MA99 EDUCATION

Case study: The Meiji Restoration: Summary

03

NSW MODERN HISTORY 11-12 SYLLABUS 2024 FOR HSC 2028 AND LATER

Every quotation is short, exact and attributed, so you can use it as written. Read this the week before an assessment.

1. The case study on one page

CONTENT POINT	KEY POINT	EVIDENCE
The decline of the Tokugawa Shogunate	It was weak before Perry: broke, hungry and losing respect	Deficit of "well over half a million ryō" a year by 1837 to 1841 (Beasley 1972, p. 51); Tenpō famine 1833 to 1837; Ōshio's Osaka rising 1837
The end of isolationism: the Black Ships and Perry	Perry forced treaties the shogunate could neither refuse nor defend	Perry at Uraga, 8 July 1853; Kanagawa, 31 March 1854; Harris Treaty, 29 July 1858, signed without the emperor's consent
The reasons for modernisation	Survival, equality (treaty revision), unity, wealth, "civilisation"	Charter Oath, 1868: knowledge sought "to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule"; China's defeats; Kagoshima 1863, Shimonoseki 1864
The role of individuals and groups	Oligarchs ruled in the emperor's name; samurai, merchants, peasants and the rights movement shaped the result	Iwakura, Ōkubo, Kido, Saigō, Itō, Yamagata; Satsuma Rebellion 1877; Freedom and People's Rights Movement from 1874
The role of Western imperialism	Threat, model, constraint and partner; and Japan copied it	Iwakura Mission 1871 to 1873; Triple Intervention 1895; extraterritoriality ended 1899; alliance with Britain 1902
Consequences for Japan, the Emperor, the region and the West	Four headings, every time	Domains abolished 1871; Constitution Article 3 "sacred and inviolable"; Okinawa 1879; school attendance 35.4 per cent (1875) to 95.6 per cent (1905)
Militarism and imperialism	Each war grew from the last, and Korea is the thread	Shimonoseki, 17 April 1895; Portsmouth, 5 September 1905; annexation of Korea signed 22 August 1910
The debate	Revolutionary in scale, authoritarian in method	Norman 1940: "no liberal era"; Beasley 1972: "a nationalist revolution, perhaps"; Jansen 2000: "The Meiji Revolution"

PERRY TO THE ANNEXATION OF KOREA

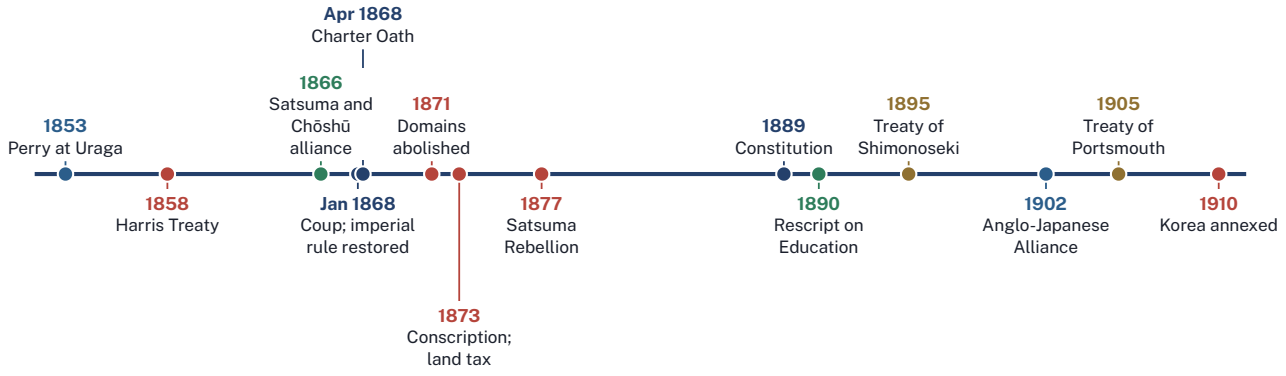


Figure 1 · The dates that carry most of the marks. Sources: Beasley 1972; Jansen 2000; treaty texts, "The World and Japan" Database.

