

# PME 833 - Critical Thinking Lesson Plan

## Robert Nemcko

Class: Grade 6	Subject: Social Studies	Unit: Imperial Japan
Textbook:	Hands On History: Age of Imperialism	pp. 90-98
Time frame:	These activities will take place over four class periods (60 minutes each) spread out over two weeks.	

Note: This lesson plan is a revision of the textbook activities on pages 90-98 (see pdf) to promote more critical thinking about the content. The unit will only focus on the textbook reading on pages 92-94. The activities on the following pages will not be assigned as they don't invite critical thinking and require students to simply regurgitate facts. However, students will be encouraged to complete these pages upon early completion of assigned tasks in class.

### Critical Challenge

Why did Japan colonize Korea in 1910 and what were the effects of colonization for both Japan and Korea?

### Purpose

This unit in the English program curriculum serves to complement the social studies unit in the Korean curriculum on Colonial Korea. Students will begin the unit with an adequate amount of background knowledge on this time period, however, my past experience has demonstrated that students often have a limited account of the events in Japan's history with little understanding of the causes of colonization. This limited perspective is often framed by a negative depiction of the events of colonization and strong bias. This unit aims to provide a better understanding of how the modernization of Japan following the Edo Period and the transition to Imperial Japan led to the colonization of Korea. It also aims to provide an evidence-based understanding of, not just the negative consequences of colonization on Korea, but also the positive influences on the modernization of Korea and Japan. This topic can be controversial and evoke strong feelings, so it is important to be culturally sensitive while encouraging open-mindedness toward the content.

### Outcomes

- Students will appreciate the events that transitioned Japan from the Edo Period to the Imperial Period.
- Students will think critically about and gain understanding of how and why countries modernize.
- Students will recognize how historical events are connected having causes and effects.
- Students will synthesize background knowledge and newly acquired knowledge to build better understanding of historical events and their impacts.
- Students will examine ideas and information from different sources to acquire new knowledge and assist in problem solving.
- Students will collaborate and use peers as resources to build understanding of historical events and their impacts.
- Students will draw conclusions from organized information.
- Students will communicate to support and/or challenge the conclusions made by peers.
- Students will independently report conclusions based on evidence.
- Students will collaborate to evaluate and provide feedback on the work of peers for revision and improvement.

Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Smartboard</li> <li>● Textbook (pp.90-94)</li> <li>● Tablets and web-based resources</li> <li>● Worksheet 1 - Analyze the Photo</li> <li>● Worksheet 2 - Significance of Key Events / Questions for Further Investigation</li> <li>● Worksheet 3 - Effects of Japanese Colonization of Korea</li> <li>● Assignment Rubric / Feedback Form</li> <li>● Computer lab resources</li> </ul>
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<b>Experience - Part 1 (60 min)</b>
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Lesson phase	Activity Description	Pedagogy
<i>Making Connections</i>	<p>With current images of Korea shown on the smartboard, initiate a class discussion based on the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is Korea a modern country? Why and/or why not?</li> <li>● How is Korea today different from when your parents were children? Grandparents? Great-grandparents?</li> </ul> <p>Referring to the last unit on The Industrial Revolution and The Age of Imperialism, tell students to brainstorm within their table groups (3-4 students) to respond to the Making Connections question (textbook p. 90): What makes a country modern? Ensure students have a clear understanding of the word ‘modern’.</p> <p>After giving students sufficient time to brainstorm, discuss ideas as a class to create a class mindmap on the smartboard using the online software, Popplet. Review the word criteria and ask students to look at the mind map and narrow down the entries in the mind map into three criteria for modernized countries. Guide the students to establish the criteria that modernized countries have developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Economies</li> <li>● Technology</li> <li>● Quality of life</li> </ul> <p>Tell students that this criteria will be used to frame the topic for the remainder of the unit on Imperial Japan.</p>	<p><i>Engagement in the topic</i></p> <p><i>Teach thinking strategies: Mindmapping; categorizing information</i></p> <p><i>Make criteria overt</i></p> <p><i>Teach vocabulary for critical thinking and conceptual knowledge</i></p>
<i>Recall</i>	<p>Ask students to recall what the “Edo Period” in Japan was (from previous unit on <i>The Unification of Japan</i>). Referring to the criteria, ask students if Japan would be considered a modern country during this time and to explain. Encourage students to provide good reasoning to defend their ideas based on the established criteria.</p> <p>Ask students if they think that the Japanese people during the Edo Period would want to modernize and explain ideas referring to the criteria of a modern country. Ask students what some of the barriers might be to modernizing.</p>	<p><i>Review to assess background knowledge</i></p> <p><i>Thinking strategies: Using reasoned judgments to defend an opinion</i></p>

