you stop the film at the point when the following is being said (approximate halfway point):

“Why is it not a crucial issue that Makiko hasn't had children? The role of a housewife in these old middle class families is to manage the household and that is her most important responsibility—I say even more important than having children.

“If she has children, that's good. If she doesn't have children, they can be adopted. I mean, if you look at the front part of the book, you see that people are adopting heirs right, left, and center. It's not absolutely crucial for a woman to be a breeder. It's absolutely crucial that she be a good manager.”

2. Make sure that each student is clear regarding his/her assignment as a film reviewer. Show the film.

After Viewing the Film

1. Allow students a few minutes to analyze the information they have recorded on the *Film Reviewer's Forms*. Based on this information, ask students to critically review the film. Ask students to share their responses.
2. Review this activity by asking the following questions:

- What can we learn from primary sources such as diaries?
 - How are students' lives impacted by non-Western countries such as Japan?
 - How is the theme of “continuity and change” relevant to students' lives?
 - What makes a country modern?
3. Other Suggested Activities: Distribute Activity #1 to a group of five students. Distribute Activities #2 or #3 to other small groups of 3–5 students. Allow students 30 minutes to work on their activities.
 4. Have each group come to the front of the class to share its activity and work.

Assessment

- For Activity #1, consider the appropriateness of the Readers' Theater format, and time management, as well as the students' general understanding of the characters' experiences in your assessment of the Readers' Theater and its related tasks. During their sharing of the various changes that occurred in these characters' lives during the Meiji Period and their comparison of these lives to Makiko's, consider how the students were able to synthesize information from the Readers' Theater and focus on key concepts and/or ideas.
- For Activity #2, you may want to consider craftsmanship, visual or sensory imagery, language use, and cohesive themes, as well as the students' general understanding of other haiku guidelines in your assessment of the haiku.
- For Activity #3, you may want to consider craftsmanship, appropriate detail, themes, and symbolic meaning, as well as the students' general understanding of the Meiji Period in your assessment of the advertisements.
- Another suggested assessment approach to use with this guide is a reflective journal, in which students record their attitudes towards the concepts and information provided in the film and activities. You may consider having students identify certain sections of the journals for the teacher's and/or other students' comments.

Follow-up Activities

- Have each student research a person in his/her family's history. The format can be of your or the students' choosing but each student should focus on how an important historical event or period impacted the person's life. Ideally, primary sources such as diaries would be incorporated. Some possibilities of formats could include short story, scrapbook, children's picture book, photo album with captions, and research-style report.
- Have students write a textbook entry on a significant historical event or period. If possible, diary excerpts from their families' history would be incorporated. Consider how well the information is synthesized and interpreted and how effectively historical documents or other primary sources are used.
- Have students assume the role of a Meiji Period newspaper editorial writer from the following hypothetical newspapers: *U.S. Daily News*, *Tokyo News Bulletin*, or the *Kyoto Weekly*. Have them write an editorial about any aspect of the Meiji Period from either the perspective of an American or a Japanese. Use the editorials to determine how well students have drawn upon their newly acquired knowledge and perspectives related to the Meiji Period. How persuasive are their comments and/or points of view?
- Have students write diary entries of their own, with particular focus on the changes going on around them.
- Have each student utilize information from his/her Film Reviewer's Form to write a film review for *Makiko's New World*.

Civilization and Enlightenment

Keeping these questions in mind, read the following handout:

- Why did Japanese leaders feel their country had to modernize so rapidly? Why do you think the Japanese agreed to the treaties?
- What were some internal and external causes of the Meiji Restoration?
- What were some of the goals and policies of the Meiji state and their impact on Japan's modernization?
- What were some of the social costs of rapid cultural change in Japan during the Meiji Period?
- To what degree are the values, ideals, and beliefs that Japan observed in the West necessary for modernization, civilization, or enlightenment?
- What signs of modernization appeared independent of Western influence?
- What kinds of conflict stemmed from response to pressure from the West and the changes occurring within Japanese society?

