Notes

10.1

Japan

Location and Place

* Mountainous Japanese archipelago (four main islands)
  + Archipelago – string or group of islands
* Sea of Japan / East Sea between Japan and Asian mainland
* Proximity (closeness) to China and Korea
  + Close enough for Chinese and Korean culture to influence Japanese culture
  + Far enough away to avoid being invaded

Influence of Chinese culture

* Writing
  + Japanese writing system based on Chinese characters
* Architecture
* Buddhism
  + Japan adopted Chinese forms of Buddhism

Shinto

* Ethnic religion unique to Japan
* Emphasis and focus on natural features, forces of nature, and ancestors
* State religion
  + Emperor worship
  + Japanese emperor is the highest figure in Shintoism and is considered to be a descendent of the gods
* Shinto coexisted (existed alongside) with Buddhism in Japan

Japanese Feudal Society

* Emperor rarely held much real political power
* Most power was controlled by the Shogun (“great general”)
* Japanese society was organized into clans along feudal lines
* Japan experienced nearly constant warfare because these clans always fought each other for power and land

Samurai

* Samurai were the Japanese equivalent of knights
* Had a strict code of conduct called *Bushido,* which emphasized fairness, loyalty, and military prowess/ability