<p><i>Analyze the photo</i></p>	<p>Give students Worksheet 1: <i>Analyze the Photo</i>. Tell the students to carefully study and analyze the provided photo (that portrays the colonization of Korea by Japan). Discuss the meaning of the word ‘analyze’ to ensure understanding and clarify misunderstanding. Encourage students to fill in the bubbles with as much information as they can in 5 minutes to answer “What”, “Where”, “Who”, “When”, “Why”, “How”. Encourage students to discuss ideas within their table groups if they need help or more ideas.</p> <p>Discuss ideas as a class encouraging students to listen to and respect different perspectives. After discussing, tell students that this is a photo taken of Japanese troops marching through the West Gate in Seoul in 1904, which eventually led to Japan taking full control of Korea by 1910. Ask students what feelings they had while analyzing this photo and to share with the class.</p> <p>Tell students that we will learn more about Imperial Japan to gain a better understanding of history to think about the critical challenge: Why did Japan colonize Korea and what were the effects for both countries? Tell the students that while they may have strong opinions and feelings on the topic that by keeping an open mind and by gaining a better understanding of historical events from different perspectives, we can arrive at a clearer understanding of the events and their effects.</p>	<p><i>Develop thinking strategies: Decode the puzzle through photo analysis</i></p> <p><i>Assess background knowledge</i></p> <p><i>Build conceptual knowledge: Teach vocabulary for critical thinking</i></p> <p><i>Develop habits of mind</i></p>
<p><i>Group Reading</i></p>	<p>Hand out Worksheet 2: <i>Significance of Key Events / Questions for Further Investigation</i>. Tell the students that they will form groups of 3-4 students for a group reading session of pages 92-94 in the textbook. Encourage students to choose their groups, but choose group members who they can work with well. Review the expectations for group reading: Take turns, divide roles, support each other’s understanding, ask questions to clarify information/vocabulary, highlight and discuss key points, take notes, give feedback etc. Tell the students that while they are reading, they will have two further responsibilities to complete on the worksheet provided:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell students that their goal is to record, in their own words, 8 key events they identify in the reading and explain their significance in allowing Japan to modernize. Remind students to use the criteria to support their thinking (effects on economy, technology, quality of life). Model an example on the board: <i>Ex. Key event: In 1853, American warships arrived in Japan, Significance: Japan was no longer isolated from foreign influence leading to better trade relations to develop the economy...</i></li> </ol>	<p><i>Build community of thinkers through group analysis</i></p> <p><i>Develop habits of mind</i></p> <p><i>Applying criteria to understand significance of key events</i></p> <p><i>Develop thinking strategies: Posing powerful questions; critique the piece</i></p>

	<p>2. Acknowledge that the textbook gives only a brief account of the historical events. Tell the students that in their groups, they should pose one powerful question per section (3 sections = 3 questions) that, when answered, would help to provide a better understanding of the events and would improve the textbook's account if this information were included. As a class, overview what a powerful question is. For example, a powerful question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is relevant to the topic</li> <li>● Cannot be answered with a yes or a no</li> <li>● Asks for lots of information for better understanding of the topic</li> <li>● Is not easy to answer and requires further research</li> </ul> <p>Provide an example, on the board:  <i>Ex. I read that Matthew Perry presented a treaty to the shogun. My question is, what was written in the treaty?</i>  Check with the class that this example meets the criteria for asking powerful questions.</p> <p>Provide adequate time to complete the group reading and the worksheet.</p>	
<i>Formative assessment</i>	As students are group reading, check in with each group to ensure they are following procedures and expectations, check understanding, and scaffold students who need additional help. Provide feedback on progress considering the tools for critical thinking: Habit of mind, thinking strategies, background knowledge, conceptual knowledge, applying criteria.	
<i>Reflection</i>	After group reading, discuss the significance of key events as a class. Share questions for further investigation and ensure they meet the requirements for powerful questions. Allow students to suggest improvements to questions if needed.	<i>Develop habits of mind and thinking strategies</i>
<i>Homework Assignment</i>	Tell the students that before the next class, they should do research using web-based resources to answer their questions for further investigation in the space for new findings on their worksheets. Remind the students to cite the sources of their information.	<i>Develop background knowledge through independent research</i>
<b>Experience - Part 2 (60 min.)</b>		
<i>Share research findings</i>	At the beginning of class, tell students to get back in their reading groups to compile their research and answer their questions for further investigation. Groups will present their questions and findings to the class. The teacher will summarize and keep a record of new findings on a chart on the smartboard. Students should ask the groups further questions about the information for clarification.  Print the summary for each of the students when completed and hand out.	<i>Develop background knowledge and thinking strategies</i>

