**CHY4U Japan Video: Memoires of a Secret Empire**

**Admiral Perry’s Arrival in Japan**

1. From whom did the shogunate perceive threats? (3)
2. Give evidence that even though they were isolated Japanese people were interested in the outside world.
3. What was the US motivation for coming to Japan in the 1850s?
4. Describe the first interaction between Perry and the Japanese.
5. What was Perry’s ultimatum?
6. What were the two views of foreigners present in Japan at the time?
7. How did the daimyo respond to the shogun’s poll?
8. What did the Japanese ultimately choose to do? Why?

Japan Video: Memoires of a Secret Empire:

Answers:

1. Japan perceived threats from Russia in the north, Britain in the south and America in the east.
2. Evidence of Japanese interest in the outside world despite their isolation:

They had started a translation bureau (department) in the gov’t that worked with atlases and dictionaries. They developed foreign affairs specialists. (Basically they knew that isolation would end and they should have some preparation).

1. US motivation in the 1850s for coming to Japan was its resources such as coal and whales (for whale oil used in business which had already depleted the source in the north Atlantic.)
2. The first interaction between Perry and the Japanese (July 2, 1853) was surprising for the Japanese who noticed the huge ships belching black smoke. Perry demanded they open trade with the US. This took place in Edo Bay (not Nagasaki where the foreigners were). The Americans were armed with cannons and 1000 men. Japan ordered them to leave but Perry ignored them because he wanted to be intimidating. Armed samurai warriors demanded they leave. Perry said the interest of commerce demanded they stay.
3. Perry’s ultimatum was that Japan had better open up to trade with America or the US would take them by force. They would return in the spring for the answer. They left.
4. Two views of foreigners in Japan at the time.
5. One was fear of the Americans and Perry. They were portrayed as the devil with ships belching fire.
6. One was more arrogant and saw the Americans’ action as an insult to national dignity.

Note: both were fascinated with ships and technology.

1. The Daimyo responded to the shogun’s poll (actually the advisors’ poll):
2. Some said open the country – we have no choice but to open to trade – Americans don’t understand ethics anyhow.
3. Others said revere the emperor, repel the barbarian: we must drive them out or others will follow (in other words, we’d set a precedent).
4. The Japanese ultimately chose to negotiate with Perry.

The reason was that they compromised – the US got their relations with Japan, which they wanted; Japan didn’t have to surrender their total control of trade – in other words, they were not totally open to UNREGULATED trade with anyone. It was a practical, peaceful choice.

1. The talking head on the video says that some historians have not given credit to Japan for their choice. This implies that some Japanese at the time may have felt that it was a weak decision to negotiate with the Americans – that Japan was surrendering, giving in, not standing up for itself.