

JAPANESE EXERCISES

A - exercises

1. Look at a map of the world. Where is Japan?
2. What happened in and around Japan during the First and Second World Wars? What property did Japan gain and lose?
3. Who have been in power since the creation of Japan as a country?
4. Make a timeline. What differences did the various rulers make?
5. Are men and women equal in Japanese society? Explain your answer. Look at the creation myth and the pantheon to help you form an opinion.
6. What two religions play a major role in Japan? How are they different?
7. How did the "Great Land of Eight Islands" come into existence? Explain why islands played such an important role in the Japanese creation myth.
8. Find as much information as you can about Yin and Yang and write a description of what you find (like an entry you would find in an encyclopedia). Why can one not exist without the other?
9. How is thunder as a natural phenomenon explained?
10. To what extent do the kami resemble human beings? How are they different?
11. Compare the story of creation with the information about IZANAGI and IZANAMI found the pantheon. What are the differences? How can you explain the fact that there are different versions of the same story?
12. What similarities do you see between the Japanese creation myth and those of other cultures?

B - exercises

Look at a few websites that deal with this culture and choose one or two that have images, sounds or text that you think are useful for preparing your presentation. Make a summary or a sketch of the Japanese creation myth on a piece of flip chart paper. As much as possible, try to use the illustrations and images you found on the internet.

Choose one of the following exercises:

1. Choose one "kami" from the list. Find as much information as you can about this kami and make a "television" documentary about it. While presenting your documentary show what the relationship is between the kami you chose and the other kami.

or

2. Collect as much information as you can about the Shinto religion and its rituals. Create a play in which it becomes clear what happens in such a ritual and what the meaning of such a ritual is.

C - exercises

What is missing in the Japanese creation story? Do you have an explanation for this?