2. The facts to quote

The context, 1603 to 1868

Tokugawa Japan. Shogun in Edo from 1603; emperor in Kyoto with prestige, no power; about 260 daimyo with their own domains; samurai about 5 to 6 per cent of the people with families (Jansen 2000, p. 49). Alternate attendance kept daimyo in Edo every second year.

Seclusion. From the 1630s; Dutch confined to Dejima from 1641. Controlled contact through Nagasaki, Tsushima (Korea), Satsuma (Ryukyu) and Matsumae (Ainu): a policy of control (Toby 1984).

Decline. Rice income, cash costs; deficit of over half a million ryō a year by 1837 to 1841. Tenpō famine 1833 to 1837; Ōshio Heihachirō's rising, Osaka, 1837; Tenpō reforms 1841 to 1843 failed. Mito school and national learning exalted the emperor. News of the Opium War (1839 to 1842).

Opening. Fillmore's letter asked for "friendship, commerce, a supply of coal and provisions, and protection for our shipwrecked people". Kanagawa (1854): Shimoda and Hakodate, a consul. Harris Treaty (1858): more ports, fixed tariffs, consular courts (Article VI). Ii Naosuke signed without the emperor's consent; assassinated 1860.

Overthrow. "Revere the emperor, expel the barbarian" (sonnō jōi), then "rich country, strong army" (fukoku kyōhei) after Kagoshima (1863) and Shimonoseki (1864). Satsuma and Chōshū alliance, 7 March 1866. Coup in Kyoto, 3 January 1868: "This coup, for that is what it was" (Jansen 2000, p. 334). Boshin War 1868 to 1869.

The nature of the Restoration, 1868 to 1912

Reforms. Charter Oath, April 1868. Domains returned 1869, abolished 29 August 1871 (261 domains to prefectures). Iwakura Mission December 1871 to September 1873: about fifty officials, twelve countries. Education System Order 1872. Conscription, January 1873 (270 yen exemption: "bore most heavily on the poor", Jansen 2000, p. 366). Land tax, July 1873: 3 per cent of land value in cash, cut to 2.5 per cent in 1877. Sword ban and stipends ended 1876. Satsuma Rebellion, 1877. Cabinet 1885. Constitution, 11 February 1889. First Diet 1890: about 450,000 voters (Jansen 2000, p. 415).

Models. Constitution: Prussia (1850), though the aim was not "to create an East Asian Prussia" (Jansen 2000, p. 391). Army: France, then Germany (Meckel, 1885 to 1888). Navy: Britain. Law codes: France (Boissonade), then Germany.

Control. Press laws from 1875; Peace Preservation Ordinance, December 1887: over 500 expelled from Tokyo; police posts 3,068 (1885) to 11,357 (1890) (Jansen 2000, p. 401). Rescript on Education, 30 October 1890: "should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State".

Empire. Taiwan expedition 1874; Korea opened 1876; Okinawa Prefecture 1879. Sino-Japanese War 1894 to 1895: Shimonoseki gave Taiwan, the Pescadores, Liaodong (returned after the Triple Intervention) and 200 million taels. Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 30 January 1902. Russo-Japanese War 1904 to 1905: Tsushima, 27 to 28 May 1905; Portsmouth recognised Japan's "paramount political, military and economical interests" in Korea; no indemnity; Hibiya riots. Korea a protectorate, 17 November 1905; Itō killed at Harbin, October 1909; annexation signed 22 August 1910, published 29 August.

HISTORIAN	WORK	PHRASE TO QUOTE	WHERE IT SITS
E. H. Norman	Japan's Emergence as a Modern State, 1940	"Japan experienced no liberal era"	Oppressive
Japanese Marxists	e.g. Tōyama Shigeki, Meiji Ishin, 1951	Meiji "absolutism"	Oppressive
W. G. Beasley	The Meiji Restoration, 1972	"a nationalist revolution, perhaps"	Between
Marius B. Jansen	The Making of Modern Japan, 2000	"The Meiji Revolution"	Revolution

Figure 2 · Four positions in the debate, with the phrase to quote for each. Sources: Norman 1940, pp. 50, 70; Beasley 1972, pp. 7, 405, 423 to 424; Jansen 2000, pp. 334 to 335.

