# JAPAN: Places, Images, Times & Transformations

Suggestions for the Middle and High School Classroom

# Japanese Writing System II - Hiroshi Nara

* **Objectives:**
  + Identify the changes in writing styles throughout Japanese history.
  + Understand how Chinese characters were adopted and adapted within Japan.
* **Suggested Units for Inclusion:**
  + Social Studies or Japanese units that explore the relationship between Japan and China.
  + Social Studies units that explore the development of languages and their writing systems.
  + ELA units that explore the evolution of language, the development of writing systems or how meaning is conveyed through writing systems.
  + Japanese units that introduce hiragana, katakana, or kanji.
* **Lesson Ideas:**
  + 1. Individual Research Homework
    - Students can be assigned the *study questions* or *develop questions for the class to discuss*
  + 2. Writing System Project
    - Students could be tasked with creating their own writing system for English. Students should decide what kind of writing system they will make (Syllabic vs Logographic) and translate a predetermined passage into the writing system they development. Students should also justify the decisions they make through a paper or journal.
  + 3. Compare and Contrast
    - Students can compare and contrast the development of the Japanese writing systems to changes they see happening in the English language.
* **Study Questions:**
  + What is the difference between junkanbuntai, hentaikanbuntai, and senmyotai? What were each of these writing styles used for?
  + What did individuals like Maejima Hisoka and Kanda Takahira propose during the Meiji period? What happened in Meiji 36? Why are these steps important?
  + What are homorganic consonants and how were they represented in the Japanese writing system?
  + What is the difference between ateji and man’yogana?