

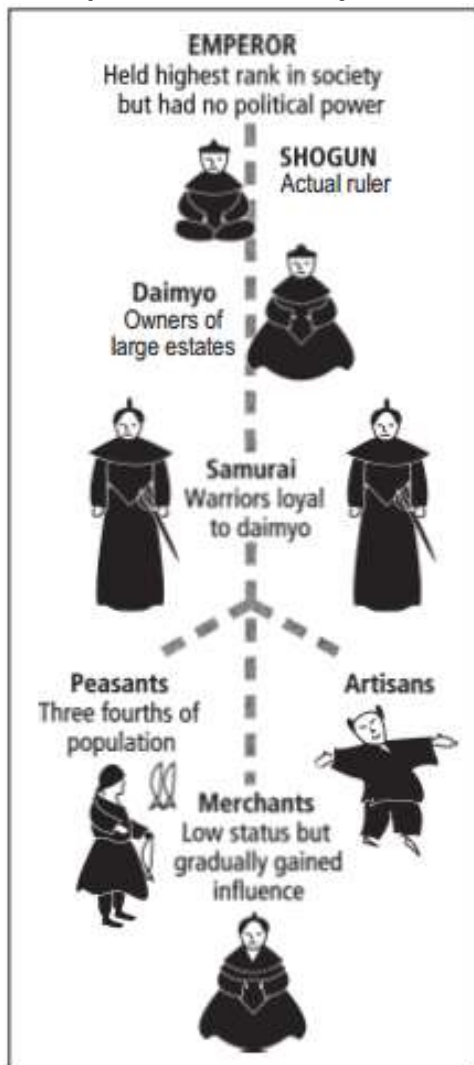
Name _____

Feudal Japan and Tokugawa Shogunate

Vocab.

daimyo (n.)	powerful landowning nobles in Japan who were loyal to the shogun	samurai (n.)	landowning warriors in Japan who were loyal to daimyo
decentralized (adj.)	divided or spread across into different areas or people	shogun (n.)	a military leader in Japan who had absolute power and passed their power down through their family
feudalism (n.)	a decentralized system of power in which land owned by a powerful person is divided up and given to others in exchange for work and a promise to fight for the interests of the land owner		

Japanese Feudal System



Source: *Guide to the Essentials of World History*. Prentice Hall, 1999 (adapted) from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam.

Throughout Japanese history, even today, the head of the ruling government has been an emperor. The emperor is always a member of the Yamato family, but the emperor's real power in the government was different depending on the time period in Japanese history.

From the late 12th to the late 19th century, Japan was ruled by a series of **shoguns**. **Shoguns** were military leaders in Japan who had absolute power and passed their power down through their families. A government ruled by a shogun was called a **shogunate**. During the period when Japan was ruled by shogunates, there was still an emperor from the Yamato family, but he had little power.

The Shoguns created a hierarchy in Japanese government and society called **feudalism**. **Feudalism** is a **decentralized** system of power in which land owned by a powerful person is divided up and given to others in exchange for work and a promise to fight for the interests of the land owner.

Feudalism existed in Europe during the Middle Ages in which kings divided up their land and gave them to lords to rule in exchange for loyalty to the king and protection if the king needed it. These lords gave land to knights who promised to protect the lords in exchange.

In Japan, the system was similar but the roles had different names. The shogun ruled Japan and the **daimyo** were the wealthy landowners who promised their loyalty to the shogun. The daimyo gave land to **samurai** in exchange for their loyalty and protection. Below the samurai were peasants, merchants, and artisans.

Source: Adapted from information in "[Shogunate](#)," Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Tokugawa Shogunate (n.) the government that ruled Japan (1600-1868)

After the fall of the Ashikaga Shogunate in 1573, rival daimyo fought for control of Japan. Tokugawa Ieyasu defeated his rivals and was granted the title of shogun by the emperor. He started a shogunate that lasted for over 250 years.

READ the following selection from the Japanese Government Act of Seclusion (1636)

1. Japanese ships shall by no means be sent abroad.
 2. No Japanese shall be sent abroad. Anyone violating this prohibition shall suffer the penalty of death...
 3. All Japanese residing abroad shall be put to death when they return home.
 4. All Christians shall be examined by official examiners.
 5. Informers against Christians shall be rewarded
 6. The arrival of foreign ships must be reported....and watch kept over them
 7. The Namban people (Spaniards and Portuguese) and any other people with evil titles propagating Christianity shall be incarcerated in the Omura prison...
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1. Summarize the structure of Japanese feudal society.
2. Based on the above document and your knowledge of social studies, what do you think the Japanese are reacting to in the Act of Seclusion?
3. Summarize what the Japanese are trying to do with this Act of Seclusion.