3. What to do with it

Four recipes

A source question (perspective, usefulness). Who wrote it, when, for whom and why. Quote three to eight words that show the perspective. Say what it reveals and what it hides. Fillmore's letter is polite and lists peaceful aims, yet mentions "a powerful squadron".

An explain question (reasons, role, consequences). Claim, evidence with a date, the effect (because, so), then a link to the question. For consequences, use the syllabus's own four headings: Japan, the Emperor, the region, the West.

An interpretation question. State each view in a phrase, name the historian, work and year, and say what each measured and when they wrote. Then judge against a criterion: who held power, how much changed, whose interests were served.

An extended response. Judgement in the first sentence; criterion in the second; three or four paragraphs that each argue a reason; the strongest counter argument, answered; a conclusion that commits and says when it would not hold.

The six mistakes that cost the most

Writing that Japan was "completely cut off" before 1853: contact was controlled, not absent. Writing that Perry "caused" the Restoration: he was the trigger, and fifteen years separate 1853 from 1868.

Writing that the emperor modernised Japan: the oligarchs acted in his name. Listing reforms without reasons: every reform served survival, equality, unity or wealth.

Treating militarism as starting in 1894: conscription (1873), the Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors (1882) and the emperor's supreme command (1889) came first. Siding with a historian instead of judging the interpretation.

3.1 Terms to use exactly

TERM	MEANING
Bakufu	The shogun's government, based in Edo
Daimyo; han	A domain lord; his domain (about 260 in Tokugawa Japan)
Alternate attendance (sankin-kōtai)	Daimyo spent every second year in Edo, with families kept there
Sakoku	The policy of controlled seclusion from the 1630s
Sonnō jōi	"Revere the emperor, expel the barbarian": the loyalist slogan of the 1860s
Fukoku kyōhei	"Rich country, strong army": the aim that replaced expulsion
Extraterritoriality	Foreigners tried by their own consuls, not by local courts (Harris Treaty, Article VI)
Oligarchs	The small group of former samurai and court nobles who ruled in the emperor's name
Zaibatsu	Family-controlled business groups such as Mitsui and Mitsubishi
Protectorate	A state whose foreign affairs are controlled by another: Korea from 1905

4. The last check before the assessment

Tick each line only when you can do it on blank paper, without these notes. Every line left at "not yet" is where your next hour of study goes.

CAN I DO THIS WITHOUT NOTES?	YES	NOT YET
Draw the division of power between emperor, shogun and daimyo.	☐	☐
Give three internal weaknesses of the shogunate before 1853, with dates.	☐	☐

CAN I DO THIS WITHOUT NOTES?	YES	NOT YET
Quote Fillmore's letter and explain its perspective.	☐	☐
Name two terms that made the 1858 treaties unequal.	☐	☐
Give five reasons for modernisation, each with a reform.	☐	☐
Explain the role of two individuals and two groups.	☐	☐
Explain four roles of Western imperialism.	☐	☐
Give one consequence each for Japan, the Emperor, the region and the West.	☐	☐
Give the date, cause and outcome of each of the three content examples on empire.	☐	☐
State Norman's, Beasley's and Jansen's views, each with a phrase.	☐	☐

> If you can only do one thing before the assessment, learn one dated source for each content point.

About this resource

MA99 EDUCATION

Scope

NSW Modern History, Year 11. Written to the NSW Modern History 11-12 Syllabus 2024, Case study: The Meiji Restoration, for students sitting the HSC in 2028 and later years. Written to the new syllabus, taught in Year 11 from 2027. Sources are real and attributed; quotations are short and checked, and any source written for MA99 says so.