After two and a half centuries of isolation from the West, Japan was thrust into the industrial era in the 1850s. At this time, American “gunboat diplomacy” forced Japan out of relative isolation and into a series of unequal relationships with Western nations, including the United States. The threat of Commodore Perry’s “black ships” and cannons on the horizon left the Japanese with little choice other than to make a unified response to the Western challenge.

The 1850s also marked a time of great change in Western Europe and the United States. For Western nations, the following changes had been occurring during two centuries of Japan’s isolation from the West:

- rise of science and its application to technology
- accelerated urbanization and population growth
- political revolutions, independence movements, and the rise of representative governments
- formation of modern nation-states
- industrial growth and economic development
- increase in military

Meanwhile, the Tokugawa Period (1603–1868) in Japan was a time of relative peace and economic progress following centuries of domestic violence and civil war. The great majority of the population was still farming the countryside, although Edo (now called Tokyo) was the largest city in the world during part of this period.

The amount of social and economic change that occurred in the relatively peaceful centuries before the Meiji Period is a matter of scholarly debate. However, it can be safely said that the seeds of change experienced during the Meiji Period were sown during the Tokugawa Period. For example, the class structure was legally fixed during the Tokugawa Period (it was difficult to advance to a higher class), although classes were in actuality slowly becoming more mobile. In Tokugawa terms, this usually meant moving to a lower class. Classes were officially abolished during the Meiji Period.

Commodore Perry’s arrival in the 1850s shocked leaders of Japan into realizing how far behind the West they were in terms of science, technology, and military power. The Japanese were in awe of Perry’s two steamships and two war sloops, which represented technology that far outweighed anything they had ever seen. Perry negotiated the first United States trade-related treaty with Japanese government officials in 1853. This was followed by unequal treaties with other Western powers. Unequal treaties demanded that Japan give up some of its rights and sovereignty to the militarily dominant Western nations. For example, foreigners on Japanese soil were not subject to Japanese laws and the Japanese were not permitted to set their own tariffs. These treaties were highly insulting to the Japanese and detrimental to the country’s development.

Perry's forced opening of Japan took place during the most intense period of European imperialism in Africa and Asia. When Japanese national leaders saw what was happening to other non-European nations, particularly their neighbor, China, they feared similar colonization. China had been defeated by the British in the Opium War ten years earlier and then had to accept unequal treaties with Western nations. This shocked the Japanese who had long admired Chinese civilization.

That the society, economy, politics, and cultural life of Japan should be changed and modernized in the face of the Western threat was accepted by many influential leaders during the 1860s. The question for Japan then became *how* to meet the challenge of the Western powers. This debate led to a civil war called the Meiji Restoration (late 1860s). There was conflict between people favoring modernization and those on the side urging the continuation of the current system of government. The people who advocated a change of government called it a "restoration" because it was supposed to *restore* power to the Emperor. The power of this position had been seized by strong military dictators and their families for hundreds of years.

The period beginning in 1868 is called the Meiji Period, named for Emperor Meiji, which means "enlightened rule." The entirely new system of government was modeled on Western institutions, whose organizations were modified to fit Japanese patterns of life. The Meiji government chose to model its program of "civilization and enlightenment" on the West for several reasons: they feared colonization; they had to get rid of unequal treaties; and they desired Western technology.

In addition to admiring Western technology, the Japanese in power were very interested in Western ideals, such as progress, democracy, equality, and freedom, which they felt had made the West (particularly the United States) strong. They felt that their country could achieve its potential only if all of its people could achieve their potential. Thus, the terms, "civilization and enlightenment," referred to Japanese appreciation of Western culture and values. Japanese leaders were especially interested in Western culture and values in the early stages of the Meiji Period.

The following new social institutions appeared during the Meiji Period. They are listed in order of their appearance, which gives some indication of the priorities of the new government.

