Note Outline on “The Rise of Imperial Japan”

1) What was the period of internal warfare? Who were the “daimyo” and the “samurai”? What would they have been comparable to in the Middle Ages of Europe?

2) How did Tokugawa Ieyasu manage to consolidate the country? What title did he take? Why was the period of his family’s rule so significant?

3) Why were the Tokugawa rulers able to maintain the peace for so long?

8) Who were the first foreigners to reach Japan? How were they restricted by the shogun? Why did the shogun issue edicts stopping conversions to Christianity?

9) Which social class became increasingly important during the Tokugawa period? Why? How did their rise contribute to the future modernization of Japan?

10) On which two occasions did Admiral Matthew Perry visit Japan? What was the impact of his visits? What was the Treaty of Kanagawa and how did the Japanese react to it?

11) How did the Meiji Emperor come to the throne? Why is his reign called “The Meiji Restoration”?

12) What did the Meiji reformers decide to do in order to ward off western imperialism? Where did they turn to for models upon which to base their modernization?

13) By when had Japan established a strong army and navy? How did this enable them to negotiate with the western imperial powers?
14) What was the cause of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894? What was the result?

15) Why did Japan go to war with Russia in 1904? What was surprising to many Europeans about that conflict? Who brokered the peace treaty and what was the effect on Russia and Japan?

16) How was Japan able to make Korea its colony? What draconian measures did they adopt in Korea?

17) What had Japan developed by the end of the Meiji Era?

Thinking Question

Why do you think that Japan was able to modernize in the 19th century and become an imperial power, while China lost power and territory to the imperialists?