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MA99 EDUCATION

Case study: The Meiji Restoration: Practice Questions

03

NSW MODERN HISTORY 11-12 SYLLABUS 2024 FOR HSC 2028 AND LATER

1. Instructions

Fifty five marks in total: ten multiple choice, twenty five marks of source based short answer, and a twenty mark extended response in two parts, the shape of a structured question in the new HSC. Complete it under timed conditions before reading the back of the document.

How to run this

Give yourself 100 minutes for the whole set, written, on paper, with no notes. That is the HSC rate of a little under two minutes a mark. Mark it yourself against the guidance at the back, then write one sentence naming the single change that would have gained the most marks. Do that sentence. Nothing else. Make one change per attempt.

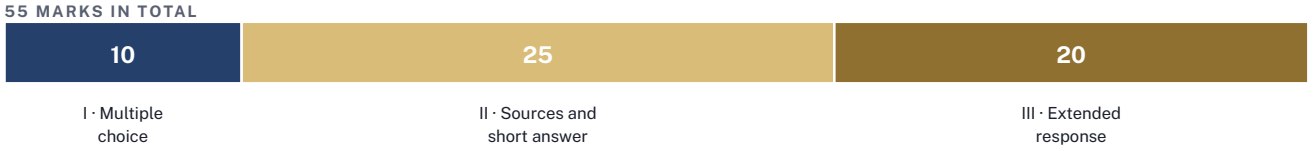


Figure 1 · How the 55 marks are split across the sections. Your time should follow the same split.

The sources in this set

Every source is real, quoted exactly and attributed. Quotations are short; treaty and constitution texts are from official English versions. The two interpretations in Section III are from published histories. Nothing in this set is invented.

FOUNDATION Section I recalls and applies one idea per item.

STANDARD Section II uses real sources. Match your detail to the marks.

2. Section I · Multiple choice

Ten marks. One mark each. About 15 minutes. Choose the single best option.

Question 1

1 MARK

Before 1853, who held real political power over Japan as a whole?

A The emperor in Kyoto

B The Tokugawa shogun in Edo

C The Dutch traders at Dejima

D The daimyo of Satsuma

Question 2

1 MARK

Which statement best describes Tokugawa sakoku (seclusion)?

A Japan had no contact of any kind with other countries

B Japan traded only with the United States

C The shogunate controlled all foreign contact, through Nagasaki and a few domains

D Japan banned trade with China but welcomed Europeans

Question 3

1 MARK

Which of the following was a term of the 1858 Treaty of Amity and Commerce (the Harris Treaty)?

A Americans accused of offences against Japanese would be tried in American consular courts

B Japan would set its own tariffs on American goods

C Only Shimoda and Hakodate would be opened, for supplies

D The emperor would approve the treaty before it was signed

Question 4

1 MARK

After the bombardments of Kagoshima (1863) and Shimonoseki (1864), Satsuma and Chōshū adopted which aim?

A Sonnō jōi, “revere the emperor, expel the barbarian”

B Sakoku, seclusion

C Fukoku kyōhei, “rich country, strong army”

D Sankin-kōtai, alternate attendance

Question 5

1 MARK

In August 1871 the Meiji government

A returned the domains to the daimyo as hereditary lords

B replaced the domains with prefectures run by appointed governors

C gave each daimyo a seat in an elected Diet

D abolished the samurai’s right to wear swords

Question 6

1 MARK

The land tax reform of 1873 required farmers to pay

A 3 per cent of the assessed value of their land, in cash

B 3 per cent of each year’s harvest, in rice nothing,

C a tax collected from the whole village, as under the Tokugawa

D because the tax fell only on merchants

Question 7

1 MARK

The defeat of the Satsuma Rebellion in 1877 was significant because it

A restored the shogun to power

B showed that a conscript army of commoners could defeat samurai

C made Saigō Takamori prime minister

D forced the government to end conscription

Question 8

1 MARK

Under Article 11 of the 1889 Constitution, supreme command of the army and navy belonged to