- modern educational system (1872)
- universal draft (military conscription, 1873)
- new economic institutions (land tax, banks, government offices, etc., mid-1870s to mid-1880s)
- Constitution and Diet (two-house parliament, 1889–1890)

As time went on, however, many intellectual and political leaders became increasingly negative about whether Western culture and values fit Japanese society. One prominent example of this questioning of Western ways was with regard to the position of women in society. Although many Japanese women called on government leaders to grant greater freedom to women during this period of change, few prominent leaders believed that women should have rights equal to those of men.

Japanese national leaders not only modernized their own society and economy, they also became increasingly imperialistic as had the industrialized Western powers over the past few centuries. Japan's victory over China in 1895 and over Russia in 1905 made Japan one of the strongest countries in the world. Rapid change to a modern nation-state was not without social costs for most Japanese citizens. During parts of the Meiji Period, Japanese factory workers (80 percent of whom were teenage girls) often worked long hours in unsafe working conditions. Farmers and former warriors resorted to riots, especially during the 1870s and early 1880s, to protest the radical nature of the government's reforms as well as their increased tax burdens.

Life for most Japanese toward the latter part of the Meiji Period, which ended in 1912, was very different than it had been before the period began. As is the case with events in any historical period, many contributions of the Meiji Period were not realized until the Taisho (1912–1925) and Showa (1925–1989) Periods which followed. As in any society, changes continue to come about with regard to institutions, social mobility, the individual, and all other aspects of culture.



Film Reviewer's Form



*Utilize this form to record notes during the film on one of the following topics.
Your teacher will assign one topic to you.*

Western influences

Consumer goods

Makiko's interpersonal relationships

Continuity of traditions

Changing role of women

Significance of war

Film Reviewer's Form



Western influences

- Western-style rooms
- musical scales
- clothing
- furniture
- architecture
- food
- transportation, e.g., trains
- Christianity

Consumer goods

- rubber
- electric light
- foods, e.g., bananas
- Munich beer
- chairs
- cameras
- sewing machines

Makiko's interpersonal relationships

Students should note Makiko's relationship with members of her household, neighbors, and birth family

Continuity of traditions

- customary New Year's foods
- Buddhism, Buddhist family altars, visiting temples and shrines
- death memorials, offerings to the dead
- significant birthdays, e.g., 88
- imperial palace
- Noh theater
- flower viewing
- Japanese foods, e.g., *chazuke* (boiled rice with boiling hot water or tea poured over it), *miso* (soybean paste), *sukiyaki* (beef and vegetables boiled in soy-flavored sauce), Japanese pickles
- weddings, betrothal gifts
- holidays, e.g., Girl's Day, National Founding Day
- clothes, e.g., *kimono*
- *jinrikisha* (ricksha)

Changing role of women

- students should note the comparisons made between Japanese and American women, e.g., between a wife in a merchant household and a wife in a salaryman's household; between women's duties in business and work done for the family
- role of housewife in old middle class families
- childbearing

Significance of war

- August 1945, end of World War II
- Allied air raids and evacuations
- fighting in North China; Manchuria

