

Midterm Study Guide

The midterm exam for this class will consist of three **keywords** (30%), one **document commentary** (20%), and one **essay** (50%).

The **keyword** responses should aim at not only simply identifying the item and placing it in its approximate time if appropriate; they should also, more importantly, provide a succinct explanation of the item's historical significance. In other words, what does it exemplify about the society, culture, politics, and/or economy of the time?

The **document commentary** is essentially an expanded keyword response based on an excerpt of a primary document. You will be asked to identify and provide a brief commentary and analysis of an unidentified passage from a translated primary source that we have read. You should point out what is being referred to within the passage and, as in the keyword responses, offer some ideas about its historical significance.

The **essay** is your forum to synthesize and analyze the course material within some larger theme or issue. Your study for the keywords and the document commentary should provide you with building blocks for the essay. Some of the themes and issues that would be worth considering as you study are:

- The relationship (positive and negative) between the political order as instituted by the Tokugawa bakufu and cultural, social, and, economic developments, especially those spawned by urban life.
- The factors (internal, external, material, intellectual, "high," "low") that unraveled the bakufu and brought about the Meiji Restoration.
- The character of the Meiji Restoration: in what ways, if at all, was it a "revolution"? To what extent did it come from above or below or inside or outside?
- The change and/or clash of values among different classes and even within the same classes throughout the Tokugawa period and into the Meiji period.
- The impact of western things and ideas from the late Tokugawa to early Meiji period.
- An analysis of the slogan and reality of "bunmei kaika."
- The "3Ms" (Might, Money, Myth) with respect to the establishment of the Meiji state and Japanese nation; in other words, the steps that were taken by the Meiji period leaders to ensure Japan's sovereignty and to consolidate socio-political order. Who, within this new order, were the "winners" and "losers"?
- And more!

It goes without saying that success on the exam lies in having paid attention to readings and lectures, having processed their contents, and being able to demonstrate this mastery through articulate responses. Ganbatte!

Bring an empty blue book and a full brain to the exam!