A the Imperial Diet

B the Cabinet

C the House of Representatives

D the Emperor

Question 9

1 MARK

The Triple Intervention of April 1895 forced Japan to

A return Taiwan to China

B withdraw from Korea

C return the Liaodong Peninsula to China

D pay an indemnity to Russia

Question 10

1 MARK

In Japan's Emergence as a Modern State (1940), E. H. Norman described the Meiji government as

A a liberal democracy from its first years

B a revolution led by the peasantry

C a restoration of Tokugawa rule under a new name

D an "enlightened absolutism", under which Japan "experienced no liberal era"

3. Section II · Sources and short answer

Twenty five marks. About 45 minutes. Use the sources and your own knowledge. Write in full sentences and attribute every source you use.

Source A: President Fillmore to the Emperor of Japan, 13 November 1852

"These are the only objects for which I have sent Commodore Perry, with a powerful squadron"

The objects: "friendship, commerce, a supply of coal and provisions, and protection for our shipwrecked people."

Millard Fillmore, letter presented by Commodore Perry at Kurihama, 14 July 1853. Text: Internet Archive transcription; also in Hawks, Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, 1856.

Question 11

3 MARKS

Using Source A, outline the aims of the United States in sending Perry to Japan, and explain ONE feature of the source that reveals its perspective.

Source B: the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, 1858, Article VI

"Americans, committing offenses against Japanese shall be tried in American Consular courts, and, when guilty, shall be punished according to American law."

Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the United States of America and the Empire of Japan, signed at Edo, 29 July 1858. Text: "The World and Japan" Database (GRIPS and the University of Tokyo).

Question 12

4 MARKS

Using Source B and your own knowledge, explain why the treaties of 1858 weakened the Tokugawa Shogunate.

Source C: the Charter Oath, 6 April 1868, Articles 1 and 5

"Deliberative assemblies shall be widely established and all matters decided by public discussion."

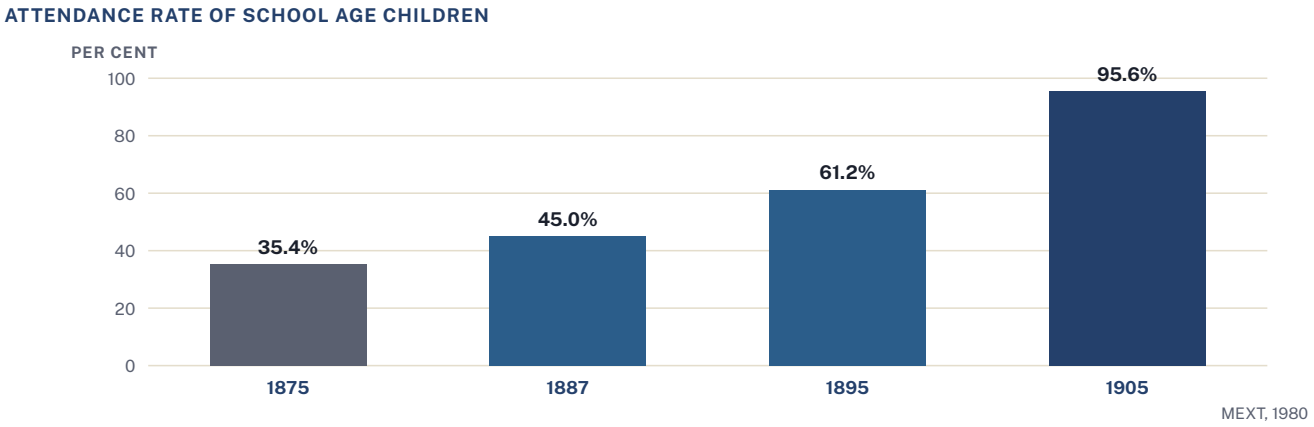
"Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule."

Translation from Tsunoda, de Bary and Keene, eds, Sources of Japanese Tradition (Columbia University Press), as reproduced on the University of Texas at Austin Meiji pages.

Question 13

4 MARKS

Using Source C and your own knowledge, explain the reasons for Japanese modernisation under Meiji rule.