- Isobe Hachibei Things are hard for most of us farmers. We have to pay high taxes to the government, and now it has to be in cash, not crops like before. Many of us have been talking about what to do. You know, there have been many peasant rebellions since the Meiji Period began. It seems that the modernization of Japan is at the expense of us farmers and working class people in the cities.
- Sato Yoji I owe so much money on our land that I may lose the farm in a few years. Then what would we do? We'd be forced to sell our land and work on someone else's farm or move to the city and try to find a job. I can really understand why farmers in other areas have rebelled. All these changes just to catch up to those foreigners! Who needs them anyway?
- Isobe Kiichi Speaking of foreigners, I saw some of them at the university. I found myself staring at their unusual clothes and odd way of speaking Japanese. Seeing a Westerner in person wasn't as scary as I had expected. But, I wonder what the foreign influence will do to our people? For example, I wonder what Western missionaries are teaching my cousin Haru at the mission school.
- Fujikawa Goro I understand they teach foreign languages like English, as well as other things to make a person better educated. Watch out, though—Haru might give up her Japanese hairstyle and *kimono*. You know, the Emperor now wears his hair like the foreigners you saw in Tokyo. Next thing you know, your cousin will become a Christian.
- Isobe Hachibei My sister, Haru's mother, said she would never permit Haru to become a Christian. I don't know anything about the religion though, so who knows if it would be good or bad? As long as Haru can keep her Japanese ways and religion, what's the harm? Maybe the foreign gods can protect her from these foreigners. I'd be more worried about Haru speaking up for women's right to vote, observing Diet (parliament) sessions, or campaigning for other political rights.
- Sato Fumi After so many years of not being able to wear what we wanted, it's exciting to be able to change our clothing style as we wish. If I lived in Tokyo, I might even cut my hair or start wearing jewelry—who knows? I think those Western styles look pretty good on Westerners, and I'm getting used to our Empress wearing Western ball gowns. As for speaking up for ourselves, the factory girls I know would rather campaign for better working conditions or pay in the textile mills. Then we'll worry about our political rights as women.
- Sato Yoji At least you are out of that factory. Why don't you tell your friend Kiichi about the conditions of where you worked?
- Sato Fumi Well, I guess all villagers know why I came back from that factory dorm where I caught tuberculosis and ruined my hands. Working 14 hours a day on a textile loom was just too much. I endured it as long as I could, thinking how much our family needs the money. I thought I could last there until I marry . . .
- Isobe Kiichi Don't be so hard on yourself. You did your best for your family and for Japan. If people of our nation didn't sacrifice, then we couldn't modernize. Japan needs the money that comes from exporting our textiles.
- Sato Yoji As for your marriage, we'll find someone in the village for you soon. First, let's worry about curing your tuberculosis.

- Isobe Hachibei Besides young people like Fumi, the ones I feel sorry for are the coal miners. Not only are they ruining their health, but the mines are dangerous. You all remember what happened at Ashio Mines in 1878. Why, 2,000 miners were killed in that big explosion. I think that working conditions have really gone downhill since the government turned over industry to private entrepreneurs.
- Fujikawa Goro As you all know, I am teaching in our neighborhood school. Since we warriors weren't needed in the new society, I became a teacher like many others who didn't land a job as a government bureaucrat. Anyway, what I wanted to say was that I've been studying and teaching the ideas of our great Meiji leaders—scholars like Fukuzawa Yukichi. He talks and writes about the positive changes this new era has brought.
- Sato Yoji Like what? What have we gained by all this foreign influence?
- Fujikawa Goro For one thing, personal freedom. You may think what you want to think and say so. Why, look at the conversation we are having right now. Would this have happened so freely in the Tokugawa Period? I don't think so. We are all equals in this new society. We don't have to stay in our former social class if we work hard.
- Isobe Kiichi If we are all equal, why can't women and those men who don't own property vote? Most of the population is not represented by the new political system.
- Isobe Hachibei I think it's a matter of time until these new rights extend to all Japanese. Major changes for former feudal nations like ours don't happen overnight. If you want my opinion, no matter how rough things are now for most of us, they are already better than they used to be. For example, look at all the foreign goods that are being imported. If we have to trade our goods for silk and tea for weapons, why not? It beats being colonized or taken advantage of, like our neighbor, China.
- Sato Fumi One of the best things about our new society is the ideal of education for girls and boys alike. Sure, boys still get more education, but that's partly because we Japanese are slow to change our thinking. Also, there is so much work to be done that spending time in school seems like a luxury. Still, I would really like to have the chance to study...
- Fujikawa Goro Someday soon, Fumi, there will truly be education for all. That is the best way to make our nation strong. We must know about Western ways in order to know what we're up against. Having the most literate country in the world already gives us an advantage, don't you think?
- Isobe Kiichi And don't forget baseball and other Western sports. I could really come to like baseball from what I've heard about it. When I return to Tokyo, I'll write a letter to you, father, all about this new sport.
- Isobe Hachibei I think we must be patient and see what the future brings. Let's trust our wise Emperor and look forward to the future with a positive attitude.
- All characters Long live the Emperor!



