Levels 7 and 8: Chronology – Student Handout

Activity: Timeline of Japan under the Shoguns

1. Your task is to create a timeline of Japan under the Shoguns. The following dates outline events in feudal Japan, but they are jumbled.
   1. Sequence the dates and events into the correct order.
   2. Place them onto either a vertical or horizontal timeline. You may choose to use shapes and text boxes in a Word document or a PowerPoint presentation to make a timeline, or make one using an Excel spreadsheet.
   3. Use colour-coding or symbols to show the periods of time when Japan was under:
      1. imperial rule
      2. shogunate rule
      3. political unrest or civil war.

* **1392 AD –** Ashikaya Yoshimitsu unifies Japan again, restoring peace. A golden age of Japanese culture begins.
* **1854 AD –** Perry returns with an even larger fleet, resulting in the abolishment of *Sakoku* by the Treaty of Kanagawa; Japan begins to trade with the US.
* **1274 AD –** The first Mongol fleet under Kublai Khan attacks Japan and is defeated by the Japanese thanks to a typhoon called the Divine Wind.
* **1633 AD –** Tokugawa Iemitsu introduces the ‘locked country’ policy, *Sakoku.* This means that no Japanese people can leave Japan and no foreigners are allowed on Japanese soil; this policy is largely upheld for over 200 years.
* **660 BC –** Legendary Emperor Jimmu becomes the first emperor of Japan, establishing imperial rule.
* **1333 AD –** Emperor Go-Daigo overthrows the Kamakura shogunate and briefly the imperial family is in power again.
* **1867 AD –** Tokugawa Yoshinobu gives power back to the imperial family under Emperor Meiji and thus is the last shogun.
* **1560s to 1590s AD –** *Daimyo (*orWarlord) Odu Nobunaga overthrows the Muromachi shogunate and takes control of much of Japan; his successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, continues the process, leading the way for the reunification of Japan.
* **1337 AD –** Emperor Go-Daigo is challenged by Shogun Ashikaya Takauji who sets up a rival emperor and founds the Muromachi shogunate. For the next 60 years Japan experiences civil war as the two factions vie for power.
* **794 AD –** Emperor Kammu moves the capital to Heian-Kyo (modern day Kyoto) – it will be the official capital of Japan for the next 1000 years.
* **1467 AD –** The Warring States period begins as civil war breaks out between rival *daimyo* or warlords, destabilising the rule of the Muromachi shoguns.
* **1853 AD –** US naval officer Commodore Perry arrives in Edo with four warships to persuade the Shogun to open Japan’s borders for trade.
* **710 AD –** Nara becomes the first official capital city of Japan.
* **1281 AD –** A second attack by a Mongol fleet is also destroyed by the Divine Wind.
* **1603 AD –** Tokugawa Ieyasu establishes the Tokugawa shogunate and establishes his capital at Edo (modern day Tokyo).
* **1185 AD –** Minamoto no Yoritomo seizes power from the emperor and becomes shogun, establishing his own capital in Kamikura. Shoguns rule Japan for about the next 700 years.

**Note:** The Japanese imperial dynasty is stated to be the oldest continuous monarchy in the world, beginning in 660 BC with Emperor Jimmu and continuing in an unbroken line to the current emperor, Naruhito. Even when the Shoguns took power, the emperors remained the sovereigns of the state, though they had no political or military power.

1. Use your completed timeline to help you answer the following questions about the chronology of Japan under the Shoguns:
   1. For how long, and how many times, was Japan:
      1. ruled solely by an emperor?
      2. ruled by a shogun?
      3. experiencing civil war?
   2. What patterns of continuity can you identify (i.e. what remained the same or similar over time)?
   3. What change can you identify (i.e. what changed over time)?
2. Follow these steps to write a short narrative, of about 300 words, to describe and explain an aspect of Shogunate Japan.
   1. Create three to five questions you would like the answers to about Japan under the Shoguns.
   2. Think about:
      1. what you already know from your answers to Questions 1 and 2
      2. what else you need to know.
   3. Undertake some research on the internet to answer your questions, and then turn this into a narrative that could help others learn about Shogunate Japan.