Source D · Attendance rate of children of school age, Japan, 1875 to 1905. Source: MEXT (Ministry of Education, Japan), Japan's Modern Educational System: A History of the First Hundred Years, 1980, chapters 2 and 3, web edition.

Question 14

5 MARKS

Refer to Source D.

(a) Calculate the change in the attendance rate between 1895 and 1905, in percentage points. Show your working. (1 mark)

(b) Using Source D and your own knowledge, explain the social consequences of modernisation for Japan. (4 marks)

Question 15

4 MARKS

Explain the role of Saigō Takamori in the Meiji Restoration.

Sources E and F: Japan and Korea, 1905 and 1910

Source E. Russia "acknowledged that Japan possesses in Corea paramount political, military and economical interests"

Russo-Japanese Peace Treaty (Treaty of Portsmouth), 5 September 1905, Article 2.

Source F. The Emperor of Korea "makes complete and permanent cession to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan of all rights of sovereignty over the whole of Korea."

Treaty regarding the Annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan, signed at Seoul, 22 August 1910, Article I. Both texts: "The World and Japan" Database.

Question 16

5 MARKS

Using Sources E and F and your own knowledge, explain how Japan gained control of Korea between 1894 and 1910.

CHALLENGE Section III asks you to judge between interpretations.

4. Section III · Extended response

Twenty marks. About 40 minutes. Answer both parts.

Interpretation G: E. H. Norman, 1940

"Hence from the first, even during the transitional years, Japan experienced no liberal era."

E. H. Norman, Japan's Emergence as a Modern State: Political and Economic Problems of the Meiji Period, 1940, p. 70. Norman, a Canadian historian and diplomat, described the Meiji government as an "enlightened absolutism" (p. 70).

Interpretation H: Marius B. Jansen, 2000

Japan began the Meiji period as "one of the modern world's most fractured polities" and "emerged within a generation as one of its most centralized states."

Marius B. Jansen, The Making of Modern Japan, 2000, pp. 334 to 335, in the chapter "The Meiji Revolution".

Question 17

20 MARKS

(a) Explain how Interpretations G and H differ in their view of the Meiji Restoration. (5 marks)

(b) "The Meiji Restoration was a true revolution." To what extent do you agree with this statement? Use Interpretations G and H and your own knowledge in your answer. (15 marks)

Write your response in a separate writing booklet.

5. Marking guidance

Mark accurately. A generous mark hides the change worth making. Equivalent evidence earns the same marks. The criteria are MA99's, written in the NESA style; your school's marking guidelines are the authority for your own tasks.

Section I

Q	ANSWER	WHY, AND WHERE THE DISTRACTORS COME FROM
1	B	The shogun ruled; the emperor had prestige and appointed him but held no power. A is the most common error: confusing authority with power. D was one of about 260 domains.
2	C	Contact was controlled through Nagasaki (Dutch and Chinese), Tsushima, Satsuma and Matsumae. A is the "closed country" myth; D reverses the facts: Chinese merchants traded at Nagasaki.
3	A	Article VI set up consular courts: extraterritoriality. B is the opposite of the treaty, which fixed tariffs. C describes Kanagawa (1854). D is wrong: Ii Naosuke signed without the emperor's consent.
4	C	Defeat taught that expulsion was impossible until Japan was strong. A was the slogan they abandoned; B and D are Tokugawa policies.
5	B	The abolition of the domains (haihan chiken) created prefectures with appointed governors. A confuses it with 1869, when daimyo became governors; D happened in 1876.
6	A	A uniform 3 per cent of land value, paid in money whatever the harvest. B describes the old rice tax; C the Tokugawa village system the reform replaced.
7	B	Commoner conscripts beat the most famous samurai army, which ended armed samurai resistance. Saigō died in 1877 (C), and conscription stayed (D).
8	D	Article 11: "The Emperor has the supreme command of the Army and Navy." A, B and C are the usual guesses from a Western constitution.
9	C	Russia, Germany and France forced the return of Liaodong; Japan kept Taiwan (A). Russia leased Liaodong in 1898.
10	D	Norman's own words (1940, p. 70). B confuses him with peasant-centred readings; A is the opposite of his argument.