Examples of Haiku

Samidare ya
Aru yo hisoka ni
Matsu no tsuki

All the rains of June:
then one evening, secretly,
through the pines, the moon!

—Oshima Ryota (1718–1787)

Touyama no
medama ni utsuru
tombo kana

In its eye
the far-off hills are mirrored—
dragonfly

—Kobayashi Issa (1763–1828)

Harusame ya
Kawazu no hara no
Mada nurezu

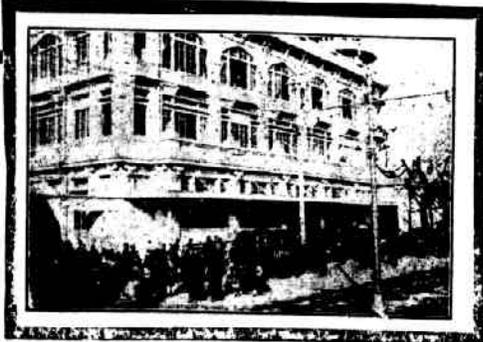
Spring rain: and as yet
The little froglets' bellies
Aren't even wet

—Yosa Buson (1716–1784)



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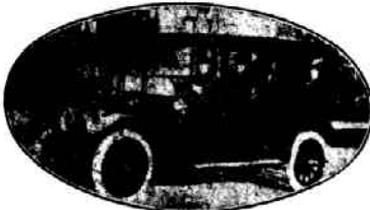
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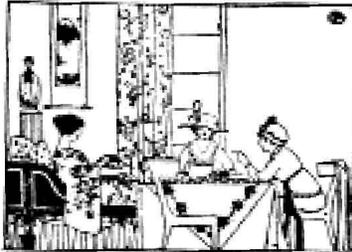
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Hostess: — O, it's a birthday present from Algy. He is very artistic, you know, and quite au fait as to where to buy the best, so I expect he must have get it at

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PASSENGER CONDUCTORS having a knowledge of English are on duty to give passengers any information and assistance they may require with regard to their journey.

SLEEPING CARS are provided on all Evening Express Trains on the Tokaido line between Tokyo (Shimbashi) and Kobe, on the Sanyo line between Kobe and Shimonoseki, and on the North-Eastern line between Tokyo (Uyeno) and Aomori, and on the Kyushu line between Moji and Nagasaki or Kagoshima.

DINING CARS are attached to all Express Trains on the Tokaido, Sanyo, Kyushu and Tohoku lines, in which meals are served in European style either table d'hôte or à la carte.

RAILWAY HOTEL 'Sanyo Hotel,' furnished in European style, and equipped with all modern conveniences is provided at Shimonoseki, the western terminus of the Sanyo line. It is under the direct supervision of the Imperial Government Railways and affords every comfort to the foreign travelling public at moderate charges.

Imperial Government Railways of Japan

Other examples of Japanese calligraphy

The image shows the Japanese characters for 'Denki' (electricity) written in a bold, expressive calligraphic style. The character '電' (den) is on top and '気' (ki) is on the bottom, both written with thick, black ink strokes.

Denki = electricity

den = lightning

ki = spirit, essence

The image shows the Japanese characters for 'Nikki' (diary) written in a bold, expressive calligraphic style. The character '日' (ni) is on top and '記' (ki) is on the bottom, both written with thick, black ink strokes.

Nikki = diary

ni = day

ki = written record

The image shows the Japanese characters for 'Makiko no Shinsekai' (Makiko's New World) written in a vertical calligraphic style. The characters are 'ま', 'き', 'こ', 'の', '新', '世', '界', written from top to bottom in a bold, expressive calligraphic style.

Makiko no Shinsekai
= Makiko's New World