<p><i>Rank new findings for importance</i></p>	<p>As a class, review the research findings in the summary and discuss the relevance and importance of the new information to promote better understanding of the content. Tell the students that we need to consider what are the 5 most important details that should be included in the textbook to improve its account of the historical events. Give the students 10 minutes to review the information and choose their top 5 choices. Take a vote to rank the top 5 choices having students discuss why they chose that piece of information as important.</p>	<p><i>Rework the piece to develop background knowledge</i></p> <p><i>Develop habits of mind</i></p> <p><i>Build community of thinkers</i></p>
<p><i>Reflect</i></p>	<p>Discuss with students what they learned about the modernization of Japan and how the Meiji Restoration led to the formation of an empire. Discuss if this new information gives a better understanding as to why Japan colonized Korea and how their thinking has changed.</p>	<p><i>Assess background knowledge</i></p> <p><i>Develop habits of mind through communication and reflection</i></p>
<p><i>Considering the effects of colonization</i></p>	<p>Tell the students that now that we have a better understanding of how Japan modernized leading to the colonization of Korea, we will consider the effects of colonization for both Japan and Korea. Encourage students to establish a new group (different from reading groups) for the next activity. Hand out Worksheet 3: <i>Effects of Colonization</i>. Instruct the students that in their groups, they will use the criteria for the modernization of countries to develop a chart demonstrating the positive and negative effects of Korean colonization on both Korea and Japan for each of the criteria: Development of economy, advancement of technology, and quality of life. Give the students sufficient time to complete the worksheet chart.</p> <p>Tell the students that we will discuss ideas as a class. During the discussion, students should add to/revise their chart as they gain new perspectives or acquire new information from other groups. Encourage students to support and challenge ideas using evidence. Review meanings of terms ie. challenge, refute, evidence etc. and how to disagree with opinions respectfully (important as the topic can be controversial in Korea, especially when considering the positive effects of colonization of Korea).</p>	<p><i>Develop thinking strategies: Using charts to organize information</i></p> <p><i>Making criteria for thinking overt to make judgments</i></p> <p><i>Support expectations for community of thinkers</i></p> <p><i>Develop habits of mind to be open to new ideas perspectives</i></p>
<p>Experience - Part 3 (60 mins in computer lab)</p>		
<p><i>Introduction of assignment for summative assessment - Putting it all together</i></p>	<p>Tell the students that they will draw conclusions and use their ideas and new understanding to report their learning throughout this unit to respond to the critical challenge: Why did Japan colonize Korea and what were the effects on both Korea and Japan?</p> <p>The students can choose how to report their findings given the options: Written report, video, slideshow, diagrams, voice recording or another means that they think is appropriate (must verify their choice with the teacher). The reports can be printed or web-based in Google drive.</p>	<p><i>Understand success criteria to design to specs</i></p> <p><i>Giving choice to determine best strategy to demonstrate thinking/learning</i></p>

	<p>To ensure that expectations for the assignment are clearly understood, hand out the Assessment Rubric to each student and go through the success criteria for a quality report: Content (background knowledge), evidence (use of criteria), language (conceptual knowledge), organization (thinking strategies), effort (habits of mind). (I tried to adhere to the tools for critical thinking as much as possible). Tell the students that they will perform a self-evaluation and peer evaluation using the rubric and use feedback to revise their work before submitting to the teacher for grading. Address questions to clarify understanding and ask students for suggestions for any appropriate changes to the rubric.</p> <p>Assign due date for first draft and tell students that work that they don't complete in class will be completed for homework before due date.</p>	
<i>Independent work</i>	Students work on assignment individually. Check in with students while they work to provide formative feedback and scaffold.	<i>Application of knowledge and thinking strategies using criteria to make reasoned judgments</i>
<b>Experience - Part 4 (60 min)</b>		
<i>Self- and Peer-evaluation</i>	<p>Using the assessment rubric and feedback form, students will perform a self-evaluation. After, they will share their assignment with two other students, chosen randomly, for peer-evaluation. Encourage students to provide meaningful feedback using the success criteria. Review expectations for peer-evaluation and feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be critical, but respectful</li> <li>● Focus on positive points before suggesting areas for improvement</li> <li>● Address areas for improvement specifically and constructively ex. Don't say "I don't understand this", instead say "Point x is unclear. Can you give an example or more evidence?"</li> <li>● Refer to the rubric to provide information that will help the student to improve</li> </ul> <p>Give adequate time for evaluation and feedback. After evaluations are completed, tell students that they should use the evaluations and feedback to revise their work to produce a final draft for teacher assessment. Set a due date for final assignment.</p>	<p><i>Peer evaluation to develop habits of mind and revise thinking strategies</i></p> <p><i>Establish expectations for peer evaluation to support a community of thinkers</i></p>
<i>Reflection (Homework)</i>	<p>After final draft has been submitted, students will reflect in their online portfolios to answer these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What were the 3 most important ideas/events that you learned in this unit?</li> <li>● How has your understanding of Japan's colonization of Korea changed? If it hasn't changed, explain why.</li> <li>● What were the biggest challenges you faced in this unit and how did you overcome them?</li> </ul>	<i>Developing habits of mind through reflection</i>

**Resources:**

Case, R. (2008) *Beyond Inert Facts: Teaching for Understanding in Elementary Social Studies*.

Case, R., & Balcaen, P. (2008). "Supporting a community of critical thinkers." In: Case, R. & Clark, P. (Eds.). *The Anthology of Social Studies: Issues and Strategies for Elementary Educators*, Pacific Educational Press, Vancouver.

Case, R., & Daniels, L. (2008). "Teaching the tools to think critically." In: Case, R. & Clark, P. (Eds.). *The Canadian Anthology of Social Studies Volume Two: Issues and Strategies for Secondary Teachers*, pp.74-85. Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational Press.