Section II

Q	MARKS	WHAT A FULL MARK ANSWER CONTAINS
11	3	Aims from the source: trade ("commerce"), coal and supplies for steamships, protection for shipwrecked sailors (1). Context: whaling fleets and the Pacific route to China (1). Perspective: a diplomatic letter that calls these "the only objects" yet mentions "a powerful squadron", so peaceful language backed by force (1).
12	4	Source B shows extraterritoriality: Americans tried by their own consuls, so Japan lost legal authority over foreigners (1). Fixed tariffs meant Japan could not set its own customs duties (1). Ii Naosuke signed without the emperor's consent, so opponents rallied to the emperor; Ii was assassinated in 1860 (1). The shogunate looked unable to defend Japan, which fed sonnō jōi and the rise of Satsuma and Chōshū (1).
13	4	Article 5: knowledge sought abroad "to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule", so learning served national strength and the new regime (1). Survival: China's defeats and the bombardments of 1863 and 1864 (1). Equality: revising the unequal treaties required Western-style law and a constitution; Article 1 anticipates assemblies (1). Unity and wealth: abolition of the domains (1871), land tax (1873), fukoku kyōhei (1).
14	5	(a) 95.6 minus 61.2 = 34.4 percentage points (1). (b) Universal schooling under the 1872 Education System Order reached almost every child by 1905, using the data (1). Girls' attendance rose fastest, from 18.7 to 93.3 per cent between 1875 and 1905 (MEXT) (1). Other social change: abolition of the status order and of the samurai class; conscription of commoners (1). Schools also taught loyalty: the 1890 Rescript on Education, "offer yourselves courageously to the State" (1).
15	4	Led Satsuma forces in the overthrow: alliance with Chōshū (1866), the coup (January 1868), and the surrender of Edo with Katsu Kaishū (1). A leading member of the government to 1873 (1). Resigned over the Korea debate, 1873 (1). Led the Satsuma Rebellion, 1877, and died; significance: his defeat ended samurai resistance (1).

Q	MARKS	WHAT A FULL MARK ANSWER CONTAINS
16	5	Sino-Japanese War, 1894 to 1895: Shimonoseki ended China's claim over Korea (1). Russo-Japanese War: Source E, Russia accepted Japan's "paramount" interests in Korea (1). Protectorate, November 1905: control of Korea's foreign affairs; Itō as Resident General (1). Resistance and the assassination of Itō, 1909; the Korean emperor forced to abdicate, 1907 (1). Source F: annexation signed 22 August 1910, "complete and permanent cession" of sovereignty (1).

MODEL ANSWER, QUESTION 13

The Charter Oath shows that the Meiji leaders modernised to strengthen the new imperial state. Article 5 says knowledge will be sought "throughout the world", but "so as to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule", so Western learning was a means, not an end. The first reason was survival: China had lost two Opium Wars, and the bombardments of Kagoshima (1863) and Shimonoseki (1864) had shown that Japan could not resist the West without a modern army, which explains the conscription law of 1873. A second reason was equality. The unequal treaties of 1858 imposed extraterritoriality and fixed tariffs, and the powers would revise them only for a state with Western-style law and institutions; Article 1's promise of "deliberative assemblies" pointed towards the constitution of 1889. Finally, the government needed unity and revenue, so it abolished the domains in 1871 and introduced a cash land tax in 1873.

