

# Ceremonies - Who's In Charge?

## Summary

Students will compare and contrast the governments of Japan and the United States

## Materials

Venn diagram worksheets

There are many other books in libraries regarding Japanese government and US governments that will give even more information.

## Background for Teachers

Japan has been one of the United States' strong allies in the Far East. Yet she does not share the same type of government. Like the United Kingdom (England), she still has a monarch, and the real power lies in the hands of a prime minister. What binds these two countries (the United States and Japan)?

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will learn about the government of Japan and how it is similar and different from our government. They will also learn how to organize information using a venn diagram graphic organizer.

## Instructional Procedures

Introduce the venn diagram as a graphic organizer that shows contrast and comparison. Makes sure students understand the difference between the two terms (to compare is to show similarities; to contrast is to show differences). Students will use the diagram to show what they have learned.

The following chart shows some of the differences and similarities. An information sheet could be prepared for students to read and determine what goes where on the chart, or the teacher could orally give the information and as students listened, they would fill in the chart.

United States of America	Japan
Representative democracy	Parliamentary representative democratic monarchy
President	Prime Minister, head of Diet
2 Houses of Congress: Senate and House of Representatives elected by the people	2 Houses of the Diet: House of Representatives and House of Councillors elected by the people
No king or emperor	Emperor
Written constitution	Written constitution
3 branches of government: Executive, Legislative, Judicial	3 branches of government: Executive, Legislative, Judicial
Political parties	Political parties
Bill of Rights first 10 amendments of the constitution	31 articles listing rights and duties of the people in the constitution
Citizens pay taxes to support government	Citizens pay taxes to support government
Private (individual and private insurance)	Socialized medicine (provided through taxes by the government)
Capitalistic economic system	Capitalistic economic system

If desired, students could learn more about how the Japanese government was formed after World War II. Following Japan's defeat in the war, the United States occupied Japan with General Douglas MacArthur as the supreme commander. The emperor became a symbolic head of state with little power. After 1951, United States troops were stationed in bases throughout Japan.

In the present day, our relationship with Japan continues very strong with continued trade, military defense in Asia, and world political support (as in Japan's support during the war with Iraq).

### Bibliography

- [Japan](#)
- [Elections in Japan: A Comparison with the United States](#)
- [Government](#)
- [Government of Japan](#)

### Authors

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