Section III

QUESTION 17 (A): MARKING CRITERIA

MARKS	CRITERIA
5	Clearly explains how the interpretations differ, with accurate reference to both, and accounts for the difference (what each historian measures, or when and why each wrote)
3 to 4	Explains a difference between the interpretations with reference to both
2	Describes each interpretation
1	Makes a general statement about one interpretation

Model answer. Interpretation G sees the Meiji Restoration as a change of rulers without a change in the nature of rule: Norman argues that "from the first … Japan experienced no liberal era", because the new leaders built an "enlightened absolutism" to modernise quickly while suppressing popular demands. Interpretation H stresses the scale of change: Jansen judges that Japan went from "one of the modern world's most fractured polities" to "one of its most centralized states" within a generation, and titles his chapter "The Meiji Revolution". The difference comes from what each measures. Norman measures who held power and how far ordinary people shared it, writing in 1940 as militarists dominated Japan and looking for the roots of their power. Jansen measures the transformation of structures: the end of the domains, the samurai and the status order. Both can be supported: the same state abolished feudalism and expelled more than 500 opponents from Tokyo in 1887.

QUESTION 17 (B): MARKING CRITERIA

MARKS	CRITERIA
13 to 15	Makes a clear, sustained judgement about the extent to which the Meiji Restoration was a true revolution, against a stated criterion. Uses both interpretations critically and integrates detailed, accurate, dated evidence. Analyses change and continuity in political, economic and social life. Communicates a logical, cohesive response using historical terms and concepts
10 to 12	Makes a judgement supported by relevant evidence and use of the interpretations. Addresses change and continuity, possibly unevenly. Sound use of terms
7 to 9	Explains some changes of the Meiji period with some reference to the interpretations. Judgement implied or general
4 to 6	Describes features of the Meiji Restoration with limited reference to the question or interpretations
1 to 3	Makes general statements about Meiji Japan

MODEL ANSWER, QUESTION 17 (B), ABRIDGED

Judgement. The Meiji Restoration was a true revolution in the structure of Japanese society, but not in who held power or how they used it, so I agree only in part. The test is whether the old order of power and society was replaced, not only reformed.

Structures were replaced. Within a generation the shogunate, the domains and the samurai class were all abolished. The coup of 3 January 1868 ended Tokugawa rule; in August 1871, 261 domains became prefectures run by appointed governors; by 1876 the samurai had lost their stipends and their swords, and in 1877 a conscript army of commoners crushed Saigō's Satsuma Rebellion. Jansen's judgement that Japan became "one of its most centralized states" within a generation (Interpretation H) is supported by this evidence: a feudal order was dismantled, not reformed.

Society changed for everyone. The status order was abolished in law; commoners gained surnames, freedom of occupation and a duty of military service from 1873; farmers became owners of land taxed at 3 per cent of its value in cash. School attendance rose from 35.4 per cent in 1875 to 95.6 per cent in 1905 (MEXT). These are revolutionary changes in daily life.

But power stayed narrow. Norman's view (Interpretation G) is strong on politics. The men who seized power in 1868 were samurai of Satsuma and Chōshū, and they ruled as an oligarchy in the emperor's name. The 1889 Constitution made the emperor "sacred and inviolable" and gave him supreme command of the army and navy; about 450,000 men, roughly 1 per cent of the population, could vote in 1890. The Peace Preservation Ordinance of 1887 expelled more than 500 opponents from Tokyo. Norman wrote in 1940, when the army dominated Japan, so he looked for authoritarian roots; but the evidence for them is real.

Weighing the two. Beasley offers the best synthesis: he was "reluctant to call the Restoration a revolution in the full meaning of the term" because it lacked the social purpose of the great revolutions, and suggested "a nationalist revolution, perhaps" (1972, pp. 423 to 424). The purpose of the change was national strength, not popular power.

Conclusion. The Meiji Restoration was a revolution from above: revolutionary in what it built, authoritarian in who decided. The statement holds for society and the economy, and fails for political power.

> "Agree in part" is only a judgement when you say which part, and why.

Attempt record

Come back every few weeks and date it. Improvement in a written subject is invisible from the inside, which is why students who are getting better so often believe they are not.

DATE	MARK OUT OF 55	THE ONE THING TO FIX NEXT TIME

Fill one row every time you sit a set. A tracker with three rows in it is worth more than a perfect one you never started, because the pattern you are looking for only shows up across attempts, not inside one.

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